

2004

One or two relatives expressed a wish for me to write some of the things that happened during the childhood days of the children in our family, so this is the result.

I was born, so I have been told, in a log house about a mile or two east of Concord, Pike County, Georgia. This log house was on a small dead end road with 2 or 3 farm houses, and ran parallel to and a few hundred yards north of what is now Georgia Highway 18, in the area between Bottoms Road and Reidsboro Road. At that time there was a railroad between the two roads.

My mother and father had married, and lived in the log house while he worked on building the house in the same yard, so to speak. I have a faint memory of seeing the log house, which by then was used as a barn or some such outbuilding.

I don't know how long we lived at that place, but I guess the next place we lived must have been one of the two smaller houses on Grandpa Oxford's place on what is now Bottoms Road (the house toward the east, toward West Road). I believe it has now been replaced by a house trailer.

One thing I remember while we lived at this place is having my tonsils out because of earaches. The doctor came to the house and used ether to put me to sleep for the surgery.

One time I thought I got sick from ice cream (I doubt that, don't you?), so while the rest of the family ate ice cream, I went across the road to the scuppernong vine and ate scuppernongs. Afterwards I completely overcame that sickness, I'm glad to say.

Another thing that happened there was the 1918 flu epidemic. Papa got sick with the flu, and thought he was going to die. How thankful I have been that he survived, and how thankful for all the time together for the whole family, and the opportunity to learn things from our parents, though I know it kept them busy. Along with this I think of friends, relatives or others who had the bad misfortune to lose the father to death, leaving the mother a widow with several children, and that when not many women worked outside the home, as hard as that would be under the circumstances. Some examples are Lily's family the Banks', Lily's Sister Maude (Scott), and Aunt Alma Marshall (Papa's sister).

Another thing that happened at this place was my encounter with a snake. There was a pasture that came up to a gate at our yard. The pasture had a branch running through it, which had a place washed out over the years, making a kind of bowl several feet across with a pool of water in the bottom. There were some small fish in there, and when I was probably 6 or 7 years old, I would go down there and fish. One day walking alongside the branch on the way to fish, I came upon a snake crawling in the grass, which scared the daylight out of me. I started beating the snake with my fishing pole as hard as I could, then I threw down my pole and ran for the house as fast as I could, knowing the snake must be right behind me. When Papa got home he went with me down to the branch and we found my fishing pole lying next to the dead snake.

When we were growing up (Fred born 1912, Paul 1914, Clay 1915, Kate 1917, Eugene 1919?), more families lived on small farms. Some owned their farms, some rented, some worked on "halves", where the owner of the land received half the crop I suppose the main crops like cotton, but I don't know about corn, wheat, etc. That is known as sharecropping.

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