

Early Schooling

My first school was at Mound Fort, which was located at the southeast corner of Washington Avenue and 12th Street in Ogden, Utah. It was a sandstone building. I could walk from our house that was located at the northeast corner of Jefferson Avenue and 16th Street by taking a shortcut westerly over a hill that had several trees on it and ended up on a concrete sidewalk.

I do not remember the name of my first grade teacher. One thing that I can remember from that grade was that all of our parents purchased a kind of water whistle that you would blow through to create a tune. On another occasion my teacher whacked me across my knuckles with a ruler for being late for class.

I remember more of the second grade, which was located in a different room.

We were taught the Palmer Method of handwriting.

There was an ink well that was located in the upper right corner of our desks.

Our pens were scratchy old things that were hard to handle.

We practiced this at what seemed an endless enterprise. We worked everything from the bottom muscle under our forearm. One practice consisted of making slanted lines across the page. We filled many pages doing this. Then we coursed our way across the page, making slanted O's. When we got good at this, we were promoted to integrating some finger action along with the muscle on the bottom of the arm.

There were a few Japanese students in the room and they all had very beautiful handwriting. I envied them.

I liked this teacher whose name was Miss Jenson. We took sack lunches to school in those days. At about noontime, every day, this teacher would send me and another student to a home located about two blocks south of the school to see if she had any mail. If there was mail, we were to bring it to her at the school. We thought that she was expecting a letter from her sweetheart.

After the second grade was over, we had moved from the Ogden School Weber County District in Marriott, Utah. This was a small farming community located about five miles northwest from the center of Ogden. Our parents had purchased a rundown farmhouse that my father repaired and added to. This lot occupied five acres of land.

The local swimming hole was located at the north end of our fields. Here in the summertime, we enjoyed swimming and diving among the water snakes and fishes. This creek was called the Mill Creek and was the same creek that ran past our house where we lived in Ogden. People also had a swimming hole in that area.

I well remember our trip to the farm from Ogden. It was a cold and miserable rainy day.

My parents had purchased a milk cow in Wilson Lane and tied it behind our model "T" Ford truck. My younger brothers got to ride in the truck along with my mom and a few other things. As the oldest boy, my job was to follow alongside the cow and hit it with a stick when it didn't want to move forward.

My mother never had any daughters. There were just us boys: Tracy, Eugene, Wendell, Donald, and Delbert.