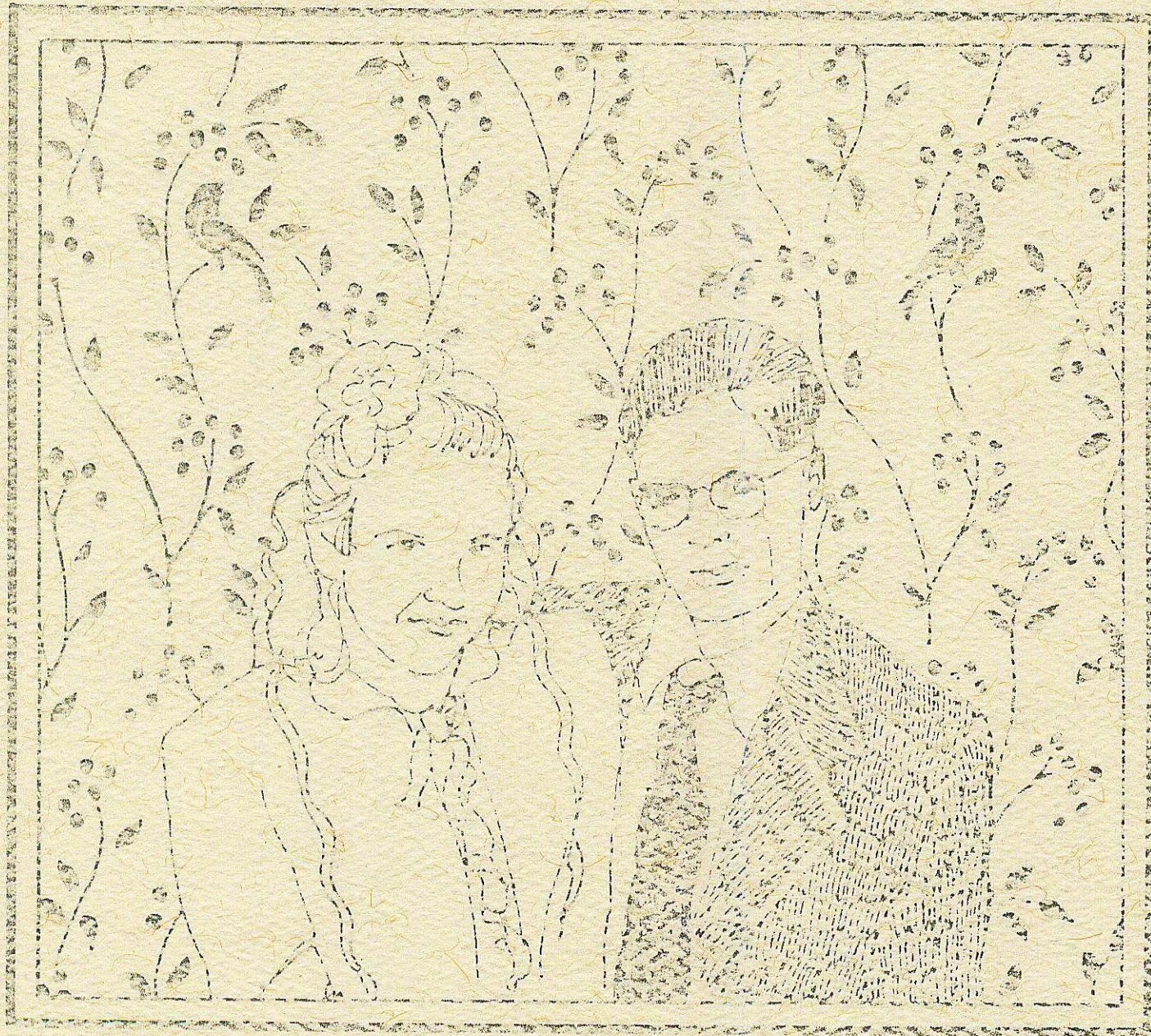


Erville & Velma Dickey



ELBERT DICKEY

ORVILLE CURTIS DICKY

and

VELMA ARLENE (MAYBERRY) DICKY

Elbert Curtis Dickey

September, 1986

ORVILLE CURTIS DICKEY
and
VELMA ARLENE (MAYBERRY) DICKEY

FOREWORD

This book was written primarily for Mom. It is also written for her grandchildren since none of them had the opportunity to really know their grandfather. Even though I wrote most of the text, Steven, Allen, Norman, Virginia, and Mom helped provide details of some of the daily activities. Allen drew the sketchings of the houses and Peggy L. typed most of the text.

Elbert

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ORVILLE CURTIS
and
VELMA ARLENE (MAYBERRY)
DICKEY

Orville Curtis Dickey

Orville Curtis Dickey was born 7 December 1925 to Audrey Vere and Pearl (Collins) Dickey. At his birth, Audrey and Pearl rented and lived in the house that Audrey's father, Joshua Curtis Dickey, had built in 1905. The house is about four miles north and one and one-half miles west of Sims in Berry Township, Wayne County, Illinois and is now owned by Verl and Dorothy Dickey.

When Orville was about two, Audrey and Pearl moved in with Audrey's mother, Laura, who wasn't very well. This house was about one-half mile east and one mile south of where they were living and had belonged to Vernon Dickey. Joshua Curtis and Laura bought the house and 80 acres when Vernon moved to Oregon. The day after Audrey moved, 16 October 1927, Harold was born. In the fall of 1928 Audrey and his family bought the log house and 40 acres which was across the road and to the south of Laura Dickey's house. It was here that Opal (18 September 1929), Verl (27 August 1931) and Otha Lee (31 March 1934) were born. About two weeks after Otha Lee was born, Audrey, Pearl and their five children moved back to the house that Joshua Curtis had built. Audrey had purchased the 80 acres and house from his mother, Laura. This move resulted in a school change for Orville, from Mabry to Berry.

Orville had rheumatic fever when he was six years old and did not start school at Mabry until the following year. They didn't think he would walk again, but Doris Jean Lowe, a neighbor girl, stopped everyday as she went home from school. With her encouragement, Orville learned to walk again. However, the rheumatic fever contributed to his health problems in subsequent years.

Another sister, Barbara, was born 24 October 1935. On 7 September 1940 Carlyn was born and Irene was born 4 April 1944. This totaled eight children who were:

Orville Curtis
William Harold
Opal Louise
Audrey Verl

Otha Lee
Barbara Faye
Carlyn Allen
Helen Irene

There was a lot of work to be done and most of the field work was done with horses. Audrey also had a threshing machine and did custom work which kept him and his boys busy. An Aultman-Taylor 30-60 tractor powered the thresher in the mid 1940's. One of the crops threshed was red top and for a time Wayne County was a major producer of that crop. Audrey also bought one of the early Ferguson tractors which had a three-point hitch, a new idea at that time. When plowing one spring, Audrey forgot to raise the plow at the end of the field. Since the plow wasn't raised, the tractor didn't turn and there was a pond straight ahead. He became somewhat excited and being used to horses, began yelling "Whoa!". When he remembered to use the clutch, he was in the pond and he couldn't put the clutch in for fear of getting stuck. Besides if he put the clutch in, the plow wouldn't raise because the three-point hitch only worked with the clutch out. So he kept the clutch out, raised the plow, drove through the pond and a fence, turned around in the road, drove back through the fence and pond and resumed plowing. Nobody saw the incident but Harold saw the tracks and Audrey had to tell what happened. Harold also usually got to drive the tractor because Orville, being older, could handle the teams better.

In the fall of 1941 Orville began high school at Wayne City, Illinois. Between his sophomore and junior years, summer 1943, his grandmother, Laura Dickey, was having health problems. For a time she stayed with Audrey and his family and Orville helped take care of her. Laura's mind was very confused at times and she was eventually taken to the state hospital at Anna, Illinois where she died 8 January 1944. At that time, both pall bearers and flower girls were selected by the bereaved family. Velma Mayberry was chosen as one of the flower girls.

Orville competed some in track his junior year and won the 440 and 880 yard dashes (Velma still has his ribbons). In the spring of 1944, before completing his junior year, Orville quit high school and began farming with his father, Audrey. After he started farming, Orville and Audrey bought one of the first Allis Chalmers, pull-type combines in Wayne County. They custom harvested crops for several people that year.

Audrey, Orville and Harold also had one of the first Oliver two-row mounted corn pickers in the area. According to Glen Weaver, a neighbor and future son-in-law of Audrey's, it was a treat to watch Orville, Harold and Audrey harvest corn. At that time many people shucked corn by hand and a few had a one-row pull-type picker. But a mounted two-row picker was new and fast. In addition the Dickeys had four or five wagons and a hoist to dump the wagons. Again most farmers only had one or two wagons and their corn was unloaded by hand.

That June, Orville had appendicitis and was in the Olney, Illinois hospital for 10 days. The room charges were only \$4.50 per day and the total hospital bill was less than \$50.

In the fall of 1945, Orville and a friend, Stanley Matthews, went to work in an ammunition plant in Joliet. But they didn't stay long. They got homesick and felt out of place because the women they worked with at the plant cussed just like the men.

Orville managed to purchase a 1932 Ford coupe and he began dating Velma Arlene Mayberry more seriously. His first car broke a gear in the rear end every time the car was in a hard pull. One time it got stuck, the rear end broke and a man with a team charged \$10 to pull him out. It was all the money Orville had. In early 1946, Orville took his physical for the service. Thinking he would have to join the army, permission was given for Orville and Velma to marry. They were married 1 March 1946 in Ray Johnson's home in Mt. Vernon. Velma's sister, Nona and Orville's sister, Opal were witnesses. About the time of their marriage, Orville learned that he had failed the physical because of a rheumatic heart.

Velma Arlene Mayberry

Velma Arlene Mayberry was born on Sunday 14 October 1928 to Harrolle Halsey and Lucile (Trotter) Mayberry. Harrolle and Lucile lived about six and one-half miles south of Wayne City, Wayne County, Illinois. Weighing about 10 pounds at birth, Velma did not have any appreciable hair until she was about a year old. On 26 July 1931 Velma's only sister, Nona was born.

Velma began grade school before she was six years old. When she was about 10 years old, Harrolle preached his first service and was ordained 18 September 1938. Velma graduated from Crossroads Grade School in 1942. Between grade school and high school, things began to change for Velma. Harrolle was preaching every Sunday and Lucile was left with the chores. Finally Lucile persuaded Harrolle to have a sale, which was on 18 August 1942. The sale cleared about \$2,000 of which \$130 went to both Velma and Nona for the cow and calf each had sold.

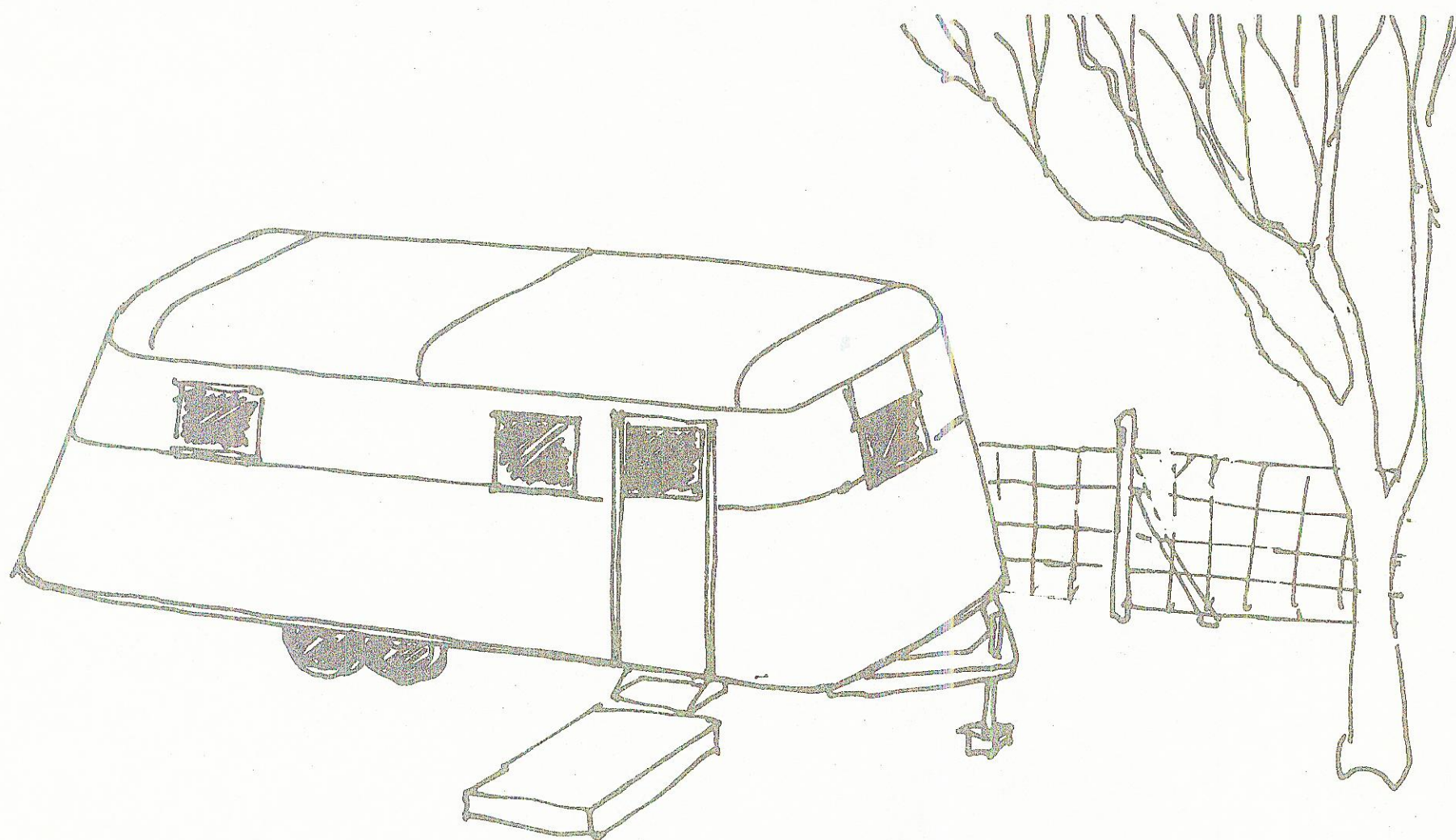
During Velma's freshman year at Wayne City High School, Harrolle, taught the four upper grades at Keenes Grade School. Riding together, they left early and came home late. Since high school was out at 3:15 Velma waited in restaurants until Harrolle could pick her up on the way home from Keenes. In high school Velma played the coronet and made good grades. When caught whispering once to a girlfriend, the study hall teacher had Velma move to the seat behind Orville Dickey. Many students laughed but the romance had already begun.

In March 1943, Harrolle bought a place in Wayne City and on 10 August 1943, the Mayberrys moved to town. In the winter of 1943 Harrolle was hospitalized with pneumonia which contributed to a sparse Christmas. Over the Christmas holidays, Orville Dickey was one of their visitors.

In March 1944, Velma started working at Payne's Store on Saturdays and continued to work three days a week during the summer. Velma's junior year required more studying and nothing unusual happened. Velma stayed home the summer of 1945 and helped her mother. Her senior year proved to be the hardest and Velma also worked 45 minutes a day grading typing papers. Before graduating, Velma married Orville Dickey on 1 March 1946.

SIMS, 1946 to 1955

Orville and Velma lived in a 7 foot by 20 foot house trailer from 1 March 1946 until early November. The house trailer was parked near a plum tree along the lease road about 100 yards southwest of Audrey and Pearl's house. They carried water from Audrey's and when it was extremely hot, Orville and Velma ate with Audrey and his family. One week after Orville and Velma were married, Audrey had a sale and sold some of his equipment. George Wilkerson's father bought the threshing machine. George was Velma's uncle.

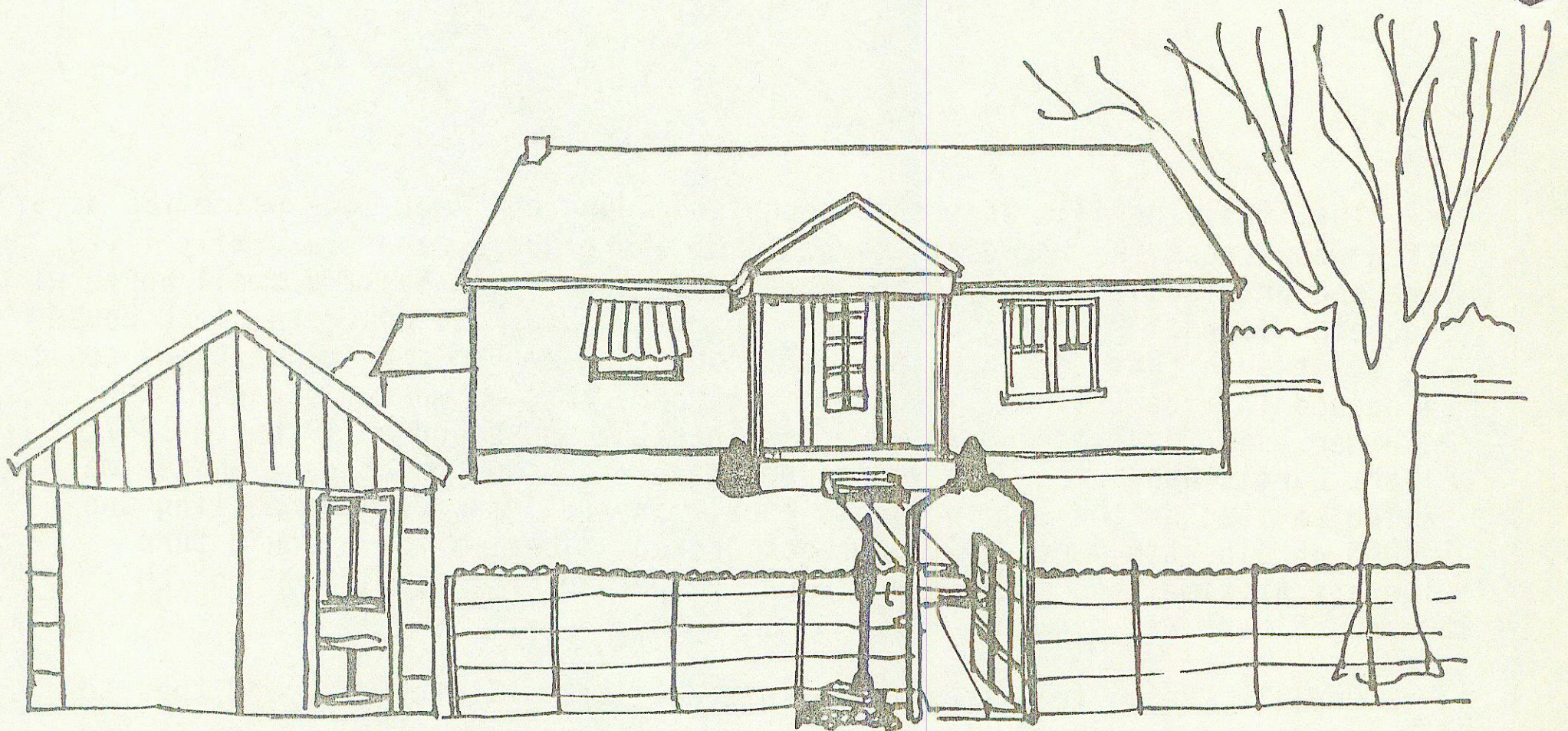


That fall, Orville and Velma bought the John and Anna Lowe place (80 acres) which was across the field to the north of where Audrey and his family lived. A fire had previously destroyed the Lowe house so Orville built a small house with concrete blocks. Planning ahead for a bigger house, the concrete block house was built such that the interior walls could be removed and the west end could be opened in order to easily convert the house into a two-car garage. In November 1946, Orville and Velma moved into the house and on 19 March 1947, Elbert Curtis was born. The unfloored attic was used for storage and Velma failed to step on the ceiling joist once. She fell through the ceiling and landed on Elbert's foot. Although not broken, Elbert's ankle would turn sideways at times and would need to be "popped" back into place. For this reason, Elbert was slow to walk.

Orville, Velma and Elbert went to the Illinois State Fair, and then to Peoria to visit some of Velma's relatives in the fall of 1947. They stayed overnight with the Homer Wells and also with the Paul Trotters. In the fall of 1948, Orville and Velma returned to the State Fair and Elbert stayed with his grandparents, Audrey and Pearl Dickey. While at the fair, Velma became sick and passed out.

Orville continued to farm with his father and brothers, and Glen Weaver helped Orville farm part of the time. In November 1948 Nona's husband, Gene Musgrave, died and Nona came to live with Orville and Velma. On 16 January 1949 Steven Lee was born. Nona went to Audrey's house and stayed to help some with his kids and Pearl came to help Velma. Nona continued to stay with Orville and Velma until Nona's son, Clifford was born 23 May 1949. After Clifford's birth, Nona stayed with her parents, Harrolle and Lucile Mayberry. Nona soon got a job in Mt. Vernon and Orville and Velma kept Clifford from Monday through Friday for several weeks. Allen Wayne was born in the small house on 9 October 1950 and Nona stayed with Orville and Velma for a while to help take care of all the boys.

In 1950, Arrington Prairie Missionary Baptist Church (Dickeyville) decided to construct a new building. Sealed bids were taken to tear the old church down and Orville's bid of \$327.50 on 11 February 1951 was successful. Much of the lumber salvaged from the old church became part of the new house Orville and Velma were building. Most of the summer of 1951 was devoted to finishing the new house. Thomas Richards was the head carpenter and Orville did most of the wiring for both the new church and house. As with the farming, Glen Weaver helped build the house. In the fall of 1951 Orville moved his family into the basement of the new house since the upstairs was not complete. Their first Christmas in the new house was in the basement.



Orville had been selling DeKalb seed corn since 1946 and won a large, off-white, all wool blanket through a DeKalb sales contest. The blanket was used several years for a bedspread. In the fall of 1951 Orville built a large hen house and bought several DeKalb chickens. In addition to the hen house, chickens were kept in the pasture east of the barn during the summer. Part of the basement of the new house became a storage and candling area for the eggs and an automatic egg washer was purchased. Velma and her boys spent several hours each day gathering eggs, washing, candling and sorting the eggs and feeding and watering 1,000 layers. Orville would get up early on Monday morning and take the eggs to Cisne where they were trucked to St. Louis for a higher price than could be obtained locally.

Velma became pregnant in the winter of 1951 and could no longer use the treadle sewing machine. Orville and Velma bought a Mercury electric, portable machine which sewed both forward and backward. The sewing machine did not have a cabinet and was kept on an old ironing board.

On 4 August 1952, Robert Dale was born prematurely. Orville and Dr. Phillips, from Cisne, took Robert to the hospital but he only lived about two hours. Velma spent six weeks in bed before Robert Dale was born and two weeks afterward. Before his birth, neighbors came over and cooked the family one good meal each day. Otha Lee and Barbara helped Orville and Velma a lot during this time. Dr. Phillips also came by every day for two weeks after Robert Dale was born to treat Velma for an infection and Marjorie Talbert stayed with Orville and Velma during these two weeks. In the summer of 1952, Orville became very sick with the mumps and couldn't regain his strength. He learned that he had diabetes. At first his diet was altered to try and achieve some control of the diabetes. Finally he began daily injections of insulin which continued until his death.

Elbert began school September 1953 at Mabry, the same one-room school that his father and grandfather, Audrey, had attended. Orville got the position of bus driver. By 1954 several of the small schools including Mabry consolidated and built a new school house. Orville also drove the bus for the Berry Consolidated School District when school began in September 1954.

Orville and Velma were active with friends and played pinochle on a regular basis. Croquet also became popular and Orville built a sand court which was equipped with lights. Several people from Wayne City would come out to play in the evening. Orville also liked basketball and he and some other men would occasionally play in the evening at Berry Consolidated School.

Orville and his family also went to the Illinois State Fair and saw President Eisenhower (1953-1961). Orville had parked in the race track infield and later in the day, it began to rain. The infield became a quagmire but Orville got out. That night and the next day they visited with Glen and Otha Lee Weaver who were living and working on a farm up north.

BELLE RIVE, 1955 to 1958

Droughts in 1953 and 1954 began to take its toll and Orville and Velma were having difficulties making a living on the 80 acres. They sold th 80 acres to Audrey and on 1 March 1955, Orville, Velma and their three boys moved to a 307 acre farm in Moore's Prairie Township, Jefferson County, Illinois. Before moving to Belle Rive, Arrington Prairie Church had a dinner for Orville and his family. Gifts included a pink table lamp and the round piece of wood out of the new church tower. Orville got a man from Markham City to make a round end table from the wood.

Orville and Velma paid \$26,000 to the heirs of Judd Smith for the farm. The house was big with two stories, about 50 years old and heated with wood. There were two fireplaces and a wood stove in the kitchen and living room. The upstairs was not heated. The farm had two old barns and several small out buildings. Water or lack of water was a continuing household problem. Right after moving, it froze pretty hard and plumbing in the bathroom expanded and forced the wash basin off its support brackets and it fell onto the floor. The water supply from the well was poor and drilling deeper did not help. To supplement the water supply, rainwater was caught for some of the laundry.



On 12 April 1955 Norman Gail was born. Dr. Phillips helped deliver Norman and Verl brought Dr. Phillips over from Wayne County. Norman was born in the west room which had a fireplace that was kept burning continuously through the long cold spring to keep Norman warm. Nona, who then lived in Mt. Vernon, kept the three boys overnight when Norman was born and helped Velma for a few days afterward. Velma's grandmother, Ducey "Ma" Mayberry did the washing and ironing after Orville and Velma moved until the first Sunday in June. The mending was stacked in a chair, but with all the boys to take care of and with the farming, clothes were sometimes outgrown before they were mended.

After moving, Elbert finished second grade at Belle Rive. In the fall of 1955 Steven began school. A large billy goat about the size of a Shetland pony had been left on the farm by the previous owners and Elbert and Steven began riding him. Everything went well until the goat learned to brush up against fences and buildings. The billy goat was sold to a Negro from Mt. Vernon who had a barbecue place. Later, Audrey Dickey bought a smaller goat for the boys from Vess Barnard and Vess also gave the boys a second goat.

Because the big barn was in such poor condition, Orville began building. First he built a pole shed attached to a corn crib and later he built another pole building for hay and machinery storage. He also remodeled a smokehouse into a granary. To help overcome the water problem, two ponds were built. One was near the middle of the farm and the other was near the house. While trying to cross one of the dams after a rain, Orville got stuck and almost got the truck in the pond.

Orville and Velma had a pickup when they moved to Belle Rive. To provide additional passenger room, Orville fixed a tarp so the boys could ride in the back of the pickup. For several years, the Collins reunion was held in Decatur on the first Sunday of June. One year, the boys rode to the reunion in the back of the pickup under the tarp. One time, someone left a gardening fork in the drive and Orville had to fix a flat.

During wheat harvest, Orville would often pull two or three wagons at a time to the elevator. Once, going around a corner, the back wagon became unhooked and Orville spent most of the day picking up wheat from the overturned wagon.

In addition to raising corn, soybeans, wheat and hay, Orville raised sheep and hogs. However animal health was a problem. The sheep tended to abort their lambs and it was learned that the previous owner had similar problems, suggesting that some type of disease was present which prevented successful sheep production. There was also an outbreak of hog cholera and several hogs were lost. Orville supplemented the farm income by working as a mechanic in the off season at the Ford Tractor and Implement dealership in Mt. Vernon. In the fall of 1956, Velma also began working Saturdays at F. W. Woolworth in Mt. Vernon. During the Christmas rush, she worked full time.

After Velma had began working at Woolworths, Orville and his family took a trip to Kentucky to visit Barbara and Ansel Musgrave. The trip also included sightseeing at Mammoth Cave and Diamond Caverns.

Orville farmed the 307 acres with two tractors, a Minneapolis Moline Z which he owned when in Wayne County and a Fordson Major Diesel which he purchased from the Ford dealer where he worked. Orville added a lift mechanism to the Moline and had a mounted 4-row planter and cultivator. In the summers of 1955 and 1956 Orville also hired a person to help with the farming. The first was Ferrel Payne from Belle Rive and the second was Roy Whitis, a brother to Marge Whitaker who was a neighbor in Wayne County. In the summer of 1956 Orville taught Elbert to drive the tractor and he did some of the plowing, disking and mowing that year. Failing once to turn in time, Elbert almost let the Fordson get into a ditch. The front wheel was hanging over the ditch but Elbert got the tractor stopped, walked to the house and got Velma to get the tractor backed up. Roy Wisenhunt, a neighbor, used to say that he could see the tractor going back and forth across the field but there didn't appear to be anyone driving because he couldn't see Elbert. In 1957, Velma and Elbert did the work that had been previously done with hired hands. While Velma and Elbert were in the field, Steven and Allen took care of Norman. However, they didn't watch Norman real close and he began making and eating dirt sandwiches. Orville became sick one summer and Nona's husband, Charles Green, helped with planting.

The sheep were pastured near the north end of the farm which caused several problems. To help ensure pasture was available, some of the fields were divided with an electric fence. One of the chores was keeping weeds and other materials off the electric fence. Where the fence was close to the ground, the lawn mower was used to keep grass and weeds away from the fence. Through experience, Elbert, Steven and Allen gained respect for electric fences especially when the ground was wet. Thinking the fence was off one time, Allen got shocked hard enough to keep him from letting go of the electric fence wire. Running away from the fence finally created enough tension to pull it from his hand. One summer dogs got into the sheep and killed some. Eventually the dogs were caught and destroyed.

While the farm and outside jobs kept everyone busy, there was still time for fun. The boys often played ball with their guns and cowboy hats on. After putting up hay, swimming in the new ponds was a treat. Making ice cream with two or three of the neighboring families was a frequent occurrence in the summer. The Wisenhunts, Thatchers, Archambos and Lynns were supporters of the ice cream events. In the winter, there was the Blue Belle Club which offered bingo and other card games for both adults and kids. Neighbors took turns at hosting these evenings. At Belle Rive, Orville and Velma also got their first telephone and television. Elbert was in 4-H and during his first year, the 4-H club won the "Share the Fun" contest. The club earned a trip to the Illinois State Fair where they won a blue ribbon. Orville and Velma as well as the Wisenhunts accompanied Elbert to the State Fair.

Even the work was shared. The roads were oiled each summer and had to be closed while the oil dried. In at least two of the summers, Orville and the neighbors ground corn cobs and spread these on the oil which enabled people to get back and forth almost as soon as the road was oiled. The corn cobs resulted from shelling the ear corn which was also a shared activity with some of the neighbors.

1956 proved to be a good year for Orville. He spent part of the summer working with the Fordson Major Diesel and the plow. Carlyn came and helped adjust the plow and that summer Orville placed fourth in both the Jefferson County level and contour plowing contests. He also produced corn which averaged 112.7 bu/ac which made him winner of the Jefferson County corn growing contest sponsored by DeKalb seed corn (Elbert has the plaque and ribbons from these events).

One summer Orville traded hogs with Roy Wisenhunt. The hogs, weighing only 30 to 40 pounds, were put in a burlap bag which was held by Elbert while Orville hauled them on an open trailer. The trip from the Dickeys to the Wisenhunts went as planned but on the return trip, the trailer became unhooked, the trailer's tongue hit the ground which immediately stopped the trailer, and Elbert and the hog went rolling. Elbert regained consciousness at Dr. Dixon's office in Mt Vernon.

Velma began working full time at Woolworths in the fall of 1957 and Norman stayed with a baby sitter in Mt. Vernon. Often Velma had to get up, milk the cow, get Elbert, Steven and Allen on the school bus and take Norman to the baby-sitter before starting work. On laundry days Velma would get up about 3:00 a.m. to do the laundry before going to work. She had just got the laundry started one morning when the ceiling in the west room fell down. Orville quickly came downstairs to see what had happened. He, the boys and a neighbor, Charlie Archambo, spent the rest of the day tearing down the remaining ceiling and cleaning up.

Orville also sold insurance for two weeks in the Greenville area. When he learned how easy the insurance company could cancel a policy, he quit. When selling insurance, Orville needed a topcoat but there wasn't enough cash to buy a new one. He and Velma found a nice coat at the second hand store for \$10.

While Velma was working, a tornado hit Mt. Vernon and moved toward the Belle Rive area. Orville had taken the truck to Mt. Vernon and the boys were alone. A neighbor, Bertha Lynn managed to tell the boys to get in the house and stay there. Although the tornado did not hit the farm, the winds were strong enough to knock several limbs and trees down in the yard.

Norman got a piece of glass in the palm of his hand while the family lived at Belle Rive. Orville used his pocket knife to cut the glass out.

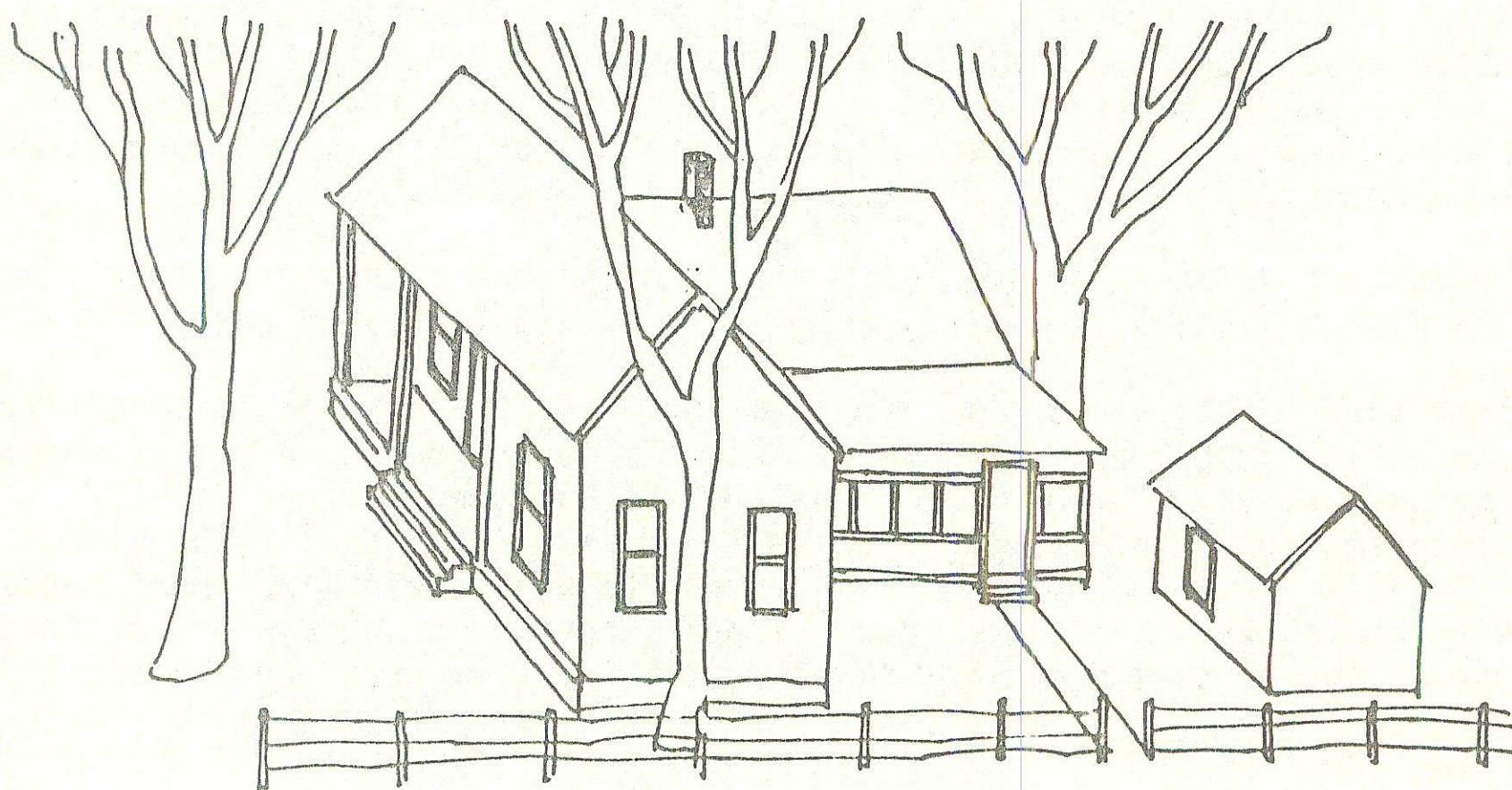
Even though the farm was making a living, the Farmers Home Administrator kept suggesting that Orville and Velma sell the farm and make a profit which could be used to buy another farm. Real estate salesmen (primarily M. D. Burkitt) also kept pushing Orville to sell and he finally priced the farm. It sold. Orville and his family had been attending Hams Grove Missionary Baptist Church and prior to moving, the church had a surprise Sunday dinner for them. Although trying at times, the three years at Belle Rive were good times.

BOYD, 1958 to 1961

Orville and Velma used some of the profit to buy 160 acres near Boyd in Rome Township, Jefferson County, Illinois. On 11 November 1958 Orville and his family moved. Verl and Audrey helped with the move and several trips were necessary to get all the machinery and livestock. Prior to moving the sheep, a big snowstorm came. Orville, Elbert and Steven spent the bigger part of a day finding and driving the sheep up to the barns for loading. The snow was about a foot deep and Elbert caught pneumonia after the move.

The house at Boyd was much smaller than the two-story house at Belle Rive. However an attached smokehouse was used for storing items. Orville did some remodeling on the house to improve the kitchen and bathroom. He also purchased a new clothes washer and dryer as well as a new deep freeze. As with Belle Rive, wood stoves were used for heating. The barns and other buildings at Boyd were in good condition. However of the 160 acres, only about 100 were tillable. The rest was hilly and there were several small woods.

Elbert, Steven and Allen attended Rome Grade School at Dix, Illinois. Because of differences in the school program between Rome and Belle Rive, it was decided to move both Steven and Allen back a grade. Velma continued to work at Woolworths and Orville farmed and took care of Norman. One Christmas, Elbert, Steven and Allen got small plastic model airplanes which could be flown with control lines. The planes came from Woolworths and Orville became more interested in the planes than his boys. Also, Velma got a sewing machine cabinet for the portable machine which had been purchased in 1952. (Velma still has this cabinet).



Orville enjoyed raising hogs and began doing some remodeling at Boyd to accommodate new ideas about raising hogs. He remodeled the chicken house and built farrowing crates which would enable more pigs per sow to be weaned. The farrowing crates were made of oak and could be removed from the building between farrowings to disinfect both the crates and building. Orville also took a trip to St. Joseph, Missouri and got some Landrace gilts on a lease arrangement. This relatively new breed was long and lean and leaner meat was bringing a higher price at the packing houses. Elbert also went on the trip and Orville purchased cowboy outfits for his boys at St. Joseph. Orville did some experimenting with cross breeding and settled on a triple cross involving Landrace, Yorkshire and Hampshire. The market hogs were raised on the ground in relatively small lots which was a forerunner of concrete finishing floors. Many of the hogs were sold directly to Hunter Packing Company in St Louis on a graded basis. Because of the quality, Orville consistently received a premium.

Elbert and Steven also got a start in the hog business. They both purchased a registered Landrace and Yorkshire gilt for \$100 each. One year at the 4-H livestock show at the Jefferson County Fair, Elbert's Landrace got first and his Yorkshire got second. Steven's was just the reverse, his Yorkshire was first and his Landrace was second. Steven also had gardening as a 4-H project and he consistently produced good garden crops. To supplement the produce from the garden, the family picked strawberries from U-pick patches near Walnut Hill. One year they picked 275 quarts and on Velma's day off from work, she would make 10 or 12 pies to use and to freeze.

The rolling hills was a natural place for riding horses and Orville bought horses for the entire family. The four boys each got Shetland ponies. Elbert had a roan mare, Steven had a brown mare, Allen had a palomino colored mare and Norman had a smoke colored gelding. At least he was supposed to be a gelding but when one of the young fillies became pregnant, they learned differently. Each boy also had his own saddle and gear. Many hours were spent racing over the hills playing Cowboys and Indians. Steven was probably the most proficient rider of the group. At one time Orville also had two larger mares, a matched pair of fillies for a team, and two stallions. The smaller stallion, Silver King, was only about 40 inches tall and worked well with a buggy. Steven showed him at the saddle club once. The bigger stallion, Bucky, tended to be rough. One winter Orville made a sled for the boys out of oak which would take the meanness out of Bucky in a short time.

Orville once sent one of the boys to the house for Velma's scissors. They were going to trim the horses manes. Velma said "No!" since she only had one good pair. Orville sent word back and said he would get her a new pair and he did. (The new scissors were very good and Velma still uses them today).

There were probably many close calls with the horses but the two worst ones involved Orville and Norman. When trying to break a mare to ride, she reared up and fell over backwards catching Orville with the saddle horn. One Sunday, Norman was sitting on Silver, one of the larger mares, while she was being led around. Silver was always rather jumpy and Norman ended up on the ground with a broken arm when he was about five years old. Both bones were broken and a general anesthetic was used. Velma had to help the doctor and nurse set Norman's arm by pulling on his arm as hard as she could. One night while riding horses and playing hide and seek, Elbert fell in the garden and ran his hand through a pint jar. Because of the large amount of bleeding, Velma called Dr. Dixon and he had her rinse the cut with peroxide and bind it tightly.

In December 1958, Orville and Velma bought a new 1959 Rambler. Velma picked it up and drove it home from work. This was the only new car they ever bought. Orville borrowed Audrey's 4-WD Jeep truck to haul some equipment and got stuck "crossing a ditch a horse wouldn't try".

To help make ends meet Orville took a job in a nearby rock quarry. Elbert was given the job of raising the crops and did most of the farming in the spring of 1959. Elbert missed 10 days of the seventh grade to get the crops planted. Steven also helped and learned to drive a tractor and to cultivate the crops. One evening Orville and his boys spent a lot of time uncovering some corn. Elbert, Steven and sometimes Allen walked the beans to chop weeds. Orville had the boys use weed hooks rather than knives or hoes. Orville also tried some band applied herbicides and got very good weed control in the corn rows which helped the boys produce a better crop. Elbert and Steven also chopped thistles in the pastures and earned some money doing the same thing for Gene Sargent, one of their neighbors. Winter was spent getting wood and sledding on the hills.

When Orville and Velma were working, the boys did their own cooking. While popping some popcorn in a skillet, they became distracted and let the popcorn and skillet catch on fire. Another time, some bacon caught on fire and the house got full of smoke. There was even soot on the ceiling. The skillets were ruined in both incidents.

Even with off-farm income, the farm would not support a family of six. Also the hogs contracted rhinitis. At that time, it was thought that the disease would stay in the soil for several years. Thus, Orville had a farm sale on 15 April 1960. Everything was sold; equipment, livestock, supplies and even the farm was auctioned. However, Orville rejected the final bid on the farm because he did not feel it was adequate. Also, through a friend, Orville managed to keep one mare, Silver.

After the sale Orville bought a 1957 Ford 640 tractor and some assorted equipment. That spring Elbert did most of the farming because Orville was sick quite a bit of the time. He seemed to be sick in the spring and fall when the work load increased. It was felt that the strain on his rheumatic heart combined with the diabetes caused him to be sick. One time the needle used for giving the insulin injection went into a vein rather than muscle tissue. Orville had Norman go get Leonard Denning, a hired hand helping with harvest. By the time Norman got back to the house Orville had passed out. Leonard called the doctor and he indicated there was nothing to do but wait and hope.

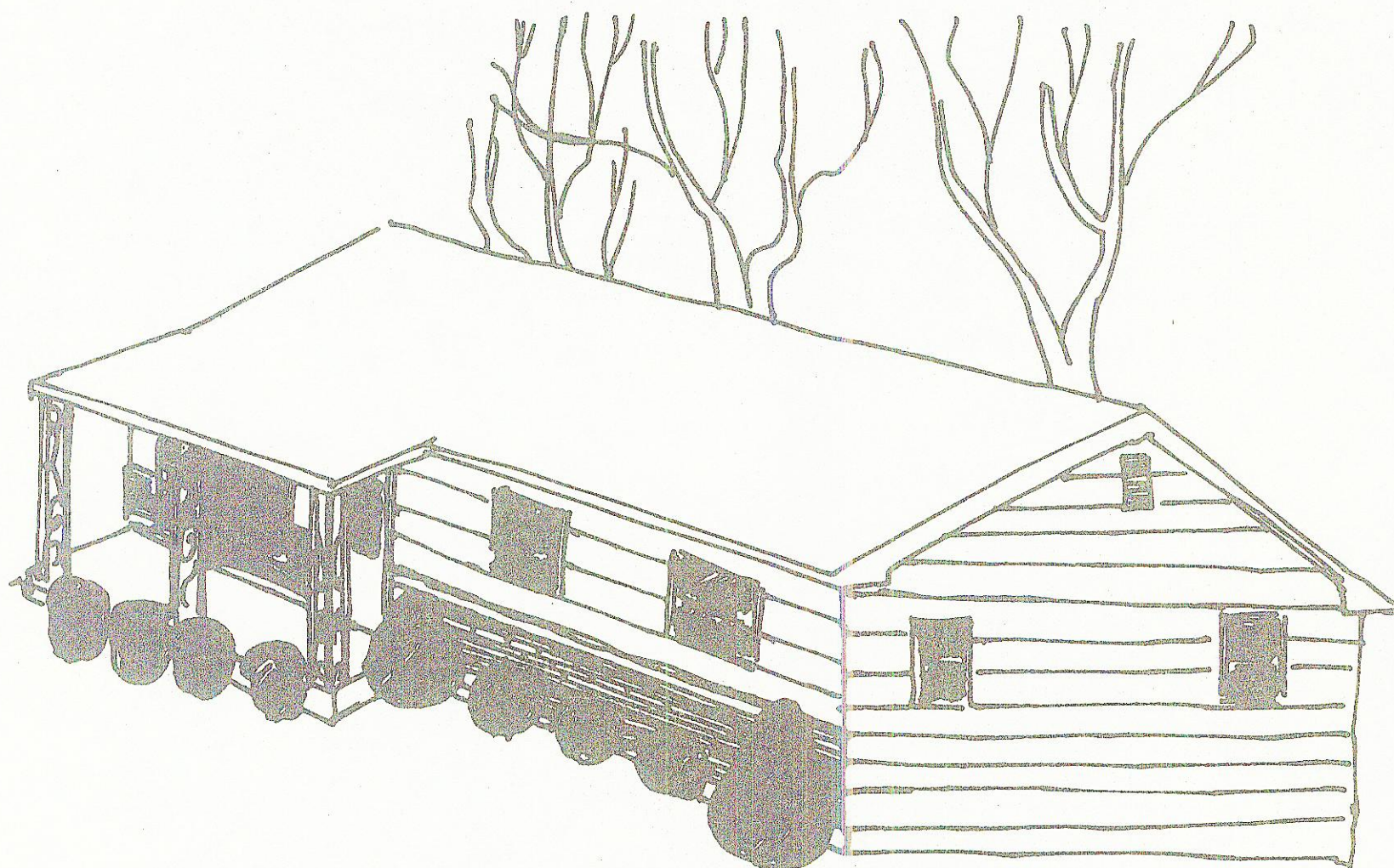
In the winter of 1960 Orville embarked on a different career, one of owning and operating a furnace and duct cleaning and repair business. The farm was sold and Orville moved his family to a small housing development about five miles north of Mt. Vernon in the spring of 1961.

While at Boyd, Orville and his family attended Webb Missionary Baptist Church where they became good friends with the pastor, Dale Brookman. Elbert and Steven accepted Christ as their Saviour, were baptized and joined the church.

MT. VERNON, 1961 to 1962

Orville and his family moved to a new house in the spring of 1961. They also purchased an adjacent lot so the boys would have some room. Orville's furnace cleaning business included a franchise arrangement with Dyna-Vac for the Jefferson and Wayne County areas. The Dyna-Vac truck had a large fan which created a vacuum and made furnace cleaning somewhat analogous to vacuuming a carpet. Contracts were obtained to clean boilers and the heating and cooling systems of several schools. The biggest contract was with Good Samaritan Hospital in Mt. Vernon. Steven and neighbors, Glen and Willard Southerd, and Dale Brookman helped Orville with the hospital contract. Willard and Steven also helped with several of the contracts in Wayne County. Residential furnaces were also cleaned but there was a competitor with less quality for less money. Business was slow at times.

When moving to the new house, the boys were in a different school district. Even though Elbert only had one quarter left in the eighth grade, and the Rome school district line was only one-quarter of a mile away, he had to change schools. Elbert graduated from Pleasant Hill, a two-room school, in 1961 and was in the last graduating class because Pleasant Hill consolidated with Rome that spring.



Orville had kept the Ford 640 tractor and some implements when leaving Boyd. Elbert had a summer job of mowing ground that was placed in the soil bank. Some of the ground was near where they used to live at Belle Rive. Velma or Orville would take Elbert, about 15 gallons of gas and lunch to the site to be mowed and would leave Elbert by himself. Late in the summer, while plowing some of the same ground, Elbert let the tractor slip into a gully and the tractor turned over on its side. Since the land was some distance from other farmsteads, Elbert sat quietly and waited for one of his parents to pick him up that night and about dusk, watched the wolves come out of hiding.

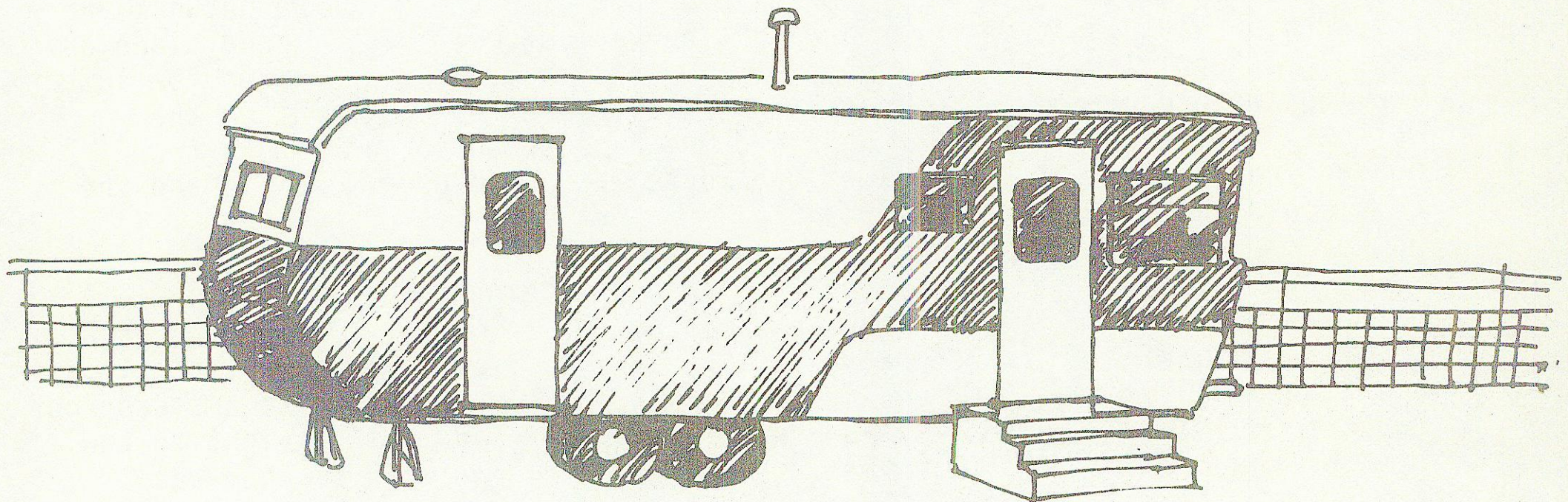
That same summer, Elbert also stayed with Verl Dickey for about a month to help get the crops in. Steven and Allen helped put out a big garden and spent much of their time there. Also, Orville had kept a few horses and rented some pasture so riding was still possible. Steven traded his pony for a larger, sorrel mare and Elbert bought Silver from Orville. Orville also continued his interest in model airplanes which were flown with control lines. He started building planes from kits and tried to get the boys to develop an interest in flying. He also built a circular concrete runway and tried to develop a remote control method for flying some of the control line planes. As with riding, Steven learned to fly the planes better than the others. The planes were occasionally flown with other friends at the Mt. Vernon Airport.

That fall, because of the school consolidation, Steven and Allen returned to Rome. Norman began first grade at Rome and Elbert began high school at Mt. Vernon. Orville also became quite sick again and was in Good Samaritan Hospital for several days in the fall of 1961. Dr. Dixon knew money was tight and that Orville was very sick. Even though he was vomiting blood, Orville refused to go to the hospital. Dr. Dixon threatened to send an ambulance, which would cost several dollars, to get Orville's attention.

Since there was no income while in the hospital and only limited funds to keep going, Orville decided to try farming again. He rented nearly 1000 acres in the Dry Fork Creek and Skillet Fork River bottoms south of Boyleston, Wayne County, Illinois. The house and business reverted back to the previous owners.

THE BOTTOMS, BOYLESTON, 1962 to 1964

During the winter of 1961, Orville began working on the farm owned by O. A. "Whitey" Holdren. Although Orville rented the farm, by agreement he was to buy the existing farm equipment from Whitey, who maintained a strong presence at the farm. Orville also drew a salary advance which was charged against his share of the crops. One of the first jobs was to prepare a place to live on the 40 acres which did not flood in the spring. A trailer about 8 foot by 36 foot was positioned on a lot near the lane leading back to the barn and feedlot area. In early January, Orville returned to the hospital for a short time. On 16 January 1962, Orville and Velma and their four boys moved into the small trailer. There was some water there but the quality was so poor that drinking water was hauled. Elbert transferred to Fairfield High School and Steven, Allen and Norman transferred to Boyleston Grade School. On 4 February 1962 at the Good Samaritan Hospital in Mt. Vernon, Virginia Arlene was born. This was somewhat new for Velma since all her boys had been born at home.



Elbert and Steven moved their horses to the bottoms. After the move Steven sold his mare to his grandfather, Harrolle Mayberry. Steven received the first colt from the mare as part of the payment. Because Whitey didn't want to support many horses, he gave Allen a market hog every six months and Steven got a hog before he got his colt back. (Allen thinks the hogs were a bonus for all the work the boys did.)

There was much work to be done prior to planting that spring. In the equipment purchase agreement, Orville received a Case 830, a Ferguson 20 and a Ferguson 30. He also had the Ford 640 purchased in 1960. Although there were about 1000 acres in the farm, only about 500 acres were in condition to farm that year. About one-half of the 500 acres had just been cleared of timber and the remaining land had only been cleared and farmed for two years. Because of roots and stumps left from clearing, a moldboard plow was useless and all

primary tillage was done with a Burch one-way disk. Having only one tractor with more than 35 horsepower, Orville was forced to buy another relatively large tractor which was an Oliver Super 88 diesel. The next order of business was to build a shop area to repair some of the equipment that had been abused because of the stumps and lack of maintenance. Orville already had accumulated a relatively complete set of tools but there was no place to use them except in the driveway of the barn. A corner of the barn was converted to a shop and tool storage area. Somehow Orville, Elbert, Steven, Allen and one hired hand, Raymond Laird, got the 500 acres planted that spring and on a relatively timely basis.

The next major purchase was a 4-row cultivator for the Ford 640. Combining this cultivator with the 2-row cultivators for the two Fergusons, the boys could cultivate 80 acres a day. Steven and Allen sometimes got in trouble for racing the tractors while cultivating small corn.

Orville devoted time to planning and building. Whitey had three caterpillars and a dragline and was continuing to clear the remaining 300 or 400 acres and improve the drainage. Orville helped plan the drainage network and prior to pushing the trees over and cutting them off with a V-shaped blade on the big caterpillar, several trees, mainly water oak, were harvested for lumber. The logs were dragged to Jim Gregory's sawmill which was adjacent to the bottoms. Orville hired Dwight Legg and began construction of an oak frame house. While a lot of the work on the house was hired done, Orville and the boys contributed quite a bit.

Work also began on corn crib, granary and machine shed combination. The crib was 80 foot long, 8 foot wide and 16 foot tall and was constructed as a double crib having a 12 foot driveway. Over the driveway, space was made to store about 6000 bushels of shelled corn. The crib was built with a steep roof so corn could be directed to either side from the inside. The height to the peak of the crib was about 30 feet. A relatively large machine shed was attached to the east side of the crib.

Rather than buy premixed concrete, sand, gravel and cement were purchased in bulk and a three-point hitch concrete mixer was attached to the Ferguson 20. An above ground storage bin for gravel and cement with a chute was built and loaded by using the front-end loader on the Ferguson 30. The gravel and cement could then easily be dumped into the mixer. With this operation Elbert, Steven and Allen mixed almost all the concrete which went into the corn crib and other buildings.

Whitey felt that feeding cattle was a way to make money and had previously built a large trench type silo with concrete floors and wood sides. During the summer, several weeks were devoted to chopping silage. The Case 830 did not really have enough power to handle the chopper but considering the time to haul the silage and dump it, the Case was adequate. Four IH barge wagons were purchased and hydraulic cylinders were added to dump the boxes. Even with dumping capabilities, false fronts with cables leading to the rear of the wagons were placed in the boxes so the silage could be pulled from the wagon as necessary.

The three boys were the primary drivers of the small tractors which hauled the silage. The Ferguson 20 developed a relatively loose transmission which could be shifted without engaging the clutch. Once, when getting off to close a gate, Steven bumped the shift lever and the Ferguson lurched into a forward gear and ran over Steven's foot. Steven was not hurt bad, but for several years, undue pressure or exertion on that foot caused swelling and pain.

Construction continued that summer and fall with the development of a finishing floor, farrowing house and water supply. The pond was enlarged, a sand filter and settling tank constructed, and a chlorination unit was added to the new pumphouse. New water lines were installed and pond water became the water supply for the farm.

Orville designed the finishing floor which had both covered and open areas. The floor, divided into six pens, had a capacity of 300 hogs. The floor sloped to a gutter covered with slats. A shuttle-type scraper in the gutter transferred manure to a lagoon. The farrowing house began as a quonset building with no insulation. A new floor was poured which sloped to gutters near the middle and the gutters sloped to the end of the building. Farrowing crates were built and the house could handle 24 sows at a time. With previous experience, Orville selected Yorkshire and Landrace gilts which were initially bred to Durocs. Gilts that were kept were bred to Hampshires. As before, most of the hogs were sold to Hunter Packing at St. Louis on a grade basis so a premium could be made. With the purchase of a grinder-mixer and the subsequent design of feed rations from raw materials, soybean meal was often hauled on the return trip from St. Louis.

While the cattle operation lost money both years primarily due to disease contracted when Whitey would pick up some sick calves at the sale barns, hogs proved to be a money maker. Orville oversaw and planned the operation, but much of the work was done by Elbert, Steven, Allen and Velma. Elbert kept some of the records on the pigs, gave iron injections and penicillin injections as necessary, clipped the needle teeth and docked the tails. Also a lot of time was spent cleaning the farrowing house. Steven mixed a lot of the feed after school and Allen and Velma pushed manure to the gutter on the feeding floor. Saturdays were spent trying to catch up and there was always the need to mix another load of feed for either the hogs or cows.

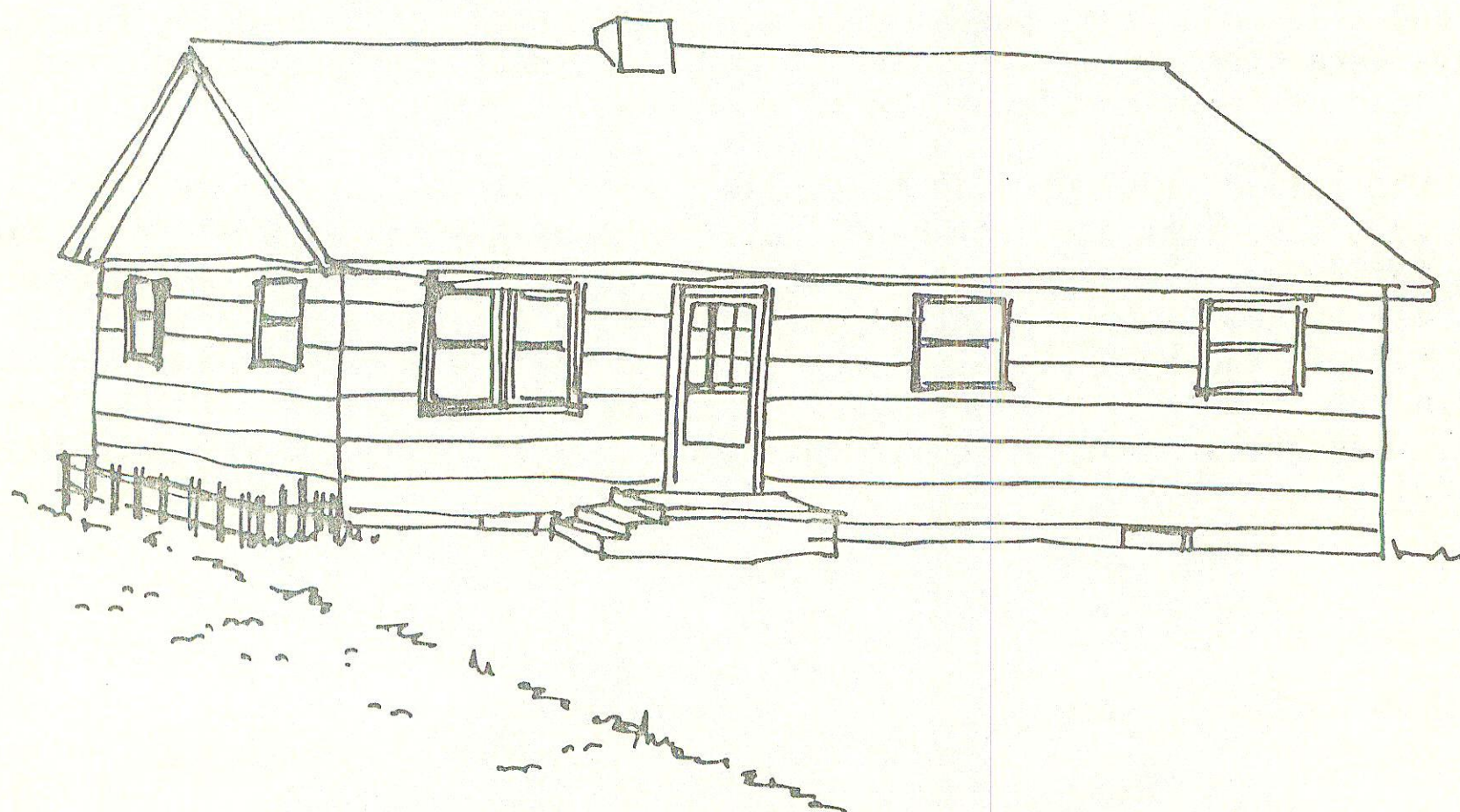
In the fall of 1962 Orville moved his family into the new house. As in the past, a wood stove was used for heat, but the house was fairly well insulated and the family could keep warm for a change. Being left alone after school one day, Norman burned several of his and Virginia's plastic and rubber toys to start a fire in the wood stove. After the move Orville hired Leonard Denning to help with the farming operation. Leonard had previously helped with the harvest at Boyd. Leonard and his two children, Lonnie Ray and Donna, moved into the house trailer.

Corn harvest was good that year. A two-row mounted picker had been bought for the Oliver and the new corn crib was filled. During the peak of the harvest, Elbert would take over on Friday night and pick corn until everything used to haul corn was filled. Steven, Allen and Leonard would work Saturday and unload wagons and haul corn for Orville. Then the process was repeated Saturday night.

Unfortunately, one of the hired hands neglected to check the oil on the Oliver. Near the peak of harvest, the engine ran out of oil and locked up. A new engine was installed and picking resumed. Again the engine locked up. The crankshaft in the new engine had broken. Even though Oliver provided the parts at no charge, Orville furnished the labor and harvest was delayed.

Orville and Velma always tried to have a nice Christmas. Orville usually picked things out and would spend almost every penny, even the next weeks grocery money. However, there was no money in December 1962 and in terms of gifts, 1962 was sparse. To help with finances, Orville and Velma traded the 1959 Rambler to Nona and Charlie Green for their 1956 Pontiac.

In preparation for the season of 1963, Orville purchased some additional equipment to handle the land cleared in 1962 and being brought into production. The two major items were an Oliver Super 99 and a 16 foot disk. The Super 99 had a 3-cylinder turbo-charged diesel engine which had more power than most tractors available at the time. The 16 foot disk was hardly a load. In 1963 about 750 acres were planted. A lot of the corn had to be replanted because of floods in June. During the floods, one of the jobs was to walk the levees and fill in low or weak areas to prevent further flooding. Once Orville had a close encounter with a cottonmouth water moccasin. While Orville was climbing up the levee, the snake was coming down. The snake struck at Orville but missed. Orville quickly returned to the truck, got a log chain and killed the snake.



To assist in developing the surface drainage network being built with the dragline, Orville constructed a land leveler from an old road maintainer. A hitch was made for the Oliver 99 and hydraulic cylinders replaced the hand operated wheels used for raising and lowering the blade. Work began on filling in low spaces and creating W-ditches. These ditches were actually a pair of parallel ditches where the excavated soil was placed between them to create a W-shaped cross section. The ditches were farmed at right angles and very little land was removed from production. Elbert seemed to inherit the job of running the land leveler.

During hay season, Elbert and two of the hay hands had an encounter with bumble bees. Toward the end of the day, Elbert picked up a bale of clover hay which was on top of a bumble bee nest. The boys began running and the bees began stinging. Allen got in the truck and rolled up the windows. Steven ran toward the creek. Elbert and the others ran toward the baler where Orville was at. Orville brushed the bees off and sent Elbert and the two hay hands to the house where Velma put baking soda paste on the stings. After treating the hay hands Velma looked after Elbert who had more stings than the others combined. In another haying incident, Steven was stacking hay when he was surprised by a bale of hay that had a live snake hanging from it.

Velma always did a lot of canning. One year, she canned 700 quarts of produce. Additional produce was frozen and the deep freeze was almost full and contained only a small amount of meat. The family also got 27 bushels of nice dropped apples. In addition to apple sauce and pies, apple jelly was made from the peelings. Elderberries were also used for jelly and some of the bunches of elderberries were large enough to cover a gallon crock. Although peas and greens were not canned, the family ate lots of these vegetables. It seemed that greens really did well in the bottoms.

Prior to harvest in 1963 Orville purchased a Massey Harris 90 self-propelled combine having a 16 foot grain platform and a corn head. The model was a rice field special which had high clearance and deep tread on the tires. During harvest, Orville realized that changing from the corn picker to the combine had made the new corn crib almost obsolete. To make harvest more pleasant a cab made of canvas and plastic was added to the combine. Fans and filters were used to keep the cab pressurized and relatively clean.

While there was a lot of hard work, Orville managed to take his family on a vacation to the Smokies in the summer of 1963. Camping gear was borrowed from Harold and two tents were used. The first night, out the family stopped in Kentucky and visited Fred and Marge Whitaker who had moved from Wayne County. Fred and Marge were making dried apples. The apples were sliced and placed outdoors on newspapers to dry. Netting or screens were not used and the flies were thick on the apples. A shower came up and the newspapers were rolled up, flies, apples and all. So much for dried fruit. The family camped in the Smokies where bears got in the garbage can near the tents. The trip also included driving several miles and camping along the Blue Ridge Parkway before returning home.

Steven and Allen were members of the Boyleston Grade School basketball team. Norman helped take care of Virginia and had a collie named Prince. Prince was so protective of the children that Velma would not punish Norman and Virginia while outside. Grandparents would often stay in the car until he was chained up. Prince was afraid of thunder and lightning and would generally crawl under the house when a storm came up. However, one summer a cat had just moved her kittens under the house when it began to thunder and lightning. During the storm, Velma saw Prince wobbling around in the front yard and got him into the house where he died. The veterinarian thought Prince had been hit by lightning and Velma thought the cat had kept him from getting under the house. Orville and Norman wrapped Prince in a blanket and buried him in the bottoms.

Elbert was active in FFA and had a registered Yorkshire sow. As a shop project, Orville had Elbert build a portable hog house and pen with slotted floors. Once again Orville was working with new ideas. The hog house floor with 3/4 inch slots performed better than the pen which had 3/8 inch slots even though the vo-ag teacher was sure the 3/4 inch slots were too wide for the pigs to walk on. The hog house was put on skids and pulled home from school with a tractor. Gravel roads wore the skids down. One side of the hog house came loose and scattered boards and tools along the road for several miles.

Orville suffered at least three heart attacks in 1963 and had about decided that Dr. Dixon was not helping him improve so he switched to Dr. Alexander. Dr. Alexander immediately said that the stress and work load from farming was more than Orville's health could endure. During one of his visits to Dr. Alexander, the doctor asked Velma if they were still farming. She said yes and Dr. Alexander said there is no point in coming back until you are off the farm. But so much had been accomplished on the farm in such a short time and Whitey was also offering an opportunity to buy the farm. Orville felt he could make it work but not with his poor health.

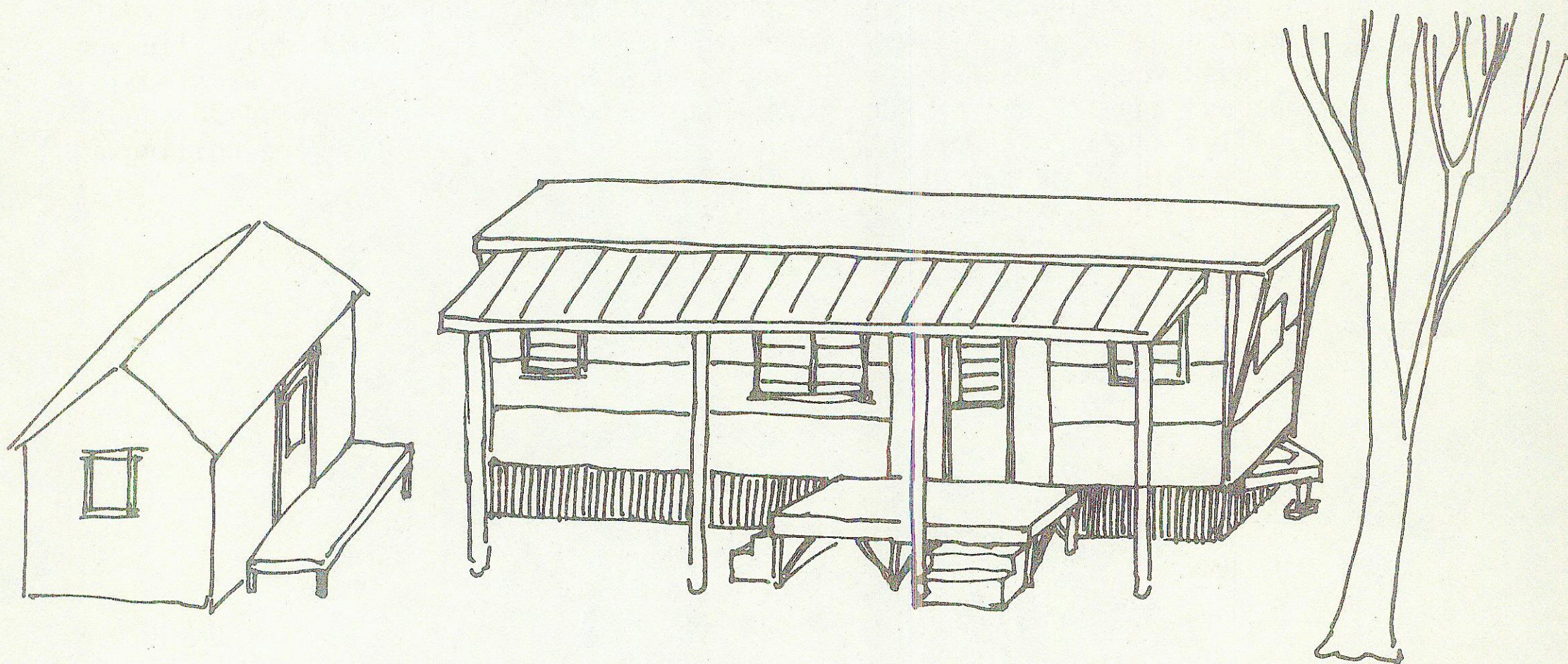
Leaving the farm was hard and compounded by the fact that Whitey did not want to buy back the equipment that he had forced Orville to buy in the first place. During a meeting in the lawyer's office, Whitey maintained that Orville owed for all the equipment and salary advances and couldn't leave until the debt was paid. However Audrey, Orville's father, attended the meeting and pointed out that Orville's health was more important. That was the end of the argument; Whitey took possession of all the equipment and assumed the loans which Orville had obtained to get the two additional tractors and the combine. Orville wanted to file bankruptcy but the lawyer advised against it. Orville and his family had built a farm operation for Whitey and had nothing left but the Ford 640 tractor which they had started with two years earlier. Elbert's savings account for college of about \$1,700 was used to support the family during this transition period. In February 1964 Orville moved his family to Boyleston and gave up farming as a way of life.

Prior to moving, Elbert sold Silver and Steven sold his colt to Eldred Simpson. Steven rode the colt to grade school and Eldred led the colt home from school.

BOYLESTON, 1964 to 1965

When first moving to Boyleston, Orville rented a big two-story house near Hunt's old store. Orville and Velma both found jobs at the Fairfield Garment Factory. Orville began work 3 March 1964 as a machinist and learned to repair, adjust and set up the most complicated of sewing machines. Velma worked on the floor and kept others supplied with work. In addition to working at the garment factory, housekeeping chores kept Velma very busy. It was not uncommon to have 25 shirts to starch and iron on Saturday. Elouise Porter, a crippled girl, began baby-sitting Virginia near Easter, 1964. Noma Thomason, Elouise's mother, also kept Virginia.

The Ford 640 bought in 1960 was finally sold with the help of Lavern Edwards. About April 1964, Orville bought a three-bedroom Frontier house trailer for \$4,421. The trailer was about 10 foot wide and 55 foot long and two lots in Boyleston were purchased to set it on. The boys dug footings and poured concrete pads for the trailer. A two-room building, already on the lots, was repositioned and used for laundry and storage. By May the trailer was set up and the Dickeys moved yet again.



While living at Boyleston, Orville traded the 1956 Pontiac for a 1959 Pontiac. The new Pontiac really had a lot of acceleration. Elbert also bought a 1955 Ford for \$300 before school was out in 1964 and soon had a speeding ticket.

Carlyn Dickey, who farmed with his father, Audrey, was in a serious car wreck that spring. Because Audrey needed help to farm both his and Carlyn's ground, Allen moved to and stayed with his grandparents to help. Allen moved while school was in session and finished the seventh grade at Berry, where he became a member of their track team. Allen accepted Christ as his Savior and baptized in a pond near his grandparent's house.

Steven was starting high school in August 1964 and Elbert was beginning his senior year. Both needed summer work and found it. Elbert farmed some for Art Richardson, worked with the Edgingtons at the Xenia Elevator during wheat harvest, and worked some with Delbert Clevenger in the timber and at his saw mill. Steven worked some for Ford Harris and helped pick up chunks on some recently cleared land. Steven and Elbert also purchased some beehives which helped supplement their income. Steven caught some additional beehives that summer and began raising registered Boston Terriers and Pekingese dogs. He built pens behind the two-room building and built doghouses under the edge of the building in the crawl space.

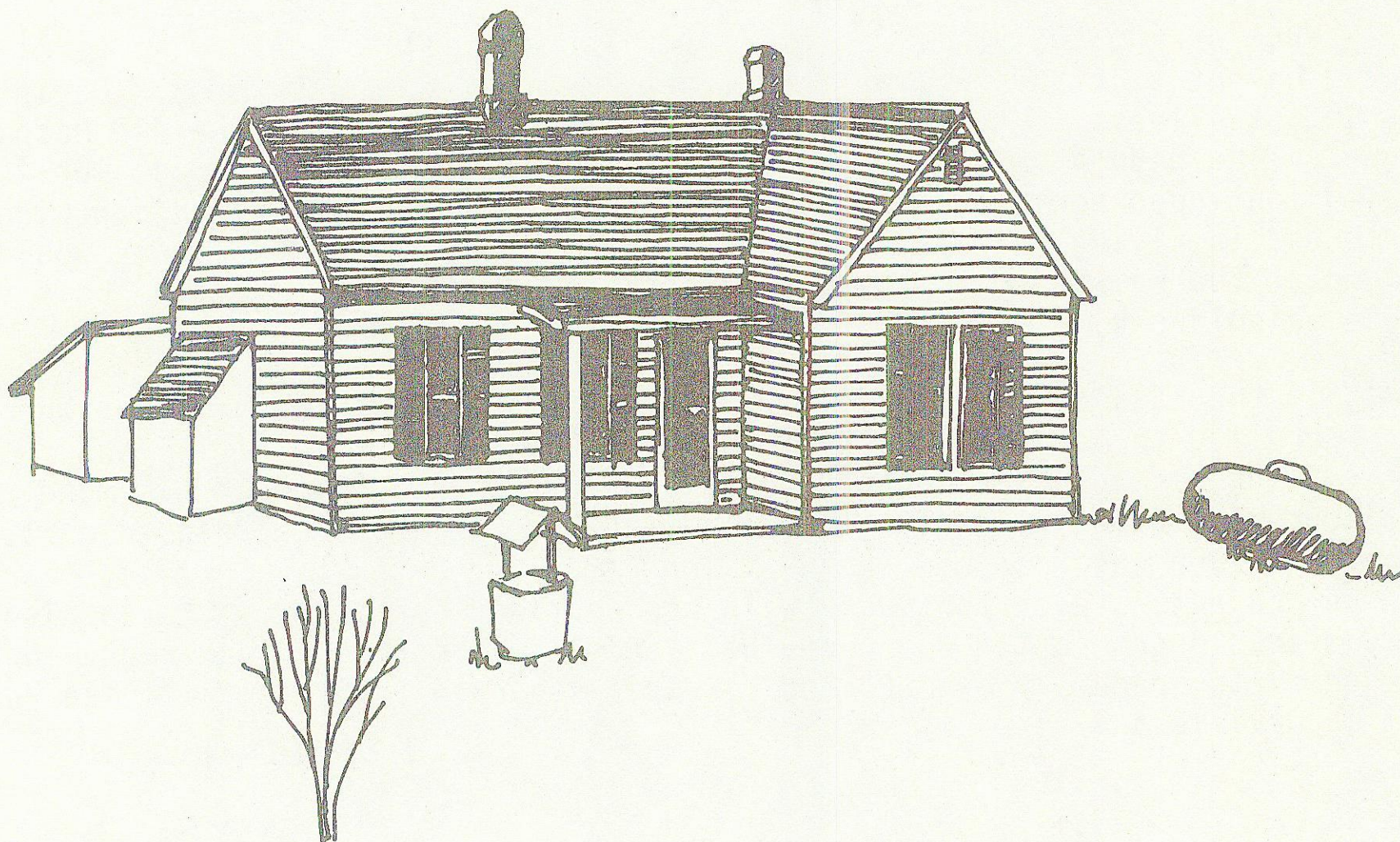
The boys sometimes went fishing in the Skillet Fork River with Floyd Templeman in the summer of 1964. Rather than using poles and hooks, they waded in and went "hogging". All you had to do was feel around some brush or logs that were underwater until you felt something move. Then you simply slid your hands under the belly of the fish and grabbed hold. The fish were stuffed into burlap bags and several pounds of fish were caught that summer. On 30 August 1964, Allen and Norman were playing at a neighbor's house and were rolling a barrel by walking on top of it. Allen fell off and broke his arm.

POND CREEK, 1965 to 1967

A real estate agent, M. D. Burkitt, offered to rent 120 acres to Orville in 1965. Orville felt that he and his boys could handle a 120 acre operation. The farm was in the Pond Creek area southeast of Fairfield. Because of feuding between the Sheltons and other families, Orville sought and was granted permission from one of the Merrits before moving to the farm in June 1965. The house trailer in Boyleston was sold for \$3,000 plus some furniture which was needed for the house.

Near the time of the move, the 1959 Pontiac was traded for a red 1962 Rambler. The Rambler had a push button, automatic transmission.

Before the move, Elbert had graduated from Fairfield High School and had went to Washington, D.C. on his senior class trip; Steven had completed his freshman year at Fairfield; Allen had graduated from Boyleston Grade School; and Norman had completed the forth grade at Boyleston.



Orville bought a 1956 Minneapolis Moline UB Special tractor, a MM 4-14" plow and a MM disk. The note made on 20 May 1965 was for \$1,872. He, Steven and Allen farmed the 100 acres that was tillable. While plowing that summer, Allen drove the Moline into a gully. The impact was enough to break the front end off the tractor. Steven and Allen also had a big garden and sold produce at the garment factory on paydays. When Steven and Allen were farming, Virginia and Norman took them drinking water. Cutting weeds was another job that Norman had. Steven also got a part-time job mowing lawns and Allen worked for a neighbor, Leslie Cunningham. Elbert farmed for Eldon Long. Later in the summer Elbert moved to Mt. Vernon and stayed with Nona and her family where he had a job with Central Wholesale Liquor helping build storage shelves and filling orders.

The Moline used LP gas and would not plow all day on a tank of fuel. Because you cannot easily refuel in the field with LP, it was imperative that the tractor make it back to the fuel supply tank. Steven ran out of fuel in the drive way one day and ruined the starter by using it to get the tractor to the supply tank. Fearing they would run out of fuel again, Velma hurriedly took the bicycle to the field one time when Steven hadn't come in by mid-afternoon.

Norman kept Virginia that summer for one dollar per week. When he was busy, Virginia stayed by herself. Norman also cooked dinner for the boys and one of his meals was five kinds of beans. Developing a limp, Norman was taken to a foot specialist who found a bruised tendon. Because of this Norman did not take PE during the sixth, seventh or eighth grades.

Once during the summer of 1965, Orville helped do some of the farming. Again he got sick and that was the last time he was on a tractor. During this period of illness, Orville went to Dr. Gershenson and the Fairfield Hospital. However, he didn't think they helped and he returned to Dr. Dixon. Orville and Velma continued working at the garment factory and Orville began renewing his interest in flying model airplanes. Occasionally, the model planes would be flown at the Fairfield Park. One Christmas, at least three of the boys received model airplane kits.

In the fall of 1965, Orville and Velma took Elbert to Champaign where he was enrolled in Agricultural Engineering at the University of Illinois. Everything he had was in one suitcase and the major portion of his money for college was in the form of a letter saying that he had been granted a \$1,000 loan. Steven was a sophomore and Allen was a freshman at Fairfield. For his vo-ag project, Steven continued with the dogs and honeybees. Steven also had registered Angus cattle and Allen had registered Spotted Poland hogs. Norman began fifth grade at New Hope and Virginia stayed with Bud and Elouise Porter while Orville and Velma worked.

Harrolle Mayberry had Steven, Allen and Norman help break a colt to harness in the fall. The colt was the second colt from the mare that Steven had sold to Harrolle. To help break the colt to harness, Steven and Allen made a sled from oak. That fall was very wet and in the evenings and on the weekends, the boys would harness the horse to the sled and pick up downed corn. Harrolle was proud of the horse and kept him until he died in 1984.

Norman had a big black collie named Major who would kill groundhogs and bring them up to the house. He was always going to neighbors so Orville had Steven and Norman take him to the vet to be put to sleep. Steven buried him.

As with many of their other houses, the one at Pond Creek was heated with wood. However there was a gas furnace in the living room and bathroom. Also like some of the other houses, the water supply was inadequate. Drinking water was obtained from a cistern which was cleaned by Elbert, Steven, Allen and their cousin, Clifford. Truck loads of water would be purchased in the summer and dumped into the cistern.

The house was also built near the top of a hill with several tall trees nearby. Whenever it stormed, the house seemed to attract lightning. After a big bolt of lightning there would sometimes be a smell of burning wood or hot electrical wires. More than once, the ladder was got out and one of the family climbed into the attic to search for fire or smoldering wood. Once in a while the lightning would ruin an electrical appliance or radio.

One problem with the garage at Pond Creek was that the door was too low. When the truck had the stock racks on, it would not go under the door. However about everyone tried to make it fit, including Orville.

Elbert returned home for the summer of 1966 and worked at Airtex in fuel pump disassembly. Through a summer job program, Steven got work at the high school helping the janitors and Allen got a similar job at the Center Street Grade School. Steven also managed to get several free chickens and raised them that summer. When they were big enough, Velma and Steven would butcher five or six at a time and put some in the freezer. Chicken got old that summer and winter. Steven also purchased a new sewing machine for Velma. The Mercury sewing machine was worn out from making boys shirts and doing the mending. Gathering wood was one of the major activities during the winter.

Orville planted a huge turnip patch. To get to the field, the custom harvesting crew drove through the patch. Not only that, one of the crew, unfamiliar with the truck he was driving, dumped a load of corn in the middle of the turnips. No one really cared except Orville.

While killing sparrows, starlings and pigeons for an FFA sponsored pest contest, one of the boys was trying to bat a bird with a 2x4 and in the dark, hit Virginia in the head. Virginia was knocked out. The bird's heads were kept in a bag in the freezer and counted at the end of the contest.

In December 1966, Orville and Velma bought 15 acres on the southwest side of Cisne for \$15,500. However, they did not take possession until fall 1967. The big pink house and farm was known as the Ekleberry place.

When Elbert left for college, he left his 1955 Ford at home with no license plates and almost no gas. One of Steven's dogs was having problems in delivering her pups. Steven took the Ford and started down some backroads to the vet at Fairfield. However, he ran out of gas and the pups died.

About this time, Orville was having problems with the 1962 Rambler. Steven had to help the vo-ag teacher, Mr. MacDonald, with popcorn sales at ball games. Orville happened to be in town the same evening as Steven and caught him racing the Rambler. Allen also got in trouble for spinning out with the Rambler's push button transmission. The car also over heated once and Velma put cold water in the engine. Orville traded the Rambler for a 1964 Chevrolet in June 1967.

In early spring 1967, Orville rented three Holstein cows. After the cows had their calves, Steven and Allen milked the cows and later that summer, bought some additional calves to put on the cows. Steven also won a trip to the Illinois State Fair for his 4-H demonstration on "Smoking Honey Bees". He also won the FFA sectional and district competition for his honeybees which was entered in the "livestock specialty" class.

Elbert returned home to work at Airtex again in the summer of 1967. Near the start of summer he went to Evansville and bought a used 1967 BSA, 650 cc motorcycle. The boys learned to ride on gravel roads. During the summer, Nels Winland came over to butcher a cow. When he went to stick the cow, it jumped and Nels nearly cut his thumb off. Since there was no other way, Elbert and Nels went to Fairfield on the motorcycle with blood dripping most of the way. Orville and Norman got the motorcycle stuck in a ditch after dodging a large appliance box on the road.

Since the butchered cow was Steven's, he would often cook himself a steak for lunch. When Orville and Velma found out how many steaks Steven had eaten, they made him stop.

Steven farmed the 120 acres and hauled hay for several of the neighbors. Steven also rented 100 additional acres from Walter Anderson and David Dickey. Again through the summer job program, Allen got a job with the Fairfield Park Department. Elbert helped finish the planting that year. The planter trip broke with ten acres to go so Norman rode the planter and tripped it by hand.

Both Orville and Elbert had some excitement while they were living at Pond Creek. Charles "Blackie" Harris was in the Fairfield jail for killing two people, one of which was a Merriit. Somehow Blackie escaped and the police, the FBI and the Merriits were looking for him. The Merriits were patrolling some of the roads and stopping cars which they were unfamiliar with. When coming home late one night, Elbert rounded a curve and came upon three men carrying pistols and rifles. They were in the middle of the road but Elbert did not stop. Orville later caught a glimpse of Blackie hiding in a cemetery near where he was apprehended.

While at Pond Creek, Orville, Velma, and their family attended Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church.

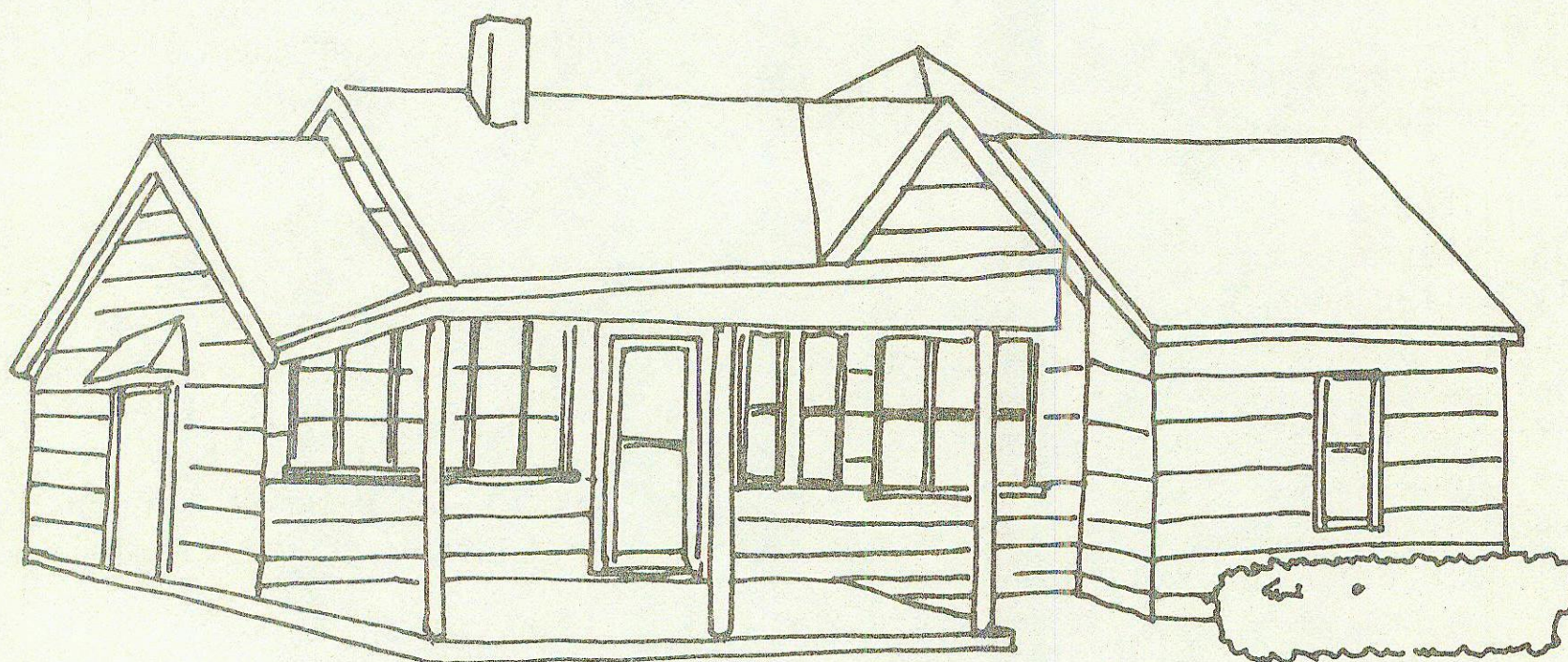
CISNE, 1967 to 1980

After school had begun Orville and his family moved to Cisne. Steven, Allen and Norman had already begun school at Cisne and drove back and forth daily from Pond Creek. Steven was a senior and Allen was a junior at Cisne High School and Norman was beginning the seventh grade. Leon and Jane Sams helped with the move. At the time of the move, Orville still had the Minneapolis Moline UB and some equipment. Cows, hogs, dogs and beehives were also moved. Norman and Virginia kept one dog, Trixie, until she was very old.

Shortly after the move, Orville, Velma, and Virginia took a weekend trip to see Fred and Marge Whitaker in Kentucky. Norman was on a school trip to Eastern Illinois University. While they were gone Steven and Allen had an accident with Orville's 1963 3/4 ton, blue, IH pickup. A lady approaching a one-lane bridge took her portion of the road out of the middle. Steven had the pickup on the shoulder and she still hit him. The truck was totaled but no one was seriously hurt. The insurance company replaced the pickup with a 1964 3/4 ton, red, IH pickup, but it was not as good as the older truck.

The 1964 Chevrolet was traded for a white 1966 Mercury that December. Orville suspected the mileage shown on the Chevy was off by at least 100,000 miles.

The carport at Cisne was a little awkward to back the Mercury out off. If you turned the front wheels too soon, the front fender would hit one of the posts supporting the roof. One of the family had hit the post and dented the fender. Two weeks after Orville had got the fender fixed, Elbert hit the post and dented the fender again.



Before school was out in the spring of 1968, Steven had began working on weekends for Orville's sister and brother-in-law, Irene and Robert Barbee who lived southwest of Wayne City. Before going on his senior trip to the Lake of the Ozarks, Robert paid Steven with a check, which, when cashed, would provide Steven with enough money for the trip. On his way home from Roberts, the pickup quit and by the time Orville had helped Steven get home there was no place to cash the check. That night all the cash in the Dickey house was scrounged up and the alarm was set so Steven could catch the bus early the next morning. The alarm didn't go off. When they woke up it was time for the bus to leave. Orville immediately sent Allen to hold the bus while Steven got ready. The school wouldn't hold the bus but Allen delayed it enough that Steven got to go on the trip.

Steven graduated from Cisne High in May 1968 and won a \$950 annual scholarship from R. & M. Kaufmann, the company that owned the garment factory where Orville and Velma worked. He also received a vocational education scholarship for tuition and fees.

Velma was sick during the spring of 1968. On Easter Sunday, she lost consciousness and Orville took her to Good Samaritan Hospital in Mt. Vernon where she stayed six days. She had an internal infection and her white blood cell count was very low. Dr. Dixon gave her all the blood transfusions that he dared and sent her home with orders to stay in bed. Steven did much of the cooking and would come home from school to fix Velma's lunch. After two weeks of rest, Velma underwent a hysterectomy and was in the hospital for eleven days. While Velma was in the hospital, Virginia stayed with Nona. In total, Velma was off work five months. Orville purchased and installed a dishwasher to help Velma with her recovery.

Elbert again returned home in May and started work at Airtex. He traded his 1967 BSA motorcycle on a new 1968 BSA. Before the motorcycle had been driven 1,500 miles, Steven was involved in an accident which totaled the motorcycle and a car. Steven was very lucky and spent only one day in the hospital with a broken bone just above his wrist. The wreck had thrown the motorcycle nearly 100 feet and Steven said he remembered seeing the motorcycle in the air above him. He never did find one of his shoes which was knocked off during the impact.

During the summer Steven stayed with and farmed for Robert and Irene. Robert and Steven also got involved in some of the local tractor pulls. Steven generally pulled with Robert's John Deere. Also, for the second time, Steven won the FFA district and sectional competition with his honeybee project. Allen began working for Sam Reed at the Cisne Phillips 66 station and also began doing some preaching to fill in once in a while at some of the local churches. On 16 June 1968, he was licensed to preach by the Cisne Missionary Baptist Church. Norman went on a camping trip through one of the youth programs and Virginia was in the Cisne Head Start Program.

Later in the summer Steven got a job at Airtex. He and Elbert purchased a 1965 Chevrolet Impala and Allen purchased the red 1964 IH pickup from Orville. That fall Elbert returned to the University of Illinois and Steven began a program in vocational education at the University of Illinois. Elbert and Steven roomed together and made several trips to Olney to visit their girl friends. When he left for college, Steven sold 20 bee hives to Norman at \$10 each. Norman later used the bees as an FFA project and paid for them four years later when he sold them. Virginia began first grade that fall and Norman was in the eighth grade. Allen was a senior and was a member of the basketball team.

Orville continued his interest in model airplanes and gradually went from control lines to radio control. One reason for the switch to radio control was because Orville got very dizzy when flying the control line planes. He began the Cisne Hobby Shop in late 1967 and formed a 4-H flying club, "The Cisne Flying Aces". The family went to some air shows and for two or three years participated in model airplane flying contests at the Olney-Noble Airport. Steven was one of the better fliers and often flew "combat". Combat competition used control-line planes which were mostly a wing and an engine. These planes had speeds near 100 mph. Ribbons were attached to the tails of planes and two contestants would fly in the same circle. The object was to cut the ribbon off the other plane with your propeller without hitting either the other plane or the ground. The 4-H club flew planes on the infield at the county fair to show their projects. Norman went to a 4-H camp for officers that year.

Orville built several planes from kits and also built some from scratch. Often, he would spend several hours perfecting a paint job. Generally the planes were white and trimmed in bright colors such as orange, green or red. One of the first planes he made was a Veco "Squaw". It had a built up fuselage and was involved in several crashes. Because of all the repairs, the plane became too heavy and Orville made a "profile" plane out of it. Crashes which required repairs did not seem to bother Orville very much. He seemed to like having something to do in the evenings after being at the factory all day. Orville also kept a place in the pasture fenced off and mowed close so he would have a landing strip for the radio control planes.

Allen would skip school once in a while and didn't think Orville and Velma would know. However, Velma went to pick him up one afternoon and caught him returning to school. Allen also began smoking and you really can't hide the smell of smoke, especially around non-smokers. At the service station, Allen got caught by Orville. Seeing him pull in for gas, Allen laid his cigar on a barrel. Sam Reed waited for the appropriate moment and asked Allen if that cigar on the barrel was his and had him get it off since it was a fire hazard.

Allen graduated from Cisne High School in May 1969. His senior class went south to Biloxi, Mississippi. When going to Olney to take the ACT test before graduation, the fan belt came off Allen's IH pickup and the engine got hot. Later, Allen had to rebuild the engine. Norman graduated from Cisne Grade School that spring and continued in 4-H where he had honeybees as one of his projects. He won the local 4-H speaking contest and was awarded a trip to the Illinois State Fair at Springfield where he won the 4-H speech contest with his presentation on honeybees. Orville, Velma, Virginia and Elbert and his fiancée, Peggy Smith, accompanied Norman to the fair. As a winner, Norman gave the speech on an Evansville, Indiana farm television program.

Norman also hauled hay for several farmers in the Cisne area. He bought three bred Guernsey heifers as an FFA project. After the cows had their calves, Norman broke the cows to milk. He sold them for \$150 each and bought nine black Angus heifers which he sold with calves after graduating from high school. Norman, with Orville's help, bought some more bees at an auction and at one time, had 65 hives.

During the summer of 1969, both Elbert and Steven worked in water pump assembly at Airtex. Steven sold his part of the 1965 Chevy to Elbert and purchased a 1957 Ford so both boys had cars that summer, which led to a small problem. Coming home from Airtex early one morning, Elbert and Steven began racing and Steven's car was a little faster. However, a state policeman, Bud Feather, saw the boys leave Fairfield and caught Elbert at Geff. Steven hid his car in a garage and went home through the country after the excitement died down. To avoid some severe traffic violations, Elbert told Bud who was driving the other car. Bud followed Elbert home and gave both boys a ticket for doing 75 mph in a 65 mph zone.

Allen again worked for Sam Reed that summer and Norman stayed with and farmed for his grandfather, Audrey. Norman disked with an IH-806 and Audrey planted. Norman got stuck several times and caught the disk on a tree which caused more delays. They planted soybeans until July 10, that summer.

Orville was ordained as a deacon in the Cisne Missionary Baptist Church on 8 June 1969. Elmo Manahan was ordained at the same time. Orville and Elmo were the first deacons that the Cisne Baptist Church had ordained. Norman and Virginia accepted Christ as their Saviour and joined Cisne Baptist Church. They were both baptized at Bloom Missionary Baptist Church.

That fall three of the Dickey boys were in college. Elbert and Steven were again rooming together and attending the University of Illinois. Allen was enrolled in Union University at Jackson, Tennessee. Prior to going to college, Allen sold his IH pickup and Orville and Velma took him to Jackson. Norman began high school and Virginia was in second grade.

Orville had a lot of problems with his leg that fall. In October his leg was nearly "frozen" or "locked" with the knee in a bent position because of rheumaty arthritis. He was taken to Jewish Hospital in St. Louis where therapists began working with his leg in order to avoid surgery. He stayed in the hospital for six weeks and got out Wednesday before Thanksgiving. Velma went and saw Orville every weekend.

One reason Orville got out of the hospital was because Elbert was getting married. On Friday, 28 November 1969, Elbert married Peggy Smith, daughter of Robert and Hazel Smith, at the Blue Point Free Will Baptist Church near Cisne. Steven was the best man, Virginia was the flower girl and Allen was an usher. Elbert was still in college and Peggy had been attending Olney Community College. After their wedding Elbert and Peggy lived in Urbana and Peggy obtained a secretarial position in the Agricultural Engineering Department at the University of Illinois.

On Sunday after the wedding, Orville returned to the hospital and remained there until almost Christmas. Before coming home for Christmas, Orville purchased Velma and Virginia's Christmas presents at the hospital gift shop. He bought a Playdough Factory for Virginia and a sweater for Velma. While in therapy he had also made a ceramic vase and a mosaic tile plate that contained the letter "V" for Velma. Orville also made ceramic creamers and sugar bowls for his daughter-in-law, Peggy, and future daughters-in-law, Janice Henson and Peggy Atwood. Norman received a radio controlled car that Christmas because he was losing interest in the planes. Orville gave Norman his radio and purchased a new one for himself.

Allen rode the bus home from Jackson and purchased a 1962 Chevy over the Christmas break. After Christmas, Allen took Orville back to St. Louis for a check-up. They were driving Orville's 1966 green Chevrolet 1/2 ton pickup and fortunately the truck was equipped with tire chains because the road was solid ice most of the way. During this period of illness, Orville missed three months of work.

In the summer of 1970, Steven and Allen returned home from college. During the summer Steven worked some for the Robinson farm near Mt. Erie and at Airtex. Allen worked some for Bob Glover and also at Airtex. Norman again helped his grandfather, Audrey, with some of the farming and he, with Orville's help, made an arrangement with a neighbor, Ruby Galbraith to use her Ford 8N tractor. Norman bought a Bush Hog mower and with the 8N, mowed pastures, empty lots and the Cisne Baptist Church yard. As part of the arrangement with Mrs. Galbraith, Norman mowed her pasture for free. The Bush Hog mower was purchased with money made from hauling hay, selling honey and some of the money from his three cows. Norman sold the mower that fall.

While mowing around the bee hives with the 8N, a bee got into Norman's ear so deep it could not be seen. Norman went crazy with pain and fear. He hit the garage door hard with the tractor when coming to the house. A neighbor, Janice Shell, dropped everything and rushed Norman to the doctor. The bee crawled out without stinging but Norman still got a shot for the pain. Norman later taught Virginia to drive the 8N and she hit the corner of the garage.

That summer, Orville, Velma, Norman and Virginia took a trip to Kelly Bee Supply in Tennessee. On the way they stopped in Indiana at Santa Claus Land and Lincoln's Boyhood Home. Two days after returning home, they went to the NATS (national model airplane show and contest) which were held at the Glenview Naval Station north of Chicago. Orville had wanted to go to the show for sometime because the airplane modeling magazine he subscribed to always featured an article or two about some of the planes that had been shown at previous NATS. Several boys from the Cisne Flying Aces went with them. They, at least eight, all went in the white 1966 Mercury. On the way they had tire trouble and had to purchase a tire. The service station manager, apparently thinking all those kids belonged to Orville and Velma, sold Orville a new, brand-name, tire at an exceptionally low price. Velma and Virginia did not go all the way to the NATS that year, but stayed in Urbana with Elbert and Peggy.

On 20 June 1970, Steven married Janice Henson, daughter of Roscoe and Betty Henson, at Rock Branch General Baptist Church. Elbert was Steven's best man and Virginia was flower girl. Norman and Allen were ushers. After their wedding Steven and Janice lived in a apartment at Cisne. In the fall they moved to an apartment in Urbana which Peggy and Elbert had lived in. Janice obtained a job at Price's Paint Store as a bookkeeper and sales person.

Allen married Peggy Atwood, daughter of Layton and Neva Atwood, on 15 August 1970 at the Cisne Missionary Baptist Church. Allen's grandfather, Harrolle Mayberry, performed the wedding. Norman was present at the wedding and took photographs. Allen and Peggy moved to Jackson, Tennessee where he began his sophomore year at Union University. Peggy obtained a job as a telephone operator.

Also in August, Elbert completed his undergraduate program at the University of Illinois. He received both a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Engineering and Agricultural Science. He and Peggy moved to Springfield where had a position with the Division of Highways and Peggy found a secretarial job with Franklin Life Insurance Company. Their apartment was in a basement and heavy rains caused flooding one night. Peggy, at home by herself, had to clean up after having about 12 inches of water in the house. In November Elbert and Peggy moved to Philo, Illinois because Elbert had accepted a full time research position with the University of Illinois.

Gas prices were going up and since the older boys were married, Orville decided he would like a smaller car. He bought an Opel wagon in Centralia, Illinois in 1971. He test drove it and was impressed that it would do 70 mph in third gear. He was later disappointed to learn that it would only go 75 mph in fourth. But it had room for the airplanes and got good mileage.

Third gear went out of the Opel while Norman was driving. While taking it to the mechanic, it locked in two gears at once. Parts had to be ordered which took three or four weeks to arrive. Orville put plates back on the white 1966 Mercury and for a time kept three vehicles running.

Norman drove either the Mercury or the Chevy pickup and performed and paid for most of their maintenance and minor repairs. After washing and waxing the green pickup in the backyard, Norman backed into a tree while trying to miss Virginia and the kittens. Orville was sure that \$100 damage was done. However, it was fixed for \$25, but the paint never matched.

After completing his sophomore year in the spring of 1971, Allen decided to quit college. He and Peggy moved to a farm house near Mt. Erie. Peggy obtained a job with AMF in Olney and Allen found a job at Champion in West Salem.

Orville bought his first riding mower, a 8 hp, yellow, Wizard, in the spring of 1971. Norman again farmed for his grandfather, Audrey, and he also won a trip to Springfield, Ill. and to Washington, D.C. in 1971 through some FFA activities. He had won sectional and district awards for his honey bees. Norman was one of a few juniors to receive the FFA award of State Farmer.

Virginia became quite good at telling everything she knew. For example, she saw Norman back the car into a pole at school and she told at the supper table that night. She and Norman also teased each other quite a bit. Once, Virginia squirted some lemon juice down his throat. That took his breath away and he rolled out on the floor.

Norman took Virginia to church camp during the summer. Somehow, he let the car get into the ditch. This time, neither he or Virginia told, but Orville found out about it.

In August, Orville, Velma, Virginia, Elbert and Peggy also took a camping trip to Washinton, D.C. Some of the major sights seen on the seven-day trip included Washington, D.C.; Mt. Vernon; Monticello; Civil War battle sites at Gettysburg, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Spotsylvania, Manassas, and the Wilderness; and the mountains along the Skyline Drive and Blue Ridge Parkway.

Norman graduated from high school in May 1972 after attending only three years. All the required course work had been completed and he had been accepted as a student in Agricultural Engineering at the University of Illinois. Like Steven, Norman also won the R. & M. Kaufmann scholarship which had been raised to \$1,500 per year. Norman worked for the Robinson Farm near Enterprise that summer and got most of his dinner during work from Robert and Hazel Smith.

Steven also graduated in May with a Bachelor of Science degree in Vocational Education from the University of Illinois. After graduating he worked for Roland Espenschied at the Agricultural Engineering Department until July when his Vo-Ag teaching job began at Okawville, Illinois. He also continued working part time at a small animal veterinary clinic north of Urbana where he had been employed since March 1971. Norman occasionally visited the clinic and helped with the work once or twice. The vet gave Norman a bird dog pup.

Orville and Velma as well as Janice's parents, Roscoe and Betty Henson, helped move Steven to Okawville. Later when Steven and Janice moved from a rented house to their house trailer at Okawville, Orville and Velma helped. The move was made during a snowstorm and Orville got stuck in a snowdrift while returning to Cisne.

Orville and Velma became grandparents in a big way in July, 1972. On the first, Allen and Peggy became the parents of Stacey; on the second, Steven and Janice became the parents of Debra; and on the twelfth, Elbert and Peggy became the parents of Michelle. In addition to visiting their grandchildren, Orville and Velma purchased a new truck in 1972. It was a 1/2 ton Dodge Pickup with a factory installed Winnebago "camper" shell. The truck was white with orange trim which matched the shell. The white 1966 Mercury, the green 1966 Chevrolet pickup and the 1970 Opel station wagon were traded in. (Allen bought the pickup in 1974 and painted it red.)

Orville and Velma also went to the 1972 NATS. Steven, Norman, Virginia and Bob White made the trip with them and they camped at the Glenview Naval Station.

In the fall of 1972, Norman attended the University of Illinois and lived with Elbert, Peggy and Michelle at their apartment in Philo. Virginia was in the fifth grade at Cisne and had began taking piano lessons. Orville and Velma bought an upright piano at Enterprise, Illinois for \$60 and the boys and daughters-in-law helped move it to Cisne. The piano teacher, Mrs. Bostwick, thought Virginia's eyes needed checked. The eye doctor said she could not see the leaves on a tree without glasses. That explained several things such as not being able to catch a ball. She couldn't see it. Later Virginia played piano for Bible School at three different churches and became the regular pianist at Cisne Baptist.

That November, Orville and Velma sold 13 acres to Bill Frye, a neighbor and the Cisne High School principal, for \$5,500. With Virginia's help, Norman built a new fence to divide the properties.

Christmas in 1972 was a relatively large event for Orville and Velma. They always had a big Christmas tree and this year they had three granddaughters. One of the events was trying to get the three to pose for a picture on the living room sofa. If there was a good photograph obtained, it was strictly an accident.

Orville's health began to decline in 1972. One of the major problems was with his eyesight. The years of having too much blood sugar and then not enough sugar had weakened many of the very small blood vessels in his eyes. These weakened vessels would occasionally leak and small blood clots would form, clouding Orville's vision. At times he used a magnifying glass to read the newspaper and he got to where he couldn't see to fly the model airplanes. Because of this, his interest changed from radio controlled planes to radio controlled boats. The boats were easier to see. As a result of his continuing loss of vision, he was put on medical disability. His last day of work at the garment factory was 26 March 1973.

Allen and Peggy bought four lots and an additional acre in Mt. Erie in the summer of 1973. The lots had several old buildings which Allen tore down or used for storage. Allen and Peggy bought a 12'x 70' trailer to live in. After Allen and Peggy bought the lots, Orville got several pine trees to use as a windbreak and to serve as a screen between his land and that which he had sold to Bill Frye. He also gave Allen and Peggy some of the pines to plant on their lots. Cedar trees which came from land belonging to Roscoe Henson and Paul Shelton were also planted. Orville liked cedar trees and would often cut one for Christmas.

Norman returned home in the summer of 1973. He got a job on the third shift at Champion in West Salem. About two weeks later when returning home from work, Norman had an accident with Allen's light green, 1962 Chevrolet Belair. Just when coming out of the bottoms near Enterprise, Norman hit the back of a farm tractor. Fortunately, there were no major injuries. Allen, Steven and Norman worked all weekend to put Allen's engine from the wrecked 1962 into a red 1962 Impala body he bought from Steven. Allen drove it to work Monday. With his second paycheck from Champion, Norman bought his first car, a 1963 Chevrolet. About the middle of July, Norman began work at Airtex.

Since Norman was working full time, Virginia began mowing the lawn. However, the Wizard mower threw a rod that summer while Norman was driving it and he and Orville installed a new short block.

In the later part of June, Orville, Velma, Virginia, Peggy and Elbert went on a twelve-day camping trip. Michelle was left with her other grandparents, Robert and Hazel Smith. They took the Dodge pickup which had two bucket seats in the back. Elbert had a professional meeting in Lexington, Kentucky. While he and Peggy attended the meeting, Orville, Velma and Virginia camped at Red River Gorge in the Daniel Boone National Forest. Daniel Boone had stayed in this area for about two years and the area contained natural bridges which had been created by wind erosion. After the meeting, the group went through Cumberland Gap and took the Blue Ridge Parkway to the Smokies where they camped

at Cherokee, North Carolina. In addition to the scenery they also saw the outdoor play "Unto These Hills" which depicted Cherokee history and how the Cherokee Nation was forced to leave the Smokies and go to Oklahoma. After seeing the Smokies, they went to Lookout Mountain in Chattanooga, Tennessee and saw some of the Civil War battlefields there and at Chickamauga. They also went to Shiloh and camped near Pickwick Landing on the Tennessee River. On the way home, Orville stopped at a major supplier of model airplane components in Nashville.

In the fall of 1973, Norman returned to the University of Illinois and again stayed with Elbert, Peggy and Michelle. Virginia began the sixth grade at Cisne.

Orville and Velma had their fourth grandchild in April 1974. Chad, son of Allen and Peggy, was born 16 April. In May, Elbert completed his Master of Science degree at the University of Illinois. Even though working full time, he had taken courses as time permitted. Norman again returned home and worked at Airtex during the summer and Virginia mowed lawns. Even though Orville and Velma thought she was a little young, Virginia began baby-sitting for John Hosselton. The Hosseltons liked Virginia and began using her as their regular baby-sitter. In midsummer, Norman sold his 1963 Chevrolet and bought a 1967 Chevrolet Impala. Orville, Steven and Norman fixed the rust and touched up the paint.

Orville was hospitalized at Good Samaritan 7 April 1974 for five days. The diagnosis was diabetes mellitus; coronary insufficiency, angina pectoris, left, anterior vascular block (heart pain); hypertension; and nephritis (kidney inflammation). Dr. Dixon decided that he had done all he could for Orville and suggested he see a specialist. Because his poor vision, the Illinois Division of Vocational Rehabilitation was also working with Orville. On 11 July 1974, Richard Isett, a counselor for the blind and visually handicapped wrote Dr. Suresh, a diabetic specialist at Olney, and asked if he would accept Orville as a patient. Mr. Isett stated that Dr. Dixon was no longer able to control and regulate Orville's diabetes. Mr. Isett also made arrangements for possible photocoagulation or laser treatment of Orville's left eye. This relatively new treatment was done at St. John's Mercy Hospital in St. Louis in July 1974.

Orville became ill and hyperventilated 12 July 1974. Virginia wanted to call the ambulance but Orville, being disoriented, would not let her. Steven came by and thinking Orville was about gone, called the ambulance. In August, Dr. Suresh accepted Orville as a patient and Mr. Isett arranged for the state to pay for ten office visits and other medical expenses as necessary. Because of continuing illness, Orville was again in the hospital from 23 August until 3 September 1974. About this time, the doctors indicated that Orville had only one or two years of his life remaining.

Norman returned to college that fall and roomed in a house with twelve other boys. That summer, Elbert and Peggy had purchased and moved to a house in Urbana. On 15 October 1974, Julie was born to Elbert and Peggy.

The new year had hardly began when Orville returned to the hospital for three days beginning 15 January 1975. He also was taken to the emergency room on 31 January where he was treated by Dr. DeKovessy. From that point on, both Dr. Suresh and Dr. DeKovessy worked with Orville. On 5 May 1975, Orville went to St. Louis for a second laser treatment on his eyes. This time the treatment was done at Barnes Hospital in St. Louis because they had better facilities to handle patients with a heart condition. Orville's heart condition and its behavior during the earlier treatment at St. John's had created some concern for the doctors. In October 1975, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, feeling they had done all that was appropriate, removed Orville from their active files.

Allen and Peggy built a three bedroom house on their lots in Mt. Erie and moved into the house in April, 1975. Norman returned home that summer and got a job at Champion. Norman took Virginia who was in the seventh grade to the grade school graduation. Rita Stark happened to be there and Norman asked her out. They dated a lot that summer. Steven, Janice and Debra moved to Albion, Illinois in late May. Steven had accepted a teaching position at Wabash Valley Community College.

Virginia was in 4-H and had some exhibits at the Wayne County fair which did exceptionally well. She went to the Illinois State Fair that summer. The people that were supposed to take Virginia to the fair forgot to pick her up and Virginia ended up riding with someone she didn't know. While at the fair she got sick and Ruth Vaughan took care of her. However, she won and as a winner at the state fair, Virginia appeared on the Evansville television station with her demonstration on "How to Paint and Trim a Denim Shirt". Virginia also continued mowing and she babysat regularly for the Hosseltons, Catheys and Carters. While babysitting at Hosseltons, Virginia also had to answer their ambulance service emergency phone and sometimes would simply babysit the phone. Her piano teacher, Mrs. Bostwick also hired Virginia to clean her house once a week.

Orville's interest in boats had continued to grow and he and Bob White had started building their own boats. They got the hulls from Bob's brother-in-law, Bob Schaff. In August, 1975, Orville, Velma, Norman, Virginia, Rita Stark (Norman's fiance) and Bob White went to the INTERNATS (an international model boat show) in Indianapolis, Indiana. They stayed with Bob's sister. Orville won a 3rd place trophy and ribbon for his "Deep V" Stand-off Scale. This boat, the "Boss O Nova" was a scale model of one used in off-shore races. In the races, Orville won a 2nd place trophy. Bob White's boat won the 1st place trophy for his boat in the stand off scale. Orville had scaled, built and painted Bob's boat. The only thing Bob had done was to put life jackets on the models of three men. While at Indianapolis, they toured Spring Mill State Park.

Prior to the trip, Orville had to be taken to the emergency room on 3 August. After the trip, Virginia painted the men in Orville's boat because he could not see well enough to do it. Later, Virginia did a lot of the driving for Orville. That worked better than when Velma drove because Orville was not as critical of Virginia's driving.

During the summer and fall of 1975, the Cisne Missionary Baptist Church was sided with brick. Orville was an advocate of the brick siding and was given the job of supervising construction. All of Orville's boys helped dig the footings. Norman, Monte Manahan and Jim Hill stacked bricks as time allowed that summer. The church was dedicated 7 September. Norman returned to college the fall and Virginia began eighth grade.

Orville and Velma refinanced their house at Cisne and did some remodeling. Insulation was blown into the walls and ceiling and the foundation was lined with styrofoam. All the boys helped with this job. After insulating, the dining room, living room, kitchen and part of the bathroom was paneled. A new linoleum was laid in the kitchen. At Easter in 1976, Norman and Rita helped finish with remodeling by paneling two of the bedrooms.

That Christmas, Virginia received a model boat and Mrs. Galbraith gave her a Keshound dog. On Father's Day, Virginia gave the dog to Orville. He liked the dog, but it disappeared. Orville thought that someone may have killed the dog since it looked like a wolf. Chad, son of Allen and Peggy, also had a problem with a dog. While at Peggy's parents, a dog bit Chad and he had to have several stitches in his face.

Orville was taken by ambulance to the emergency room at Olney 8 February 1976. In March, Orville bought a 1970 IH Cub Cadet with a 42 inch mower for \$575 from Kissner and Weaver at Wayne City. Orville rebuilt the IH engine and repainted the mower. The Wizard mower was sold at a consignment sale.

Orville and Velma had a strawberry patch at Cisne. Usually Orville would help pick some of the berries. This spring, however, Orville laid on the grass and watched while Velma and Virginia picked.

In May 1976, both Virginia and Norman graduated. Rita Stark, Norman's fiance also graduated in May from Illinois State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Education. Norman received his Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Engineering and accepted a test engineer position with International Harvester at Memphis, Tennessee, where he began working on round balers and cotton strippers. A vision test was required and Norman went to the eye doctor that had treated Velma and Virginia. The doctor said "you're the first Dickey I've met who could see across the room".

Also in May, Steven resigned from Wabash Valley and put his application in for the coal mine at Keensburg. From May until November 1976, when he got the coal mine job, Steven worked primarily at a gas station in Albion.

Again Virginia babysat and mowed lawns. Sometimes, Virginia would babysit six children at a time. They belonged to Hosseltons and Boehrs. Mr. Boehr was principal of the North Wayne School Unit. She also continued her 4-H exhibits and returned for the second time to the Illinois State Fair. Orville and Velma took Virginia and some other girls to the fair. The girls rode in the back of the pickup. At the fair, the girls stayed in the dorm and Orville and Velma camped in the truck on the fairgrounds. While they were gone, the bathroom stool was left running. Roots in the sewer line caused water to back up and the bathroom and basement got very wet. When they got home from the fair, Elbert, Steven and Allen had dug out the sewer line, removed the clog and were ready to put things back together.

In August 1976, Orville, Velma and Virginia returned to the Indy Unlimited Model Boat competition at Indianapolis. Steven and Bob White also accompanied them and they again stayed with Bob's sister. Since Orville couldn't see, a provision was available which allowed Bob to drive his boat in the races. Steven helped Bob by keeping him slowed down on the turns. Orville's boat finished 22nd and Steven's finished 195th. For his 22nd place finish Orville won the Dremel Hobby Tool. After the competition at Indianapolis, Orville, Velma and Virginia went to a boat race at De Pue Lake near La Salle-Peru, Illinois. Virginia entered the race but did not get to compete because of a radio problem. Virginia began high school that fall.

On 4 September 1976, Norman married Rita Stark, daughter of Robert and Rosellen Stark, at the Blue Point Freewill Baptist Church. The day they were married, one of Rita's aunts died. Rather than change their wedding plans, Norman and Rita changed their honeymoon plans so they could attend the visitation. Also Norman's grandmother, Pearl, had surgery on her hip that same weekend. However his grandfather, Audrey, and a cousin, Greg Dickey attended the wedding. Norman and Rita made their home in a two-bedroom duplex in Memphis. Rita found a position as a substitute teacher in the Shelby County School system that year.

In May 1977 Norman and Rita bought a house trailer and rented a space to park the trailer on the north side of Memphis. Orville, Velma and Virginia visited Norman and Rita for four days that summer. That fall Rita began teaching remedial math full time at Mumford Ellis School.

While visiting Norman and Rita, a wind storm hit Cisne and knocked several limbs down. Steven, Allen and Phillip Shell worked all day cleaning up Orville and Velma's yard.

Virginia's lawn mowing peaked that year and she was taking care of 20 yards in Cisne. Some days Orville would help her load the equipment and take her to the different lawns. Then he would go to the restaurant. When he felt too bad, Virginia did the work alone. Virginia also went to Six Flags with Steven, Janice, Debra, Norman and Rita in 1977.

Virginia liked flower arranging and in 1977 she went to the Illinois State Fair for the third time, where she won a blue ribbon. Rita took Virginia to the fair and stayed in the dorm with her. Rita was on vacation at the time.

Like the boys, Virginia also burned a skillet. She had company and was fixing bacon. The bacon got on fire when she was not watching close enough and filled the house with smoke.

Orville was getting progressively worse and arrangements were made with the school to allow Virginia to stay home until 10:30 a.m. On days when Orville was in a worse condition, Virginia stayed home all day. For many people, Orville did not appear to be very sick. One of the major reasons for this was Orville tried not to let his pain or illness be seen by others. As shown with Virginia's mowing, if Orville was able to go at all, he went to the coffee shop in Cisne which gave the impression that he was getting along alright. Another time he had been fairly sick in the summer of 1977. Elbert came home to help but Orville seemed fine by Sunday. While Elbert was driving back to Urbana, Velma had to take Orville to the emergency room at Olney where he stayed almost a week. This time, Norman was in the field with IH near Lincoln, Illinois. Rita happened to be visiting Norman and they drove to Olney to see Orville.

Mark, son of Allen and Peggy was born 18 June 1977 which made four granddaughters and two grandsons for Orville and Velma. Shortly after his birth, Mark had to have surgery. He again had surgery in 1985.

Orville traded the 1972 Dodge pickup for a 1976 Mercury in January 1978. He had heard the car being advertised on the radio and called the dealer. Even though there was a lot of snow on the ground, the dealer drove the car to Cisne. Orville test drove the car to the corner and called the bank about getting insurance to cover the loan in case of death. The bank said yes and Orville traded at the kitchen table. Elbert then purchased the pickup. During the time Orville had the pickup, both he and Norman were involved in several small fender benders.

In April 1978, Norman was transferred to International Harvester at Hinsdale, Illinois. Six weeks later Rita moved to northern Illinois when school was out. In July, Virginia, Steven, Allen, Norman, Rita and Allen's boys went "hogging" near Mt. Erie. Virginia remained active in 4-H. Some of her clothing projects were sent to the Illinois State Fair and she was a Leader at the 4-H camp. In August, Elbert received his Doctor of Philosophy degree in Agricultural Engineering from the University of Illinois. He and his family moved to Lincoln, Nebraska where he had accepted an extension and research position at the University of Nebraska.

Orville continued to get worse and was in and out of the hospital several times in 1978. When he had a seizure at home 29 September, John Hosselton brought the ambulance. Before they got Orville out of the house, his heart quit beating. John worked and worked and finally Orville's heart started. At the emergency room, the doctors and nurses cut his clothes off and began work. Virginia was in the room and would not let them give Orville a shot until they had taken a blood sugar content. Too many times, the medical staff had assumed Orville needed insulin when he actually needed sugar. Orville was discharged 3 October, but because of continuing problems was readmitted on 12 October for five days. Velma and Virginia took Orville to the emergency room on 5 December. The doctor on duty was going to send Orville home, but when he could not stand up to put his clothes on, they decided to admit him and he stayed for four days.

On 16 December 1978, Orville's father, Audrey, died. Orville went to the funeral and his boys helped him walk to the cemetery. Orville, Velma and Virginia went Christmas shopping at Centraillia that year. The store had a coffee shop where Orville stayed. Velma and Virginia picked out gifts and went by the coffee shop periodically to show Orville what they were getting. All the Shopping was done in that one store. That Christmas, there was a concern that having all the family in would be too much. On Christmas afternoon, Orville laid on the living room sofa and slept while the grandchildren played on the living room floor. Also Orville's family had always went to Audrey and Pearl Dickeys on Christmas for dinner. In 1978, Orville and Velma and some of the children went to see Pearl late in the afternoon. He enjoyed seeing all his family and was still able to get some rest.

Sunday, 11 February 1979, Orville was taken back to the hospital. About 3 a.m. Monday he had a seizure and the doctors shocked him five times to get his heart beating again. While in intensive care, Orville would try and remove the tubes and monitoring devices. His brother, Carlyn who was also a diabetic and had died in 1974, had talked to Orville about problems with dialysis. This combined with his pain and his orders for no more heroic actions may have caused his behavior while in intensive care. Elbert and his family drove in from Lincoln and Norman flew in from Texas. Velma and at least one of her children was always at the hospital until Orville got out of intensive care. After being in the hospital for about two weeks, Orville died on 24 February 1979. Virginia and an old friend, Marion Hardesty, was with Orville when he died. Orville had went to school with Marion and they had visited over the years but he had not seen Marion since Marion's father had died.

Elbert and his family had left for Lincoln that morning and Velma had gone to lunch with Harold and Lois Dickey. Steven called the State Police to see if they could stop Elbert. The police missed Elbert and he got to Lincoln. When Elbert opened the door to his house, the phone was ringing. Without resting, they turned around and drove back. Norman had taken some extra vacation time while Rita stayed in Chicago. She had driven down for the weekend and they were preparing to leave when they were called.

The next day Cisne had an ice storm which knocked the electricity out for two days. Steven used a 4-wheel drive truck to open a road to the cemetery. Normally only 30 minutes were required for the drive but that day it took two and half hours. Dale Brookman conducted the funeral service which was held at Arrington Prairie. The electricity was still off at the church and portable generators were used to run the furnace and lights. One of the larger generators was provided by Jimmy Taylor. The Cisne Baptist Church, where Orville was a member and a deacon, provided dinner for the family.

That summer Virginia was again a Leader at the 4-H camp and for the fifth straight year Virginia or one of her 4-H projects was at the Illinois State Fair. Virginia also won a trip to Washington, D.C.

Velma had another grandchild, Lisa, born to Elbert and Peggy on 12 June 1979. In July, Velma, Norman and Rita visited Elbert and his family in Nebraska. During the visit, they all took a one day trip to Fort Kearney, the sandhills, and Ash Hollow where Oregon Trail ruts are visible.

That November, at the Wayne County 4-H Achievement Program, Virginia was one of six members to receive the Key Club Award which recognized outstanding achievement. She also was named as an alternate delegate to attend the 4-H Citizenship Shortcourse in Washington, D.C. During her last year of school, Virginia only went until noon. As part of a work-study program, she got a part time job in the Cisne Flower Shop for the afternoons. However, for two weeks straight, Virginia worked more than 60 hours even though she was in school. As part of some 4-H activities, Virginia also took time from school to give seat belt demonstrations all over Wayne County.

Norman and Rita purchased a house in April. The house was in Romeoville and was about halfway between where they worked.

Virginia graduated from Cisne High School in May, 1980 and won a \$500 scholarship from the Eugene B. Kaufmann Foundation. This scholarship was renewable for four years and was similar to the ones Steven and Norman had received. In addition to the scholarship, Virginia got to attend the 4-H Citizenship Short Course in June in Washington, D.C. After returning from the short course, she went to Evansville and taught the citizenship material to other 4-H members. In addition, Virginia attended a deaf camp and learned to sign and communicate with deaf people. Virginia also worked at the Cisne Flower Shop during much of the summer.

Saturday, 7 June 1980, at about 9:00 p.m., a tornado struck Allen and Peggy's new house in Mt. Erie. Velma was talking to Allen on the phone when the tornado struck. Mark and Chad were in the bathtub. Miraculously no one was hurt, but the house was destroyed. The roof was gone, the attached garage was demolished and tree limbs were on their vehicles. Hearing Allen saying "Oh, my" before the phone went dead was enough to get Velma excited. Norman, who happened to be home, drove Velma and Rita to Mt. Erie about as fast as the Mercury would go. Velma got the kids wrapped in a blanket and in her car while Allen, Steven, Norman and neighbors helped get some of the furniture moved to Peggy's parents' house to get it out of the rain. Norman stayed at the house all night to ensure that no one would bother the house.

Near the middle of summer, Virginia and Velma went to see Elbert and his family. Elbert took Velma, Virginia and his family on a three-day trip to Fort Robinson, the Black Hills and the Badlands. Velma had brought the garden tiller to Nebraska and gave it to Elbert.

On Labor Day weekend, 1980 Steven and Janice moved from Albion to 10 acres and their new house southwest of Cisne. Allen and Peggy also moved into their rebuilt house on Labor Day weekend. Velma had decided to purchase a house trailer in Cisne and made arrangements to sell the big pink house. Velma also moved part of her belongings on Labor Day weekend. She had an auction 27 September 1980 and sold most of the furniture and tools before moving to the house trailer. The kids had already divided up some of Orville's tools the preceding Easter. Major items distributed included:

Elbert	box end wrenches, 1/2" socket set, draw knife
Steven	combination wrenches, tool box, square
Allen	open end wrenches, 1/4" drill, bow saw
Norman	1/2" drill, drill index, brace and bits, power saw
Virginia	3/8" socket set, small screw driver set, tool box

Virginia began school at Olney Community College that fall. She rented an apartment and worked part-time in a flower shop. Virginia also bought a 1962 Chevrolet Nova SS which seemed to have its share of mechanical problems.

CISNE, 1980 to 1982

Work at the garment factory began to slow down in 1980. Often Velma only worked two or three days a week and finances began to get very tight. Steven helped Velma do some work on the trailer to get it winterized.

Virginia married Larry Shadowens on 24 January 1981 where Norman gave her away. Virginia and Larry lived at Olney and Virginia worked some in a flower shop. They met because a friend told Virginia he could help fix her car.

Velma took a needed vacation in the summer of 1981. First she went to Chicago and visited Norman and Rita. Then she, along with Norman and Rita went to Elbert's. From there, Elbert, Peggy and their three children; Norman and Rita; and Velma took a ten-day trip to Yellowstone and the Tetons. They went in Elbert's Chevrolet Suburban and camped every night. Other sights visited included Fort Laramie, the Oregon Trail, South Pass, Cody Museum, Devil's Tower, Wind River Mountains, the Black Hills and the Big Horn Mountains.

On 17 September 1981, Andrew, son of Steven and Janice was born. In January, Janice had gallbladder surgery. Since Velma was only working sporadically at the garment factory, she stayed with Steven and Janice. The arrangement helped both families.

In the fall of 1981 Virginia and Larry moved to Oklahoma. That winter, Virginia could not return to Illinois and she called the family on Christmas. Janet, daughter of Norman and Rita, was born 2 February 1982.

Velma was reaching a low point in her life and becoming relatively depressed. Work at the factory in the spring of 1982 was almost nonexistent, but there was just enough work to keep Velma from drawing unemployment. With just a few dollars left and some borrowed money, Velma went to visit Virginia in May. Shortly after getting there, she found employment at a garment factory near Claremore, Oklahoma. She returned to Illinois about a month later, packed her belongings, visited relatives and friends, and moved to Claremore.

The house trailer became available for rent and Steven inherited the major responsibility for taking care of the trailer.

CLAREMORE, OKLAHOMA, 1982 to PRESENT

Velma stayed with Virginia and Larry in their apartment. In July they bought a house and Larry stopped working. Virginia got pregnant, but miscarried. With Larry unwilling to work, Virginia unable to work, the house was lost. Velma moved into an apartment in Claremore that November. She also found an additional part time job. On Sundays and on Wednesday nights, she worked in a church nursery. That Thanksgiving, Velma, Virginia, Larry and Norman, Rita and Janet went to Elberts.

Velma had Christmas dinner with Virginia and Larry in 1982. After Christmas, Virginia and Larry went to Illinois for five days, but were gone for three months. Virginia came back to Oklahoma, starved, pregnant and had started from Illinois with less than \$25. Elbert and his family visited Velma in May 1983. Also in May, Virginia filed for a separation which became final in September. Virginia had several mental and health problems that summer and fall and was in a mental hospital at Tulsa in October 1983 but didn't stay long. The doctor would not let her work and said she should not live by herself so Velma stayed with Virginia for the next six months. Virginia had a house trailer near Oologah Lake that she had rented and Velma continued to rent her apartment. Since she could not work Virginia began a professional secretarial program at Rogers Community College. In October 1983, Virginia also filed for divorce. The divorce was finalized 29 February 1984.

Dovie Renee was born to Virginia 7 December 1983. Matthew, son of Elbert and Peggy was born 24 January 1984. Velma, Virginia and Dovie visited Elbert's family in the spring.

Velma began having eye problems that spring. She went to an eye specialist in Tulsa who found her eyes were covered with scar tissue. During the summer Velma, Virginia and Dovie went to many craft shows where they sold items they had made. The craft shows kept them busy and helped make some additional money. Coming home from the biggest show they had, Velma got the Mercury in the ditch and had to be pulled out. On Labor Day, Velma took Virginia and Dovie to a raft race at Sand Springs, Oklahoma. They stayed overnight and slept in the car.

In September, a neighbor girl asked Virginia and Dovie over for supper. The neighbor girl was Deborah Boydston.

Velma moved to a different apartment in Claremore and began working at putting her life together again. The financial problems of keeping two households going and helping Virginia with her problems had really drained Velma. At Thanksgiving Elbert and his family visited Velma and met Lonnie Boydston and his three children.

Michael Robert, son of Norman and Rita was born 20 October 1984. That Christmas, Velma, Virginia and Dovie returned to Illinois for a visit and Velma got to see her new grandson.

Virginia married Lonnie Boydston 1 March 1985 at Miami, Oklahoma. Lonnie was a dock foreman near the Port of Catoosa and he adopted Dovie soon after they were married. Virginia, Lonnie and the four children lived in a duplex near Oologah Lake. Virginia had about completed her secretarial program and got a job at a bank through an employment agency. A short time later she went to work at a cable television company where she worked almost a year.

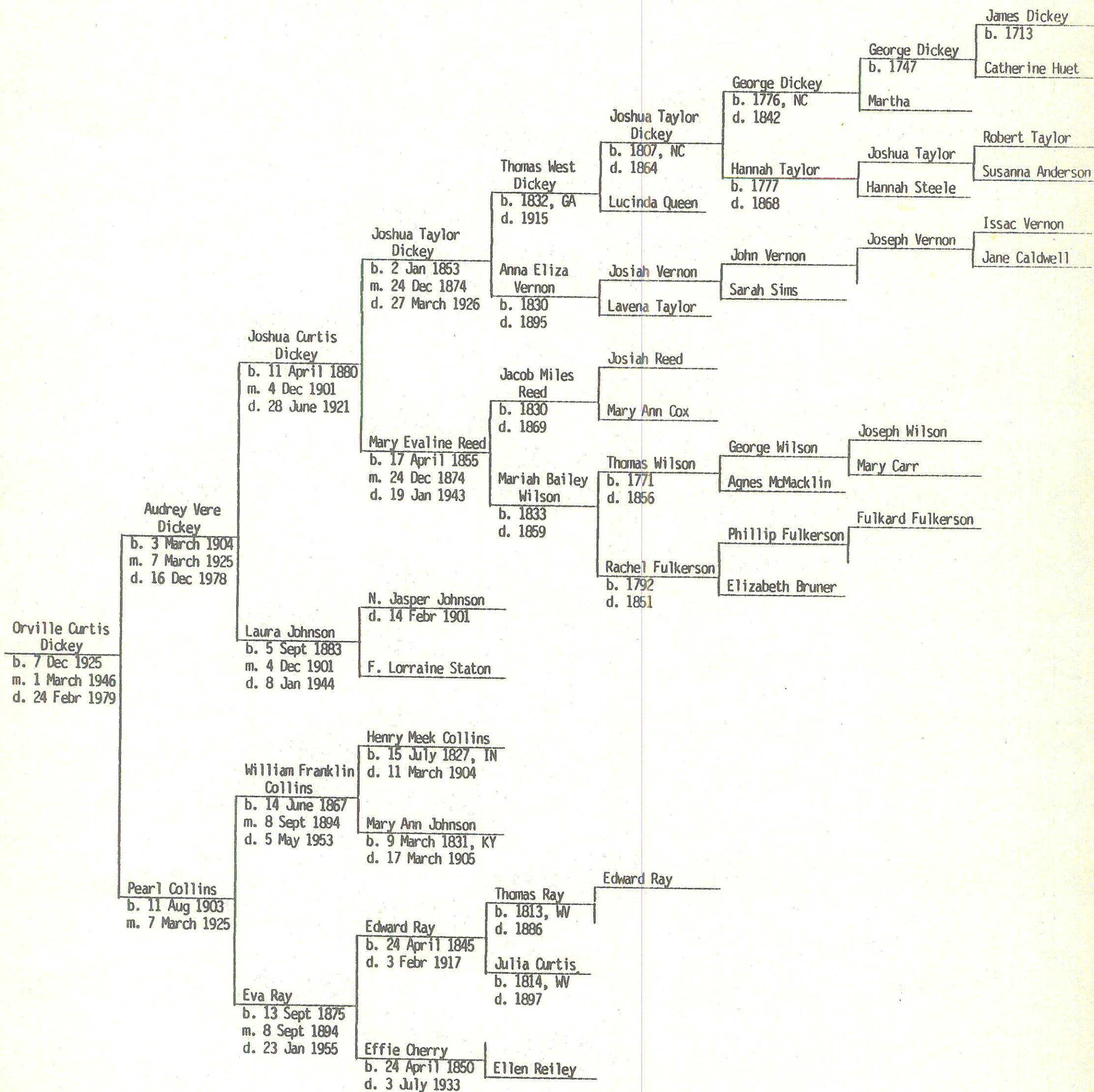
Two weeks before Mother's Day, Velma had lunch with Virginia and Lonnie. When she was leaving, Velma fell and jammed her elbow into a tree. Her arm hurt so she went home and soaked it. She continued working at the garment factory in the day and baby-sitting at church in the evening. However her arm continued to hurt and she stopped by the doctor's office two times. Her arm continued to hurt but neither the doctor or the nurse could find anything wrong. Because of the pain, the doctor finally X-rayed Velma's arm and found her shoulder was broken. The doctor put her arm in a sling and gave specific orders about when she could move her arm and told her she would not be working for several weeks. After a few days of doing nothing, Velma decided that she could drive. First she drove to Lincoln and visited Elbert and Peggy. From there she drove to Chicago and visited Norman and Rita. Then she drove to southern Illinois and visited Steven and Janice, Allen and Peggy, and other relatives and friends. Then she took a scenic drive across southern Missouri. In total she drove 2500 miles with one hand and she missed four weeks of factory work and five weeks of church nursery work.

Elbert and his family returned to Oklahoma and visited Velma in October. Virginia and Lonnie had purchased a house near Locust Grove and had just moved. The house is near the Grand River. Velma spent Christmas with Virginia and Lonnie.

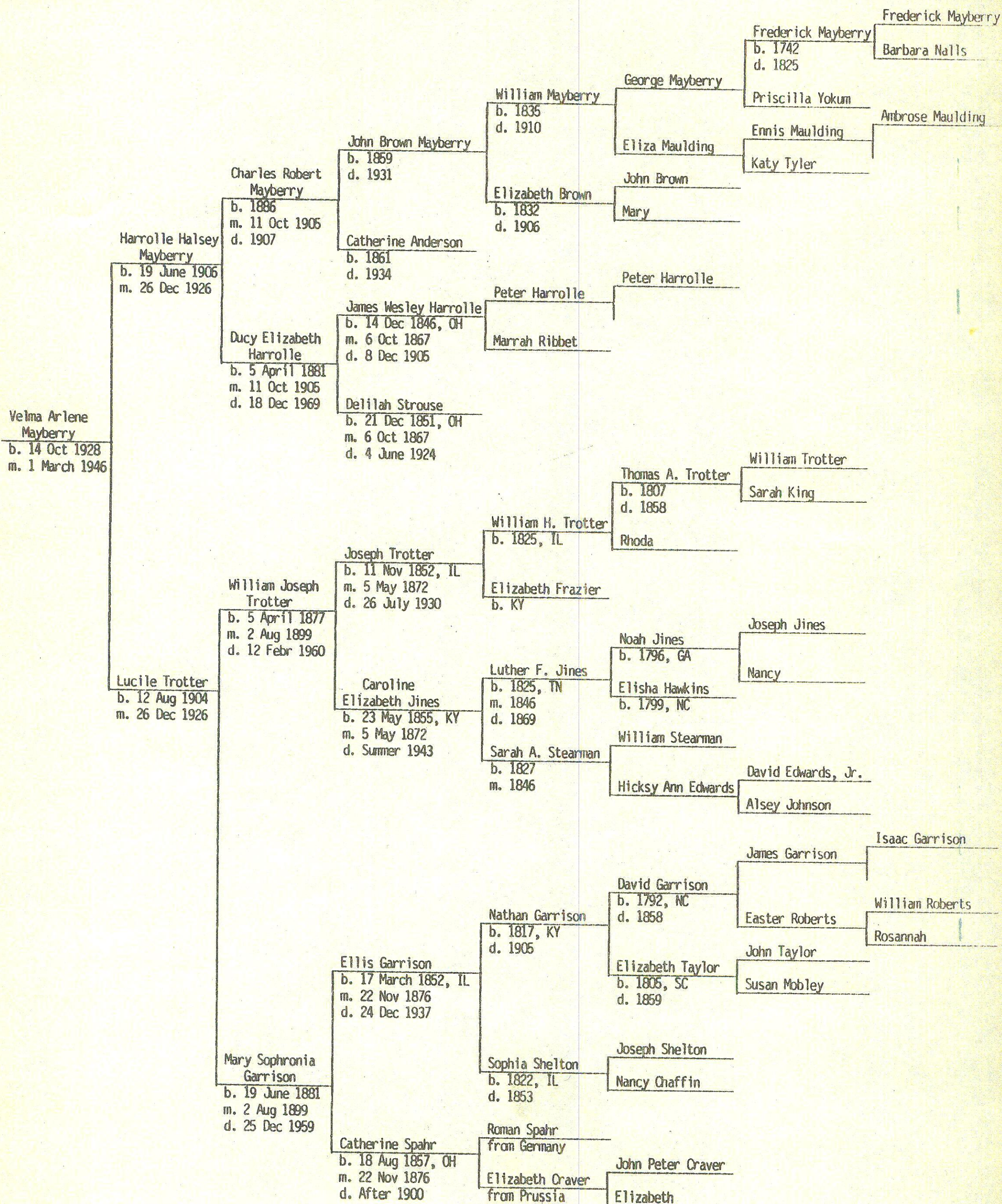
Steven and Janice became the parents of Ryan James on 10 January 1986. On 5 March 1986 Virginia adopted Bill, Ronnie and Deborah.

Before school was out, Elbert and his family returned to Oklahoma for another visit. Velma took them to Har-Bur Village where they saw several displays of older tools, dishes, and other collectables. Virginia and Lonnie both got new jobs. She works in the Grand Valley Abstract Office and Lonnie got a factory job near Pryor. In June Steven and his family also visited Oklahoma. Lonnie took Steven fishing and they caught a 34 pound catfish. Norman had some field work in Texas and he and his family also visited Velma and Virginia and Lonnie in the summer of 1986.

LINEAGE of ORVILLE DICKEY



LINEAGE of VELMA (MAYBERRY) DICKEY



MAP of DICKYVILLE AREA

