

Democratic Eagle Optic—Being republicans, the young pioneers thought all democrats were rebels. They knew nothing of religious differences and were exceedingly tolerant even though so decided in politics.

In a month the houses were supposed to be ready and the grown ups were impatient to be off.

The man hired to transport household furniture as well as the families, forgot to tell them that one of his horses was balky but it leaked out when nightfall found them only sixteen miles from Larned and twenty-four from the claim. Some kind settlers took them in. The following morning, the horse had either reformed or been exchanged as the cavalcade started early on its way.

A young, wild eyed long horned Texas cow had been bought for milk in the Larned market. She was stubborn as well as deceitful, with decided ideas of her own.

At times she refused to lead behind either wagon but would let the little 105 pound mother lead her—The little mother, who had never led or milked a cow in her life could always subdue that wild ranger even though the hired men were afraid of her.

To be tied behind a wagon was beneath her dignity but when the little mother sat at the rear holding the rope saying "Come Bossy" she came right along.

Why she was called the "old white cow" when she was four years old and spotted like a calico pony will never be known. Suffice it to say, it was the only name she ever had. She could snort and toss her horns like a rodeo steer but it was only a joke. She never hooked, nor kicked nor put her foot in the milk pail and no Jersey ever gave richer milk. Peace to her ashes wherever they are for she furnished milk to those five children and good milk too.

At the end of the second day they arrived at Duncan's Ranch, three miles north of the claim on the old Hays and Dodge trail. Here they stayed another week while the roof was shingled and floor laid.

The young uncles did their best but left much to be desired. The little mother looked with dismay upon the sod walls that were already beginning to bulge. The shingled roof was too heavy for the walls. With every rain there was a new bulge and soon a wall fell out but by this time the little mother was having lime stone hauled for a new house. Soon a good mason, named Llewellyn was laying walls for the new house. Windows, doors, roof, floor, etc., were moved from the old house to the new. The new house had a cellar and an attic and deep bright windows that were soon filled with house plants. Everybody for miles around exchanged slips of plants and rooted them in shining tomato cans, in which they grew luxuriantly.

As the barns, chicken houses, and sheds were built stone was used—Every child learned to lay stone, straight solid and true—That was a long time ago but if they had to do it, there isn't one in the family that could not lay a true wall of lime stone, and have a good time doing it, particularly if they could all work at it together.

Not knowing that western Kansas is sometimes a little penurious regarding rain, the mother hired fifty acres broken and put in winter wheat. There was not even seed harvested that year.

The beauties of old Hodgeman at that time cannot be described. Miles of the curling green Buffalo grass, many varieties of wild flowers and the bluest of skies, made not easily forgetable memories in childish minds.

If the wind were too hot and strong for comfort during the day, it always turned to a cool caressing breeze at night.

The little mother was a saint living close to God and teaching her children to pray for all their needs.

The grandmother suddenly died in August after a three days illness. There were no telephones nor undertakers but a good carpenter, who made the casket of the smooth white boards that floored the new attic of the little mother's stone house.