

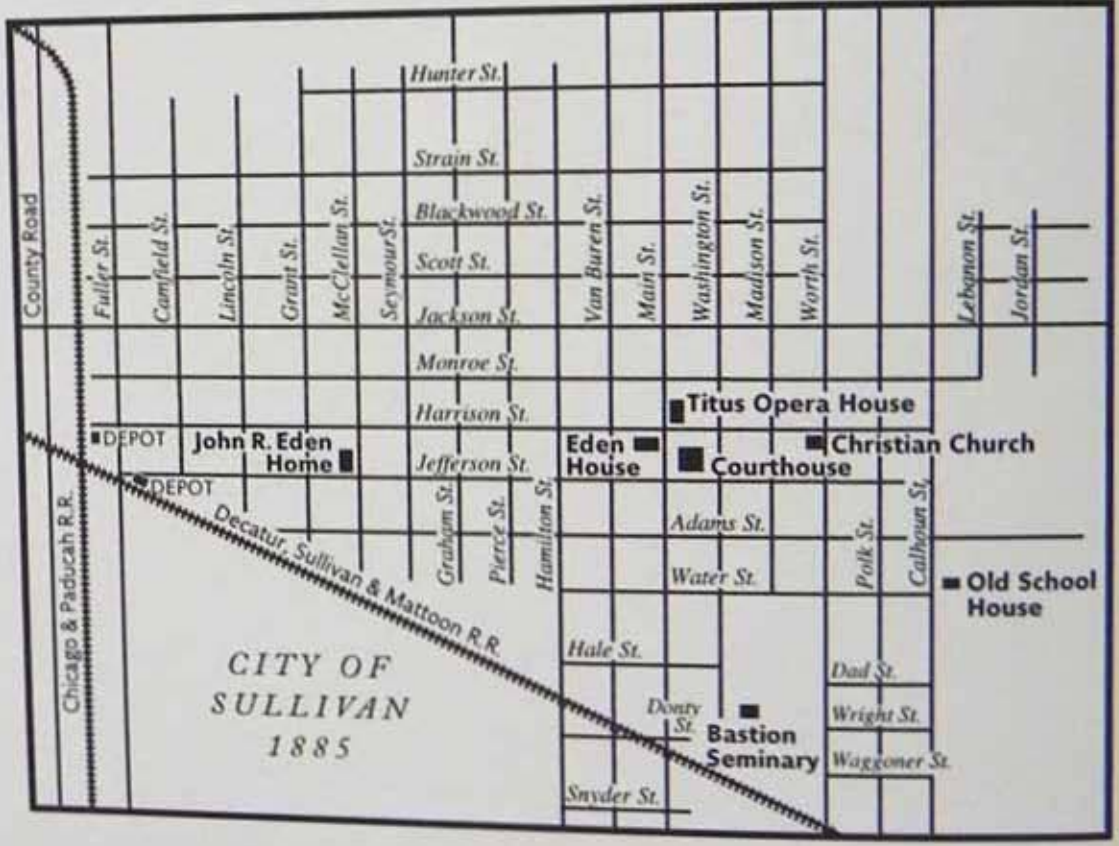
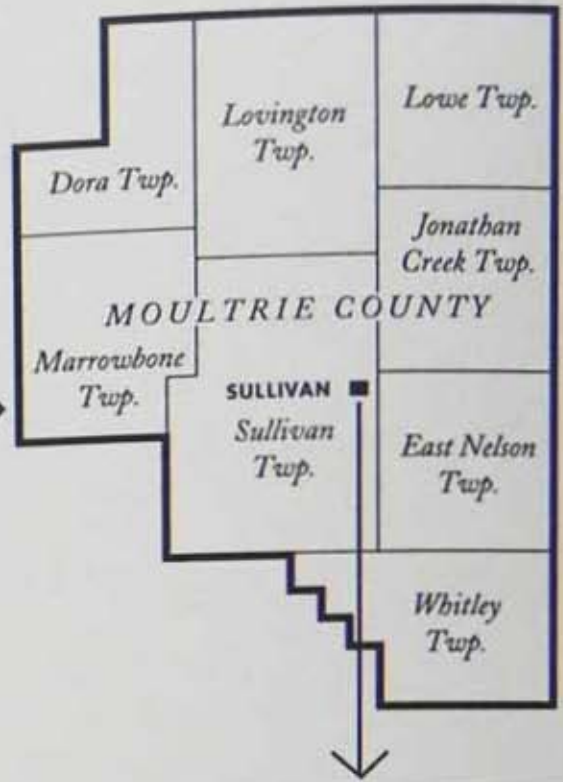
MEMOIRS OF A "BOY MAYOR"

*Recollections of Sullivan, Illinois
from the Civil War to 1909*



WALTER EDEN

R. EDEN MARTIN, *Editor*



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WALTER EDEN.

Mr. Eden is the second son of Hon. and Mrs. John R. Eden, and was born in Sullivan, Ill., July 14, 1862. He attended the schools of Sullivan and Decatur until the fall of 1875, when he entered the University of Georgetown in the District of Columbia, where he attended school for three years and a half.

In December, 1880 he became deputy circuit clerk under S. W. Wright, where he remained until this fall. He engaged in the abstract business for about three years with S. W. Wright, under the firm name of Wright & Eden. He was nominated for county treasurer by the democratic convention, was elected last month and entered upon the duties of his office on the sixth of this month.

He and his cousin, W. W. Eden, have recently gotten up a set of abstract books which they are now selling, and it is one of the most simple yet complete sets that we have seen.

Walter was married to Miss May Mulvey at Cincinnati, O., on the 24th day of September, 1884, and they now have two children, Martha May and John R. Jr.

Mr. Eden is a splendid scribe and eminently fitted for the position to which he has just been elected and the funds of Moultrie county could not have fallen into safer or more competent hands. Mr. Eden is affable, agreeable and will be found following in the footsteps of his predecessor, who made many warm friends while he held the responsible position of treasurer of Moultrie county.

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Walter Eden

R. EDEN MARTIN
Editor

Chicago
1999

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Acknowledgments

We have several of Walter Eden's descendants* to thank for preserving the manuscript of his memoirs of Sullivan. One of his children—John R. Eden II—first suggested, in 1930, that Walt write down his recollections of his boyhood and of his business and professional career. Walt, who was living in California at the time, embarked on this task in 1931, and sent the first installment to his son as the latter was about to leave for summer ROTC camp. John R. II took the manuscript with him with the intention of editing it, but unfortunately the suitcase containing the document was stolen from his car and was never recovered. In the meantime, Walt had continued writing his narrative. When he learned about the loss, he circled back and re-wrote the missing first portion.

In the meantime, Walt's health was failing. He died in November 1932 at the age of 70 with the manuscript incomplete and unedited. His son, John R. II, saved the document, but never edited it. It was left to his daughter, Mrs. Maisie Eden Power, to type portions of the manuscript, which were made available to Mrs. Mabel Martin, a niece of Walter, and to the Moultrie County Historical Society. Slightly different and longer portions of the typed version were also in the possession of Mrs. Martha Ostermeier, another of Walt's granddaughters. Mrs. Power was the ultimate source of the entire handwritten

*Despite the editor's middle name (Eden), he is not a descendant of the author of these memoirs. Walt's sister—Rose Eden Martin—was the editor's grandmother.

manuscript, which added significantly to the shorter typed versions that had previously been available.

Philip Martin, John George, Robert Sampson, and Maisie Eden Power read the draft of this edited version of the memoirs and made helpful suggestions.

Introduction

Walter Eden, once referred to by his contemporaries as the “Boy Mayor” of Sullivan, Illinois, was born on July 14, 1862. Sullivan was then, as it is now, a small town in the east-central part of the state.

Walt’s father was John Rice Eden, a lawyer and Democratic politician who served five terms in Congress. He was first elected in the fall of 1862, the year Walt was born, and took his seat in the thirty-eighth Congress in March 1863. Walt’s mother was Roxana Meeker, the daughter of a local blacksmith and farmer, Ambrose Meeker. Roxana had married the young lawyer, John R. Eden, in August 1856. The Edens had five children who survived to adulthood: Emma, Rose,* Walter, Belle and Blanche.

In 1862 Sullivan was a growing agricultural community and the county seat of Moultrie County, which had been created as a separate county in 1843, less than two decades earlier. The town of Sullivan had been established in 1845 as the new administrative head of the county. Much of the business of the town in 1862 was conducted in wood frame buildings surrounding the courthouse square, which formed the center of the small business district. The first courthouse was home to the County Court—the county judge and two associate judges who acted as a county board—as well as the other county officers.

The county judge when Walt was born in 1862 was Joseph Edgar Eden, John R.’s brother. Joseph Edgar had been the first

*The romance of Walt’s sister, Rose, and a young Sullivan newspaperman, I. J. Martin, is the subject of a small book containing their courtship correspondence. *Ivory and Rose, A Year’s Courtship*, edited by R.E. Martin (Chicago, 1997).

of the two brothers to arrive in Sullivan, in 1853. He first opened a general store, and later became proprietor of the Eden House, the town's hotel. He was also a farmer and stockraiser.

John R. Eden had moved to Sullivan from Shelbyville, Illinois, later in the same year, 1853.* Having completed his legal studies and been admitted to the bar in the previous year, John R. was seeking a place to commence his law practice, which would, of course, not be confined to the court house in Sullivan. Like other central Illinois lawyers of the era, John R. would ride the circuit from county seat to county seat, following the circuit judge as he held court in different locations. In 1856 John R. was elected States Attorney for the Seventh Judicial circuit, comprising nine central Illinois counties; and while serving in that capacity, he built his own private law practice and expanded his network of political connections. In 1859 he became political editor of the first newspaper published in Moultrie county—the *Sullivan Express*, owned by J. H. Waggoner, a strong supporter of the Stephen Douglas wing of the Democratic party.

Walt thus grew from childhood to manhood during the post-Civil War years as the son of a reasonably successful lawyer and rising politician. He remembered the Civil War, or at least the martial band music he later associated with the war. And he also vaguely remembered adult discussions of a violent death, which

*John R. Eden was born in Bath County, Kentucky, February 1, 1826. His father, John Paul Eden, son of Jeremiah Eden, was born in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1796; and his mother, Catherine Cann, was born in Kentucky in 1800, the daughter of Joseph Cann. John R. and his family moved from Kentucky to a farm near Rushville in Rush County, Indiana, in 1831, when John was 5 years old. John R. worked on the family farm and attended school in a log cabin school house. At the age of 18 he started to teach school, and continued to do so for seven years while also working on the farm and studying law. In 1852 John R.'s widowed mother and her four children—Joseph E., John R., Nancy Jane and Julina all moved from Indiana to Shelbyville, Illinois. Shortly after, John R. was admitted to the bar. In 1853 he followed his brother Joseph E. in relocating to Sullivan. *Portrait and Biographical Record of Shelby and Moultrie Counties, Illinois* (Chicago, 1891), pp. 191–2.

he later believed to have been that of President Lincoln. At the time of Lincoln's assassination, Walt was a little less than three years old.

The outline of Walt's life and professional career can be briefly sketched. He spent his childhood years, first, living in the family home in Sullivan, a half block south of the courthouse square, and later, from 1869 until 1870, on the family farm two miles southwest of the town. His primary grade schooling was initially in the first Sullivan schoolhouse, a two-story brick "ramshackle" structure located southeast of the town square near the public cemetery. Later he studied at the Bastion Seminary in Sullivan, a private school for the older children owned and operated by N. S. Bastion, a preacher in the local Christian Church, and his wife.

In 1870, when Walt was eight years old, his father moved the family to the nearby and somewhat larger town of Decatur, where he hoped his law practice would be more successful. The family remained in Decatur for only two years, at the end of which John R. decided to move back to Sullivan, apparently because he believed his political prospects would be improved. Having served one term in Congress, from 1863-65, and having been the Democratic Party's unsuccessful candidate for Governor of Illinois in 1868, John R.'s appetite for political office had been sharply whetted.

So in 1872, at age ten, Walt and his family moved back to Sullivan and into a new large frame home on McClellan Street, six blocks west of the courthouse square. John R.'s political instincts proved to be sound for he was re-elected to Congress in the fall of 1872, and was later re-elected in 1874, in 1876, and for the last time in 1884.

Starting in 1873, during the period when his father was in Congress, Walt Eden attended boarding school at Georgetown College, a few miles west of Washington City. According to a family tradition, Walt did not want to go to boarding school,

and asked permission to remain in Sullivan where he would live with his uncle Edgar. But Walt's father persisted; and, indeed, by 1874, Walt's three sisters—Emma, Rose, and Belle—were enrolled in a convent school in Georgetown, while Walt and his younger brother Hartwell were at the nearby boy's school. Walt soon adjusted to the new situation and became a good student.

In 1875 he commenced studies at the University of Georgetown which he continued until 1879, receiving approximately the equivalent of a modern high school education. In his memoirs, Walt wrote fondly—but briefly—about this period of his life, recalling his visits to the Navy Yard and the uniformed midshipmen, and also the Smithsonian Institution and the Capitol, where he was impressed by the painted pictures of historic events on the walls of the Capitol building.

In 1879 Walt returned to Sullivan, and within a year—at the age of 18—he went to work for the Circuit Clerk as a deputy. It happened that the Clerk at that time, Samuel W. Wright, also maintained an abstract business, preparing abstracts of land titles; and Walt worked in his spare time in the title business where he acquired skills he would use throughout the rest of his life.

In 1884 Walt married May Mulvey, a young lady from Cincinnati who not long before had moved to Sullivan and worked as a milliner—a hat maker—in a local dry goods store. When the newlyweds returned to Sullivan following their wedding in Cincinnati, they brought with them a six-year girl—May's orphaned niece—whom May had promised to care for. The next year, Walt and May had their first child, Martha, who was followed a year later by a son, John Rice II.

In 1886, at the age of 24, Walt was elected to a four-year term as County Treasurer. His career as a local Democratic party politician seemed well launched. More remarkably, in 1887 Walt, at the age of 25, was elected to a two-year term as Mayor of Sullivan—making him, according to local speculation, the youngest mayor in the state. *Notes on the History of Moultrie County and*

Sullivan, Illinois, Martin I.J. (Sullivan, 1990), at p. 51. He was nominated by the local "Citizens" caucus and elected on the "Citizens" ticket. The "Citizens" caucus had declared itself in favor of licensing saloons, which led the local temperance forces to nominate their own candidate. Walt defeated George Brosam (who was later elected during the 1890's to a term of his own). In 1889 Walt was re-elected to a second term, defeating Frank Craig.

During Walt Eden's two terms as Mayor, progress continued in bringing modern conveniences to the citizens of Sullivan. Prior to his term, during the administration of Mayor William H. Shinn, streets had been graded, wooden sidewalks built and repaired, and a system of gasoline street lamps initiated. The "boy Mayor" continued the process of improvement by commencing the City water system. During his two terms, a well was dug, a windmill was erected to operate a pump, and a large wooden tank was built at the corner of Jefferson and Madison streets to hold the water. Water mains were laid along the center of the streets around the public square.*

While serving as Mayor, Walt studied law in his father's law office—which at that time was the accepted way to prepare and qualify for taking the bar exam. He was admitted to the bar in 1889, at the age of 27, and did not stand for re-election two years later when his second term as Mayor expired.

By 1891, at the age of 29, Walt and his wife May had three children—Martha, John Rice II, and Walter. He was well known as a former local public official. He was an experienced title abstractor, and he was launched on a legal career with his father, a well-respected lawyer and political figure. Yet Walt inexplicably walked away from it all and moved to Fresno, California, where

*The information which appears here about Walt's two elections as Mayor and about his two terms is taken from a "common place book" about Moultrie County history, written by Ivory J. Martin, Walt's brother-in-law, in 1927. This manuscript is in the possession of the editor.

he worked for the Fresno City Abstract Company for three years, until 1894. Possibly he had been persuaded to move to Fresno by a cousin of his, W. W. Eden, who was later manager of the Fresno abstract office. Probably he believed that his ability to support his family would be greater in Fresno. Whatever the cause of his relocation, it was simply the first of several such moves which regularly punctuated his subsequent business and professional career.

In 1894, dissatisfied with the abstract business in Fresno, Walt Eden returned to Sullivan, where he resumed his law practice with his father. He continued in law practice for the next seven years. Many of his recollections of people and events in Sullivan, and of his political and legal activities, date from this period.

In 1900 Walt moved to Springfield, Illinois, and went into the abstract business, and from that time on he spent most of his time away from Sullivan. Consequently, his memoirs for the subsequent period of his life will be of less interest to those whose primary interest is in the people and events which comprise the history of Sullivan.*

In Springfield, Walt developed and managed an abstract business, practiced law, and invested in real estate. Unfortunately, because of hard times generally and bad real estate investments, he lost everything—his abstract business, his real estate, and even his residence. He was left, as he put it (*infra*, at 83), with "not a scintilla."

So in May 1907, at the age of 44 and out of a job, Walt moved to Billings, Montana, where he tried the abstract business, but stayed only two months. He then moved on to Tacoma, Washington, where he stayed another two months working in another abstract office. Liking Tacoma but finding the job unattractive, he returned to Sullivan in the fall of 1907, where he remained practicing law until 1908. He then tried Billings again,

*Accordingly, the editor has eliminated from this published version of Walt Eden's memoirs many of the details relating to Walt's abstract businesses and law practice in other cities.

but to no avail. He stayed in Sullivan only until he received an offer from his cousin, W. W. Eden, to come and work in an abstract office in Fresno, California. Walt accepted the offer and moved to California in March 1909.

From that time on, Walt worked in a succession of positions, but never returned to live in Sullivan. He soon left Fresno for Vancouver, Washington; from there, he went to Tacoma; and from there in June 1910 he moved to Los Angeles, where he worked in several different abstract offices. It was during this period that he married Margaret Fitzgerald of San Diego.

In 1912 Walt and Margaret moved to Santa Ana, in Orange County, where he again worked for a title company. His lack of political dexterity cost him a possible position as state court judge, but he soon went to work as a deputy attorney in the local district attorney's office. After four years in that position, he returned to private practice. He lived in Santa Ana about 10 years and thought it was the only place he had lived, other than Sullivan, where he felt perfectly at home. He also attained a certain level of local prominence, serving as a member of the local Chamber of Commerce.

In 1918, at the age of 56, Walt was elected to the California General Assembly, where he served one term, from January 1919 to 1921. He later expressed his regret at having re-entered politics. He wrote that it would have been "better for me had I never entered into the game. My political life was short but full of trouble." (*Infra*, at 95.) But he never had a chance to explain why. He died just as he was starting to write that portion of his memoirs describing his career in the California legislature. However, various local histories in Southern California record that after his single term in the Assembly, he was elected to the California Senate, where he served one term, from 1921-25. In 1923 he relocated from Santa Ana to Los Angeles, where he became counsel to the California Title Insurance Company, a position he held until near the end of his life.

Walt Eden died in Los Angeles on November 5, 1932, at the age of 70.

* * *

Walt's memoirs present an interesting question: Many people, particularly as they near the end of a normal life span, are moved to write their memoirs in some form. Almost all of these recollections deserve to be saved by the families and descendants of the writers. But which ones should be published to a broader audience?

Some memoirs are of interest because the authors knew people who were historically important or witnessed events about which we are curious. Others are worth publishing because of the quality of thinking and writing that enter into their composition. By telling us what the writer thought and experienced, they tell us things of value about our own lives. Still others are worth preserving because the people, events and activities which they describe—even if not publicly important—are of interest to the descendants of those described, as well as others who want to know how people lived at the time and place described. Local history may appeal to a narrower audience than the history of a war or the biography of a major political leader. But the appeal may, depending on the memoir, extend beyond the descendants of the writer to those curious about how ordinary people lived, worked, dealt with their families and neighbors, and coped with their problems.

Walt Eden, as he wrote in his introduction, was a man of no particular prominence. He grew up and lived under the shadow of a successful and respected father. He had many natural gifts of which he never took full advantage. His business career was marked by inconsistency and failure, and his family life was clouded by an unexplained decades-long separation from his family. His political career, which started out so brightly, apparently became a great disappointment to him toward the end of his life in California. The circumstances of this disappointment

are not known to the editor; but one may speculate that they were related to a tendency, which is reflected in his memoirs, to elevate disagreements into differences over matters of principle—differences which he had a tendency to construe as reflecting negatively on the honesty, integrity or character of those with whom he disagreed. When a prospective client came to him seeking not only representation but also business references, instead of simply declining the professional engagement he announced that the prospective clients could not do business in Moultrie County, and if they attempted to do so, Walt would denounce them publicly. (*Infra*, at 67.) When he disagreed with Presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan, a Democrat, on the free silver issue in 1896, not only did Walt vote for Bryan's Republican opponent, but he did so—as he says—“openly,” and “at great personal sacrifice,” thus abandoning, he thought, what might have been “a successful political career.” Indeed, as he describes it, Walt spoke in community meetings against Bryan, and was, he thought “more effective than Republican speakers.” As a result, Walt was “for many years a man without a party.” And, as he wrote in his memoirs, he was proud of it (*infra*, at 74):

I still retain my independence, and reserve my right to vote against any party that does not measure up to my ideas of right and wrong, or to do what is best for my country.

Another time, when a long-time Democratic party colleague in a public meeting criticized President McKinley's policy of delaying the steps that ultimately led to the Spanish-American War, Walt became “outraged” and called his old friend a “traitor”—which led to a near riot. (*Infra*, at 75.)

Walt Eden's memoirs are not the work of a particularly introspective man. At a time when few men (and fewer women) had the advantages of a formal education beyond the age of 17, Walt's schooling cannot be faulted. Indeed, with over three years of study at Georgetown University, he went farther than most of his

contemporaries. But his memoirs give no indication that he had a particularly deep or insightful understanding of the events about which he wrote. Walt was intelligent enough. It is unlikely that he could have practiced law, functioned as an abstractor, and been elected to public office several times without being reasonably quick-minded. But Walt's career and writings do not suggest an intellectual capacity or curiosity that was in any way unusual, let alone extraordinary. Walt had the misfortune to be the average son of an unusually talented father.

However, Walt's memoirs do reflect remarkable powers of observation and recall. His descriptions of Sullivan and the people who lived there during the post Civil War years when he was a little boy are, at least in the editor's judgment, unusually acute. And his recollections of what local characters said and how they conducted themselves are sharply drawn and often humorously revealing. He recounts events that were important in the life of the community—the fire that destroyed the Centennial House hotel, the brawl between the Lakey Bend boys and their Jonathan Creek adversaries, the way men and women entered and sat separately during Christian church services and the disagreement that arose over installation of a new organ, the Murphy anti-liquor movement, the discipline inflicted by teachers at the old Bastion Academy, the shows at the old Opera House, and the circus. His descriptions of life on the farm—the crops that were grown, the animals raised, the food that people ate and the way it was prepared, and the balance of school work and farm work of the youngsters—all give a sense of how people lived and occupied themselves in a small Midwestern town over a hundred years ago.

Perhaps most important, Walt writes about the people he observed and knew. His memoirs are not the stuff of public history. But how these people made a living, what they did and said, how they looked, and what kind of people they seemed to be to an observant boy rapidly becoming a young man, may be of some interest to social historians.

As to one of these people, Walt's memoir is a significant addition to what we know about a young man who later became a prominent American politician and writer. Albert J. Beveridge was the most successful political figure to grow up in Moultrie County. He was born in Ohio in 1862 and his family moved to a farm near Sullivan in late 1866 or 1867 when Albert was four or five years old. Later the family moved into Sullivan, and Albert attended the Sullivan public schools. Following his graduation from high school in 1881, he went on to college in Indiana at the college later known as DePauw, in Greencastle. He became a lawyer and, ultimately, a United States Senator from Indiana, as well as the author of two distinguished biographies, of Abraham Lincoln and Chief Justice John Marshall. His achievements as a leading member of the Progressive Republicans added to his national prominence.

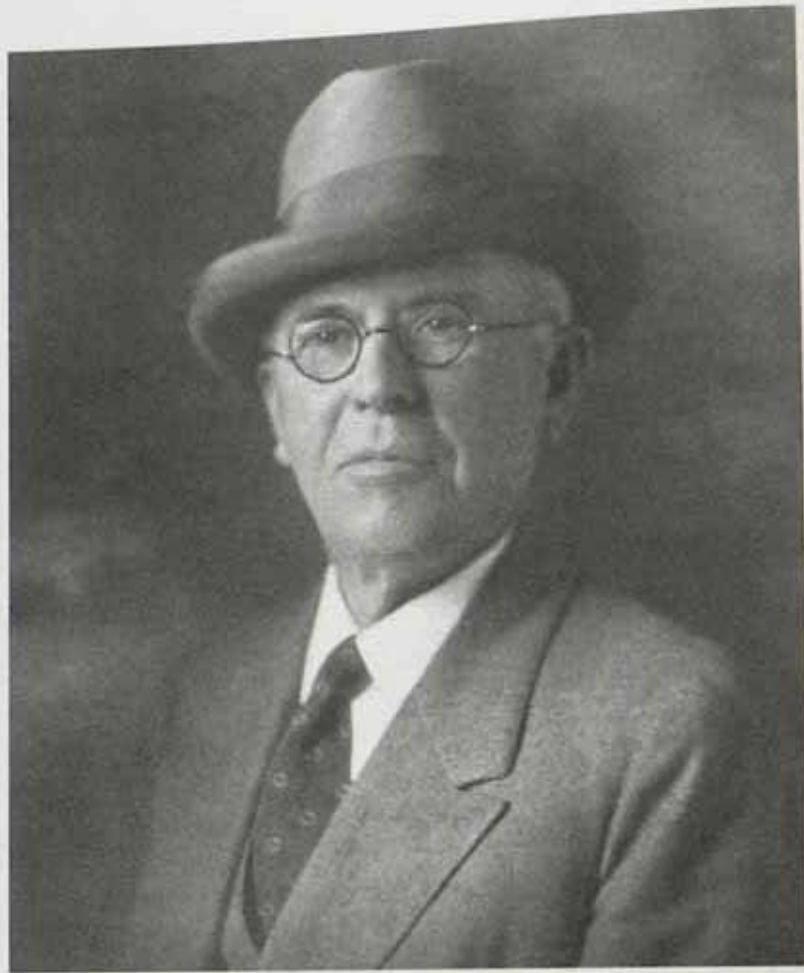
Despite that prominence, Beveridge's early life in Moultrie County is shrouded in obscurity. Claude Bowers knew little of it when he wrote his early political biography, *Beveridge and the Progressive Era* (Boston, 1932). A more recent and complete biography—*Albert J. Beveridge, American Nationalist*, by John Braeman (Chicago, 1971)—contains only a few pages, and not much information, about Beveridge's early years in Illinois (pp. 7-11, 328).

Walt Eden's memoirs add significantly to our knowledge of Beveridge's Illinois years. Walt was only three months older than Albert, and knew him from childhood through high school. His recollections include long passages about Albert's family, young Albert's work as a farmer and logger, his personal characteristics and ambitions, and his speaking and writing skills. Walt also tried one lawsuit against Albert after he had moved to Indiana. He also implicates Albert in a childhood prank, and suggests a social liason between Albert and one of Walt's cousins.

Although far from a complete picture, Walt's memoirs thus add valuable information about Beveridge's youth and may be of use in any future biography of the great Progressive Senator.

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My memoirs are those of a man of no prominence, one who never had his name in *Who's Who*, simply one of the common "every day folks." They are the memoirs of such a man from childhood in an early day in Sullivan, a small county seat in Central Illinois. Having some spare time, and being a man who has always been active in business, in order to give myself something to do, I am writing some of my experiences in a long and uneventful life—not for publication, but more to leave for my home folks and my children a record of some of my acts, thoughts, observations and experiences.

Walt Eden, 1932.

I

The Eden Family

My father, John Rice Eden, was born in 1826 in Bath County, Kentucky. His father's name was John Paul Eden. His grandfather emigrated from Baltimore, Maryland, at a very early day, so that I come from the Maryland Eden family, and my earlier ancestors were from England. When my father was in Congress in the 1870's, a man from Baltimore came to Washington to see him. I do not remember the man's name, but either his wife or mother was an Eden. My father knew of many of the family names he mentioned. He said we were related to Robert Eden, the last Colonial Governor of Maryland.

Father's family moved from Kentucky to Rush County, Indiana, when my father was a boy. There he grew to manhood, procuring such education as poor boys of that period received, altogether from his own effort. He read the life of Francis Marion and was a great admirer of his. I have heard him say what books were available to him, but have forgotten. They were very few, but of the best literary merit. He taught school in Rush County and was admitted to practice law there. He was a subscriber to the Rushville *Jacksonian* as long as he lived. He came to Illinois in 1852 and settled first in Shelby County.

I was born in Sullivan, the county seat of Moultrie County, Illinois, on the 14th day of July, 1862. My father was a Democratic politician of considerable note; he served in Congress for several years and was in 1868 the Democratic party nominee for

Governor of Illinois. He was in Congress during a part of President Lincoln's term as President, during a part of Grant's, and later during a part of Cleveland's term.*

When my father was admitted to practice law in the State of Illinois, the court appointed Lincoln, David Davis, and Samuel M. Moulton as a committee to examine him as to his qualifications. Father and the committee repaired to a room in the hotel, probably in Shelbyville in 1852. When they arrived at the room, Lincoln flopped (so my father expressed it) himself down on the bed and remarked that the other two could examine him, that he was going to sleep. Father formed a bad opinion of Lincoln from this circumstance, and never changed his opinion. Judge Davis afterward became a judge of the United States Supreme Court, and made himself unpopular by his decision in the matter of the Tilden-Hayes controversy for the Presidency.** Mr. Moulton afterwards represented his district in Congress.

They tell a story about Moulton that when he was a young lawyer, he prepared an indictment which was returned by the grand jury against the defendant. Somehow Mr. Moulton was employed on the defense. He moved the court to quash the indictment, which was sustained. The prosecuting attorney remarked that, "He who makes can unmake."

My mother's name was Roxana Meeker. She was the daughter of Ambrose Meeker, a blacksmith. I have been reliably informed that she was related to Ezra Meeker of Puallup, Washington, who acquired a national reputation as a trail blazer, having a few

*Editor's note: John R. Eden was elected to the House of Representatives in 1862, was defeated in 1864, and was later elected and re-elected to 1872, 1874, 1876, and 1884.

***Editor's note:* Justice Davis was to be the tie-breaker in the Electoral Commission in 1877, and many Democrats expected he would vote for Tilden. They were disappointed when the Republicans in Illinois gave Davis their nomination for the U.S. Senate, thus removing him from the Court and the Commission. Justice Bradley was selected in his place, and Bradley broke the tie in favor of the Republican, Hayes.

years ago, when he had become very old, driven an ox team from the State of Washington to the City of New York, and set markers over the old Oregon Trail, by which he as a boy had traveled as part of the great Western migration.* Her mother's people were named Hartwell, I think from Philadelphia. The Hartwells in Cincinnati were related to her.

My parents had eight children born to them, four boys and four girls. The girls all lived to fairly good ages; but two of the boys died in infancy, and one, Hartwell, about two years older than I, died when he was about nineteen years old. Two of my sisters married brothers. Belle married Joel K. Martin, and Rose married I. J. Martin. Each raised a family of several children. Blanche married Paul Thackwell, the son of a missionary to India. She had four children, all girls.

**Editor's note: See Mecker, Ezra, The Ox Team, or the Old Oregon Trail, 1852-1906, An Account of the Author's Trip Across the Plains...in 1852, (Indianapolis, 1906).*

II

Early Memories of Sullivan in the 1860's

I was born during the Civil War and have always felt that, in some way, that accounts for my partiality for martial music, especially the drum and fife. To this day I sit up and take notice of such music. I remember as a boy hearing Sousa's band in Washington City.

I understand that I was named for a man named Walter Kilner, who, with his brother Ed, were druggists at Sullivan at the time I was born. They remained in the drug business there until I was several years old, and I have a good recollection of them in that business. My principal recollection of them is at Christmas time, as they always had a great stock of toys on hand, and Walter Kilner, being a fat man, was usually Santa Claus at the public Christmas festivities at Sullivan. I also remember him as an actor in local theatricals and, especially, as Rip Van Winkle. He made a good Rip.

The Kilners were of good family. Old Doctor Kilner, their father, had an office over the drug store and specialized, even at that early date, in diseases of the eye, ear, nose and throat. When I was a child I had some trouble with my ears, and for a long time he treated me. He was an Englishman and had a crippled leg from some cause. I remember as if it were yesterday his figures of speech. He told me one time of a conversation he had

with a man who resided in Sullivan, by the name of Wick Everett. It shows the old Doctor's temper. He said Mr. Everett asked him how he became crippled. Mr. Everett told him he merely asked out of curiosity. The Doctor told him: "What you call curihosity I call damn himpudence!"

Walter Kilner had a disappointment in a love affair and left Sullivan when I was about ten years old. I never saw him until about thirty years thereafter, when I had moved to Springfield. I met him one day and, notwithstanding he looked seedy and dissipated, I recognized him and said to him: "Aren't you Walter Kilner?" He answered, "Yes, what's left of him." I learned that he lived at the county poorhouse and was doctor and druggist of the inmates, he being also an inmate.

A few months later, he consulted me as a lawyer. He had been left about five hundred dollars by a will from a relative. I aided him in procuring this money and tried to get him to deposit it all in the bank. He insisted on holding out about sixty-five dollars and left the rest in the bank and went off with his cash and his bankbook. The next day I was called to court by the judge, and when I arrived, there was Walter, still pretty tipsy. The police had found him in a drunken condition, with some of his cash and the bankbook, and he was being tried on a charge of being incompetent, with a prayer to have a conservator appointed for him. He told the judge that he wanted me for his conservator, an office which I accepted. I had him take a cure, which stuck, and as the manager of the poor farm wanted him to come back on account of his knowledge of drugs, I arranged for him to be doctor and druggist for the poor farm, not as an inmate but as an employee. He held that place until he died several years thereafter, and when he died there was some money left in his estate.

I remember when I was a very small child that all the home folks were very much exercised about someone who had met a violent death. I was especially impressed with the sad look on the faces of all about me and of the description of the body in a

coffin. I am not sure but I have always believed it was at the time of the assassination of President Lincoln. I can remember well some things that happened when I was still wearing dresses.

I lived within one half block of the public square until I was six or seven years old—1868-69—so I knew of a lot of things that were going on "down town," even when I was very small. The public square at that time, such as was built up, was of frame business houses, shacks mostly, except one brick building of considerable proportions at the west end of the south side of the public square owned by a man named Perryman, and a brick store building in about the center of the west side of the square owned by J. E. [Joseph Edgar] Eden, an uncle of mine. Immediately adjoining and on the north was what was known as the George P. Chapman Hardware store.

The brick building first mentioned was near my home, just across the street in fact. How well I remember this brick building. It seemed to be very old when I first remember it as a little child. I think it belonged to John Perryman, one of the early pioneers. As I remember, he ran a store in it. It was also occupied by the Kilner Drug store. Mrs. Elizabeth Titus, the widow of George Titus, also made her home in that building with her grandson, William R. Titus, a child of my own age. I was frequently in their home. She was an old resident of Sullivan at the time of which I speak, and was the mother of Joseph B. Titus, who at that time was a lawyer and banker, and built a few years later the Titus Opera House.

Mrs. Titus owned the land which afterwards became "the Titus Addition to Sullivan," on which the old school house was erected about the year 1872. The land when I first remember it was in pasture. I well remember that Mrs. Titus had two fine sleek red cows, which furnished for the household plenty of good cream, on which W. R. Titus as a boy was raised. He always took it sweetened with sugar. I think that for years was his principal diet.

Mrs. Titus was the first person in Sullivan who had a piano. Hers was the first piano I ever saw. She also had a bay horse and a buggy. Buggies at that time were very scarce although Sullivan boasted of a buggy factory, operated by D. L. Pifer.

I will never forget a circumstance that occurred about that bay horse. I went barefoot when I was a boy and was subject to all the troubles of a barefoot boy, such as stubbing my big toe and stone bruises. I had run a hedge thorn into my foot and it was in deep. You could hardly get a hold of it. All the family begged me to let them pull it out, but I would not give my consent. Mrs. Titus offered to give me the bay horse and buggy if I would let her pull it out, but even that was no inducement, and I still refused. Finally she grabbed me and held me down and pulled it out anyway. For a long time I regretted I hadn't consented as I thought, of course, she would have carried out her promise. I have always wondered, as I do yet, how she would have gotten out of her promise.

I have a lot of remembrances about the old Perryman brick building. The Masons used to meet on the second floor. Every lodge meeting night they used to bring out a great iron triangle and strike it with another piece of iron, and it would make a noise that could be heard for miles around the town. This would call the brethren to the meeting. My childish curiosity was very much aroused as to what the Masons did. Finally, in some way I got into the hall or temple and found the walls were decorated all over with oil paintings by James R. Duncan, a local artist. These pictures, of course, depicted the various characters and events mentioned in the ritual, and my curiosity was never satisfied until I grew up and became a member.

We must have had some pretty big snakes there in those days, for I saw out in the alley in the rear of the drug store the skin of about as big a snake as I ever saw. It was fully six feet long and was about three inches through. Some snake story, eh! In later years I often heard Israel Pifer, who conducted a stand at the county fair

and other public festivities as a barker for the sale of his red lemonade, announce that his stock came from "the Devil's backbone, where the big snakes stay." So I always connected this snake skin with the Devil's backbone, being the area south of Sullivan where Mr. Pifer had his farm.

In 1876 this old building was remodeled as a hotel, and W. S. Harris, who married Jim Canfield's widow, commonly known as Doctor Dobbins, operated there the "Centennial House," and did a considerable amount of business.

The old building was finally destroyed by fire, and as there was still a drug store in it, it made quite a fire. I was about twenty years old then [c. 1882]. The fire came on one Sunday night after midnight. I was a member of the volunteer fire department. My tailor had just made me a fine new blue broadcloth Prince Albert suit of clothes, and I had been wearing it that day. It was the only suit near at hand for me to don in the hurry to get to the fire, which I did. I helped roll out great barrels of oil to get them away from the fire, as they were feeding it, so that it was gaining ground. I was too excited to take off my new suit, which was ruined.

When I was a little boy and even after I had grown up, Sullivan was a pretty wild town. In the early days, the north side of the square was almost all saloons. We had "sod corn row" there. I remember it well. There was a two story frame building on the corner at the west end of the north side of the square, where the Opera House was afterwards built.

Lakey Bend was a community southwest of town, and Jonathan Creek was northeast of town. The young men from these neighborhoods always had a grudge against each other, and on Saturdays would meet at Sullivan. When they got drunk enough, which always happened when they came to town, there would always be several fights on the public square. I had no desire to go out of the house on Saturdays, especially at night, during my tender years.

Thinking of Lakey Bend and Jonathan Creek reminds me of a furious battle between those two contenders, of which I was a spectator. This occurred when I was almost grown. A Fourth of July picnic and dance was in progress in the country in the Lakey Bend neighborhood. With a companion I attended the picnic all day. They all had a fine time and got along swimmingly until, just at its close, Bill Carlisle, the champion fighter of the Jonathan Creekers, got out on the floor and, walking up and down, announced that he could "lick any man on the grounds." I never saw Bedlam turned loose quicker in my life. Charlie Marsh, who then lived in the Lakey Bend neighborhood and was one of their leaders, and in fact had never been licked, immediately took up the challenge.

There were at least twenty-five men who pulled their knives, but before anyone was killed, Carlisle started after Marsh with a knife and was running him all around the grounds with his knife raised, ready to strike. He was about to overtake him when a little hunchback Lakey Bender named Connard hit Carlisle over the head with a big club, which seemed to stop the fight. I was in my buggy ready to start home when the fight started, and my companion had not yet got in. Connard came running up to me, jumped in my buggy beside me, and said: "Drive me over to that clump of trees." I soon persuaded him, as he seemed to be in too great a hurry to stop and argue, that it was better for him to run over to it. Notwithstanding I had often seen Connard before that, I never saw him again.

Carlisle was hauled to town in the bottom of a wagon and never fully recovered from that encounter. A few years thereafter he fell into an open fire and died from the effects of it. Carlisle and Marsh were both fine specimens of physical manhood.

Several years after that, Marsh moved to Sullivan and I, as Mayor of the city, appointed him to the police force. He made an excellent officer. Marsh for a long time held the championship belt, before he became a policeman. He participated in

many street fights, was always victor, and everybody thought he couldn't be whipped until a little fellow named Charley Sprannels came to town. He was a tinner and no one would think there was any fight in him. One evening, on a Fourth of July, in Sullivan, Marsh and Sprannels met and fought under and at the edge of the porch in front of the Eden House, an old frame building owned and operated by my uncle, J. E. Eden. I was on the porch, as it was built to accommodate guests in the upper story, and saw the fight. Sprannels whipped Marsh and I never heard of his having a fight after that.

John Kirkbride, a policeman when I was a lad, put a stop to the Saturday fighting in Sullivan. He was a man of few words, and he never had to go after them but once. After that he did his stuff without much trouble. He was one of the best policemen I ever knew. When he married a widow who owned a farm and had some means, he became a farmer, and a good officer was lost.

But I am going far afield. Turning back to my childhood days, my first experience in school was at an old brick schoolhouse near what was the public cemetery, the ground on which it stood being now a part of the cemetery. I didn't like going to school. I often think the old school house had something to do with it. It was an old ramshackle two-story building. A man named Donelson was at the head of it. I remember well that, after I had been to school the first day, I didn't want to go back any more, and my mother followed me all the way brandishing a switch taken from an apple tree.

When I was in the primer class, our teacher had a dozen of us stand in a row before the blackboard on which she had written simple words like "dog" and "cat." She would point at a word and we would announce what it was. She pointed at a word none of us knew, so no one answered. She said, "Quick!" and, in a chorus, the whole class said "Quick!"

I had often wondered who that teacher was and never found out, until about 1910, when I was living in Los Angeles. I

attended a picnic of Moultrie County people and there I met her. At the time she was teaching, her name was Sallie Edwards. She told me she was my first teacher. I had often heard my folks speak of Sallie Edwards. She was a sister of Tommie Edwards, a Cambellite preacher.

Near the west end of the south side of the square there stood what then appeared to be an old frame, two story building with a portico over the sidewalk in front. It had been trimmed all over the front with scroll work. In that building, on the corner, Henry F. Vadakin had a drug store. He was the father of Dr. James Vadakin, later of Bethany, and was related to James A. Livere—probably a brother-in-law.

In that building James Elder, a very wealthy man for his time, had a place of business on the ground floor. I remember seeing him there frequently when I was a very small boy. He was the father of William Elder, Sullivan banker of the early eighties.

E. D. Cleveland, a Justice of the Peace, held his court in that building. He was an old man, and the greatest impression I have of him is that he wore slippers during office hours, made of some sort of carpeting material, which was very much used in that day—the same material as carpet bags were made of in the same period.

William Thunemann, the father of Mrs. Dr. S. W. Johnson, had a harness shop in a little frame shack about 15' by 25' on the west side of the square. He used to sit in the front window on some sort of harness sewing device, and make his harnesses.

My uncle, Judge Joseph E. Eden, owned and managed a hotel called the "Eden House." He had a livery stable in connection with it. He never had a bar in connection with it. The hotel was a two story frame building on the north end of the west side of the square, covering about the same ground as the present hotel, including the Sam B. Hall drug store. Along the whole front was a wide porch, which was a great loafing place, not only for the guests, but for the general public. My aunt always had a

mocking bird and red birds hanging out under this porch in the summer and on nice days. That mocking bird sang all the time and one could hear it all over town.

Charles L. Roane had a sort of general store in a two story frame building at the south end of the west side of the square. He handled dry goods, clothing and groceries. In those days merchants in that part of the country seldom held sales to get rid of their old stock. At least Mr. Roane did not. If you wanted "antiques" in clothing, you could always find them there.

I remember an event that occurred when I was a small boy which is almost incredible. One day I was standing on the sidewalk across the street from the Roane store building. The building had a shingle roof that came to a point on its crest like the letter V turned upside down. I noticed a bird's head sticking up over the crest of the roof. Just then Charles T. Harris came along and I called his attention to it. He said, "It's a quail," and picked up a clod of dirt and threw it and hit the bird's head. We went over, and on the stairway on the north side of the building we picked up the quail, dead.

John B. Shepherd had a dry goods store on the southwest corner of the square. It was in a frame store building, with a portico extending across the walk in front. He had his residence on the same quarter block. His family lived just across the alley from our home, and I remember his father and his wife's father. She was a sister of Ben Haydon, who lived across the street from us. John B. Shepherd was a most affable man—soft spoken under all circumstances, a typical Southern gentleman. The Shepherds came from Kentucky.

Joe Keedy had a saloon at the northwest corner of the square. Here also was the town pump, always equipped with watering troughs where the farmers could water their horses. I never knew it to go dry.

George Mayer had a place of business, probably a tailor shop, on the south side of the square. As a child I was impressed by

the slaughter of geese in the back yard of his place of business.

Dan Morrison had a sort of eating place on the south side of the square. He was a fiddler and used to play for the dances. He always had about his place a half dozen hunting dogs—setters.

A man named Perquoit [?] had a little lunch counter in an old wooden shack on the east side of the square. My recollection principally of what he dealt in was cove oysters and hard cider.

The foregoing are some of the conditions in Sullivan in the last half of the sixties. Almost every day a drove or two of Texas cattle would go past our house—those of the yard-long horns.

We had a woollen mill, two flouring mills and a buggy factory. Dan Pifer was the ice man. He didn't deliver ice, but you could go to his ice barn and dig into the sawdust till you found what you wanted, pay for it, and take it away.

My mother belonged to the Christian church, and of course, that is where I received my early religious training. Often I have sat through long sermons I did not understand, delivered by Preacher Bastion, Dr. A. L. Kellar, and occasionally some outside preacher. The church had two doors, so that the ladies would go in and sit down on the left hand side, and the men on the right. A man and wife, when they reached the church door, would separate, and sit apart when they were in church. How well I remember some of those early pioneers, who usually occupied the "Amen" corner: Dad Patterson, Doc Patterson, John Powell, J. H. Waggoner, Europe A. Lilly, John Rose, Alfred N. Smyser, James Wright, Whip Hoke, and Dr. A. L. Kellar. They used to sing their hymns without music, as they had no organ in the church in those early days. When in later years they did install a little cottage organ, they lost several of their most devoted members, who refused to enter the church as long as they lived, where this instrument of the devil had a place.

I always enjoyed the Sunday School, to which I went every Sunday. Capt. A. N. Smyser superintended the Sunday School, and led the singing. He had a good voice, as most all of his fam-

ily had after him. He used a little "tuning fork" (I think that is what you call it) in leading his singing, the only one I ever saw.

My father never joined a church, but he compared in his life with any one who did. I heard him say in his later years that the "Sermon on the Mount" was his religion.

In 1868 Father was nominated by the Democratic party as its candidate for Governor. Though there was not a chance of electing a Democrat, he made a vigorous campaign. John M. Palmer, who a few years before that was a Democrat, was his opponent on the Republican ticket.

The first Presidential campaign in my recollection was in 1868—Grant and Colfax on the Republican side, and Seymour and Blair the Democrats. It was wild and wooley in those days—torch light processions with uniformed marchers.

Joseph B. Titus had a bank in a one story frame building near the center of the north side of the square. He was a fine looking man, of only medium height, rather heavy set, with blond hair and beard, rather sparse. At that time he always wore his shirt open at the collar. One day there was a circus in town and he saw me standing near the ticket wagon, and when he bought himself a ticket, he also bought one for me and handed it to me.

Dr. B. B. Everett was an old man at the time of which I speak. He had an office in a little wooden shack near the corner two blocks west of the southwest corner of the square. As a little boy I always wondered why he had two baby skeletons hanging by their necks on one of his window jams. He had a "Hurdy Gurdy," or "Roman Fiddle," and often dispensed music from it for an audience standing around his front door. I was frequently a part of the audience. His son, Wick Everett, edited some sort of newspaper in the second story of a frame building on the corner adjoining the Doctor's office. Joe Birchfield assisted in getting out the paper.

I remember well the full eclipse of the sun about the year 1868. It came on about 4 o'clock p.m. on a summer day. The

chickens went to roost, and after it was over the roosters crowed as if it were morning. Quite a number of poorly informed folks thought the world would come to an end. It seemed to me that there was quite a bit of excitement about it.

In those days the streets in town and the highways in the country had many wild flowers. The streets in town were full of a very pretty flower, which we used to call buttercups. They had a bloom of yellow and white. When you squeezed them, they closed again. I see other cultivated flowers now very similar, but not of the same color.

Charley Crow had a blacksmith shop on the corner one block west of the southwest corner of the square. He had me very much excited with the idea that he and I would start a circus, and he put me through a lot of stunts preparing for it. I remember one was that he would have me straddle a wagon tongue at the end and he would lift me up by the tongue to the ceiling of his shop. I never saw an act like that in a circus, but it seemed to me that it was a very difficult act.

James Camfield was a wealthy farmer for that day. I remember seeing him in the blacksmith's shop. He had a sort of Santa Claus look with his white beard. He was marking off some sort of plat in the dust of the shop floor. That was in the late sixties, not long before he died.

A man named J. M. Norvale kept a grocery store on the south side of the square. His family lived on the adjoining block to where we lived, and as he had several children we became well acquainted. He used to raise sweet potato vines commercially, which he sold in the store, as well as from his hot bed.

My best friend, as a child, was Mrs. Samuel Wright. Sam Wright was then a very old man. They lived next door to us, and there was nothing to prevent my going to their house at any time. I think I was at her house about as much as at my own. She used to make the best batter cakes I ever ate. She would even defend me against punishment by my mother. She never

had any children by Mr. Wright, but he had a host of children by former wives. S. W. Wright, later Circuit Clerk and Recorder, was his son. Amanda, wife of J. M. Cummins, was his youngest child.

Mrs. Wright was English, and was the mother of Ed Oliver of East Nelson Township. Sam Oliver was her grandson. She taught me a lot of English childish jingles. I have always remembered one:

When I was little my mother kept me in;
Now I'm big I can serve the King.
I can handle a musket, I can smoke a pipe;
I can kiss a pretty girl at ten o'clock at night.

As long as she lived, she loved me like one of her own, and I never thought more of anyone than I did of her. Later, when my own mother became an invalid and I lived at my uncle's hotel, I would always go to her when in trouble, and she always helped me.

III

The Bastion Seminary, 1869-1870

My grandfather, Ambrose Meeker, owned and lived on a farm a short distance southwest of Sullivan. Father bought that farm, and traded our Sullivan house in on it; and we moved out to the farm and Grandfather moved into our house and occupied it during the rest of his life.

After we moved to the farm, we lived there during most of a winter and summer. During that period, I walked about two miles to school to the Bastion Seminary in Sullivan. That seminary had considerable reputation in adjoining counties and, if N. S. Bastion, its proprietor, had been a man of any business ability, Sullivan would have become a college town, and the Bastion school would probably now be one of the principal colleges of the middle west. Mr. Bastion was, at the time of which I speak, an old man. He was a preacher of the Christian denomination and generally preached all the sermons every Sunday in that church at Sullivan. His wife was a wonderful woman in her day. She assisted in the teaching. She was a very large woman, and could talk like a man. One of her hobbies was elocution.

Mr. Bastion was a well-educated man, and as he expounded the Bible in his sermons, he showed the etymology of words by going back to the dead languages. He had in his school as a member of his faculty a young man named William Danes.

Danes would walk around with an apple sprout about a yard and a half long, and every time he passed by me he would give me a whack across my back, without any reason whatever. W. F. Snyder sat behind me and one day he pulled out a little pistol with the lock gone and told Danes he would shoot him. Bill Snyder at least showed that he was on my side, even if he was powerless to do any damage. I have often wondered, and do yet, why Danes struck me. I can only account for it on the theory that my father was rather prominent in the community and Danes was going to show everyone that I was not the teacher's pet.

Lewis Hoke, the son of Fountain P. Hoke, a blacksmith and maker of plows, was given the most severe correction by Mrs. Bastion one day that I ever saw in school. She charged him with telling a lie. She got a basin with water in it and some soap and one of her used tooth brushes, and proceeded to throw him down on the floor, sat on him, and washed out his mouth with soap and water, claiming she had washed that lie out of his mouth.

Mr. Bastion, shortly before he died, while away from home, got into some sort of bunco game and lost a lot of money. This discredited him with the people at home and after that he was ostracized. A local druggist bought a fine Newfoundland dog and named him Bunco.

Wayne Crow and Jack Patterson got into a fuss one day in the school room, and Mrs. Bastion gave each a ruler and made them stand up before the school and fight it out.

In the Bastion school, the boys sat on one side of the room and the girls on the other. Charley Corbin was generally late in the morning, and Mrs. Bastion punished him by making him sit among the girls. That may be the reason he was late so much.

We were taught to sing the multiplication table, and I learned it so thoroughly that I find it useful to me yet. Another thing we were taught to sing was the different states with the state capitals and the rivers or other objects on which they were situated.

The first I remember of W. W. Eden, my cousin, was at the Bastion school. He was then a young man, just sprouting a mustache and chin whiskers. Of course, I must have seen him often, but that is my first impression of him.

The first time I heard sung the song "Coming Through the Rye" was there. It was sung by Melissa Earp, the daughter of one of the local saloon keepers. It made an impression on my child mind that has stayed with me all these years, probably because I thought she was about the nicest little girl in town. I guess I was impressed with the thought of kissing a pretty girl in the rye patch.

When we attended the Bastion school, we carried our noon day meal with us, made up in the fall and early winter of bread, butter, sausage, hard boiled eggs, pickles and some sort of jam or marmalade. Later the winter fried ham took the place of sausage. Every fall Father would slaughter about ten big fat hogs, so we always had plenty of sausage, ham and bacon. He salted them down himself and cured the hams, shoulders and bacon over a slow smokey fire of hickory wood. I have never tasted anything since that equaled his smoked meats.

Mother had a felon on her finger the winter we were on the farm, which gave her a lot of pain. Dr. S. W. Lucas advised her to buy a pipe and tobacco, and to smoke—which she did; and she acquired the tobacco habit, which stayed with her, until a few years thereafter she became an invalid, no doubt at least partly due to her smoking.

We children all had the measles the winter we lived on the farm, and my little brother, Joseph Edgar, about two or three years old, died. They took his body away for burial in a little casket in a wagon, on a cold winter day, surrounded by the family, except those of us suffering with the measles.

There were very few buggies or carriages in the country at that time, and most everyone rode either horse-back or in a wagon bed. Any day they celebrated, or that drew the people

together, they would furnish chairs or other improvised seats, and fill up the wagon bed for the journey. No shock absorbers, either, or smooth pavements to ride over.

Mother had a big iron kettle and a big copper kettle, each of twenty gallon capacity. She made her own soap. We always had a big ash hopper in the back yard, in which we saved all the wood ashes, and we had no other kind, as we used only wood stoves, both for heating and cooking. From these ashes she made her lye, and she would save all her fat scraps of meat, especially from her smoked meat, and she always got a large quantity of soap.

Every fall she would make up twenty gallons of apple butter, and about ten gallons of mince meat—and the mince meat was rich with plenty of good meat. She always had a pantry full of jams, marmalades and jellies. Every meal we had hot biscuit and several different kinds of preserves. We always filled up the cellar with the finest kind of winter apples out of our orchard on the farm.

My father bought me a Newfoundland pup when I was a baby. We called him "Dick." He lived until I was sixteen years old. He was my boon companion until he got too old to navigate very well. Judge Eden, my uncle, had his brother. His boys taught him to be harnessed and pull a load. In the winter when snow was on the ground, he would pull a sled full of boys around the square most all the time. They called him "Dixie"—a strange name to give him in the North, during the war.

Just before we left Sullivan for Decatur, the public square began to come out of its wooden shack buildings, and take on brick business places. At the east end of the north side, Dr. T. Y. Lewis commenced the erection of the two story brick business building that now stands there. I rather think it was completed before we left. The stairway was on the outside, and it was occupied by the City Book Store under the management of John P. Lilly. A lawyer named Merrill had an office upstairs, and I have

a hazy recollection of another lawyer named Tommy McGrath occupying a part. A man named Frederick had a photograph gallery in the rear. He had a son named Dave who took most of the pictures.

IV

Decatur, 1870-1872

About 1869 or 1870 we moved to Decatur, and Father went into the law practice there. He went in partnership with a man named J. Q. A. Odor, and maintained this partnership during all the time he lived in Decatur.

We lived in Decatur at the corner where the Decatur Review building now stands. I attended school part of the time at the 2nd Ward School, and part of the time in a primary department held in the high school building near the Catholic Church. One day I was using an arithmetic that had answers to the problems in the back. The teacher, a woman, boxed my ears and broke the drum of my left ear. It bled all night, and I have been deaf in that ear ever since. Fortunately, my children were never punished corporally at school, to my knowledge, or the teacher would certainly have had to whip me, no matter how big he might be. To this day I can't bear to hear of a teacher whipping someone else's child.

Father kept one horse when we went to Decatur, and bought himself a buggy. It was a young filly, a colt of a favorite old family mare. While he and Mother were driving one day, she ran away with them, threw them out, and broke Father's hip. He lay in bed eleven weeks with his leg and hip bound up in a splint, with directions not to move a muscle. They didn't put him in a plaster cast, as they do now. That splint extended about a foot longer than his leg, and they sawed off the foot board of a massive walnut bed to give it room.

Father liked mutton chops (broiled) for breakfast, and after

he was hurt, every morning at 5 o'clock I was routed out of bed to go to the butcher shop for his chops. Many mornings, cold and blustery with snow on the ground, I went out before daylight and woke up the butcher to get my chops. In those days butcher shops opened up for business that early. I don't know why they didn't buy meat for breakfast the evening before, but I imagine refrigerators had not come into general household use.

When we first went to Decatur, they had a two story brick courthouse, with the traditional belfry on top. It was a dilapidated looking old building, with a stairway outside. It stood in one corner of a public square, where all the street cars and inter-urban cars now come together.

After Father was able to get around on crutches, he attended court and tried cases. The court had abandoned the old court house, and it was being held in the second story of a business building about where the Powers Opera House stood later. It was my business to take him his dinner every day at the court. I carried it to him in a basket, with the coffee in a pot that held about a half gallon.

Father always kept cows, and he took a fine old roan cow with him to Decatur. The Wabash Railroad and Shellabarger's Flour Mill were the limit of Decatur on that side of town. Everything beyond Water Street was farming land. A man named Swearngen had a piece of pasture land out that way, quite a distance beyond the end of town. We kept our cow in that pasture, and it was my work to drive her out to pasture every morning and bring her back at night.

A man named Smallwood lived across the alley and he had a little red cow. He hired me to drive his cow back and forth to the pasture for twenty-five cents per month. That was the first money I ever earned. The first month he paid me in one of the old fashioned paper twenty-five cents. Before I had it long, I went down town and lost it. I retraced my steps and found it in a vacant lot I had crossed.

I remember Father's mother. She lived with her daughter, Nancy Jane Sampson. Her maiden name was [Cann]. She had a brother-in-law, Alexander Walker—Uncle Alec, we called him. He lived somewhere between Sullivan and Shelbyville. Uncle Alec was the father of Wallace Walker, a very prominent citizen of Shelbyville. Grandma Eden died while we lived at Decatur. She must have been very old, as her face was very much wrinkled.

Father had two sisters, wives of farmers living near Bruce, about five miles south of Sullivan—Nancy Jane Sampson and Julina Moore. They both lived to a ripe old age, probably as old as Father, which was 84. His brother, Joseph E. Eden, lived to be 89.

As a child, it was quite a treat for me to visit these two aunts, especially Aunt Julina. In those days families related to each other visited a lot. When we were in Sullivan, hardly a Saturday passed without a visit to our house from the family of one, if not both of these sisters. Occasionally we visited with them, generally on Sunday. We always had chicken for dinner. Aunt Julina could make the best hot biscuits and milk gravy to go with her fried chicken I ever ate. And she always served plenty of it.

Aunt Jane, at the time of which I speak, had no daughters, but she had three sons. One of these sons was remarkably helpful to his mother—Will Sampson, who lives at Sullivan now. Will did all the cooking, dishwashing, clothes washing and cleaning, to my own knowledge. Whatever other household duties he performed I do not know, but doubtless he relieved his mother in many ways. Will couldn't cook as well as Aunt Julina, however, so she bore the brunt of most of our visits. Will used to salt his butter well, saying that when he bought salt cheap and sold butter high, he made a good profit on his salt barrel. But his butter was always good.

Uncle Jim Moore raised sugar cane, and had a cane mill with which he made sorghum molasses, not only from his own cane but for his neighbors on shares. This sorghum making appealed to me, somewhat, I think because he had a little pony that kept

the machinery going by walking around in a circle. I was interested in the pony. Uncle Jim had three or four sons and two daughters. One son, Ed, was about my own age.

A creek ran through their place which seems to have always had water in it. It made a swimming hole about the right depth for us little boys—about knee deep. We used it for that purpose, notwithstanding Aunt Julina's flock of geese used it for the same purpose.

Uncle Jim Moore brought his family to Decatur by wagon, as we had no railroad then, to make us a visit. He brought us a keg of sorghum molasses. The folks all came into the house, but Ed kept yelling at the top of his voice, "Oh, Pap, don't forget the lasses!" You could hear him all over that part of town.

I never stole anything but once, and that was when we lived in Decatur. We had a regular grocer we traded with. The grocer was on the inside of the counter, and I on the outside, and he had a lot of pennies spread out on the counter. Right before his eyes I nipped five of those pennies. I suppose I thought I was a slight of hand performer, but of course he saw what I did, but said nothing. A boy of my age had a sled he had made of merchandise boxes, and he sold it to me for those five pennies. When I got home with my sled, my mother started to quiz me about where I got it. I was unable to hold my own with her, and soon confessed to her what I had done. She gave me five cents and told me to go back to the grocery man and tell him what I had done and give him back the five cents. That grocery man bragged on what a fine boy I was and gave me a lot of candy—I expect more than five cents worth. It has been a fine thing for me that that happened to me just as it did. The lesson was the greatest that I ever learned. I have never wanted to steal anything again.

Father enjoyed a good law practice in Decatur, and it would have been much to his financial advantage had he remained there, and kept out of politics. Incidentally, I have often thought it

would have been much better for me when I grew up, as a good law practice in Decatur would have been a thousand-fold better than at Sullivan. It is obvious that the prospect of going to Congress took him back to Sullivan.

V

Sullivan in the 1870's

About 1872 we moved back to Sullivan, and Father built a rather expensive and very comfortable home. This home he occupied until his death in 1909. Mother was an invalid when we returned to Sullivan. Dyspepsia they called it in those days. They were gone much of the time seeking health for my mother at various springs and health resorts. As a result, I was left at my uncle's hotel, where I did largely as I pleased. Strange to say, I did not please to do anything for which I have been ashamed, although I was a boy of but ten years of age.

When we came back, the public square presented a very respectable appearance. The Opera House, a substantial three story building, had been completed. The Morrell Block, a three story building, had been erected adjoining it on the east, and Keedy's saloon building had been completed, so that the north side was more than half built up of brick.

We had a lot of shows at the Opera House then, and being right on the ground I always worked my way in by passing bills or raising and lowering the curtain, or some other sort of work a boy could do. I sure enjoyed the theater, although the shows were mostly of the Barnstorm variety.

Once in a while a circus would come to town, and I generally worked my way into that too. I have carried a lot of water to the elephants. Circuses in those days did not travel by train, but went overland. On the morning the circus was due, I would hot-

foot it early out in the country on the road it was coming on, sometimes three or four miles, and meet it and follow it in. I don't know why but it had a great fascination for me. I can feel it yet.

When we returned to Sullivan in 1872, the town had spread out considerably. Four subdivisions had been added to the town, viz—Camfield's Addition, Camfield's Railroad Addition, Titus' Addition, and Meeker's Addition. These additions had been settled upon by families, especially the Camfield and Camfield Railroad Additions. We had acquired two railroads as against none when we left. But the county and several townships had gone heavily in debt to induce them to come into the county, by the issuance of bonds.

Reece had built the two-story brick building at the north east corner. George and Lew Brown were occupying a brick store with their bakery and confectionery. I don't remember just when it was built, but probably while we were away.

The two story brick business house at the south end of the east side of the square had been erected, and Joe Snyder carried on a hardware business in it. The Charley Crow building at the southeast corner had been built.

Other buildings that were erected at that time were W. P. Corbin's building, in which he carried on his furniture store and coffin business. He was not an undertaker, but sold coffins; and friends of the family of the deceased came in and "laid out" the dead. As a part of the Corbin building, there was another room adjoining it on the east. The Shepherd building was at the southwest corner of the square; and the west side was built up from the center south to the C. L. Roane store, now the Wyman building.

We had no agitation of the liquor question at that time, and it was considered no disgrace for a man to drink, or even to get drunk. We had a lot of saloons, and I have seen judges and very prominent lawyers carried into the hotel and put to bed in the

day time. It happened occasionally that court would be adjourned until the judge sobered up. No one thought anything of it.

But in a year or two, the "Murphy Movement" was in full swing. Meetings would be held two or three times a week in the court house or in the churches. It was like a great revival meeting. Sometimes a speaker would be brought in; meetings would be held every night. The appeal was to have the people sign the pledge. I remember one outside speaker in particular who held meetings every night at the Christian Church for several weeks—Luther Benson, a reformed drunkard. He could get up as much excitement as Billy Sunday did in his day. Most everybody signed the pledge under Benson's pleas. The W.C.T.U. came into existence then, and all pledge signers joined the order. The result was that saloons were banished from Sullivan and remained banished for about fifteen years.

An old lawyer from Decatur used to come to Sullivan regularly at every term of court, which met twice a year. Brower Burns by name. When I was a little boy stopping at the hotel, I saw him every term of court. He was an old man then, faultlessly dressed—a regular Beau Brummel. He always appeared on the street, and in going about his business, in a black broadcloth suit of clothes, the coat cut "swallow tail," with gold rimmed glasses (which were not then common), a gold headed cane and a plug hat. He was evidently living in the past, so far as clothes were concerned, as I never saw anyone else dressed in that fashion.

About the time we returned to Sullivan, Albert Wyman came to town, apparently broke. He put a cobbler's bench in the front window of a harness shop on the east side of the square owned by a man named Wheeler. He not only repaired boots and shoes, but made them to measure. I think he made the best looking boots and shoes I ever saw. He made several pairs for me. In a very little while, he rented a store room in a frame

building on the west side of the square next to the hotel. Here he continued to repair and make boots and shoes, but he soon put in a small stock. His merchandising soon took up all his time, and he quit the cobbler's bench, but did all his business for a long time without help. At meal time he would lock his door while he went into the hotel nearby and ate his meal.

It was not many years till Albert began loaning money to the farmers on mortgage security. He bought the Charles L. Roane corner and built himself a fine two story brick business building, which he occupied with his business downstairs, and as a place to live upstairs. This he occupied until his death.

His goods were always of high quality. He lived to be very old but was always in good health. He would walk every morning five miles—rain, shine or snow. This doubtless was the cause of his good health. I asked him a few years before his death why he settled in Sullivan where there were few foreigners, instead of in Effingham County where there were lots of Germans, his own nationality; and he told me that they did not spend their money freely. Thus, through this man's energy and good judgment, Sullivan enjoys Wyman Park, the subject of his beneficence in his last will and testament.

W. J. Mize and Henry Smyser were editors of the "Sullivan Progress." The paper was edited from the third floor of the Opera House. Mr. Mize was secretary of the Democratic County Central Committee for many years. He was a good organizer and could make a good ringing democratic speech, which he always did at every democratic convention. Finally, the State Central Committee found him and made him its Secretary. President Cleveland appointed him Internal Revenue Collector at Chicago, which position he held for four years. He died recently in Los Angeles.

Henry Smyser did not take such an active interest in politics, but he was appointed to a civil service position in the Treasury Department at Washington, and he held that position until he

died. Henry was a bachelor in the early seventies and, being a good looking man of good family, was considered a worthwhile catch by the young ladies.

Father formed a partnership for the practice of law with C. C. Clark, a good lawyer and for several years States Attorney. They had offices on the second floor of the Opera House. Mr. Clark was visited one summer by Mrs. Clark's sister, a very fine looking young lady. Henry Smyser became rather attentive to her, so much so that the people began to remark upon it, as people in a small town will. One day Henry threw his quid of chewing tobacco out the window and it fell on the young lady's white plumed hat as she passed along the street below. A romance was busted, and she went right up two flights of stairs and made Henry pay her fifteen dollars for the ruined hat.

The first telephone I ever saw was a rather crude affair installed by Mr. Clark to connect his office with his home. No telephone system had been started then. He ran a wire from his home to the office and ran it through the window jam, and fastened it on to a little round piece of wood with a hole in it like a doughnut. A piece of tin or some sort of metal was fastened to this piece of metal. One could hear a person talking at the other end of the wire. It had no receiver, but you talked through it like you would through a metal tube, and then placed your ear down against the piece of wood and received the answer. I don't remember how one attracted the attention of the party at the other end of the line to whom he wished to talk.

One day, we were all sitting around an office table at the far end of the office from where the telephone was. A thunder shower came up and lightning hit that telephone wire. It flashed clear across the office about as high as a man's head. If any of us had been in the range of that flash of lightning, he wouldn't have known what killed him. After that, Mr. Clark had his wire fixed so it would carry lightning down into the ground.

I remember well when J. M. Cummins and Frank Craig

about this time came to Sullivan and opened up a blacksmith shop. They managed a blacksmith shop for several years until Mr. Craig went into the implement business with Mr. Dick Archer, and Mr. Cummins went into the hardware business.

When I was staying at my uncle's hotel, H. J. Hamlin and Truman E. Ames, young lawyers from Shelbyville, came to Sullivan on business. They had both very recently come out to Illinois from New York. At bedtime they took their candlelight from the office desk and retired to their room. Mr. Hamlin afterwards became a noted and very successful criminal lawyer. I once heard him say that he would rather have one jurymen that would hang the jury than evidence. He was also in later years elected and served one term as Attorney General of the State. Mr. Ames was County Judge of Shelby County and I believe he was elevated to the Circuit Bench.

Andy Baggott was a policeman back in those days. He was the father of Mrs. Emory Dunscomb. He was a little old man with a full shock of gray whiskers. He had a habit of pushing his cane along the board walk around the square as he went around on his beat, making a noise you could hear all over town. Mr. Baggott was a very likable man, and had considerable dry wit. I never heard of his having trouble with law violators. One time in later years when I was a deputy in the County Recorder's office, he came in and stood behind me reading over my shoulder what I was writing. He told me that one time he was reading a letter that another man was writing, and the man wrote "owing to the fact that a damn fool is looking over my shoulder at what I am writing, I will close."

Frank Newbold brought his family out from Rush County, Indiana, while I was staying at the hotel. Father and my uncle came from Rush County, and knew the Newbolds when they lived there. Mr. Newbold became a tenant on 160 acres of land belonging to my uncle near the Eagle Pond. When Uncle built the new brick hotel, he sold that farm to J. B. Titus, and Mr.

Newbold continued as tenant for Mr. Titus many years—in fact, I think until he died.

A bunch of us boys of my age formed what we thought was a secret society. We had signs and pass words. We called ourselves the "Defenders of Liberty and Freedom." We used to go to the woods and scout around looking for something that needed defending. We camped in the woods and did about as "boy scouts" do, but without any head or plan. We concluded we would give a show and charge admission so as to raise the necessary cash to carry on. We rented a hall on the third floor of the store room just east of the W. P. Corbin furniture store, built a stage at one end and equipped it with chairs. We went into rehearsal of our entertainment. It was a little on the order of a vaudeville, although I had never then seen or heard of vaudeville. We circulated printed programs among the inhabitants several days before the time fixed for the show.

Jim Carter, a boy about our age, was "Sullivan's Bad Boy." One afternoon he appeared at the outer portal of our show house and made such a noise and fuss that we concluded we better let him in. He forthwith proceeded, against our will but without protest, to make himself the star performer of the aggregation. In fact, by the night of the show, he was the whole show. He became the chief performer in all the acts. Fortunately for us, he forgot to claim any part of the gate receipts—he being apparently satisfied with the applause for his acting.

When young Carter, a few years later, was about grown, he got into an awful fight with James T. Taylor, a policeman, upon an attempt at arrest. He left town and was never heard of afterwards. Jim Carter had a brother, Owen, who was inoffensive but not very thrifty. One day he was hauling all his household goods through the street. Some one asked him, "Owen, what are you doing?" The reply came back, "Paying rent."

When I was about twelve years old, I attended public school in Sullivan at the new school house, just completed, in the Titus

Addition. For the period it was a very fine three-story brick building with furnace heat and a cupola in front. It had the mansard roof, which was very popular at the time. That must have been about 1872 and 1873. I was in the fifth grade. My teacher was a very old maid, whom I heartily detested—Miss Anderson was her name. She must have been 50 or 60 years old, and when she talked to us, or to the class, she puckered up her mouth as if she had eaten a persimmon before frost came, and closed her eyes and kept them closed during all the time she talked, and let them very slowly come open when she ceased talking. She never mistreated me, except that she kept me always on a front seat where she could watch what I did.

When spring came I wanted to get away from her class, and out of doors. Father had a hired man named William Anderson, some relative of his from Kentucky. He was doing a lot of work on the farm—building rail fence and setting out osage hedge. I offered my father that if he would let me quit school I would go out on the farm and make a hand there under Anderson's direction. He took me up, and Anderson made a boss who insisted on my making a full hand. Mr. Anderson and I built rail fence, where old dilapidated fences had been, around all inside fields. We set out hedge plants on the outside boundaries of the farm, where it bounded on public roads.

I worked full time every day through the month of July. I remember that on the 4th of July, I worked until about 1 o'clock p.m. Anderson made me work a full day every day.

At that school, during the first year after the building was completed, there were a number of wonderful teachers. A man named Rose was Principal. He afterwards was admitted to practice law, and became one of the leading attorneys of Coles County. Charlotte Webster was a wonderful woman for her day. As a teacher she wouldn't be a back number for this year, 1932. She gave the students up-to-date ideas, and was instrumental in giving the Sullivan public school a wide reputation for efficien-

cy. Her husband was the local milk man. My father bought his horse for Mother to drive to a new and expensive phaeton he bought for her. "Old Sam," the horse, remained a part of our family as long as he lived. It took a long time, though, to get him out of the habit of stopping at about every other house.

That year the "Powers sisters" commenced teaching the primary grade, which position they held until a very few years ago, when they retired voluntarily on account of old age. They were twins and neither ever married. They must have served the Sullivan school district for almost 50 years.

In the period of which I am writing, every county seat in our neighborhood had its "county fair." That week brought to me more things with a kick in it than anything else. In the first place, it assured a good show at the Opera House every night. The French Spy by Bella Golden, a good actress according to my notion, was one of my special favorites. I think I saw it several times, each succeeding time with more pleasure.

The different counties in Southern Illinois would get together and fix the week each county should hold its fair. Moultrie County certainly had no influence at that conference, as they always made us hold our fair during the week of the Equinox, which most always assured some rain, if not every day. But that had no dampening effect on me. Every morning as soon as I got my breakfast found me in one of the busses that ran to the grounds. No racing would take place till about noon, but during the morning I would walk my legs off among the exhibits of pumpkins, corn, jellies, jams, quilts, chickens, hogs, cattle, sheep and horses. Everything was so colorful. Fair week brought all sort of crooks, gamblers and all sort of indecent things to town. I never became interested in them, other than as an observer: the roulette wheel with the usual barrel on which was piled up silver dollars, to make it look as though the barrel was running over with money; the smaller games where one could throw rings on a cane; the Flying Dutchman, the predecessor of the

"Merry Go Round." The big talk of the gamblers, the talk of the men who had entered horses in the races, all was new to me, for everything was wide open during fair week.

Father's uncle, Jeremiah Eden, from Kentucky came out to Sullivan and spent the summer at the Eden House in the early seventies. I remember him quite well, but was too small to take any interest in finding out anything about the family. He was a brother to my father's father. He must have been over seventy years old, for as I remember him, he was very old. I asked him one day how he lost his teeth, and his answer was, "Fightn."

VI

Albert J. Beveridge

Albert J. Beveridge was not a native of Sullivan, but he lived there from the time he was about two years old until he finished his University course at DePauw University, at Greencastle, Indiana. He was my contemporary and I knew him and his people ever since I can remember.

One of the first things I remember about the Beveridge family is at a fourth of July celebration in Sullivan when I was a very small child. Mr. Beveridge, Sr. had entered in the parade two fat steers, decorated with blue ribbands, and on the head of each he had placed a meat ax and a meat saw. Obviously he was making some publicity for his butcher shop.

Albert J. Beveridge was wholly a "self made man," but strange to say, I have read several biographical sketches of him during his life time, and in none did I ever see anything stated about his early life in Sullivan. Most men who achieve greatness from a lowly origin are proud of what they have achieved and publish it to the world. Not so Mr. Beveridge.

Thomas H. Beveridge, Albert's father, was most energetic. He was fond of hard work but a poor manager. He never stuck to one thing. He had no property except his home in Sullivan. It was always cluttered up with farm machinery, log wagons and other things which he accumulated. His home was not in an indecent part of the town. His neighbors were all poor but respectable people; but for some reason the locality was known

as "Dog Town." Probably Mr. Beveridge's carelessness in keeping up his place contributed to the appellation.

The old man rented land near town, and Albert J. as a boy assisted in the ploughing, planting, cultivating and harvesting the crops of corn, wheat, oats and hay which he raised. The old man patented a hay press and went among the farmers bailing their hay and straw. Albert J. assisted in all these things.

At that period there was around Sullivan much timber, and saw mills at Sullivan sawed a lot of walnut logs. Mr. Beveridge was a logger, and I have often seen Albert driving walnut logs into town from the timber. I say these things not with the intention of belittling his early life, as it seems to me it makes him a bigger and better man to be able to make of himself a man of importance with such a small beginning.

While Albert was attending high school at Sullivan, his brother-in-law was post master. Albert became an assistant in the post office. For a time he drove an express wagon and delivered express to the people of Sullivan. To illustrate his habit, as a boy, of precise expression of the English language, I will relate a little story. He delivered a package at our house one day and for some reason did not collect the express charges. He came back the next day and rendered a statement of the charge, and said: "Had I not been compelled to make my remittance, I would not have been so urgent in my call."

I have often heard Beveridge the boy say, "I am going to be a lawyer or a sawyer." Also, as a boy he had the ambition to be President of the United States. This ambition I heard him repeat several times. And he might have been had he remained "Regular" in his Republicanism and not gone off in the "Bull Moose" campaign.

Albert was always a great admirer of Stephen A. Douglas, although all his people were Republicans. He liked to be considered as looking like Douglas. I told him one day that he always reminded me of Stephen A. Douglas; and he expressed his

appreciation of what I had told him. A few days after that, he paid me back in kind. He told me I reminded him of Roscoe Conkling. In some ways I did resemble Conkling. I was very tall and very thin, and had a Conkling curl "right in the middle of my forehead." But I lacked the brilliance and the ability to be sarcastic that Conkling had.

After Albert had written his life of Lincoln, I asked a lawyer friend of mine what he thought of it. He replied, "It is a fine life of Douglas."

When Albert graduated from high school at Sullivan, he was valedictorian of the class. He made as fine an address as I ever heard. It was wonderful. A short time after his graduation, he loaned me a number of his books for me to read. Among others was *The Last Days of Pompeii*, by Bulwer-Lytton. In that I discovered a lot of passages underscored, and recognized many of these passages as part of his valedictory address.

Some of his classmates in high school did him a dirty trick. In my opinion it did not reflect on him near as much as it did on the perpetrators. One of their number was Charles J. Swisher, the son of a neighboring blacksmith. They had him weld an iron band about the size of a man's head and presented it to him, to wear and prevent his head from swelling up.

Albert got his energy and some of his talkativeness from his father, but his good sense came from his mother. His father had other children by a former wife, and his mother had other children by a former husband, but Albert was the only issue of the wedlock of both. His mother was a wonderful woman in a very poor setting. When the Murphy movement was on in the seventies, Thomas H. Beveridge developed into one of the principal advocates of prohibition, and became a speaker on that question of some local prominence.

Ed Anderson, a local lumber dealer, became interested in Albert; and it was generally understood that he helped him pay his expenses through college. After he graduated from the local

high school, he entered college at what is now DePauw University at Greencastle, Indiana. He took a fifty dollar gold prize for oratory, I am told, every year of his four years attendance. He was the most finished orator I ever heard. Not even Bryan had anything on him. He became one of the most forceful writers of his time, most of his articles appearing in the Saturday Evening Post. He was a great author, having written the lives of Chief Justice Marshall and Abraham Lincoln. Reliance could always be placed on what he said, for his method of research before he said anything was indefatigable and full.

After his graduation from DePauw, he never came back to Sullivan to live, and very seldom for any reason. Senator McDonald of Indianapolis and Benjamin Harrison became attracted to him and interested in him, and he told me that they assisted him in many ways both politically and in procuring business. He was admitted to practice law, but I never looked on him as much of a lawyer. I never was around him in his practice except that one time he brought suit in Sullivan for some wholesale house in Indianapolis against a merchant at Sullivan. He came out and tried the case, and I never saw a case worse butchered up than he did that one. He lost his case simply by not knowing how to handle it. A few years after he was admitted to practice in Indiana, he sent me one of his briefs in the higher court of that state, just to let me see what he could do, and the brief was very fine indeed.

Soon after his graduation, I noticed in the newspapers that in every political campaign for President, Albert was one of the most prominent and sought-after stump speakers for the Republican Party in Indiana. This gave him a lot of political prominence, and in a few years, when the Republicans got into a deadlock on the election of a U.S. Senator, they turned to him and he was elected and served one term in that body. After he was elected Senator, he visited Sullivan. He called on Father,

who began calling him "Senator." He said, "Governor, don't do that; call me Allie as you always did."

I saw very little of Albert from some time in the 70's until the time Taft ran for President the second time, and Teddy ran as a Bull Moose. I lived at Santa Ana, California, at that time, and while I was not a Progressive, a bunch of Progressives allowed me to go with them to a meeting in Long Beach to be addressed by Mr. Beveridge. When we arrived at the meeting, the committee put the whole bunch of us on the stage in the rear of the speaker. I didn't bother the speaker until he was through, as I knew from experience that a speaker doesn't want to be bothered before. I sat right back of him. I could have touched him with my hand. As soon as he got through with his address, I advanced and held out my hands and asked him if he knew who I was. He immediately lost all of his dignity and became excited, and just as he would have done as a boy, he hit me a jolt on the back and said, "Walt Eden, how are you?" But he was very soon swamped up by the crowd and hurried out of the hall.

Gertrude Meeker, my cousin, was a classmate of Mr. Beveridge in the Sullivan High School. She died a few years ago, an old maid. In her keepsakes was found a big bunch of letters, tied up carefully in ribbands, written by Albert to her from Indiana, when he was a student at DePauw and afterwards while he was still a single man after graduation. No one opened that bunch of letters, and they were burned unread.

There is one further circumstance I should mention about Albert. Father had a farm adjoining Sullivan and often lived on it in the summertime. One summer we had a water melon patch on it near the house. Generally I walked down town and returned the same way about nine or ten o'clock. One night, as I returned home I met a bunch of boys among whom was young Beveridge. I met them not over four or five hundred yards from the water melon patch and stopped and talked to them. They

were returning to town. When I got home, the women folk said a bunch of men had been in the water melon patch, making a lot of noise, and had just left. Next day, I saw Albert painting the Eden House (the hotel) and upbraided him for being in the watermelons, and he became very indignant and denied that they were in it. But the evidence was too convincing for me. I never doubted that they were the guilty parties.

VII

Other Sullivan Personalities

William Humble, commonly known as the "Great Head of Kentucky," was one of Sullivan's peculiar characters. I never heard of his having a family, and I am certain he had none, so that the things he did and did not do affected no one but himself. He was a veteran of the Civil War on the Union Side. I have heard him tell of marching through Washington City at the close of the war just before being mustered out. He was always very popular with all brands of society. He looked like the typical Kentucky Colonel, with his blond moustache and goatee. He always wore a hat which fitted in with his appearance. He was no fool. I knew him ever since I could remember until he died, after I had grown to manhood. I think I never saw him entirely sober, although I saw him probably most every day. I don't know that he was ever a Mason, although as a boy, I have seen and heard him give grips and passwords which seemed to be awfully near correct when I became a Mason.

Another very sinister character was Hiram A. Rawson. He had a wife and several children. He lived with the family, except most of the spring and summer he seemed to develop a wanderlust. I think Mr. Rawson was never sober, but he was always energetic and I think contributed to the support of the family. He was a well digger and a cistern maker at which he was an

expert. For drinks he did odd jobs about the saloons—janitor work and things he could do in the early mornings.

Every spring he went to the woods and dug up sassafras root and sold it to the housewives to make sassafras tea. Every spring Mother would supply herself from Mr. Rawson's stock, and our family had a lot of sassafras tea with every meal, instead of ordinary tea and coffee. It was said to thin the blood after it had become thickened by a hard, cold winter. I became a sort of sassafras tea addict as I rather looked forward to it and liked it.

Court convened regularly in March and September of each year, and Hiram was regularly in demand as a witness before the grand jury, and either left the county or hid out where the officers couldn't find him. One term of court, while court was in session one day, the foot and leg of a man came through the ceiling of the court room, a little in front of the court's bench. Upon investigation, it was learned that it was Hiram, hiding out in the belfry from the grand jury officers. He had missed his footing and unintentionally come through.

Hiram was a sort of bootlegger and became a regular customer of the State's Attorney. The State's Attorney, at every session of court, would have the grand jury return several indictments against Hiram for violations of the Dram Shop Act—such as selling liquor without a license, or selling to minors. In each indictment he would insert twenty counts. On each conviction, the State's Attorney was entitled to receive five dollars. Hiram would plead guilty to each of the twenty counts, and would receive his sentence of a fine on each count. As the law allowed a pauper defendant to schedule out of a fine, Hiram would promptly do so, and no one would be hurt; but the State's Attorney would collect five dollars for each count Hiram would plead guilty to, and hold out for himself several hundred dollars which he had collected on other fines where the defendant had to pay. This was certainly throwing good money after bad as far as the public was concerned, but I never heard any complaint.

No one seemed to know much of Hiram A. Rawson's early history, except that he was an old sailor. In years after, when I came to California, I found on the records of Orange County the record of an early family named Hiram A. Rawson, but I never investigated to see whether the Sullivan Rawson had any connection with the California family.

The oldest son of Mr. Rawson, Frank Rawson, was a good citizen. I think he never drank. He was a sign painter and a musician of some local note. He played cornet in Ed Hall's Brass Band.

Ed Hall's family was one of the best respected of the pioneer families of Sullivan. I can remember him and all of his family since I can remember anything. He had five children about my age, with whom I grew up and who were my classmates in school. I do not remember his avocation when I was a little boy. I know that in later years when I was Mayor of Sullivan, he was a capable City Clerk. I can first remember him as the leader of the Brass Band, which he retained as long as he lived. Sullivan always had a brass band that compared favorably with any other place. Ed Hall could play a solo on a cornet equal to anyone I ever heard, even his own son, Sam B. He always had his periodical sprees, which never made him any less thought of, or interfered with his work. Those things were expected in those days. Quite a number of Sullivan's best business men had that failing.

Peter Cofer was one of the best known early pioneers in Sullivan. Everyone knew him and respected him. He played the bass drum in the band, and at other times in the political drum corps. He was German or Dutch—I think German. One of his sayings which everybody knew was that, "The longer I live, the more I find By Jesus Christ out." He was a very prominent Mason and was Worshipful Master of the lodge more than once. He was an instructor in the ritual of the order. I think I never went to lodge meeting that I did not find him there. He was very punctual. He

raised a good family of children and was a credit to his community.

Wilson M. Stanley was a rather prominent man when I was a boy. He had a son, Chal Stanley, who was a well respected young man. Wilson was the Editor of a weekly Republican newspaper. In an early day, he was appointed by the President to an Indian Agency in the West and left Sullivan and never came back.

Jesse Kester was a jeweler in Sullivan in the early seventies. He was a bachelor and lived at the hotel. He was also a member of the Ed Hall band, and a rather popular man. He married one of the maids at the hotel and raised a family, partly in Sullivan; but he left there and I think he went to Terre Haute. At any rate, he never came back to Sullivan.

In the early seventies, there were two very popular young men engaged in the jewelry business as partners under the firm name of "Woody and Townsend." Individually, they were Frank Woody and W. B. Townsend. At the time of which I write, they were both young bachelors. They were leaders in such social functions as Sullivan boasted, which was principally dances at the hotel. A dancing Master named Moll opened a dancing academy and everyone, young and old, enjoyed a period of good cheer. I took dancing lessons myself, as did other children of my own age.

Mr. Townsend took a notion to be a lawyer. I remember all one summer that he laid out on the lawn in the Court House yard under a large locust tree with his Blackstone before him. He was soon after that admitted to practice law. He married Aggie Vadakin, the druggist's youngest daughter, moved to Shelbyville, and became one of Shelby County's successful business men and a leader of the Shelby County Bar.

Upon the abandonment by Mr. Townsend of the jewelry business, Mr. Woody drifted out of town, and I have never heard of him since.

Murray McDonald and Charles T. Harris opened a grocery

store in an old brick building situated in the center of the west side of the square. They had an old wooden lean-to in the rear, and in that lean-to they went into the poultry business. That is, they bought turkeys, chickens, geese and ducks, and killed and dressed them, and shipped them to market. I was one of their employees, and helped them to kill, dress and ship out their stuff.

They were not in partnership very long, as Mr. McDonald soon took over the whole business, and there laid the foundation of a very profitable money lending business, on personal security almost exclusively. He conducted a grocery business in that old brick business house for a number of years, and until Judge J. E. Eden built the new three-story brick hotel. When the hotel was constructed, Mr. McDonald moved his grocery store into a new brick business room built with the hotel lying immediately south of the drug store of Sam B. Hall. Long before Mr. McDonald's death, his money lending business occupied all his time, and he went out of the grocery business.

Until the early seventies, Sullivan never had a railroad. About that time, two roads had a fight to see which could be built first, as a lot of public bonds were voted to the railroad that would build into Sullivan first. These two roads are what are known now as the Wabash and the Illinois Central. They both built depots in the west part of town on some low, wet ground. Around those depots grew up some places that while they were not disreputable, they were simply not nice—a boarding house or two catering to railroad men.

Arnold (Arnie) Thomason had a cheap little saloon in a little frame shack near the depots. He sold it for \$300, and he told me that when he received that money he thought he had enough to start a bank. He thought he would have money the rest of his life, but he said it was all gone inside a month.

Arnie told me another funny thing one day. Arnie was married and had a family. There was in Sullivan a married woman

with a family. Her reputation was none too good. Arnie told me that he called on her one time at her home. He said that about three years after that, he told his wife about his visit. "Why," he said, "she got as mad as if it was yistiday."

During the time of which I am writing, I lived most of the time at my uncle's hotel, the Eden House. It was shortly before I went away to boarding school. About the year 1880, this old hotel burned down. It was an old frame structure, and it was a total loss. Very soon after it was destroyed, my uncle, J. E. Eden, constructed a fine three-story brick hotel on the site of the old one. It probably was a financial mistake for him to do so, as he was beginning to age, and soon thereafter his wife died. She was always a very important part of the hotel, and it never seemed to do well after her death.

In 1873 Father was serving in Congress and I went to live in Washington City and had full sway to go where I pleased. The Navy Yard and our middies appealed to me more than anything else. I often went to the Smithsonian Institution and the Tropical Garden near by. The Door Keeper of the House of Representatives got to know me, and I went in and out of the Capitol building as I pleased.

I am still impressed with some of the pictures in the Capitol—"Westward the Star of Empire Takes her Way," and the battle scene on Lake Erie in which Commander Decatur (I think it was) took part. These two are still impressed on my mind. They recur to me now as they did when I first looked upon them as a little boy.

I returned to Washington D.C. after graduating from high school and entered the University of Georgetown, where I finished my studies in 1879.

VIII

Sullivan in the 1880's and 1890's

After graduation I returned to Sullivan, and within a year—in 1880—became Deputy Circuit Clerk, working for the Clerk, Mr. Samuel Wright. I worked in that position until the fall of 1886. During that time, I also worked in the abstract business with Mr. Wright. In 1884 I married May Mulvey.

I also became active in Moultrie County politics. I served one term as Treasurer of Moultrie County [elected in 1886], and two terms as Mayor of Sullivan [elected in 1887 and 1889].

While serving in these positions, I took up the study of law in my father's office in Sullivan, and was admitted to the bar of Illinois in 1889; and I was associated with my father in the practice during seven of the next ten years, the exception being three years spent in California. Some of my experiences in Sullivan and in the law practice during that period may be of interest.

My old friend, James T. Dedman, whom I always did admire, and whose memory I now cherish, did a funny thing to me once. My britchen strap broke and I drove up in front of his harness shop to get a new one. He came out and fitted it on my horse. I handed him a silver dollar and he stuck it in his pocket. We talked a little while, I waited for my change, as I felt certain it could not cost that much. As he made no motion to give me my change, I concluded that was the price. It happened that at

that particular time, I was keeping an account of expenditures for a special reason, so I entered it on my book. The next day as I was passing by his place of business he hailed me and asked if I wanted to have him charge that thirty-five cents for his britchen strap. I told him of the circumstance of paying him the dollar. He insisted that I didn't, and that he had charged it to me on his books. I showed him that I had also entered the dollar on my book. Being that he was so insistent about it, and to stop further argument, I paid him the thirty-five cents.

I had another very similar circumstance with George A. Rienmund,* the grocer; I owed him a little bill of thirty-five dollars. I was a little hard up trying to buy Christmas presents. About Christmas I paid the bill to one of his clerks in cash. I had a very distinct recollection about it, because I needed the money for something else. About a week after I paid the bill, I was in his store and he dunned me for the money. He got mad about it when I told him I paid it, and insisted that I must pay it. Rather than have trouble with him, I paid it again.

Charles Whitney of Lovington was a grandson of Dr. Cheever, also of that place. Dr. Cheever was one of the most respected citizens of the county. But Charley was no account, and a "booze fighter." Charley was indicted by the United States Court for selling intoxicating liquor without a license—in other words, "bootlegging," which was in flower then as now. This was long after Dr. Cheever's death. I managed to have Charley sober up and keep him sober long enough to take him to Danville, where the court sat. It was hard to do, though. I left him just outside the courthouse while I went in to confer with the U.S. District Attorney. They had the evidence on Charley from his own version of the matter, so I wanted to know the best that could be done if I had him plead guilty. I asked to have his fine made as light as possible. The District Attorney told me that

**Editor's note:* because of Walt's handwriting, the correct spelling of the grocer's last name is not certain.

Charley had been convicted before for the same offence, a thing Charley had not mentioned, and it was the policy of the court on a second conviction to sentence the offender to the penitentiary, and that was the best he could do. I went out and told Charley. He never said a word, but turned and hastened off almost in a run. He needed my help no more, so he never looked me up any further.

Harry Smyser was a wealthy farmer, residing in Whitley township. He was no politician, but he conceived the idea that the public needed his services in the legislature, and became a candidate in the Democratic primary. He conferred with me in my office about the matter. He didn't even ask if I were for him, but wanted to make me his political manager. He offered to leave with me \$500 then to use in the election, and any more that might become necessary. I was too busy to take the management of his campaign and diplomatically declined.

I understand that in that campaign he had someone—no need to give names—employed to look after his political campaign in one of the outside townships and never got a single vote in the township, not even his campaign manager's.

James T. Elliott was a sewing machine agent, selling sewing machines on commission. He got into a dispute with the company about the settlement of his account. They had him indicted for embezzlement. Bob Peadro was his attorney. Well, Bob was a good lawyer, but a very poor criminal lawyer. Bob's best point in any law suit was to get the lower court to make some technical error and get the decision reversed on appeal. He was very successful on an appeal. The Elliott case went to trial, and all one morning the state's attorney and the sewing machine company's lawyers were running over Bob rough shod. It seemed certain that Elliott would be convicted.

My Aunt Matilda, the wife of J. E. Eden, the hotel keeper, heard at noon what was going on; and while she was not interested in Elliott, her sympathies were aroused on behalf of one of

our citizens battling for his freedom against an outside foe, and a bloated corporation. She sought out my father and said, "John R., if no person comes to Elliott's rescue, those people will land him in the penitentiary," and implored him to go in and defend Elliott without hope of fee, which my father agreed to do. I assisted in the defense. The sewing machine company sent a half dozen of its men to testify in the case—all fine looking fellows, sleek and well groomed. One of them had testified in chief, giving some rather damaging evidence and he was turned over to us for cross examination. Father turned to me and said: "I am going to take a chance on what will be the answer and ask him if he was ever convicted of a felony." The witness was asked that question. He was awfully surprised, and hesitated and looked around very appealingly, and finally admitted that he had been, in Kansas. It took all the wind out of their sails. Elliott was acquitted.

Two farmers—I will not give names—were indicted and charged with a felony. They were not rich, but each had a good farm and was able to pay a good fee. One of them employed me to defend him, the other employed another attorney. I investigated all the facts and the law, and concluded that they both had a good defense, as the same law and facts applied to both. Some cases before that had come under my observation where I was morally certain that the attorneys were bleeding their own clients. Well, this other lawyer proposed to me that we scare our clients and make them believe they had a bad case, and that there was danger of their conviction and sentencing to the penitentiary. I told him he could do whatever he wished with his client, but that I would tell my client just what I thought about his case and be satisfied with a moderate fee.

Milt Bond was a client of mine. He had some domestic trouble, and his wife left him and had either brought or threatened suit for divorce. In all my talks with him, he seemed to think a lot of her, and wanted her to come back and live with him. She

seemed to be determined, though, that she would not, and under the circumstances she was justified. Milt made no objection to giving her a reasonable property settlement. They had children and he was solicitous that they should have proper support. His wife agreed to meet him at the office of her attorney in Sullivan in an attempt to come to some property settlement. He was not inclined to be parsimonious about her support and the support of her children. I saw him about a half hour before he was killed. We had been waiting to get word that she and her brother, named Calt, were ready to meet him. He had gone out and I went to the court room on some business. He always spoke well of Mr. Calt and thought he would be reasonable. He seemed to like him. He even thought he would help about a reconciliation. Calt was a school teacher.

I was sitting in the court room and heard a shot out on the square. I looked out and saw Calt and Milt both down on the sidewalk. Milt was on his hands and knees. Calt raised himself up a little and aimed his gun at Milt, and Milt fell on his face, shot through the head. Milt's father made some remarks against his own son as soon as he heard he was killed, which poisoned the public mind against him.

Calt was indicted for murder. My uncle, John Meeker, was state's attorney, and the county employed Father and me to assist in the prosecution. H. J. Hamlin of Shelbyville defended. I examined most of the witnesses and, as I put on one after another of the witnesses who gave damaging testimony, Mr. Hamlin reached over and whispered to me: "Walt, are you never going to quit?" Calt was cleared.

That was one case in which I longed to make an argument to the jury as I knew Milt so well, but of course the state's attorney of necessity had to talk, and I could not ask Father to give way to me; and it wouldn't do to have three attorneys argue the prosecution. My father was not a prosecutor; he was naturally a defender, especially if the defense was a self defense. I have no

hesitation in saying that under all the circumstances, I could have made a more effective argument than was made. I had a lot of respect for Milt Bond. He had accumulated by his industry and good sense a good farm of 160 acres, clear of debt, and was in good circumstances. If he could have told his side of the story, it would all have appeared different. A defendant in a murder case always has the advantage as his foeman cannot speak.

M. T. Shepherd, a banker at Lovington, had a lot of litigation. He loaned money at usurious rates of interest. After the panic of 1892 and before the depression was over, many of his debtors who otherwise would have paid him were fighting with their backs to the wall. I had a lot of money cases for him. His notes were all confession notes, authorizing the taking of judgment by confession, without service of summons on the defendants, at any time, in any court. But the courts, as a rule, would open up the judgment on a very slight showing that the defendant had a meritorious defense, and the case would have to go to trial on its merits. I avoided jury trials, and whenever I could I would throw the case on the chancery side of the court, as in equity the court would allow him legal interest in any event. In one of his cases before a jury, he was entitled to a judgment for \$159.50, even disallowing the usury. The court instructed them that even though there was evidence of usury, the jury should give him judgment for that amount, and the defendant never denied it; yet the jury found for the defendant and that the plaintiff take nothing.

In several cases I collected the full amount of his claim, where the notes were signed by securities. In such cases I asked for and took judgments against the security alone. He could not plead usury, as usury is a personal defense, allowed only to the one from whom the usury is taken. A security could not even ask to have the judgment opened up to have the same tried. I found where one circuit judge had formerly been on the appellate bench, and had there ruled against a defendant in several cases

where he sought to open up a judgment. As the note gave me the right to take judgment in any court, I took judgment in his home county. I made a good strong showing on affidavits against opening of the judgment, and the judge ruled with me as he did in the cases in the appellate court.

This was all before our present bankruptcy law was enacted. One cold blustery Sunday Mr. Shepherd sent word, by telephone probably, that he had some notes against a man who was making an assignee's deed of all his property for the benefit of creditors. I told him to come down immediately with his notes. He did so, and we worked all that Sunday, until about 2 o'clock Monday morning, and by that time I had all papers prepared to take judgments by confession. The clerk was kind enough to go to his office at that time of the night, and by daylight he had judgments all entered, and executions issued and in the hands of the Sheriff. Promptly at 8 o'clock, Hon. W. G. Cochran, attorney, appeared at the recorder's office with his deed of assignment and filed it, but our judgments were liens ahead of it.

Mr. Shepherd had a number of cases against Anderson Wacaser, which caused considerable bad blood. We were taking testimony one day before George A. Sentel, then master in chancery, in one of those cases, when things got so warm that George adjourned the hearing so that everybody would have a chance to cool off. We were all sitting over a volcano during the taking of that testimony, which was likely to explode at any time. Mr. Wacaser and his two sons, George and Frank, on one side, and M. T. Shepherd and his son, Justin, were always present during the taking of testimony, and any one knowing these opposing forces can imagine what might happen at any moment.

Mr. M. T. Shepherd was always my friend, and he showed it when I left Sullivan and moved to Springfield, Illinois. While this is a little out of order in point of time, yet I will relate the circumstances. When I told him I had concluded to move away,

he did everything in his power to prevent it. He told me I had gone crazy and pleaded with me, for my own good, to stay in Sullivan. I had very little money, and when I left I had no intention of entering the abstract business, making abstracts of title to land. I fully intended to practice my profession exclusively. After I got settled down at Springfield, I found I had nothing to do. I had always been exceedingly busy. So I concluded to make a set of abstract books of Sangamon County, just to give me something to do. I soon ran out of money, and then I turned to my friend, and Mr. Shepherd grub-staked me until I finished my books. He never charged me over eight per cent, although customarily his rate was much higher. He used to tell me, "Walt, if you live I know you will pay me, but if you die I see no way of ever getting my money back," which was very true—especially as to the last half of the statement.

One day after I had been in Springfield several years I received word from him to come immediately to Lovington to draw his will. I went immediately and found him sitting up fully dressed, but with gangrene in one foot. He understood from his position that he had but a day or two to live. All that day we listed all his property, and he told me how he wished to dispose of it. That night I prepared a will to submit to him, all in manuscript, as I did then, and do now, prefer to have my wills prepared with pen and ink. They can't be so easily changed as type-writing. Next day we went over very carefully what I had written, and there were several changes he wanted made. When we had put it in the shape he wished, I recopied it, he subscribed his name to it, and it was properly witnessed; and then he said, "Waltah, I have worked a lifetime to get together this property, and now I am a pauper, I have given it to others." As soon as the will was executed, which was late at night, he seemed to give up and very soon passed peacefully away.

The public never knew him as I did. He was known as a hard and cold blooded businessman. I knew that he had a heart as

kind as his brothers, E. L. and John B. That kind heart was there to those he loved. I believe he loved me—it was there to me, a stranger to his blood. I hold his memory very dear. I lost a real friend when he died.

Let us get back to Sullivan during the nineties. Nimrod Neaves came to town about this time. It is the book readers' great loss that some author of ability had not known him. If one had taken the pains to really know the man and get out of him some of his experiences, I am sure that it would have been an interesting volume. When he blew into town, you would have taken him for a tramp. But he was as sharp as a steel trap. His wife was a very bright woman and had all the marks of refinement.

The first I knew of Neaves he had bought a good farm a few miles west of town and paid all cash. I was in the abstract business then and I became acquainted with him very soon after his arrival. I never became intimately acquainted with him, so as to know many of his characteristics, but he told me once of his system in buying land, and it shows not only good sense but also his foxy disposition. He told me that when he was in the market as a buyer of land, he put on his old clothes and appeared to be not only a man of no means, but of little sense as well. He hiked all around the country until he found the farm he wanted, then approached the owner and asked his price on the farm. He let him know that he had but a small amount of money in the bank—say \$1,000, to buy a \$20,000 farm—but he was expecting enough shortly to pay for it in full. If the owner would sell it to him for his price, he would pay him that \$1,000 then and get him the rest in a short time. The owner believed he could get that \$1,000 and keep his land too, for he thought Neaves would never get the rest of the purchase price within the time specified, or within any time. Neaves was a man of considerable means.

About the time I returned to Sullivan from California [in 1894], L.B. Scroggin came to town and organized the First

National Bank of Sullivan, which is still doing business, and is—as I understand from reading its published statement—a very thriving and solid institution in these times of depression. It seems to be one bank in a small town and in an agricultural community that has been able to weather the storm. Mr. Scroggin's family and mine soon became exceedingly intimate friends. He was the son of a very wealthy banker in Mt. Pulaski, Illinois. The elder Scroggin is long since deceased, but he lived, I am told, to about the century mark. They say that when the old man was in the hospital in his last sickness, one of his sons, who was then a very old man, visited the hospital to see his father. When one of the sisters, it being a Catholic institution, answered his knock at the door, he told her that he had come to see his father who was a patient in the hospital. The sister closed the door, went back in, and reported that there was a crazy man at the door.

In a trade I made with George D. Chaffee of Shelbyville, I acquired 980 acres of long leaf yellow pine land near Deer Park, about 45 miles north of Mobile, Alabama. L. B. Scroggin accompanied me on one of my trips to my land in the Pineywoods. We were there two or three weeks. He was very much interested in the country and made me a proposition that might have been a good thing to accept. His proposition was that if I would move my family with his into that country to live, he would buy four or five townships of the land, stock it with cattle, and divide profits. But I refused that proposition.

Several years after that, he concluded he wanted to get out of the bank, and offered to sell me his interest in it and make me manager, which we both thought might do well, together with my abstract business, and pay him out of the profits. I turned this proposition down for the reason, which I told him, that a man had no business trying to own or manage a bank unless he had sufficient wealth of his own to make good any losses he might make by bad loans. If I took the management of a bank, I

might very innocently make some bad loans, and it would not be fair to the public to try to do such a business and let someone else suffer for my mistakes. In his proposition, he offered to leave at all times not less than \$25,000 on deposit.

When I was County Treasurer, I carried an account with the Drake and Hostettler bank at Lovington. Some three years after I returned from California, Mr. Hostettler claimed that I owed them \$1,000 by reason of a mistake they made in their bookkeeping—that in keeping my treasurer's account, they had made a mistake in adding a column of figures by means whereof they gave my balance in the bank \$1,000 too much. I couldn't believe it possible that a bank could make such a mistake and not find it for three years. I had always understood that all bank books were so kept that a loss would show, even if only a penny, when the day's business was entered. They told me that they never balanced up but once a year, and at the end of the first year they found their loss, but had been another two years finding where the mistake was made.

I was astounded and couldn't believe it. I told Mr. Hostettler that even if that were true, it was a great injustice to me, as I had made all my investments on the assumption that I owed no such sum and that they were to blame. When I balanced up my treasurer's books upon leaving for California, I took no pains to add up my bank book. I simply took the totals, as I had such confidence in the bank's bookkeeping, and finding I had on hand the correct amount within about two dollars to settle with the County, I was satisfied. In fact, I never had my bank book balanced in Steele's bank, but simply enquired the amount of county money in the bank.

After Mr. Hostettler told me what he did, I dug up my old Drake & Hostettler bank book, and, sure enough, they had made the mistake just as he said, and I had received credit with \$1,000 more than I was entitled to. Then it was up to me to find where that \$1,000 went. I had Mr. Steele's bank balance, my treasurer's

bank book, and also my individual bank book; and I found that he had charged me with \$1,000 of my individual checks on my treasurer's book, and that the same checks were charged on my individual bankbook. I showed Steele the charge of the same checks twice and supposed that he would be only too glad to correct the mistake and pay me back the \$1,000 I had paid Drake and Hostettler. But he refused to pay me. So I sued him, and it was the only law suit I ever had.

I employed Jim Craig of Mattoon as my attorney. In the evidence, it appeared that the deposit slips of the bank had been tampered with, as some were newer than the others. I couldn't get a jury that was not under obligation to Steele's bank as debtor, or were not mixed up with him in church matters. He was the head of some sort of County Sunday School organization. I exhausted all the peremptory challenges to prospective jurors before the jury was half selected, and then was at the mercy of the defense. I never heard a more thorough castigation than Steele got in that case by Mr. Craig, especially about the newer looking slips, which anyone could see. When the jury went out, someone in the courthouse offered me \$800 for my claim. But the jury returned a verdict against me. Some friends advised me to appeal the case, but I concluded I could make a thousand while I was trying to get that by appeal.

Of more recent years, I have had the satisfaction of knowing that Steele's crookedness led to his conviction and sentence to the penitentiary for embezzlement of bank funds. But that didn't get back my thousand dollars. However, I feel that it had vindicated my position in my suit against him, which the jury unjustly decided in his favor. My early experience with banks has ever since caused me to deal with them at arm's length and not trust them, which several later experiences have confirmed. I won't trust a banker at all.

Mike Shay was a prominent farmer, reasonably well-to-do. He married a younger woman after he had lived a bachelor until

he had reached middle age. Mike was thrifty and saved his money. He didn't spend it any too freely. I had known him for a long time, and while we were not intimate friends, we each respected the other. It was not long after they were married that he came into the office and told me that his marriage was not satisfactory, and it was apparent that he had made up his mind to separate from her. He said he had told her to see me to act as her lawyer. He didn't employ me as his, and I didn't understand that she was to come to me to confer with her, as Mike's. Perhaps he thought I would deceive her and, while acting as her attorney, I would still be his.

She came in a few days after that and told me she did not wish to leave Mike, but that he insisted on it; that he had employed some other man to try to make love to her so as to get some evidence against her that would enable him to get rid of her without paying her alimony; that he had finally bundled up all of her things and removed her from their home. They were both Catholics and she didn't want a divorce.

So I brought suit for her for separate maintenance in the Coles County Circuit Court in Charleston. Horace Clark of Mattoon was Mike's lawyer. We had a big law suit, and I made such a good showing, especially as to some of Mike's actions, that it was evident that we would be successful. Mr. Clark then made me a proposal that if she would change her bill and pray for a divorce they would allow us to take a decree, with a judgment against Mike for a lump sum which I considered adequate for that period. The case was settled on that basis.

Morris Ansbacker, commonly called "Mose," came to Sullivan in the late seventies with a stock of men's clothing. He opened up a wooden building on the east side of the square, about where Fred Sona had his marble shop the last time I was in Sullivan. Charles T. Harris was his clerk when he first came, but he let Charley out soon, and a little fellow named Ed Truehaft took his place. When Mose moved over on the north side

of the square in a building then known as the Morrell block, a bunch of us boys used to play a little game of poker every night in the rear of the store after it closed at nine o'clock. Five of us played—including, of course, Mr. Truehaft. No one else was ever admitted in the game. Mose had a great big "base burner" stove. We would buy two or three cans of oysters (selects) and put the cans on the back of the stove where they would heat through, but not cook too hot, until about 12 o'clock, and then serve them with crackers and other proper concomitants, sometimes beer. We usually played till about 2 o'clock, which didn't allow me much time to sleep, as I had to open the office in the Courthouse at 8 a.m.

Mose did business in Sullivan a long time. During his residence there, he suffered two or three business failures, but the store always returned to some member of the family, with the creditors holding the sack. One time Sherman Williams, who in his younger days was a brakeman on the railroad and had lost both legs just below the knee, stole an overcoat from Mose's store. He was indicted and convicted of grand larceny, and sentenced to the penitentiary for one year. I happened to be coming out of the courthouse after sentence and heard him say, "Don't that take the cookies. Mose Ansbacker stole a whole store, and nothing done about it, and here I am sent up for one year for taking a \$10 overcoat." Sherman did look like he needed an overcoat, running around town on his two wooden pegs in the winter's cold. His hotel in the summer time was the band stand in the court house yard.

A Singer Sewing Machine agent, a stranger in Moultrie County, I forget his name, had sold a machine to Mac Camfield's wife, or his housekeeper—I think it was his wife—on installments. She had defaulted in her payments for several months, but refused to give up the machine. The agent went in one day and took it away over her protest. The grand jury indicted him for some sort of misdemeanor. I defended him, but

the jury, of course, found him guilty as he was an outsider in a controversy with a local resident; the assessed fine was \$35.

The Singer Company wanted to appeal the case, so I made a motion for appeal. Judge Bookwalter was on the bench, and he entered my motion, but with a look at me with a twinkle in his eye, directed the Sheriff to take the defendant to jail. I asked the judge to stay the sentence pending appeal, but he wouldn't grant it. The amount was too small to go to a higher court to ask for a stay, so the fine had to be paid.

A young man named Watwood, from Lovington, together with Ol Randall, was indicted for burglary. An old recluse found two young men in his shack one night and ran them out with his knife, but succeeded in cutting one of the men in the back. The two boys were suspected, arrested, and placed in jail. Watwood was unable to conceal from the sheriff some sort of ailment in his back which had the appearance of a cut, but which he stoutly maintained was a boil. Their guilt or innocence depended in a large measure on this wound, or boil, which ever it was.

I defended Watwood and Judge W. G. Cochran defended Randall. On the first trial, the jury disagreed. The case was given to the jury on Friday, and they not having agreed on Saturday, Judge Bookwalter adjourned court until Monday to go home for the weekend, with directions for a sealed verdict. On his return Monday, the jury was still deadlocked. He held them until Tuesday, when the court dismissed the jury without a verdict; but I never heard anyone get a worse tongue lashing than Judge Bookwalter gave the jury. He didn't charge them with anything wrong, but with incompetency—saying that it was clear that both defendants were guilty, and it was ridiculous for anyone to hold out for acquittal. To me he said, "Walter, you injected too much reasonable doubt in that case."

Judge Vail presided at the second trial, at which Watwood was convicted but Randall was found not guilty. The indictment was

faulty in not charging a burglary in the nighttime. I held this point for a motion in arrest of judgment after verdict. The point, although technical, was absolutely good; but Judge Vail, as he sometimes did, refused to grant my motion although he knew the motion should be granted.

Watwood and his father fully intended to appeal the case, and the father had just about sufficient funds to pay the expense of taking the case up, and said he would come in and pay me the expense money, but he never came in. Instead, he got on a bender and spent all his money. So the boy spent a year or two in the penitentiary.

A. K. (Kemp) Campbell was elected Mayor of Sullivan in the Nineties. He was a brother-in-law of Charles L. Roane, an old time merchant. Kemp was a man of good judgment in all things, and was a popular man. I do not remember anything particularly outstanding in his term of office. However, his administration of the office was satisfactory.

Some promoters came to Sullivan seeking to sell stock in a corporation which they proposed to incorporate to sell to the farmers the right to put out on their farms a patent hedge, which they claimed would be hog tight. A hog tight hedge would be a great boon to the farmers, as up to that time no hedge could be relied on to turn hogs. The principal purpose these men had in view was to organize the corporation, sell the patent to it for Illinois, and sell stock to Moultrie County citizens to raise the money to buy the patent—and make some money, of course, for the promoters. They were a fine looking bunch of men. They took rooms at the Eden House, laid in a lot of cigars, and commenced their headquarter's work by sending for me. They had a very plausible plan and were good talkers and rather convincing. Their patent hedge consisted in planting a hedge in the usual way. When the new growth became about one year old, it would be bent over about two or three inches from the ground, and the new stock fastened to a wire so that it

would stand at an angle of forty-five degrees. The new sprouts on this new growth would grow straight up and very close together, and after a few years there would be a hedge fence that a hog could not go through.

These men demonstrated to me this idea of how the fence would grow hog tight, a matter of which I, of course, knew very little, although it looked reasonable. They told me that they wanted to organize a corporation, and that they needed a lawyer to prepare the papers for its organization, and act as general attorney and counselor after its organization. They proposed to give me \$500 forthwith as a retainer fee, and a certain amount for counsel per year after they got it organized, and a certain amount for actual time spent per day, both in and out of court; and they also proposed to give me several hundred shares of stock. It looked to me like a very good opportunity for me, and I rather led them to believe I was inclined to accept their proposition.

Then they casually suggested that they would probably wish to send people to me for recommendation of them and their plan; that some state officer in Iowa, and some state officer in Indiana had done that for them, and it would be all right for me to do likewise. "No," I said, "I won't be your attorney, and not only that, but you can't do business in this county. If you attempt to do so, I will denounce you publicly." They took the next train out of town. Several farmers who expected to become selling agents were very much disappointed.

Another similar case was put over during this period. Some outsiders came to Sullivan and wanted to organize a creamery. This looked like a good thing, but of course the promoters of the scheme simply wanted to build and equip a creamery and sell it to our people. I had nothing to do with its organization, but our people became so enthusiastic about it that I was compelled to buy some stock in the corporation; so I bought one share for \$100. At that time our farmers didn't even milk their own cows—the women folk did it. They were raisers of corn,

wheat, oats and cattle. They didn't even have time to raise a little family garden. They were not ready for a creamery, and I knew that they wouldn't bother with selling milk.

The corporation was organized, the creamery constructed, and it ran a little while. It was a well-constructed creamery. We made the best sort of butter and cheese. But it didn't last long, as the farmers wouldn't furnish enough milk to run it at one-fourth of its capacity. If it could have bought enough milk to run at full capacity, it would have been a success from the start. I sold my stock before the enthusiasm died out.

A man whose name I forget had been indicted in Douglas County for murder. The venue of the case was changed to Moultrie County. Mr. John Chadwick was States Attorney of that county at that time. The County employed Father and me to help prosecute the case. W. H. Whittaker of Moultrie County assisted Perry Moore of Douglas County, as I remember in the defense.

The slain man was very drunk at the time he was killed. The case had been tried once in Douglas County and the jury disagreed. The killing took place near midnight. The man killed came into the defendant's saloon, and some argument arose, and the defendant ordered him out. When he went out, the defendant got his rifle or shotgun and followed the drunken man about two blocks and then shot and killed him.

One of our main fights was in the selection of a jury. Almost a week was consumed in that part of the case. The court ordered a special venire for 100 men, and I heard that Aaron Miller (who was not a lawyer but had been employed to help select the jury) had remarked that the defense was willing to accept sixty out of the hundred. I found a flaw in filling the box from which the venire had been drawn, and the hundred men were discharged, and all the names in the box were disqualified. Evidence of attempt at tampering with the jury by Mr. Miller was also brought out in the examination.

I cross-examined the defendant and got him in such a close corner trying to explain why he followed the deceased in the dead hour of the night for two blocks, after he had left his saloon, that he admitted he couldn't explain it and appealed to me to quit. So I thought it was a good place to quit my cross-examination, so I let him go without further questions. I made no argument in the case, that being done by Father and Mr. Chadwick.

The defendant's wife and grown daughter, both good looking and apparently respectable women, were in court during the trial. I have seen lawyers defending murderers weep for its effect on the jury, and have frequently seen them bring tears to the spectators. Billy Whittaker, who was then a young attorney and not as well seasoned as he became in later years, commenced after about fifteen minutes to talk about the sorrow and shame it would bring on the defendant's wife and daughter if he were convicted, and he became so much affected that he could proceed no further and had to stop. He started the sob fest too soon. He should have reserved that for his finish. However, for some reason which I was never able to figure out, the jury set the defendant free.

Dick (John R.) Bean was a Jonathan Creek farmer of considerable local prominence, and had a good farm on which he lived. He started to buy cattle to ship to Chicago. At that time the street traffic in the "downtown" portion of Chicago was very much congested with drays, express wagons and the like, all horse drawn. Policemen had to be stationed at street intersections to assist pedestrians to cross the streets. The first time Dick went to Chicago with stock, I asked him on his return how he found things in the city. He replied, "All right, but they are terribly behind with their hauling."

Owen Hughes and John Hughes were brothers. John was a bachelor and lived with Owen on about 400 acres of fine prairie farming land in Dora Township. At one time they appeared to

be in good circumstances, and as they were good farmers their prospects looked very bright. But before they were relieved from the panic of 1892, they became in very straightened circumstances, but still had good credit in the community in which they lived. To keep up this credit, and to procure money with which to carry on their farming operations, they would attend auction sales held by their farmer neighbors, of which there were many at that time; one would buy property at the sale, and the other would sign his note as security, and then sell the property at any sacrifice and use the money. This, of course, could not last long, and they finally failed completely.

One time Mr. Whittaker had some sort of claim for a client against them, for which he brought suit and levied an attachment on all their personal property, including a lot of live stock and farm machinery. At the time of the attachment, the Hughes boys were engaged in cultivating a big corn crop on their land. It stopped their farming operations entirely. They consulted me about it. I could see a good defense to the attachment so I advised them to let Mr. Whittaker's client keep possession of the property, and for them to hire enough farm machinery and horses to finish their cultivation. Under the law they had a right to give a forthcoming bond, and get back their property, which at that time they were able to do. Mr. Whittaker, of course, expected that they would do so. I beat the case on the attachment and recovered the property, and the plaintiff lost about a thousand dollars, the expense of storing the farm machinery, and feed for the live stock for several months, which was a total loss.

During the period of which I am writing, I had two narrow escapes from death by accident. A friend of mine in Moultrie County, John R. Hendricks, went with me to my farm near Oconee. He was a good farmer and I wanted his judgment as to the best thing for me to do with the farm; and he drove me down to it with a team of his own horses. On our return we

came to a little town where we crossed the Big Four railroad. A train on that road called the "Cannon Ball" didn't stop at that station, but passed through the place at 60 miles or more per hour. A large grain elevator stood near the track and up against the wagon road, so that the track could not be seen on our right as we approached. Just as the horses were at the track and ready to step upon it, going in a fair jog of a trot, the Cannon Ball came out on the wagon road around the corner of the grain elevator. The horses stopped, but had to turn their heads to keep from being hit. If we had reached the track half a second sooner, we would have been on the track and would have been killed. A young man and his wife coming toward us on the sidewalk on the other side of the track told us they expected to see us get hit, and were much surprised at our escape.

Another close call was one day I had been to the post office for our morning mail. I was more interested in one letter I received than the others, and on my way back to my office, I stopped at a tree in the court house yard and was standing with my back to the tree facing the street south of the court house yard, reading my letter. I heard an awful racket out on the street, as if a farm wagon was being driven at high speed, and thought to myself that some farmer must be in an awful hurry. When I finished my letter I turned to the west, and moved my body from the south side of the tree to the west side, starting to finish my trip to my office. Just then I felt the breath of one of the horses at my left ear, and the wagon struck the tree at the place where I had been standing reading the letter. The wagon bed had sideboards on, with the end gate of the side boards not in. One of the wheels flew off and circled around me and the tree. The wagon bed turned wrong side up and fell to the ground. A little dog ran out from under the wagon bed where the end gate ought to have been. A boy who was sitting on the seat on the wagon bed was thrown clear of the whole mess, and no one was hurt—not even the dog. Run-away teams were very common in those days.

I was billed to make a political speech one night at Old Nelson. I. J. Martin, editor of the *Sullivan Progress*, who was my brother-in-law, drove out with me. A misting rain came up before we got to the bridge we had to cross over the Okaw River, and it was so dark you couldn't see your hand before your eyes. When we got half way across the bridge, the horses stopped. We had sense enough not to urge them on. Mr. Martin got out and lit a match, and found the other half of the bridge torn out. The horses were standing with the forefeet at the break in the bridge. No lights had been put up, or other signs of warning to the public of danger.

About two years before Bryan was nominated by the Democrats for President at Chicago in 1896, the silver question was being already agitated some. I had always been a Democrat. Our congressional district was strongly Democratic. Ed Lane of Hillsboro was our representative in Congress. I had then some very fixed opinions on the silver question. I was a delegate to the congressional convention that year, and all the delegates from Moultrie County were "Goldbugs." Ed Lane was the only candidate before the convention.

I was made Chairman of the convention. After the nominations were made, I had the extreme pleasure of listening to Mr. Lane make a speech of over an hour, principally advocating silver money at the ratio of 16 to 1. I voted for him at the election as I felt myself honor bound to do so on account of taking part in his nomination. He was defeated at the polls in November 1894 by a substantial majority.

The Republican who defeated him died before he was sworn in, and next year, 1895—being the year before Bryan was nominated—we had a special election in our district. In that campaign the Democrats brought into the district Bryan, Bland and Champ Clark, all champions of free silver. It was a memorable campaign. In Sullivan we had a club of 60 Democrats, including

myself, who were avowedly supporting the Republican nominee. That was the first time I ever supported a Republican nominee.

Bryan made a speech at Sullivan. He used our office as a place to dictate some letter. In his speech he said that they didn't want the support of Cleveland Democrats. I took him at his word and voted for the Republican, who was elected. I have always been too independent to be a politician. I won't be told what to do. I do what I think is right. I don't mean that I won't cooperate with others for a common cause. But someone higher up can't control my vote as a public officer on any vital question, contrary to the right as I see it. He can convince me, yes. But he can't direct me. Nor do I want to direct others.

The night of the day on which Bryan made his speech in Sullivan I was passing the hotel, and I noticed Mr. Bryan sitting alone in the hotel office. I went in and sat with him until about 11 o'clock, when his train departed. In those days we had no automobiles, nor good roads, nor any interurbans out of Sullivan, and one simply had to wait until his train left town before he could get away. Bryan then had considerable reputation as the "Boy Orator of the Platte." He had been in Congress a few years before, and had made some memorable speeches in that body, principally on the tariff question. We spent an hour or two in very pleasant conversation relating to no particular question, but general subjects. I found him, of course, to be a very interesting conversationalist.

Bryan was nominated for President in 1896. I couldn't follow him in his free coinage ideas, and very reluctantly, but openly, refused to vote for him. This, I realized, was at a great personal sacrifice to me, for I was somewhat imbued with the idea of making politics a life work, with much hope of making it a success. I am sure that had I closed my eyes to my convictions and supported him, a successful political career awaited me.

I became an Elector on the Palmer* & Buckner ticket nominated by a convention of "Gold Bug" Democrats. As the campaign progressed, it became certain that Palmer & Buckner would receive a light vote, as the Democrats opposing Mr. Bryan would give a full vote to Mr. McKinley, instead of only a half vote, by voting the Palmer & Buckner ticket. Bryan made a wonderful campaign, and it seemed that there was some danger of his election, so I too vote directly for Mr. McKinley. In our community Democratic speakers opposing Mr. Bryan, of which I became one, were more effective than Republican speakers.

After Bryan's defeat in 1896, I supposed that the Democratic party would return to normalcy and that I could support it as I had always done. I did not think I was a Republican. But Mr. Bryan remained the power that controlled its action as long as he lived, so I went entirely out of politics, and attended strictly to business. I was for many years a man without a party. I voted for Judge Parker when the Democrats nominated him, and voted for Woodrow Wilson the second and last time he was a candidate. Otherwise, I have voted for the Republican candidates, and have finally concluded I am a Republican and always register as such. However, I still retain my independence, and reserve my right to vote against any party that does not measure up to my ideas of right and wrong, or to do what is best for my country.

When the "Maine" was blown up in Cuban waters in February 1898, this country was aroused to the highest pitch I have ever known. Everybody wanted immediate war with Spain. President McKinley held off from declaring war against a clamorous public. Pacifism was nowhere in evidence. We were, of course, not prepared for war, and the President was doubtless putting our country in a position to make war a success. In any

Editor's note: John M. Palmer had earlier served as Governor of Illinois, having been elected as the Republican candidate who defeated John R. Eden in 1868. *Personal Recollections of John M. Palmer* (Cincinnati, 1901).

event I was willing to assume he knew more about our unpreparedness than anyone else, as well as what was best to do to put us in better position, and the time necessary to do it.

The supporters of the President had a rousing meeting at the courthouse one night to discuss the situation, and to take some action in the matter. I was present. After the meeting had got well under way, Frank Spitler, a democratic attorney, for whom I had always entertained the highest regard, and with whom I had been on the most friendly terms, arose in the back part of the court room and began to speak in opposition to the President's delay. He made some most scurrilous remarks against the President and his policy. The meeting was composed almost entirely of the President's friends. As soon as he began to speak, a stir could be noticed in the congregation of men. And when he began to abuse Mr. McKinley, the audience became very noticeably angered.

I arose and interrupted his remarks. The old "Buzzard Roost," of which I have written, occupied a corner of the room. When I arose some of them were about to interrupt, but Judge Cochran, who was in the party, counseled them, "Let Walt do it!" I never felt any more outraged in my life. I was "all het up." My remarks were very severe against Mr. Spitler, and among other things I charged him with being a "traitor to his country," to indulge in such remarks against the President. At that he started for me, over the court house benches and over the heads of their occupants. I never saw a crowd rally around a man quicker in my life than the crowd rallied about me to protect me against any assault. The meeting almost turned into a riot. I became the center of a bunch of about a hundred men.

Naturally, I expected after the meeting that the next time I met Mr. Spitler he would probably attack me, or that there would be trouble of some sort. I felt pretty sure that he would not attack me with a weapon. At any rate, I did not arm myself. In a small town like Sullivan, we were likely to meet very soon. The next day, after the heat of the battle of words had passed, I

was in the Circuit Clerk's office on business, and Mr. Spitler came in; and as lawyers often do, after abusing each other in a law suit, they will retire from the court room together in good humor, Mr. Spitler spoke to me as usual. So the matter became a closed incident.

In the spring of 1900 I decided to leave Sullivan, and settled on Springfield as my new place of residence. Our March term of court was to be my last. Prior to that time, Father had prepared all of our cases for trial, so I was not as familiar with them as I should be. He was very hard of hearing during our ten years association in the law practice. As a result, it fell on me to bear the brunt of the trials in court. He attended court in all trials in civil cases of importance; but I examined all the witnesses, and when the testimony was all in and before the argument began, we would repair to an anteroom, and I told him the high points in the testimony. He would prepare one or two strong instructions, in jury cases, and could make a wonderful argument. He was a good lawyer, and was always a power before a jury.

Before our last term of court before leaving Sullivan, I prepared all our cases for trial myself, and briefed my cases and prepared instructions to the jury. A few days before the term of court opened, Father said to me, "We have no business in court, have we?" I told him we had as much as ever, about thirty. I told him what I had done, as I wanted to get the habit of depending on myself before I left him. He was pleased that I had done so. We had better success in court that term than usual, as I was familiar with all our cases.

Judge Cochran held court that term. He had always been a very dear friend of mine. I always admired him. I had two cases before him against John Reese. My client had done some work as a hired hand for Mr. Reese, and a disagreement arose in settling their account. In one of my cases, I thought my client had a good case and that I should be successful in it. The other I looked upon as being doubtful. Both cases were tried before a

jury, but separately. My best case was tried first. W. H. Whittaker was Mr. Reese's lawyer.

Judge Cochran was a veteran of the Civil War and so was Mr. Reese. I don't charge the judge with favoritism on that account, but human nature is the same in all of us. I never blamed the judge if he did wish Mr. Reese to win. I rather expected that he would. The jury decided my best case against me.

I went into the trial of the second case with little hope of winning. In cross-examining Mr. Reese, I asked a question to which Mr. Whittaker objected, and the court sustained the objection. There were several facts in the case distinctly different than the fact I sought to bring out by my question which the court ruled out, but subject to the same objection. I wanted to make a record as to each of these several facts, which I had a legal right to do; and I undertook to ask about each. But after the judge sustained the objection to the second question, when I asked the third he said, "Walt, if you ask another question like that, I will fine you for contempt." I felt greatly outraged. I wasn't exactly mad at the judge, but my feelings were hurt, to think that my friend would threaten me like that; and especially as he knew that no lawyer had more respect for a court than I. I declined to ask Mr. Reese any more questions.

Mr. Whittaker put on several more witnesses, but I declined to ask them any question on cross-examination. I had the opening in the argument, but declined to make any, which cut Mr. Whittaker out from arguing the case. The case was submitted to the jury on instructions alone. In about five minutes, the jury returned a verdict in my client's favor for his entire claim. As we went out of the courtroom, Mr. Whittaker said to me, "If the judge had not said what he did to you, I would have won the case," to which I heartily agreed.

IX

Springfield, Illinois, and Tacoma, Washington, 1900-1907

Everything was now set for me to make my move to Springfield. I sold my abstract office at Sullivan. The future looked a little hazy. I had no acquaintances in Springfield. My intention was to seek a law practice, as I had found my abstract work to be some hindrance to the practice of my profession. The public would get to look upon me as a title man, rather than as a lawyer.

I left Sullivan, leaving my family temporarily, until I could arrange a home for them, which was not long. I rented an office in the Odd Fellows Building in Springfield and hung out my shingle.

How strange it all seemed. All day long, one following another, there was nothing to do. No clients came in for consultation. Having always been busy at Sullivan, with work piled up ahead of me on my desk, I grew restive at this inaction. As the court house was to be remodeled, and really built over, the County Recorder's office was moved into the same building as my office, on the same floor just next to my office. It would be there two or three years.

After about two months of such inaction, I could stand it no longer, both from a financial consideration and from boredom.

It was unbearable to sit in my office day after day, with nothing to do but twiddle my thumbs. So I looked over the public records and concluded to make up a set of abstract books.*

My work in the Recorder's office kept me in a position where I could watch the door of my own. It seems that fate was good to me in moving the Recorder's office. I stayed in that place until I finished my books. It was the longest and most tedious job I ever undertook. It seemed that it would never end. I was tempted to give it up long before I finished; but after I got half done, I would not think of quitting. I had to go on and get it through. I ran out of money, and M. T. Shepherd loaned me money several times. When I finished, I owed him about \$2,500, without a scratch of security except my own personal note.

I carried the title business along for about two years when Latham & Southern, my principal competitor, approached me with a proposition to sell a controlling interest in their company. I fell for it. Had I carried on my own business, I would doubtless be in that business in Springfield now. I didn't need their business. I already had them licked.

But I took up their proposition with Mr. Ed Scott, then President of the Franklin Life Insurance Co., and a deal was arranged whereby Mr. Scott took most of their stock, giving me a small part. The two companies were consolidated, I owning a large block of the stock. I had a written agreement that I was to be secretary, and have full management of the company, for ten years at a fixed salary that would have kept the wolf away from my door very effectively.

While I continued in the law practice in Springfield, it was mostly in an advisory way, and in making opinions on titles to real property. I did not often go into court. The Franklin Life Insurance Company made a great many loans on real estate. I

**Editor's note:* Portions of Walt Eden's memoirs relating to the details of his law practice and work in the abstract business in Springfield and Tacoma during the period 1900-1907 are omitted.

made their opinions on the abstracts of title on which they loaned money. The State Insurance Department accepted my opinions without having their own legal department examine into the insurance companies' loans.

When I first started making abstracts in Springfield, I made it a point to get out my work with neatness and dispatch, which was such a novelty to the real estate and loan brokers that I soon enlisted a good clientele. I made it a rule with all short orders that orders left with me early in the morning would be completed before closing time of the day, a practice that I observed to the end of my title career there.

After I moved from Sullivan to Springfield, and saw the corrupt influence of the saloon in large cities, I have been opposed to the liquor traffic, and I am no long hair either. I am very liberal in my views. I am not even a teetotaler. I was amazed at the first election for Mayor in that city. There were three or four candidates, good men too, and not a single one of them would say that he would enforce the Dram Shop Act of Illinois, if elected. Springfield had a big brewery, and it exerted a powerful influence in elections. No candidate dared make such a promise. If he did, he would forfeit any chance of being elected. If elected, he would take an oath to support the constitution of the State and the United States, and perform the duties of the office of Mayor to the best of his ability; yet he dared not promise he would enforce its law.

Zimri A. Enos was one of the earliest pioneers of Springfield. He or his father owned and laid out the original 160 acres of land on which Springfield is situated. He was a director in my abstract company, an officer whom I inherited from Latham & Southern. When I first met him, he shunned me. He had come in and played havoc generally with the title business in Sangamon County. He was very old when I first knew him. After he got better acquainted with me, we became very warm friends. He belonged to the same Masonic Lodge and Commandry as I,

and was a constant attendant at Commandry meetings. He often sat with me in my office and related incidents that took place in Springfield in his early manhood.

Enos knew Lincoln as a young man before either was married, and told many things that happened in which he and Lincoln were participants. I did not have sense enough to draw him out further, or to make notes, or even to charge my memory with what he said. Suffice it to say that Lincoln was very much the same as the other young bloods of that period.

I remember one anecdote he told me. It was long after Lincoln was married. It is common knowledge that Mrs. Lincoln was of an aristocratic family, and often became irritated about common things. Lincoln was returning home from his office one day, and as he neared his home, he met a man that had been doing some work for Mrs. Lincoln about the home. The man was very angry, and started in to abuse Lincoln about something his wife had done or said to him. Lincoln asked him how long he had been about the house, and the man told him, which was but a few hours. Lincoln told him, "Well, I have lived there for several years, and what I have stood that long you ought to be able to stand for a few hours."

In my work in the Circuit Clerk's office and in the probate department of the court, I often expected to find cases in which Lincoln had been the attorney. In all my seven years delving through the court records, I never ran across a case affecting the title to real estate, or in probate, except one wherein he was the attorney. It is obvious that his practice was confined almost entirely to civil and criminal cases, which were mostly jury cases. After he became prominent, many papers signed by him were withdrawn from the files and copies supplied. I found one paper signed by him and was tempted myself to take it out. It was an affidavit of death and heirship filed in the probate of a decedent's estate. The affidavit was subscribed and sworn to by Lincoln personally.

After I had been in Springfield about three years, I finally traded my property in Decatur for seventeen vacant lots in Springfield, near the State Military camp. I built houses on all but about four or five, and sold them for enough profit to realize what I had paid out for the "Terrace Block" at Sullivan, so that the money I had put into that venture over ten years before came back to me.

I had always paid my bills promptly the first of every month. A lady bill collector for most of the merchants told me a number of times that I was the best pay in Springfield—that when she presented me with a statement she never had to wait, but that I always paid her promptly. When I got through building those houses, I found myself more heavily in debt than I could pay. I was very busy in my abstract office, and the builder always picked a time when I could not take time to check up on his statements, and when I got through, I found I had overpaid him about \$3,000. My abstract business fell off about one third. I foresaw what it was all leading to, so I gave the Shepherd Estate a deed of twenty five acres of land I had accumulated near Springfield, and five of my lots which I had left near the state camp grounds, on one of which I had built a residence property, all clear—which covered my debts to it.

I mortgaged my houses, including my own residence property, which had cost me \$12,000. I then borrowed from Lewis Coleman enough money to clear pressing obligations. My income from the abstract office became so much impaired that I saw I was unable to carry on further.

My father, who was then over eighty years old, told me that he had in contemplation the division of all his property, and conveyance to each child, what he aimed to give to each. This, of course, would have tided me over until the depression would pass, and would probably have saved me from insolvency. I advised him not to do it, but for him to keep all his property in his own name as long as he lived.

I sold my interest in the Springfield abstract company at a loss of \$16,000 over what I had refused the year before, and paid all my debts except a few straggling sums. This I was forced to do as I was threatened with attachments. One of my creditors told me one morning that he would give me that day in which to pay my account and no longer. That day, before the close of business, I owned no property—not a scintilla. It had all been sold and delivered to bona fide purchasers for value. That was in May 1907.

In May 1907, with \$150 in my pocket and no source from which to draw more, I started to the Pacific coast, my objective being Tacoma. On my arrival at the coast, I stopped at Seattle long enough to visit the abstract offices seeking employment. There were a number of such offices there, but none took any fancy to me, nor I to them. So I went to Tacoma, arriving there about 4:00 p.m. one Friday afternoon with only \$9 in my pocket. I bought an afternoon paper and scanned its pages for a suitable room. I saw an advertisement of a room overlooking Puget Sound, walking distance from the business section. The price of the room was \$10 per month. It had a wonderful view of the Sound. I wanted to stay there. It was in an old building obviously constructed by some rich man for a family residence. I told the Landlady I might not stay longer than a week, and I might become a permanent roomer, depending on my procuring work. So she accepted \$5 for one week's room rent. I was almost destitute, having but \$4, among strangers, and a long way from home.

Next morning I went job hunting. At one of the abstract offices, it looked rather favorable. The Secretary was away for the weekend. I was told to return Monday. I had a pipe and I laid in a supply of smoking tobacco. Monday morning they put me to work at \$75 per month. I was to receive no pay till Saturday. One of the employees took me to his boarding house, where I could eat and pay at the end of the week.

That was the strangest week of my life. I smiled at my predicament. At the noon hour, I would sit on a bench in a little park facing the Sound, not far from my place of work, and think. A drunken sailor came up one day and sat beside me. He said, "Know what I want?" I said, "What do you want?" He said, "A dollar, seventy-five cents, a half dollar, a quarter, a dime or a nickel." I said, "It's a good thing you said a nickel because that is all I have." I gave it to him, and he made a bee line for the corner saloon. I thought to myself how near I was to being a "moocher" like him, and how little some men's wants are.

I loved Tacoma. It is a most delightful place to spend a summer. The climate is cool and invigorating. I had with me a fine summer suit—one which I always liked to wear at home, but very light both in weight and color. I seemed never to find a day warm enough to wear it. I put it on one Sunday and attracted so much attention that I never wore it again.

I worked there about two months and saw little chance of advancement, so I made up my mind to return to Illinois, and engage in law practice at Sullivan, my native city. Probably I could have done better at Springfield as, notwithstanding my financial failure, I was well and favorably known. When I told my employers at Tacoma of my intention, they told me that they were very favorably impressed by me and my work, but thought that I should work for the small salary I was receiving for six months until I would be familiar with their books, and that after six months they would pay me \$125 per month. At that time \$125 was a fair salary for such work as I was engaged in. But I quit and went back home.

X

Sullivan, 1907-1909

Upon my return to Sullivan in 1907, I lived at the hotel. My children in Springfield were about grown. My mother-in-law and one of the children I had become foster parent to had died before we moved to Springfield, and the others had become self supporting. They were all adults.

When I moved back to Sullivan, the September term of Circuit Court was either in session or was about to convene. The first day of my arrival, I was employed by Wm. Lannon, a wealthy farmer living near Bruce, to try a case he had pending in that court. Mr. Lannon was a very autocratic man, and had always had his own way about everything, and wanted to direct the management of his case, in such a way as to endanger his success in the trial, but would tend to wreak some personal vengeance on some of his enemies. I refused to be a party to any such procedure, and told him in the start that if he wished me to take the management of his case, he would have to let me control it in my own way. He got pretty mad, and cursed around a good bit, but told me to go ahead and run it my way.

When the case came up for trial, I cautioned him expressly not to volunteer any statement I didn't ask him about. I put him on the witness stand and asked my questions, and he made a fine witness. On cross-examination, the attorneys for the defendant sought to have him make statements about the matter he wanted to tell, which was neither proper cross-examination, nor

material, and of which he knew nothing, except his own suspicions from certain circumstances, which fully appeared in the evidence anyway. I objected to the question, which objection the court sustained. Mr. Lannon turned to the court and said: "Judge, I will tell all about it if you say so." The judge told him that was a matter he would have to take up with his lawyer and not with the court. I still adhered to my objection, and he was never permitted to relieve his mind.

We were successful in the case, and given judgment for all for which we asked. My recollection is that the case was appealed and affirmed in the higher court. Mr. Lannon never got over it. I heard of things he said against me. He never had anything to do with me as long as he lived. I guess his vanity was hurt more than anything else because he couldn't have his own way.

In May 1908, while I had my office at Sullivan, I made an arrangement whereby I was enabled to go to Billings, Montana, to make up a set of abstract books. I left home, apparently on a vacation. When I got to Billings, I found someone else had beat me to it, and had started another set, so I gave up the idea, but went to work for him at 50 cents per hour. I worked about 15 hours per day until about July 1, and when I left, I had a lot of cash. I arrived in Chicago on July 4, and I think it was the hottest day I ever saw, so I boarded the 20th Century Limited for the East and vacationed for two weeks at Muskoke Lakes in Eastern Canada, and then returned home.

I was soon very busy. I didn't realize that I was doing much business from the amount of fees coming in. Law fees are generally paid when the litigation is finished, and some of the best business hangs on a long time before it is done. But I did better than I thought. I went into Sullivan penniless, equipped an office, and lived very well for a year and a half. Nevertheless, I became discouraged, and when W. W. Eden, who was manager of the Fresno abstract office wrote me a letter in the spring of 1909 urging me to come out and work for him at a fair salary,

with the promise that soon he would retire and I could take the management of that office, I concluded to accept his proposition, and did so.

I closed up all my unfinished business and collected a lot of fees due me, and before I left I discovered that I had been doing a very satisfactory law business. I was sorry I had accepted the position at Fresno. However, as I had let the public at Sullivan know I would leave again, I could not bear to change my mind. In my opinion, it would have been better for me to have stayed at Sullivan.

XI

Southern California

I moved to Fresno in March 1909. In June 1909, my father, John R. Eden, died at his home in Sullivan in his 84th year. I returned only long enough to attend his funeral. I have ever since been sorry that I did not stay and examine the contents of an old roll top desk that he had in his office. It had been in his office since 1872, when he returned from Decatur. It had not been used by him for years, but was full of old letters, many of which would doubtless be of great value on account of their age and the men who wrote them. He carried on a regular correspondence with William R. Morrison, a congressman from Illinois who was a very prominent Democrat, and frequently mentioned as a candidate for President. Father and Morrison were very warm personal friends.

I stayed in Fresno until about the first of September 1909, and as I saw no prospect of being advanced very soon, and as W. W. Eden had a man in his employ who really outranked me, and for whom I entertained a strong dislike, I quit. I went to Vancouver, Washington, a small country seat town directly across the Columbia river from Portland. I opened up an office there and stayed most of the winter. One object I had in view was to make a set of abstract books; but the situation did not look attractive to me.

I then went to Tacoma, and hung out my shingle, but I soon tired of keeping a law office without clients, so in June 1910 I

went to Los Angeles, not with the idea of going into the general practice, but expecting to work for a title company, with the hope eventually of getting into the legal department.

In Los Angeles I commenced work for the Title Guarantee & Trust Co. as an assistant escrow officer, at the munificent salary of \$75 per month. O. J. Waggoner, formerly of Sullivan, the son of J. H. Waggoner, formerly Clerk of the Circuit Court and Recorder of Moultrie County, Illinois, had a title abstract office at Los Angeles. He was having a hard struggle for business, with three strong title companies as competitors. He offered me \$100 per month to work for him. I told Mr. Brand, Secretary and Manager of the Title Guarantee & Trust Co., that I would quit. He wanted to know why. I told him I couldn't live on \$75 per month. He said he didn't see how I could, that he wanted me to stay with him, and for me to wait a few days and he would see what he could do. He then offered me \$80 per month. I told him I could get \$100 from Mr. Waggoner. Then he got mad and told me I better not change as Waggoner couldn't hold out, and when he quit business I would be out of a job and he wouldn't take me back. I told him I thought I would need a guardian if I worked for him for \$80, when I had a chance for \$100.

After I had worked for Mr. Waggoner for several months, the title officer in the Los Angeles Title & Trust Co. died. I applied to that company for his vacant position. Mr. Selby, the Secretary and Manager, seemed interested. I asked for \$150 per month. He assured me that if I was the kind of man I represented myself to be, he would gladly pay me that much—that after I worked for him a little while, he would find out. He suggested that I start in as a searcher, which was about the lowest rung in the title ladder, and leave him references. So I started in with him at \$16 per week. I gave him as references Judge William M. Farmer, of the Supreme Court of Illinois, E. A. Snively, Clerk of the Supreme Court, Judge W. G. Cochran, L. B. Scroggin, Judge Creighton

of Springfield, and Ed Scott, of the Franklin Life, and one of the bankers at Springfield.

I worked for Mr. Selby as a searcher for a month or two, when he promoted me to the examing department, but I saw no change in the pay check. Mr. Selby told me he never saw more complimentary letters than those he received from the men whose names I gave him as references. In another month or two he made me his title officer, and my name went on his front window, in gold letters, as such. I stayed with him about a year, still expecting him to say something about my \$150 salary, but not a word. When I finally quit, he was paying me \$110 per month. I went to him and said, "I guess you don't need me around here." Why," he said. "Haven't I given you the best office in the place? Haven't I put your name in gold letters on the front window?" I told him that didn't do me any good, and I reminded him of his promise to pay me \$150 if I suited him. He denied he had told me that. He asked me, "Have you any money in the bank?" I answered no, and that I never would have if I kept on working for him. I then gave him notice that I would quit thirty days after that date.

I wrote twenty-five letters to abstract companies in the State of California, and received favorable replies from Santa Ana in Orange County, and from San Diego, asking me to call and took it over. I went to Santa Ana one evening and met the officers of the Orange County Title Company, and one day to San Diego. I told them I wanted \$150 per month.

The San Diego office offered to start me at \$125. A few days later, Mr. Parker, President of the Orange County Title Company in Santa Ana, came to Los Angeles, and after a short conference, told me I could go to work for him. I accepted, and one of my friends in Los Angeles, a co-worker at the Title Guarantee & Trust Company, signed a note with me at the bank for \$50 to pay a month's rent in Santa Ana, and for moving my household goods.

My relations with the Orange County Title Company were most pleasant. Mr. Parker, I soon found, was a most amiable man with a big, good heart. He expected his employees to know how and to do their work properly. If they did, they were sure of their jobs; but if not, they were not called on the carpet except to let them out. I was given charge of the title department.

I had not been with the Santa Ana company very long when the Legislature provided for a second department of the Superior Court. Hiram Johnson was Governor and had the appointment of the new judge. The Progressives got into an awful jam as to who should be named. Both sides were intimate friends of the Governor, and he refused to appoint either of the two principal contenders. The candidate who had the strongest backing came to me and asked me, "How would you like to be Superior Judge? I think I can have you appointed. You haven't been mixed up in this fight." I told him that I would be delighted to have the appointment, but I didn't want to take it under any deception, and that I hadn't supported Gov. Johnson in his "Bull Moose" candidacy for Vice President with Mr. Roosevelt. Had I been a real politician and said nothing about that, I would probably have been holding down some judicial position ever since.

About two months after I went to Santa Ana, Mr. Selby, of the abstract office in Los Angeles for whom I had worked as title officer, called me on the telephone one Saturday morning and asked me to come to Los Angeles that afternoon, that he wanted to talk to me. He wanted me to return to work for him and would put me in his legal department. I had long wished to be in the legal department of a title company, and his proposition was very tempting. I told him that my present position pleased me very much, that I liked Mr. Parker, and would not think of making a change unless my salary would be greater than I was then receiving—I must have \$175 per month. He tried to get me for less, but when he discovered that he couldn't, he finally offered me that much, but said that I would have to

come back in two weeks. I told him I wouldn't quit where I was on such short notice if it would discommode my present employer. I asked Mr. Parker if he could get along on two weeks notice. He said he could, but if it was a question of salary, he could pay me as much as anybody. He didn't ask how much the salary would be. I told him that if he felt that way about it, I would stay with him. At the end of the month, he said to me, "I don't know how much to make your check for."

Santa Ana is the only place in which I ever lived, except Sullivan, that I felt perfectly at home. Within six months after making that my home, I was perfectly satisfied. The people I met seemed like home folks. The men around the court house where my work often took me were very congenial. They called me by my given name. Several of them became my very warm friends—especially W. B. (Boy) Williams, the County Clerk.

In the course of a year or more after I went to work for the Orange County Title Company, provision was made for a second deputy in the District Attorney's office at a salary of \$100 per month. I applied for the position and was appointed. I was in the District Attorney's office four years.

My regular duties as Deputy District Attorney did not cover the criminal department. Orange County was a very wealthy county, with its citrus, walnut and oil industries; and there was a lot of civil business. My work was most all in that branch of the work. The other deputy took charge of most all prosecution of criminals. I did some criminal business and assisted in the prosecution of several important criminal cases. In practically all raids made by the Sheriff, the District Attorney and both deputies took an active part. I participated in all, and we always bagged some game. Of course I was heavily armed, but fortunately I never had to use any weapons. I never had any experience in handling a gun, and often wondered just how I would perform in case the necessity arose. I wondered whether I would shoot too soon or not soon enough. I knew I wouldn't shoot straight!

I lived in Orange County about ten years, probably a little longer. I have now (1932) been away from there nearly ten years. During all my residence there, I never heard of any corruption in its public officers; and since I left there, I have never heard of but one case. A deputy Sheriff fell for some bootlegger outfit. I am certain that the county had never been cursed with corruption. When I first went there, the county bonded itself for \$350,000 to put in a system of hard roads all over the county. Plans and specifications and an estimation of the cost of the system were made in advance of voting the bonds. After the system was all finished, the county had thirty or forty thousand dollars of the bond money left. That alone shows the character of the men having charge of public works.

Judge Cox was a Justice of the Peace during all the time I was in the District Attorney's office, and I had business in his court several times. He was a veteran of the civil war, and was a barber before he became a Justice. He gained almost a national reputation as a terror to speeders. In California a Justice of the Peace has jurisdiction to sentence offenders to jail for misdemeanors. While his name was not mentioned, yet he was referred to in several stories appearing in the *Saturday Evening Post*. He had a wonderful knack—apart from his mania for punishing speeders—of deciding about what was right in criminal cases in his court. I have had cases before him where I hardly knew just what punishment should be given, and he would untie the Gordian Knot with a decision that appeared to me to be very appropriate. No one—no matter how high up he might be—could influence him. Speeders often sought the influence of prominent men in their behalf, but he invariably turned a deaf ear to such entreaty. In one case the Governor of the State wrote to him, interceding for some one found guilty. It had no effect on him whatever.

I was chosen as a member of the Chamber of Commerce of Santa Ana, and served one term—think it was two years. This

put me in a position where I was called upon to do a lot of free legal work. In matters of public interest which arose requiring the services of a lawyer, I was pressed into service without pay. I appeared before the Railroad Commission several times, both during my incumbency as a member of the Chamber, and even after my term expired.

After serving four years as Deputy District Attorney, I went into the general practice and enjoyed a good practice from the start. I prepared the papers for and conducted the proceedings in the organization of Laguna Beach Sanitary District, and became—and continued for a number of years—its attorney. I was the regularly appointed attorney for the County Registrar of Land Titles, under the Land Title Act, commonly known as the Torrens Law, and remained its advisor as long as I remained in Santa Ana. I supervised and helped in organizing the system of keeping records and indices.

My observation has been that the general public is swayed too much against their own interests by propaganda bought and paid for by capital. The public mind in most all things now is made up for them by propaganda printed in the newspapers and magazines, most of which is controlled by big business. In the old days, when the stump speakers flourished and the public went out to its little red school house and heard both sides of a public question discussed, the voters learned both sides and generally voted right. Now, they hear but one side, and flock to the polls and vote for some proposition without sufficient information on the subject. They vote for all sort of schemes, and then blame their Legislature for levying taxes to pay for what they have voted on themselves.

In the spring of 1918, an Assemblyman was to be elected in November to represent Orange County in the Legislature, the term to begin on the first of January 1919. The Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States was coming up for ratification. Orange County was overwhelmingly

"dry," but the drys wanted a man in the Legislature that was dry at heart. They knew that anyone sent from Orange County would vote dry, even if he were wet at heart. They called together the leaders of both Republicans and Democrats in conference with them, and let them know what they wanted.

The conference was willing to grant their request, and after consideration they all agreed on me. I was called in and asked if I would consent to become a candidate. They told me I need do nothing, nor spend any money, but that they would see that I was elected. I consented and was chosen at the primary by both parties, which of course amounted to election. That was the worst day's work I ever did when I gave that consent, as will be seen from what follows later. I had been out of politics for over twenty years, and it were better for me had I never entered into the game. My political life was short but full of trouble.

There were one hundred and twenty members of the Legislature, including Senators and Assemblymen. There were twenty five or thirty ballots cast on various features of liquor legislation in that session. I was one of eighteen members of the Legislature who voted 100% dry—that is, that voted every ballot, and voted right every time.

Walt Eden's Memoirs break off here. The text of the document shows that it was written in 1932, the year of his death. Probably his final illness prevented completion of his manuscript.

The Bench and Bar of Los Angeles County for 1928-1929 contains a brief biography of Walt Eden, which summarizes his career subsequent to the point where his Memoirs stop. The entry for Walt Eden states as follows:

Mr. Eden practiced in Illinois for twenty years, when he came to California and practiced at Santa Ana for ten years, during which

latter time he was Assemblyman for one term, then Senator for one term. Later he came to Los Angeles and associated as counsel with California Title Insurance Company, which position he still holds. In 1910 Mr. Eden married Margaret Fitzgerald, of San Diego. He maintains offices at 626 South Spring Street, Los Angeles.

The *History of Orange County California, With Biographical Sketches*, by Samuel Armor (Los Angeles, 1921), provides slightly more information about his first legislative term (p. 988):

As a Republican in politics, he was elected in November 1919 to the State Assembly and one of his important positions was that of chairman of the Committee on Rules. Among the excellent measures proposed by him was the law giving tide lands to Newport Beach, and those outside the corporation to Orange County. He also helped ratify the Prohibition amendment and the Woman's Suffrage amendment. As a resident of Orange County he is always to be found in the van when movements for the public good are in question, and to favor the projects that mean the greatest good for the greatest number of citizens.

The *History of Los Angeles, City and County*, by William A. Spalding (Los Angeles 1931), completes the story (Vol. III, p. 234):

[In Santa Ana] he became active not only in his profession, but also in local public affairs, being elected a member of the lower house of the State Legislature in 1919, and in 1921 was elected to the State Senate, in which body he served until 1923, when he returned to Los Angeles to become chief counsel for the California Title Insurance Company. He had represented Orange, Riverside and Imperial counties in the Senate, and made a splendid record of accomplishment while a member of that body. He is still chief counsel for the California Title Insurance Company, for which responsible position he is well qualified.

Walter Eden died in his home in Los Angeles, Saturday, November 5, 1932.

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