Wilson Lane School

There were so few ninth graders at the Marriott School that we were moved to the Wilson Lane School. Our family had now gone back to Ogden City from Marriott but I was allowed to continue on at Wilson Lane.

The teachers that I remember were: Miss Chadwick, Mr. Graves (also bishop of the Wilson Lane Ward), Mr. Gibby, Mr. Watson, and Mr. Don Engstrom.

Our new address was 664 30th Street. Some of my teachers lived in the same house on the corner of 36th Street and Jefferson Avenue and carpooled together to go to the Wilson Lane School. I went with them.

On the way to Wilson Lane one day, there was an earthquake but we never felt it while driving. Later on, that same day, there was an aftershock and we all felt that one and all marched out of the building.

Don Engstrom was the math teacher and I met with him every morning one half hour before class to help him understand the lesson material.

Miss Chadwick taught art and some other subjects that I have forgotten. She thought that I had good prospects of being an artist and encouraged me in it.

Mr. Watson was the science teacher. I found it easy to keep up with him.

I remember him teaching us something about building some electric motors from the theory that he was teaching. He said you could notch a thread spool in a certain way, and wind some wire in the notches, and it would rotate in an electromagnetic field.

I knew it wouldn't. So, I fashioned my own electric motor using the magnets out of the flywheel of a junked Model T Ford. Our home was located in Mr. Leek's brickyard and there was lots of junk stuff available at this place. I was accumulating tools at an early age, undoubtedly no later than when I was seven years old. One of my tools was a handheld drill. I had located a roller bearing at the brickyard. It was about three inches long and one-quarter inch in diameter. Roller bearings are very hard steel. I remember turning the handle half the night boring a one-eighth inch hole through the center of the little round bar. Next, I cut off a tight-fitting nail and sharpened both ends of it. I pushed this through the hole. I then drilled an indentation in the heads of the two nails.

This constituted a needle-type bearing. A frame would surround this assemblage. Then, I made a commutator. The commutator consisted of a round piece of wood about one inch in diameter. Two pieces of soft copper sheet was glued to the wood and the ends of the insulated wire that had been wound around the roller bearing were soldered to one end and another at the other. This completed the rotor. Now I needed two springy contactors to bring the electricity to the rotors. One more thing was now lacking. This would be a DC (direct current) motor. I needed a source of power. In the early days of telephone when there were "party lines," telephone personnel would periodically replace the one and one half volt batteries located on telephone pole lines. I was always on the lookout for the batteries that they discarded because they always had some life left. This was my power source.