

# THE THOMAS B. SEARCY FAMILY

## PART I: ZEBEDEE SHELTON

*by Lena Shelton Searcy (1871-1965)*

My grandfather Zebedee Shelton was born 1804 in Grainger County, Tennessee. He married Lavina in October 1839 in Franklin County, Missouri. He brought his family across the plains from Independence, Missouri in 1846 in covered wagons and my father, who was the eldest son 13 years old, rode a pony most of the way and picked up buffalo chips for fuel. It was a long hard trip but they made it to the Willamette Valley in the fall of that year. They lost two small children on the way. One was buried in the road so Indians wouldn't molest it. Zebedee and Lavina took up a donation land claim in Yamhill County near Carlton in March 1847.

The youngest son, who was the baby on the trail, died at the age of 21 years and Zebedee died after a few years, leaving Lavina to raise three sons and three daughters. They all lived to good old age, married and raised families. They were: John W. Shelton who lived on his claim and farmed his father's claim at Carlton, Oregon; Dr. James Shelton of Salem; Dr. Thomas Shelton of Eugene; America Manerva Bedwell of Monmouth; Alvira Catron of Monmouth; and Nancy who married Dr. Poppleton of Lafayette, a real country doctor.

My father, John W., born in

Callaway County, Missouri, May 1833, arrived in Oregon October 1846. October 3rd, 1853 he married Mary Jane Burford, daughter of Hezekiah Burford, Rickreall, Polk County, Oregon. On October 6, he took up a donation land claim near his father's. To this union there were born 13 children, 10 boys and three girls. Two boys died when young and the youngest was accidentally shot. My mother died when I was seven, my father married Mrs. Mary Mathews and had one son, Vergil. He is gone. My father died at the age of 87.

The eldest of John W. Shelton's children, Martha Edith, married Thomas Graves of Bethel, Oregon. She died within three years, leaving one son. The second daughter married Newton Wise-carver of McMinnville and had five sons and one daughter.

I was the third daughter and fourth from the youngest. After finishing school at the McMinnville Baptist College, I taught in country schools. Then I went to Sherman County to teach when there were as many as 35 or 40 in a small room, all grades. No teacher would now attempt it. While there I met a bachelor farmer, Thomas B. Searcy, who had come west to get land. We lived on a farm in Sherman County and had eight children, two daughters



*Lena Shelton Searcy, 1895.*

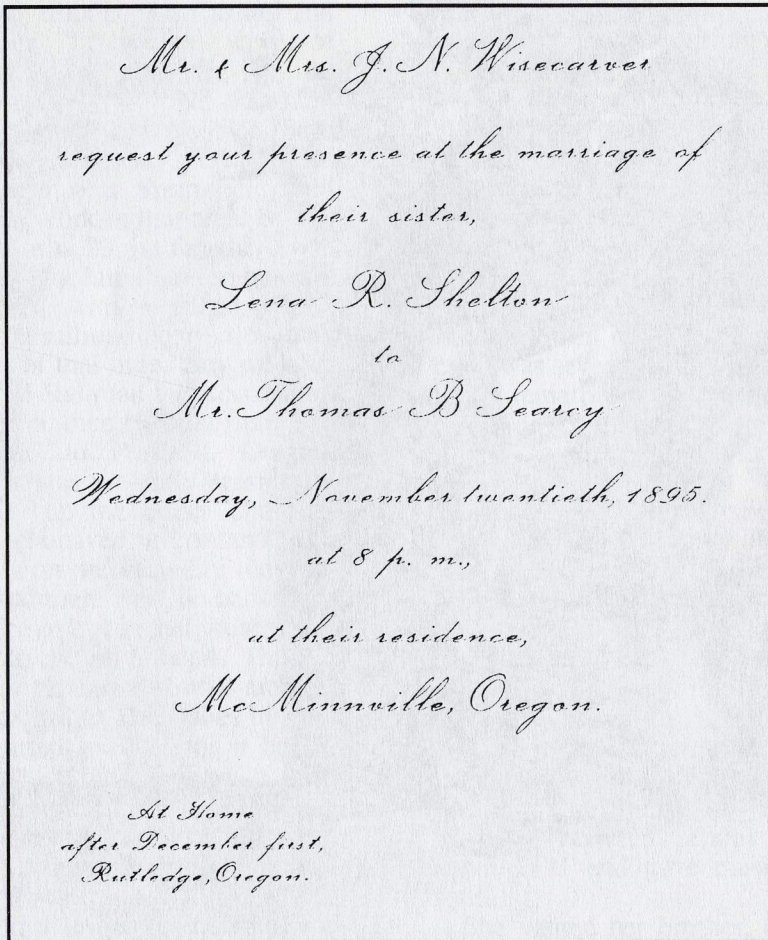
*Courtesy of Sherman County Historical Society*

and six sons.

Our eldest, Nina Olive, married Harry B. Pinkerton in 1917 and they live near Moro. I have six sons, Phillip T., Seral W., John L., Chester A., Owen L. and Morris L., all alive and doing well but Phillip who passed away. All are over 50 years but our youngest daughter, Helen Ruggles of Heppner, Oregon. She married Charles, grandson of Phillip Ruggles, an early settler in Sherman County.

The names of my brothers are: Irvine Allen, Marion Curtis, A.R. Demia, Willis Sherman, Ulysses Grant, Thomas Arthur, Alfred Loring, Hollis, Bert and Ward Shelton. All are gone but Hollis of Pomeroy, Washington and I, and we are both over 80 years of age.

I live in Hillsboro, Oregon and have seven children with in-laws, 20 grandchildren and 34 great-grandchildren.



Invitation to Lena's wedding at her sister's home in McMinnville.

Courtesy of Helen Ruggles



*Thomas B. Searcy and Lena Shelton on their wedding day.*  
*Courtesy of Helen Ruggles*

# PART II: THE SEARCY FAMILY

*by Helen Searcy Ruggles*

Thomas B. Searcy was born January 1, 1860 in Kentucky, the sixth of eight sons and one daughter born to Thomas Searcy and Elizabeth Crowder Searcy. The family moved from Kentucky to Missouri about 1861 to keep the boys from having to participate in the Civil War, then to Sangamon County, Illinois, in Curran and Gardener Townships west of Springfield, Illinois, on the old Jacksonville-Springfield Road, at Spring Creek, about 1865 or 1866.

Young Thomas grew up on their farm near Springfield, and did farm work in that area. By the time he was 23, he felt there was no future for him there, so he traveled west with a friend. There being no railroad connection with Oregon at that time, they went by Santa Fe Railroad to Sacramento, California, then by boat from San Francisco to Portland, Oregon. Thomas was violently seasick on the way up the coast. The first train had arrived in Portland from the east on the very day they got there and there were no beds to be had. They slept in their bedrolls in the hallway of a hotel. Thomas was not pleased with that area, so he went east to The Dalles by boat and started looking for a homestead site on horseback.

He found what he wanted in what later became Sherman County, Oregon, 10 miles south of Moro, 10 miles east of Grass Valley, and a few miles north of the recently settled community of Rutledge. Several families there

erected a church and school. Thomas filed for a homestead on land that had several springs and he dug a sod shanty into the hillside near a spring at the north end of his land. He went back to The Dalles and got a job taking supplies to sheepherders on the east foothills of Mt. Hood, every week or ten days, and worked on his new home the rest of the time. Wages paid for food and supplies.



Lena Rivers Shelton was born December 25th, 1871 on the farm of John William and Mary Burford Shelton near Carlton, Oregon. She was tenth of thirteen children. Her mother died when Lena was seven years old, and her father remarried a few years later to a widow with two children, and another son was born to this union a few years later.

Lena graduated from the Academic Dept. of McMinnville College (now Linfield College) June 4, 1890, then taught music while living in her sister, Lucy's, home near McMinnville, Oregon. She passed the Teacher's Examination during the summer and taught first in a distant country district that fall, then in a school near McMinnville. She taught herself to paint between school terms about 1891 and gave music lessons.

She visited her brother, Curtis, in Vancouver, Washington and his sister-in-law told of the need for

teachers near where she lived in Eastern Oregon. Lena got the position at the Rutledge school and went to Sherman County in 1894 where she taught two terms of four months, fall and spring. She had 36 scholars and was paid \$35.00 a month plus board the first term. The children were mostly from the Ruggles, Thompson, Eakin, Goetjen, Smith and Payne families. The teacher boarded one month with each family which furnished her with bed and food. She spent the first month with the Philip and Lucy Ruggles family. She moved to the next family where there were bedbugs in her bedroom and there was a long walk to the school. When Lucy Ruggles found out about it, Lena was moved back to Ruggles' promptly and the bedbugs eradicated from her and her belongings. Arrangements were made so other families would supply sufficient foodstuff and the teacher would board all year with

the Ruggles family.

It was there she met and was won by Thomas B. Searcy who had filed on his nearby homestead in 1883. Lena filed her homestead claim on adjoining land early in the summer of 1895, then returned to sister Lucy's home to sew and prepare for her marriage while Thomas built a home that summer, ready to move into when married. They were married at McMinnville, Oregon on November 20, 1895, by J.A. Campbell, V.D.M., in the presence of members of her family.

Over the years eight children were born to them: Nina O. (Mrs. Harry B. Pinkerton), Philip T., Seral W., John L., Chester A., Owen L., Morris L., and Helen L. (Mrs. Charles A. Ruggles). All of the children were born on the farm except me, Helen. I was born at Dr. Poley's home in Moro. Lucy Ruggles acted as midwife at births of the first three or four children. All of the children grew up on the



*Gathering for a family photo about July 1917 were, standing in back: Chester, Owen, Seral, Philip, John. Seated: Lena, Tom, Helen, Morris, Nina.*

*Courtesy of Helen Ruggles*

farm and helped with the work. Thomas died there August 24, 1934. Lena died February 26, 1965.



I was born January 23, 1915, seven years younger than Morris, the youngest of my brothers. The year I was two, the family rented a big house in Moro and there Mother and we children lived during the school year. Sister Nina stayed there and drove by horse and cart to teach at DeMoss School. Philip helped Father on the farm until he left to join the Army for World War I. Seral attended high school with the rest of the boys and graduated before joining the Navy. Nina married Harry B. Pinkerton on November 20, 1917.

The winters in Moro continued for several more years while John, Chester and Owen were attending Moro High School. Then Morris attended the one-room Boardman School two miles from our farm home. He drove a one-horse cart when he was in the 8th grade and I was in the 1st. For high school, Morris lived with the Pinkertons, whose farm was only three miles from Moro, and helped around their farm to pay part of his board and room.

Philip was not sent overseas to fight in World War I as the war ended before he was ready to go. Seral was on a ship patrolling the West Coast and the war ended before he was sent further. When he got home again, he worked his way through college at Oregon State University. Philip preferred to farm. He married Gertrude Brown September 17, 1923.

I attended Boardman School except for 3rd grade when Mother went to Moro to keep house for John, who was working in the bank. The next spring John married Evelyn Ragsdale on June 20, 1926. Chester tried his hand at logging, then came home to help on the farm when Dad needed him. I attended Moro school for 7th grade when Mother kept house and cooked for Mrs. Grace May Zevely, Sherman County School Superintendent.

Boardman School was discontinued at the end of the school year when I completed 8th grade. A school bus took students to Moro School, so from then on we lived at home on the farm and rode the bus or lived with friends in Moro when the roads were impassable.

Seral worked at various places after graduating from college, in Bend, then at Farmers' Bank in Moro, where he and two other young men rented a house. On December 22, 1928, Seral married Ethel C. Driscoll and he soon adopted her daughter, Audrey Ella Fenton Searcy. After Owen graduated from college he worked in a branch of the college and married Frances H. Sterett on June 9, 1928 in Corvallis, Oregon.



#### THINGS I REMEMBER FROM MY CHILDHOOD

❖ The groom gave my sister a bouquet of big pom-pom chrysanthemums for her wedding. They were so large they were placed in the umbrella stand for a vase and left in the hallway after the wedding in front of the full-length mirror. I could see they were the

same height as I was and the blossoms of yellow and bronze were the same size as my head.

❖ When snow got too deep, we got out the big sleigh pulled by a team of horses with bells on their harnesses. Special stone footwarmers were heated in the oven and wrapped in burlap sacks, and with those and heavy bear-skin lap robes, we went to programs at school or to church – or calling on neighbors. Our sleigh was big enough to hold eight people with a bit of crowding.

❖ We had about 20 head of work horses to pull the plows, harrows, weeders, combine harvester, header beds and wagons, two pair of carriage horses (which Dad raised) and two riding horses. We raised Shorthorn beef cattle, black-faced sheep and chickens.



*A tractor used for plowing. Note the old car body used for a tractor cab.*

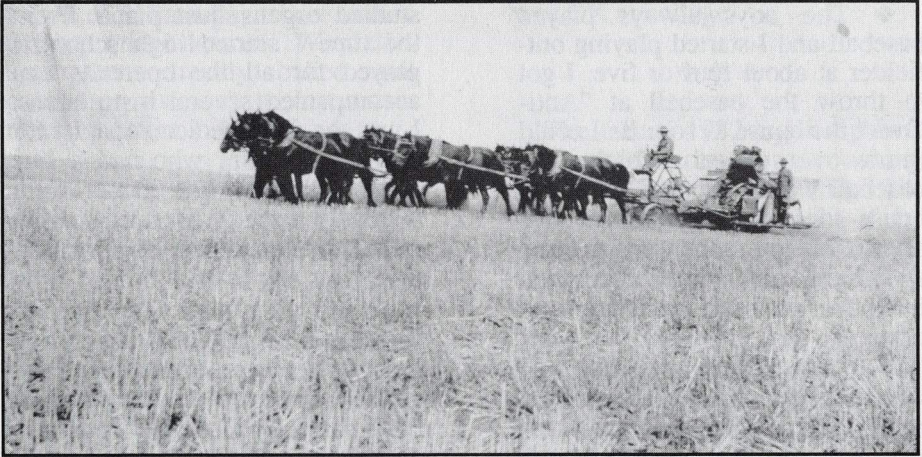
*Courtesy of Helen Ruggles*



*Plowing with a team of horses.*

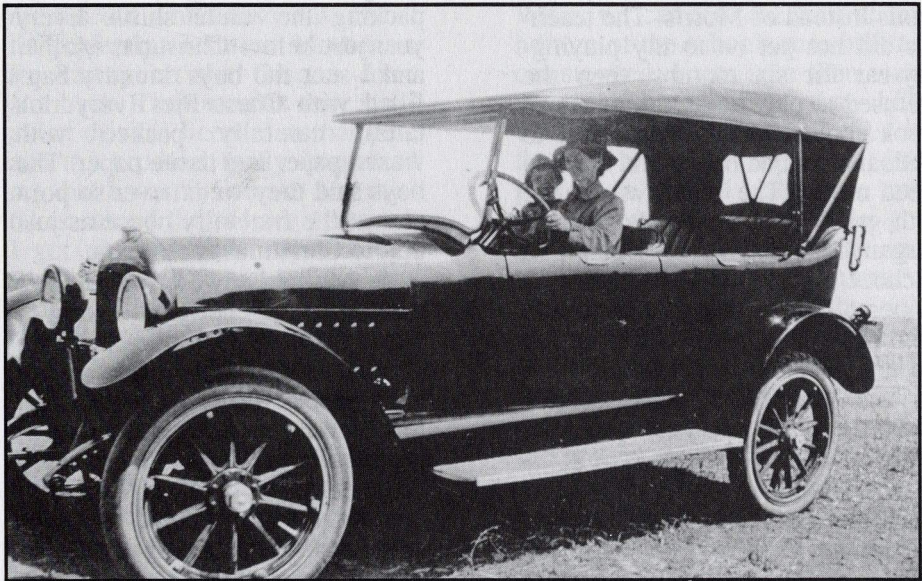
*Courtesy of Helen Ruggles*





*Searcy harvest, 1917. The Searcys used the popular McCormick and Deering "Stubble Bug" introduced in the south end of the county about 1917.*

*Courtesy of Helen Ruggles*



*Our first car was a Velie. I posed for the camera with my mother, Lena, in 1917.*

*Courtesy of Helen Ruggles*

❖ The boys always played baseball and I started playing outfielder at about four or five. I got to throw the baseball at "Anti-Over" the house as soon as I could throw over one-story high. The baseball wasn't allowed to hit the house or the roof. The boys always hunted rabbits and grouse, and ducks and geese when they landed on our ponds during migration.

❖ I was allowed to go along with Morris when he went to a neighboring farm to take his music lesson the summer I was five or six. I sat there and listened to the teacher explain the lesson to him, then to encourage him, she played the new piece of music. When we got home, I ran for the piano and played it while he was putting away the cart and horse. He was so disgusted he quit and told them to give me the lessons. A year or so later I took the lessons instead of Morris. The teacher did not get on to my playing-by-ear for six months, then she refused to play anything for me. It took about another year for me to unlearn my bad habits and learn to read music. The year I was in the 4th grade I started to play pump-organ for singing at Boardman School. At about 13 I played for a funeral and accompanied Nina and Harry Pinkerton who sang. He sang tenor, she sang alto and their voices blended beautifully. That was the start of many years of music.

❖ I've played for hundreds of funerals and have lost track of the weddings I played for over the years. One year in Heppner I played for five weddings in four different churches, all very different types of organs. I never

studied organs, just piano. From the time I started high school, I played for all the operettas and accompanied several instruments. I was the fulltime accompanist for Tom Fraser, Sr., who had a fine baritone voice. The Fraser farm was only three or four miles from ours and their oldest boy was my age.

❖ Everyone was very pinched for cash during World War I and hard times continued for many years afterward. We had to budget very carefully because there was always at least one or more in college to be helped. The boys always sent their laundry home to be done up and returned; each one sent one special laundry bag home each week. Mother always did the washing and darned the socks. I got stuck darning Dad's; he was good at it himself and very fussy about how they were done. I got the job of ironing, folding and packing the white shirts. Every year just before Christmas Mother and I sent the boys' laundry bags filled with Chess Pies (very rich tarts), carefully packed with waxed paper and tissue paper. The boys said they were never so popular at the fraternity house as just before Christmas each year.

❖ Mother sewed my clothes until I got old enough to take 4-H and learn to sew for myself. I was 15 years old before I had a store-bought coat. I always went barefoot in summer except when going to town. In winter I usually had one pair of oxfords and one pair of boots. I never had any money to spend for myself until I earned it when in high school. Nobody had any money to speak of, so we thought nothing of it. Mother and I made fresh bread and rolls

to sell each Saturday to get money for my music lessons. We delivered them freshly baked and cooled on the way to my music teacher's home in Moro.

❖ Our car was a Model-T Ford, a two-seater, with running boards and side curtains for bad weather. It had three pedals and no gear shift, and it had to be cranked. The gas tank was under the driver's seat and if you went up hill too long the gas would stop running and you would have to turn around and back up the hill. Dad never learned to drive a car or truck. Some well-meaning friend (?) taught Mother to drive. She was such a terrible driver none of our family would ride with her except me. (I had no choice). Brothers Chet and Morris started teaching me to drive while I was still 13 and finished the job the next summer. I was as large then as I am now and brother Seral gave me his old white navy suit and it fit perfectly. I drove Mother to Rockaway on the Oregon coast and back. They weren't very strict about driver's licenses at that time and my brothers really impressed me that I wasn't to make any mistakes since I didn't have a license. I got my one and only ticket in Arizona in 1975, making my passenger, Elizabeth Fastabend, furious – since it was unearned.

❖ The depression hit about 1928, but we had plenty to eat on the farm. Everyone was in the same boat about having little or no money. Things really got tight when the banks closed. That put two of my big brothers out of a job, but they soon got other jobs and got along OK. Morris had already paid tuition and fraternity expenses when they closed, so he

was OK at college.



The fall of 1932 I got a phone call from Charles Ruggles asking if I would play piano with his little dance band that night if he came to get me. He had made sleeping arrangements for me in town so we wouldn't have to drive home till the next day, Sunday. Dad said it was OK, but it had been raining most of the week and our dirt roads were bottomless, and the steep schoolhouse hill would be too slick to get over and to go back any other way would take too long. The only other time I'd had any particular contact with Charles was in his parents' confectionery store when he blamed me for mischief two other girls did, so I didn't think too highly of him. Anyway, I said, "come ahead" and about an hour later he showed up. When we came to the turn at the bottom of the schoolhouse hill the car stopped. I was sure then we'd never make it over that hill. Charles got out and went over to the ditch beside the road and picked up a good sized rope and tied the end to our front axle, got back in, blinked the lights and blew the horn. In a few minutes, rope and car started up the hill. His pal had his car at the top of the hill with the other end of the rope attached. From there it was only a short distance to the end of the gravel road. He was a lot smarter than I thought. Seems his former piano player got drunk before the dance started, and firecracker-tempered Charles fired him pronto. Then he had to have a replacement who could sight read, since there wasn't any time to

practice. Those weekly dances were about the only entertainment in the whole county. Everybody, young and old, came to the dances. What few dimes, nickels and quarters people dropped into a can on the piano was all the pay we got. In fact, the cost of gas to get there and the cost of music, strings and reeds for the instruments were all that were usually paid. We played for dances each Saturday night all winter and most of the summer. The men who played had full-time jobs and I was plenty busy, but we felt it was something we could contribute to the people of the county.

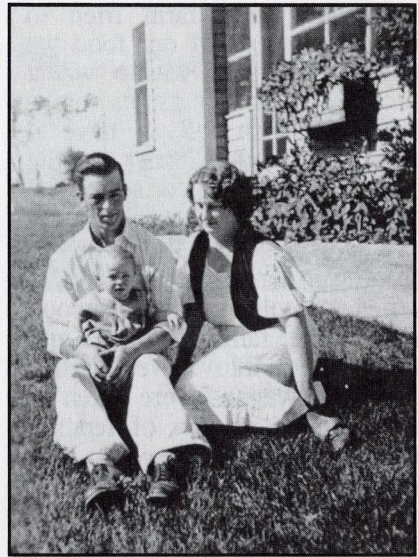
During the summer, Charles kept asking for dates, but I thought he was spoofing me. I couldn't believe he was serious. By a month or two, he was beginning to convince me and we started dating, mostly to the Deschutes River on swimming picnics and only in a blue moon to The Dalles for a movie. By Thanksgiving we were talking marriage, but decided to wait for my 18th birthday so we wouldn't have to have my parents' consent. I wasn't at all sure they would give it. On January 23, 1933, we drove to Goldendale, Washington where we were married in the Methodist manse. We spent the night with my Uncle Bert and Aunt Maude Shelton and drove back to Moro the next day. We started our married life with \$7.00 and no steady job and we still had to break the news to our respective parents. None of them were too well pleased, but there wasn't any way they could stop it then. The only request my Dad made was that I should complete high school and get my diploma. We planned to do that, anyway.

Charles started doing farm work for Clarence Morrison as soon as the weather broke that spring. Almost as soon as we were married a farmer where he worked before asked us to come stay nights at his farm, milk twenty some cows, separate milk and care for that, take care of chickens, feed and get their 12-year-old son off on his horse for school with lunch each morning, keep an eye on cattle, horses and feed and water chickens. I'd never seen a milk separator, so Charles showed me how to dismantle and wash and scald it. Then he'd drop me in Moro for school and go on to the Morrison place, reversing the procedure in the evening. We were really busy, but our living and gas for the car were all taken care of. They couldn't pay us for those two weeks plus, but gave us two weaner pigs from the next crop. Four or five other farmers had us take care of their places so they could take business or vacation trips. We spent almost four months just going from farm to farm with only our clothes and car. Living expenses cost us nothing and we earned a few dollars as well. We went to stay with my folks while Charles moved around and he would come there for a day off when he could. I helped Mother in the house and Dad in the garden. Chet had been running the ranch for two years and had married Ivy A. Graham October 7, 1933, I believe it was in Sisters, Oregon. Morris married Kathryn Tonsing on February 17, 1933. He had been dating her several years at Oregon State College and I thought she was nice.

We had a very hot and dry summer in 1933. I was pregnant and

the heat made my feet and legs swell. The afternoon of July 6th was extremely hot and I was seated in a chair on the front lawn in the shade of the house. I had my feet in a small tub of cold water while sorting and mending wheat sacks for seed wheat. Suddenly I looked up and saw my Dad frantically beating at fire in weeds near the fence between the garden and a 200 acre wheat field almost ready for harvest. I grabbed the pile of sacks, slammed them into the tub of water, then took off with them on a dead run directly across the garden. I didn't stop for shoes and hurdled the rows of growing vegetables about 1/8th of a mile to Dad in record time, gave him half the wet sacks, then beat from the other end of the fire back toward him. We had it all out in less than an hour and kept it out of the wheat. About midnight that night I knew I was having the baby before expected. I got all ready to go to the home of Nurse Cassie Holmes in Grass Valley before waking Mother and Dad. I wouldn't let Mother drive because I wanted to get there in one piece. Our baby, Constance Jean Ruggles, was born about 10 a.m. July 7, 1933. Dr. Poley delivered her, as he did me.

We sent word of her birth to Charles in Gilliam County where he was helping with harvest. The telephone operator in Arlington gave the news to Jody Morrison, who proceeded to celebrate for Charles. When he arrived at the home place he yanked the covers off Charles and dragged him by the feet around and around the bunk house whooping and hollering the news, then took Charles'



*Charles and Helen Ruggles with Connie at the Searcy home in 1934.*

*Courtesy of Helen Ruggles*

place driving Cat the next day so the new father could come see the new arrival. Mother had gone to stay with Gram Ruggles and they paced the sidewalk between the two houses while waiting for the birth. Gram Ruggles kept saying it will have brown eyes! When Connie opened her eyes they were as dark blue as they could be, but Gram was determined and they did change later to hazel.

#### LOOKING BACK A BIT

On considering why I should have developed obstructions in the arteries leading to and from my heart in 1980, I began to consider the food on which I was raised and the manner of its preparation. I was born in the midst of the depression or Hard Times as we called them. Our family of parents and eight children on a

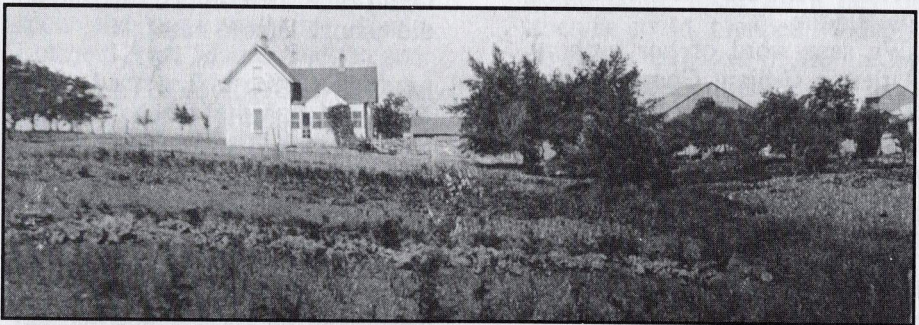
moderately small farm tried to raise or grow all of our food we could. Since ours was a wheat ranch, we took our grains to the flour mill each fall to have it ground into white flour, whole wheat flour, farina, cornmeal and rolled oats. While that was being done, we made a holiday out of camping in tents, picking huckleberries and collecting winter wood in the forest, falling the trees and sawing them into stove lengths. Two large wagons were taken to carry home a supply of fencing posts on top of the wood. The boys also fished and hunted while we were there. It was a good 50-mile trip from our ranch to the Tygh Valley Mill and back. In fact, that was where lumber for buildings came from.

Good fat beef was raised for our food and for sale. We ate baby beef rather than wait for it to reach the size of a three-year-old, as most farmers did. Even though young, it must be good and firmly fleshed and fat. We did all our own killing and butchering and had a small smoke house where we cured meat. All the heavy fat was trimmed off, but not too close, then cut up and rendered

into lard in huge pans in the oven, poured carefully into five-pound cans with good lids and stored in our basement root cellar. Some fresh meat was canned and some was ground up and packed into pottery jars about 15" tall and 12" diameter size and topped with a good layer of lard. Stored in the cellar, it would keep quite a while. What we could not use before it would spoil was traded to neighbors or relatives in return for a like amount when they butchered next. Some of the beef was roasted, and some stewed, but most was fried in lard.

Sheep were raised for wool, for food and for sale. We generally ran a herd of 50 or 60 head. I started helping with the butchering when I was about 10 because the twist it took to break loose the hide was not difficult and my hands were strong. We killed only yearlings for our own food. Some lamb was exchanged with my sister's family for pork at their butchering time as we raised no pigs and they raised no sheep.

There was always a flock of about 50 to 100 chickens which supplied us with eggs as well as meat. Brood hens were set on



*The Searcy homestead about 1927.*

*Courtesy of Helen Ruggles*

eggs each year to hatch baby chicks. It took a lot of eggs since we always had them for breakfast, usually fried or scrambled, along with bacon, ham or sausage, fried potatoes, hot biscuits or hotcakes with butter ... along with milk or coffee. In the winter when the hens slowed their laying, we used eggs we had packed into large pottery crocks in water-glass to preserve them. Those were not as good fried, but were OK scrambled and were excellent for all the desserts baked every day.

Milk cows were kept so we had all the milk, cream, and butter we needed. Whenever there was enough for it, butter was used in place of lard for the preparation of desserts and puddings, since we liked the taste better. Lard made better pie crusts and was used half and half in bread. Butter was churned and bread and rolls were baked once or twice a week. The milk was stored in crockery bowls in a screened cupboard in the cool cellar where it was skimmed to remove the thick cream. The cream was kept in the cool cellar until time to churn. The milk, cream, butter, eggs and other items of food were lifted into the kitchen pantry by way of a "silent butler" which had three shelves.

Potatoes, other root vegetables and apples were carried from the cellar in buckets. The apples and potatoes were stored in large bins built around the edge of one side and end of the cellar beneath the shelves for canned and preserved food. The other root vegetables such as carrots, turnips, rutabagas and parsnips were stored in large outside bins made by digging a round hole about 20' in diameter and about 3 1/2" deep with a layer



*The Searcy children ride in the header bed full of hay.*

*Courtesy of Helen Ruggles*

of straw or chaff in the bottom – then all the roots in sections and another layer of straw or chaff on top of them and the dirt put back on top of that. Then they were dug out as needed. They usually kept all winter.

A large homemade ice box was in one end of the cellar beside the drain in the corner of the floor. It was about 4' x 4' x 6', well insulated and lined with metal and had a good tight lid. We cut ice from our ponds in winter and bought ice as needed from the butcher shop in town. The food rested on a wooden rack on the bottom of the icebox to keep out the moisture from the melting ice. A drain in one corner was right next to the floor drain.

The flour and dry grains were in sacks stored in a sheet metal-lined box in a corner of the smoke house with cured meat hanging from the rafters overhead. That box was about 6' x 10' and about 4 1/2' high with a heavy-hinged lid. I remember falling in one day when it was empty and having to have help to get out again. The smoke house was built on posts which elevated its floor about

1 1/2' from the ground. It had one tiny window, a large, tight door, a special stove to smoke the meat and was smoke and mouse proof.

Two conservation dams were built on a creek which ran from the top of the hill east of the road past the house and other buildings. The lower one was at the top of our garden, east of the house, forming the "L" part of the garden and sub-irrigating it. A long row of gooseberry bushes and current bushes was right inside the fence at the foot of the dam. The part of the garden next to the house was about the size of half a city block with the creek carrying overflow from the dam dividing the center of the garden. Rows of every kind of vegetable were planted parallel to the dam all the way to the yard around the house. Then the long part of the garden-L was all planted with potatoes, corn, squash and pumpkin, extending alongside the dam. It was my job to keep the irrigation going in the main garden all summer, to weed and to help with the harvesting and the canning.

Fruit trees were planted west and north of the house. There was one very large Royal Anne cherry tree, two smaller sour cherry trees, one peach, four apple trees of different varieties, two pear trees and three apricot trees and about six large rhubarb plants. We bought peaches to can from orchards along the Columbia River west of Rufus, and many varieties of apples to store for winter eating. Our own apples were used for pies, jelly, applesauce and cider. We always got a box of quince for jelly. There were four bins along the sides of the cellar for storing apples, a big one along the end for

potatoes and another for winter squash and pumpkins. Three shelves lined two sides and one end of the cellar to hold jars of canned fruit, vegetables, meat, jams, jellies, pickles, relishes and mincemeat. My father was an excellent gardener and husbandman. My mother was a superb cook and they did very well by us. No skinny people or animals lived anywhere on our farm. They would have been horrified at the very thought of such a thing.

Pies were baked six at a time and cakes by double recipes or two at a time. Cookies were made at least six dozen or more at a time. The baking powder biscuit pan was about 10" x 14" and the muffins were at least three dozen. The Parker House rolls were made on two large cookie sheets. You can imagine it took about a pound of butter a day and a pint of jam or jelly. Everything was cooked in like proportions.

Pans of roasting meat filled the bottom of the large oven, potatoes filled the rack above it. Steaks were fried on griddles or extra large frying pans. Food was always plain, very rich and delicious, and loads of it! Lots of the baking was done with cream, sour cream, or buttermilk.

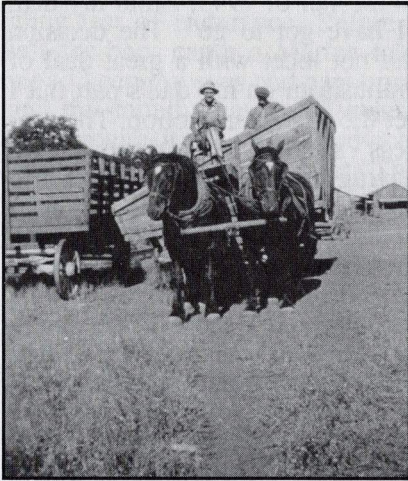
Remember, cooking was done on a large range which burned wood, with a bit of coal to keep it warm at night during the cold weather. With no thermometer for the oven, we judged heat by just opening the door a bit and extending a hand into it for a few seconds before placing food in to bake. About the only foods we purchased were white and brown sugar, molasses, syrup, honey, coffee, cocoa, tea, spices, baking



powder, soda, corn starch, salt, pepper, raisins, prunes, figs, dates, nuts, macaroni, rice and beans.

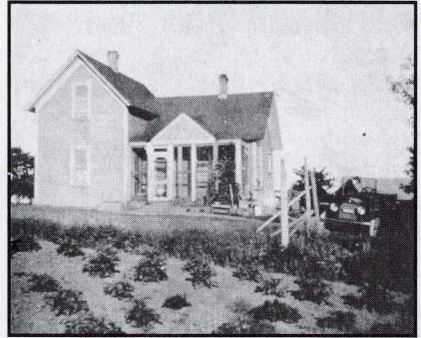
If the weather was very cold, we had at least six special stones to heat in the oven which were wrapped in newspaper and placed in our beds for warmth. If it wasn't too cold, you just popped the hot kerosene lamp chimney into an old cotton stocking after blowing out the lamp. It was a good foot warmer. We had a crank phone,

but no electricity. In the fall lots of wild water fowl landed on our ponds on their way south. The boys generally got a few during the season. The sound of the calling of migrating ducks, geese and cranes is well remembered and the continuous warm weather serenading of croaking frogs is unforgettable. During the warm season we always slept in tents so we got full benefit of all the sounds.



*Searcy header bed and team beside hay wagon.*

*Courtesy of Helen Ruggles*



*Searcy home place circa 1916.*

*Courtesy of Helen Ruggles*