

## RUN OF THE MILL

We would use this time to fall our supply of saw logs, and in the late fall or early winter, we would haul them to the saw mill and saw them into lumber. It was "Help me, and I'll help you," at the mill. It was a small mill, with a forty-eight inch, circular saw. The logs were man-handled, and the carriage was pulled fore and back by cables. It was a ten-horse mill, slow but sure--sure slow. First we would square a log and then saw it into whatever sized lumber was wanted. The slabs were used for fuel for the boiler.

Going back to the hauling of the logs, the trees were cut in varying lengths and were skidded on to the running gear of the wagon--the wagon to be adjusted to any lengths. We would chain the skid to the wheels, anchor one end of the skid chain to the top of the wheel, dig a trench under each end of the log, run the chain under the log up over the wagon, and hitch a team to each chain. The teams would pull in unison, to keep both ends of the log even. It required coordination by man and horse. After the logs were converted into lumber, we would haul it home and stack it under a shed under weight, to keep it from warping. In about six months, it would be dry and ready to be worked into door and window frames. Some would be ripped into varying widths of molding. Pa had a combination plane that could make thirty-two kinds of molding--even tongue-and-groove flooring. It was all hand work.

When Pa would start working in the shop, the little girls would come beg some curls for their home-made dolls. Lucky was the girl who had a porcelain doll head. There were no bought toys. Men handy with tools would make doll furniture for the girls and wagons and wheelbarrows and such for the boys.

Back to the sawmill: Our shingles were cut from square blocks of timber that had been steamed. The machine that made them was a steam-driven knife on a slant. The operator would cut two or three shingles and then turn the block, end for end, and cut two or three more. That way, you could use up the entire block. Shingles are three-eighths inch at the thick end, one-sixteenth at the other, and fourteen inches long. The shingle knife was a finger amputator. No shingle maker had all his fingers for long. He was asked, "How come?" He said, "It was like this . . ." "THERE GOES ANOTHER ONE!" The shingles were packed in bundles of so many to a bundle and were stacked with the thick ends out, the thin ends in the middle, lapped half way, and bound with one by two-inch slats, top and bottom, with tin strips nailed to the ends.

## SHOES AND SCHOOLS

A Mexican shoemaker came to Chupe one year. He would live with the family, while making shoes that were needed or wanted in that family, and then move on to the next home. There were about fifty homes in Chupe. He made me a pair, and I tried to hurry up, as there was a kid's dance that Saturday, and I wanted to go. I was about a block from the schoolhouse when I saw the kids coming out. The dance was over.

The boys after the age of eight or ten seldom got a full year of schooling. We started in September, but were out to harvest by October or November. Then we went back to school in December, but were back out again in April or May to plant the crops. Our schooling was paid at so much per child. First they would determine how much the teachers cost and then divide that by the number of children. The teachers would get some cash, and the balance was paid in what they could use that the people had.

## SCALPERS

In the spring, after the crops were in and roundup over, all the men would gather at the schoolhouse and choose two captains, who would choose one and one, until all the males of twelve and over were chosen. Then the captains would draw straws for the hunting. At the end of the scalp hunt, each scalp was worth so many points. Three of us boys moved a pile of fence posts and got twenty skunk scalps and a little perfume. The teacher met us at the door, holding her nose, and told us to go home. Ma met me at the door and said to stay outside, handed me a bar of home-made soap, told me to go to the barn, change clothes, and bury my stinky ones. The soil would absorb the odor. Then I went to the creek and started washing.

## CURD AND CUKES

It was this summer that Heber, age fourteen, and I, twelve, broke twenty head of range cows to milk. Some we had to tie down. If, after three milkings, they didn't tame down, we let them go. We would make cheese every day. We would strain the night milk in the cheese vat, skim it the next morning for butter, then strain the morning milk into the vat. We made one daisy cheese every day. I don't remember about the butter, as Heber and I were busy with cows and calves. We did all the milking and caring about the cows and calves. We would herd the cows, days, and pasture the calves at night. There were several families who did this.