



CHAPTER IV

DELLY'S GENERATION

Life for most people in Franklin County was bleak after the war, though not as grim for those in the South with the burned cities and torn-up railroad lines, demolished factories and cotton gins. What the returning, weary, and crippled Confederate States of America, CSA, veterans found was uncultivated fields, weedy gardens and grass growing in the streets of villages and towns. Some of the better homes had been burned by Yankees for revenge of those strongly supporting the Confederacy.

The economy was in shambles. Freeing of slaves wiped out \$2.5 billion invested in plantation labor in the South. This was nearly two thirds of the South's wealth. Worthless Confederate currency brought the failure of Southern banks. With no credit available, farmers who had survived the war were unable to buy seeds and tools for getting out a crop.

Further misfortune descended on the entire nation, but particularly on the South. President Lincoln meant to bring Southern states back into the Union in the quickest and most humane way. Tragically, he was assassinated within a week of the end of the war.

Vice President Andrew Johnson was immediately sworn in as the seventeenth President of the United States. Johnson was a Tennessean who came from abject poverty to become U .S. Representative from Tennessee and later a two-term governor of the state. Though Johnson had strong negative feelings against the planter class, his plans for reconstruction were much like those of Lincoln.

In Congress, the Radical Republicans were outraged by Johnson's leniency toward the South. Their intentions were to punish the South for rebellion. In the struggle to humiliate Southerners, Johnson was impeached, but in the trial of March 1868, the vote for conviction fell just one vote short of the necessary two thirds to remove him from the Presidency.

Still the Radical Republicans could and did humiliate angry Southerners by giving civil rights to the free blacks, and encouraging them to run for office. With punitive electoral measures used against former rebels, a number of blacks were elected to Congress from Southern states. Opportunists from the North descended on the fallen South, though not all the carpetbaggers came with ulterior motives. Some came to do educational, humanitarian and religious work.

Southern Republicans were frequently called scalawags, though they were a mixed lot. Some were those who had opposed secession, some were lower class whites who wanted to get even with planters whom they envied, while still others were business people and planters who felt that the quickest way to recover economically was to cooperate with the ruling party.

In the bitter days of poverty and the angst of defeat, there was likely some ugly name-calling around Alto. No one living today seems to have any knowledge of how James Mosley Ikard, adolescent patriot, who served both sides in the war was received among his family and neighbors around Alto.

James Mosley was no longer the favored eldest son of a popular and prosperous family. He would have almost a decade of litigation with his stepmother, Marticia, to get what he felt was his just share of the farm. In court, he pressed to have the seventy acres that Elijah bought from Jacob Keil with his and his brother's (Lanson Rowe) inheritance, turned over to them. Farming was difficult and no longer profitable. With the long drawn out struggle in the courts with Marticia, it is unlikely that James Mosley had good relations with his half brothers.

James Mosley was fortunate to marry Tennessee Elizabeth Gotcher. "Miss Tennie" was a lively woman known for her good humor and unfailing hospitality. They married June 14, 1866. By March 22 of 1867, they were the proud parents of a big and lusty child whom they named Lanson Odell. Lanson was, of course, for James' much loved grandfather, Lanson Rowe. Odell may have been for someone in the Gotcher family.

The family ended up calling the child Delly. He was a high-energy youngster with a shy smile, and unceasing curiosity. There was no help in the house nor in the fields. At a very early age Delly began to do chores. Hard times made him aware that only mighty labor would achieve "getting ahead." A workoholic and effective crew

boss developed. The problems of his father's legal struggle and declining health was not lost on him.

The Ikard School established by his grandfather, Elijah Harrison Ikard, was a stone's throw from where his family lived making it easy for Delly to attend the short school terms that were all his community could afford during Reconstruction. Mae Ikard Hicks says that Ikards maintained the school and hired the teacher. Neighbor children paid tuition (that would have included Sarah Elizabeth Gilliam who much later married Delly). Delly developed a handsome manuscript. He was an eager learner, his curiosity piqued by really unusual phenomena.

Being the oldest child of a large family eventually numbering nine children, he found it natural to take the lead in jobs to be done. With James Mosley in poor health, Delly would take charge, parceling out tasks to his siblings, coming along behind them to confirm that the job had been adequately done. He became quite a manager.

Delly was not one to pass up the good things of living in the Alto area. He attended church regularly and sang hymns with gusto. Though he had no reputation for hunting and fishing, he must have enjoyed the water and forests leading up to Sewanee. Close to the Ikard home is a low spot that retains water most of the year. It is called "Delly's Pond." During dry years the land was planted in corn, but most years it was a squishy, wadeable pond abounding with aquatic life.

Talk around the Ikard dinner table was likely centered on politics, (the virtues of the Democrats and the failings of the Republicans), good stories, and the good looks of neighboring girls and who was courting them. Delly grew into a strapping young man, taller than his father. He was not blind to the charms of the girls at the frequent square dances. He was also into the culture of imbibing good "corn squeezings" between sets at the dances. After all, a fellow needed some strong refreshment after the frenzied tempo that characterizes a Tennessee square dance set.

By his late teens, Delly was into regular courting. He was particularly taken by Sarah Elizabeth Gilliam, "Betty", who lived on an adjoining farm. She was not the prettiest girl in Roark Cove, but she was the merriest and liveliest and was the daughter of William and Mary Banks Gilliam.

The Gilliams were among the earliest settlers of the area. William Gilliam had gone off to fight for the Confederacy when Tumey recruited hundreds of young men from the hollows of the Cumberlands and was among the few who returned sound in body and mind. The Gilliams were always ready to strike up some music and dance a bit. An optimism pervaded their conversation that was appealing. Delly was drawn toward the music, fun and laughter of Betty's family, and to Betty's own indefatigable good nature and optimism.

Delly and Betty were married on September 15, 1887, in Winchester by J.N. Handline, magistrate. Very likely they lived for a time with Delly's parents, as Delly was the number one hand on the farm, though Mae Hicks says that they moved into a new log cabin.

What a pair Delly and Betty were! Delly didn't know if Betty could cook, but he felt that her optimistic nature would see them through good times and bad. He was right. In the years while Delly and Betty were bringing up their twelve children, Betty regularly made one hundred biscuits for every meal, that looked much like Hardee biscuits. Perhaps they were not the lightest and fluffiest, but they did stick to the ribs of her large and ever hungry offspring.

What Delly could earn doing farm work was not enough to provide for his and Betty's fast growing family. He continued to contribute much to the operation of his father's farm, and to work other places in the area. He learned the elements of carpentry, and took a job in Decherd as a night watchman for the railroad. He also operated the coal refueling chute for trains stopping there.

Relations had always been good between Delly and his father's half brothers. Only William Guinn Ikard among them was terribly interested in farming in the area. Delly and his siblings called William Guinn, "Uncle Billie."

Joseph Shephard Ikard, "Uncle Joe," had married R.E. Hinton on May 28 of 1891 and was not satisfied to remain in Franklin County with limited prospects. He was among the first of a mini-migration of local young men to go west to Indian Territory, or Oklahoma as it was later named.

Uncle Joe, and others who went west, wrote glowing accounts of the rich land in the territory and of prospects for "getting ahead." At this time the western area was experiencing unusually good weather and rainfall. Much of the land belonged to Indians, but some was available to homesteaders. Uncle Joe settled in Tuttle, near Chickasha, which was served by the Rock Island Railroad. Uncle Jesse had a farm a few miles to the south.

By the turn of the century Delly and Betty had a houseful of children, nine to be exact, eight of them boys. Ever ambitious, Delly knew that his boys had a bleak future in Alto with no land of their own. He was persuaded by Uncle Joe's letters that there was a future for him and Betty and their boys in Indian Territory.

Betty was not hard to persuade, as she feared that with no land of their own, her sons would drift into employment in the mines up in the cove. She had a sense of adventure and was not too sad to say goodbye to their beautiful area in Tennessee to go to a strange country peopled by Indians. Native Americans of the Plains had only recently stopped roaming the country in search of buffalo, and harassing ranchers of Oklahoma and Texas. A picture of Delly's and Betty's family is on page 186.

In April of 1905, the Ikards chartered a railroad car in Decherd, sold all their belongings that would not fit in the car and took tools, plows, furniture, bedding, lots of food, and, of course, their nine children and two hound dogs. "Oklahoma, here we come!" the family shouted. There was a note of sadness as the family passed the Ikard cemetery on the hill. Delly and Betty's daughter Elizabeth, "Lizzy," had died at two years of age and was buried to the rear of the Ikard cemetery.

No one kept a log of that journey. As boys of my generation were obsessed with airplanes, my father, George Ikard and his brothers, were obsessed with trains. Here they were saying goodbye to their grandparents, James Mosley and Miss Tennie Ikard, William and Mary Banks Gilliam and a host of other family and friends. Betty and Maggie cried. Delly had a sober countenance, but the boys could scarcely contain their eagerness to be off, riding the rails. It was a noisy farewell, as the Ikards waved from the door of their chartered box car, on a train of the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railroad. The stop in Decherd was extended that day as the Ikard car, filled with household items was attached to the train that began in Atlanta, 203 miles to the Southeast.

I can imagine their excitement in riding the train out of Decherd, of admiring the beautiful Tennessee countryside, marveling at the speed that took them the 13 miles to Tullahoma in less than an hour. The children shouted and waved to youngsters in the small towns the train passed through. There were always a collection of adults and children at the depot, because the train passing through was a big event in any day. The Ikard kids felt so privileged to be passengers rather than the "stay at homes."

Delly had the schedule in his pocket and advised the boys of the mileage to the next town. There was Wartrace, Bell Buckle, Fosterville, and then Murfreesboro, the site of a great Civil War battle. Then the train moved on through Florence, Smyrna, Lavergne and Antioch to Nashville, a metropolis. Even with stopping for coal and water and for picking up and dropping off a car here and there, the distance of 82 miles from Decherd would be swiftly covered. It was the same route that Elijah Harrison Ikard had taken home after the defeat of Confederates at Fort Donelson. This time it was a happy journey.

Betty could not contain her excited brood in Nashville. They could look up the hill and see the magnificent new state capitol building with an inspiring dome. The boys scampered across the tracks to get a closer view of the capitol and stare at all the well-dressed people who were going about the business of the state. Their hearts swelled with pride on being native Tennesseans, yet they were eagerly leaving to go to wild unknown country. After briefly exploring the area, they returned to the car. Betty was glad to see them as she was aware of the dangers of other trains passing on nearby tracks and was afraid the fellows might not be back before the train departed

for Memphis. They were. Scrambling onto the train the boys were full of lively chatter of the marvels of a big city as seen in a railway station. Delly purchased some choice food to enhance the meals en route to Memphis.

The tracks went due west 70 miles from Nashville to Bruceton, a major transfer station. Here one could observe the intricate moving of cars from one track to another. The shouts and signals of trainmen, the swinging lanterns, the huff and puff of steam engines, the screech of metal wheels on steel tracks grinding to a halt: all were part of the magic of moving people and freight across a growing country. The train crossed the wide Tennessee river on a bridge that was most impressive.

From Bruceton the tracks headed south, southwest to Jackson where a number of small railroads converged necessitating another lengthy stop for distributing cars. As the train moved on, the gentle hills diminished and the flat land supported a landscape of cotton farming. The train picked up speed. The wail of the whistle as it hurtled past intersections was ever thrilling.

Memphis was the terminus for the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway. There would be a lengthy stop while the Ikard car waited to be connected to the Rock Island Lines. It is possible that the older boys hurried toward the levy to see the mighty Mississippi. It was awesome! Linked with another engine, the car with the Ikards soon lumbered across the remarkable span, high above the rushing muddy waters into Arkansas. The sounds of the train assured that they were earth bound, but the vista gave the illusion of moving across the sky.

Mosquitos plagued the family at every stop in the delta land of Arkansas. Out of Little Rock, the rolling hills brought relief from those pests. The tracks passed south of Fort Smith going slower through a valley of the Ozark Mountains with magnificent views.

The landscape was changing by the mile. Trees squatted along creeks, and the softly rolling hills were covered with prairie grass. The wind whipped up giving a sense of even greater speed, and an aroma rose that was foreign to these native Tennesseans. Sun on the grasses gave off herbaceous odors that were pleasant to the senses. A great shout went up from the Ikards as Delly announced that they were now in Indian Territory. My dad loved the percussion of train wheels on the track. Likely, he slept little on the several-hundred-mile journey. Betty loved the rhythm of the wheels, they sang of freedom and opportunity. There had been no more tears after leaving Decherd.

There were scarcely any landmarks in the vast countryside. The horizon had moved far, far away. One could see forever, and the Ikard boys were searching for tepees. The stops in Seminole and Shawnee revealed small dusty places, hardly crossroads. Indeed, Oklahoma City bore no resemblance to the cities of Memphis

and Nashville. Instead, it was a raw town of hastily thrown up wooden buildings, unpaved streets, with what appeared to be rough characters hustling about with the city's business.

It was not a long stop. Rock Island's next important terminal was El Reno, only 26 miles to the west. Here the Rock Island line that ran north/south from Kansas City to Galveston Texas intercepted the east/west line the Ikards had been traveling for 932 miles. The tracks crossed the North Canadian River, which appeared no river at all to the boys. There was a broad sandy river bottom with a small pool of water here and there. Again the box car with the Ikards was shunted to a side rail awaiting the next train going south.

Nothing could restrain the Ikard kids here. El Reno had the crude appearance of a new western town. Fort Reno was a temporary looking place with a few soldiers about. Their job was to protect the Darlington Indian Agency. There was The El Reno Hotel next to the tracks, with a long narrow veranda and hitching posts. The depot was yet to be built. Indians lounged about the station, tall men with hair parted in the middle and long braids encased with colorful yarn. Jim, George, Don and Mark stared, open mouthed, at an ethnic group they had never seen. They were not afraid of these impassive men.

However they were concerned about the last 34 miles to Chickasha, the end of the line for them. In recent years a bold train robbery had occurred on this very line, just 8 miles from Chickasha. The ragged Doolin Gang had been on hard times with only the little food they could take from scattered farmhouses. The Railroads were running night trains under heavy guard with detectives and marshals keeping an alert eye for trouble. In broad daylight, the Doolins forced the maintenance crew to flag down the train while the Doolins hid in the brush beside the tracks. Boldly the desperados boarded, subdued the trainmen, and ordered all passengers off the train, where at gunpoint they collected \$300 and several watches including that of Conductor Dan Dacy.

The Ikard kids talked about what they would do if this train were robbed. It was an uneventful trip, and in no time at all the train pulled into Chickasha. Their handsome Uncle Jesse was there to greet them as was Uncle Joe who had a farm in nearby Tuttle. Uncle Joe invited them to visit with his family until the railroad car could be unloaded and preparation made to move the contents. On page 187 is a picture of Jesse.

In Indian Territory the unrelenting wind set a restless mood that was depressing to some Easterners, but not to the Ikards. There were a few locust trees in Chickasha and some black jack, a form of oak that would have been called a shrub in Franklin County. The rolling hills were covered with tall grass that was alive with

the ebb and flow of shifting wind. The Indians they saw in Chickasha seemed to be spectators to the slow moving pace of village life.

Uncle Jesse steered Delly toward reliable horse and mule traders, where Delly bought two covered wagons and some horses. This was a big comedown for my dad, George, from the sounds of screaming rails to the almost inaudible thuds of hoofs in the sand, as the family moved down a dusty road. Uncle Joe's family entertained them in proud prairie fashion and shortly Delly's and Betty's family camped nearby. That season Delly and the older boys worked for nearby farmers in the harvest. By winter the family was settled in a house on a farm near Fairwell, now Grady County Oklahoma. In 1906 Delly and his sturdy boys made a crop.

Good fortune continued with the Ikards and in 1907, Delly found a homesteader on an 80 acre tract east of Cyril who wanted to sell out. He wisely made a generous bid and snapped it up. While Betty and the little ones remained at the farm in Fairwell, Delly and Mark, Don and Jim lived in the dugout and started construction on a handsome two story, gabled house with a balcony and porch. The house and family is pictured on page 189 of this book. Ah! Now Betty was the mistress of a new home, and Delly had his own land.

He was able to lease two 160-acre sections of adjoining land from Indians. Delly was seeing his dream come true, as he and the boys made big sorghum crops and processed it to syrup. In later years, Betty said that for a year sorghum syrup and cornbread was a staple on her menu- and that she got really tired of it.

Since Delly had worked like a man from his boyhood days, he expected the same of others, his brothers in Tennessee and his sons in Indian Territory. Mark was 18, Don was 15, Jim, 13 and George, 12. All were big for their ages, tall and sturdily built. If a job needed to be done, Delly could deliver a competent and industrious crew. He really flourished in the role of crew boss and patriarch.

From 1912-1916 Delly owned 28 head of draft, buggy and riding horses. He also ran about a hundred head of cattle that he grazed on the Lookingglass pasture, just north of Cyril and only five miles from home. The herd was followed by a chuck wagon. You can be sure that the boys vied for the job of accompanying the cattle. All mastered the art of being cowboys, riding as if a hail storm was in pursuit of them to control the cattle. My dad, George, was particularly good with a lariat rope. His high-pitched cry (something of a rebel yell) as he closed in on a steer added to the excitement.

The Ikard children went to school at Caddo Pride, only a couple of miles away. It was a one-room, no-nonsense structure that resembled the Ikard school in Alto. Delly was elected chairman of the first school board there, and all his children attended at sometime or another. It is said that the teacher of Caddo Pride some

years roomed and boarded with the Ikards. My guess is that the teacher found it an interesting experience to say the least.

Indians lived all around the Ikards. As boys will be boys, the Ikard sons were on some days great buddies with their Kiowa neighbors. On others days, the fur flew. It has been told that Betty was seen in her kitchen doorway holding a loaded gun, covering her sons while they raced home just ahead of their war whooping Indian friends. The boys said that her concern was misplaced, but Betty was not sure. Delly was on good terms with his Indian neighbors, Bill Tonips and Chief Redbird. Chief Redbird even gave Delly his ceremonial headdress of Buffalo horns and feathers as a token of friendship.

The Ikards had two more children after moving to the prairie. Fred Oklahoma was born in March of 1907, just before Indian Territory became the forty sixth state. Then in May of 1910, Mary Tennessee "May", named for grandmother Tennessee Elizabeth Gotcher Ikard, was born, the last of a dozen children.

She was a rip! All those older brothers thought she was so cute. Alternately she was teased and indulged. Of course, she adored all the attention. Quite naturally she had to be spunky to hold her own with the brothers. She rode horses like the wind and, in later years, said that when she entered school she could swear in five languages: English, French, German, Kiowa and Comanche.

When the Frisco railroad was extended to Cyril, Delly and his older boys worked at laying track. From the Ikard farm just east of Cyril, one could see and hear the trains that served the town. The refinery that was built there was also visible and, with the wind just right, the aroma of petrol was apparent.

When World War I came along, my father George was the one to volunteer. Mark, Maggie, Don and Jim were already married. George went to Camp Bowie near Fort Worth, Texas, to train for the 111th Sanitary Train of the 36th Division. It was his choice to recover the dead and wounded rather than use a rifle. He was a gentle giant of six feet four inches, rather a good target. But his choice was to serve in a non-hostile way on the battlefields of France.

While George was in training, he was called home for a sad event. His younger brother Herbert was accidentally shot and killed on Thanksgiving day. When the war was over and he was awaiting discharge, he was again called home for another sad loss. His handsome brother Mark died of a brain tumor, leaving behind a wife and two small daughters.

Things were scarcely dull in the Ikard household. Delly was impressive in appearance, more than six feet tall, legendary in strength and possessing psychic powers. He was a hypnotist, and frequently entertained the neighbors until one night he failed to bring a young fellow out of a trance quickly enough to suit Betty.

She was frightened and told Delly that if he ever did that again she would leave him. That was the end of hypnotism for Delly.

Once, Happy Hodge, a village character in Cyril, had an accident on the Little Washita River. He was pinned beneath the wheel of his wagon in four feet of water. Delly arrived on the scene just in time and extricated Happy from a watery grave.

For twenty years, the Ikards enjoyed seeing the culture and behavior of prairie wilderness change into raw twentieth century living. Schools were established. The railroad and refinery prospered. Telephone lines brought instant communication. And early automobiles began to make twin ruts in the section line roads.

In August of 1920, Betty received the news of the 19th Amendment being ratified on her telephone. Now women had the right to vote! She shouted with joy and danced all over the house, popping her apron in time to her own "Irish Jig."

Delly, who had become prosperous by local standards felt that he was not "getting ahead" as quickly as he hoped to do. Perhaps it was the middle-age malaise so many men experience. For one thing, his many helpful hands began to marry and establish their own households, and he no longer commanded a work force. Perhaps there were opportunities somewhere else, Delly mused.

Because he read a number of periodicals, he likely got to thinking about the real estate boom in Florida. Perhaps a man could make money without a crew. By October 1924, he had persuaded Betty that they could make a fortune buying lots and building houses in Florida. Betty seemed always to agree with Delly's plans for a change. This time, the Ikards sold all their crops, tools, and furnishings. They bought a 1922 Ford pickup truck and a 1923 Ford touring car. Mae was fourteen, Fred was seventeen and Henry was in his early twenties: all the other children were married. With only clothes to carry, the five Ikards started on a journey of more than a thousand miles from dry and windy Oklahoma to the humid tropics of Southern Florida.

There were no road maps. In fact, there were only primitive roads. Like the early days in Oklahoma, the family camped out along the way. Though the automobiles were relatively new, they required much maintenance along the way. There were frequent flat tires and often fairly serious engine problems.

It was an education for all. Maybe it took three apprentice mechanics to get those two Fords across Texas and Louisiana. They crossed the Mississippi River on a ferry in New Orleans. Mae said the roads were awful.

Orlando, Florida, was the first stop. They camped for a month, but Delly thought the place showed little opportunity for making the kind of money he envisioned. They rented a house in Leesburg during the winter. Still Delly did not see the boom

that he was seeking. Finally they drove on to Fort Lauderdale, which in January of 1925 had a population of 5000 and a tremendous building boom underway.

There was no rental property available, so the sturdy Ikards again camped. The temperature was not bad, but the mosquitos were. Delly bought a lot. He and Henry and Fred built a house. Then Delly sold the house for a big profit before his family could move in. Betty and Mae were not pleased; they were weary of that tent!

It was the summer of 1925 before Delly built another house for his family. Meantime he was writing letters to his sons back in Oklahoma telling them about the high wages in a boom community. Perhaps Delly was eager to reassemble his good old work crew again. On page 192 is a picture of Delly and Betty in Florida.

After the wheat harvest of 1925, two of his sons decided to accept their parents invitation for a visit and to have a look at the opportunities. My dad, George, and his brother Luther took their very young families in a Ford touring car along the same cow trails from Oklahoma to the tip of Florida. George and his wife Alta had two children. I passed my fifth birthday en route. My brother George Jr. was two. Luther and his wife Myrtle (Alta's sister) had one child, Wallace, also two years old.

I remember a good bit about the trip: the frequent breakdowns and flat tires, the excitement of camping in strange places, the bugs that flew into the car, and the odd speech of people we talked to along the way. But most of all I recall the thrill and fear of crossing the Mississippi on a ferry at Vicksburg. I could understand why topography explains the long siege of Vicksburg during the Civil War. That southern city sits at the top of a cliff overlooking the river. The Confederate forces were able to defend the position for a very long time.

When the ferry disgorged its vehicles on the east bank, our touring car refused to make the steep climb. So my resourceful father turned the car around and backed up the long and steep incline. I knew that my daddy was the smartest man in the world.

When we finally arrived in Fort Lauderdale, my grandparents had house guests, friends from Cement, Oklahoma who stayed and stayed (a social phenomena of the time). So the young Ikards were forced to stay in the much-maligned tent. I loved the ocean, but deplored the mosquitos. George and Luther got jobs building houses, but Myrtle and Alta were not disposed to make an extended visit in the tent. After all they had had enough tenting on the long journey to Florida.

The two families went back to Oklahoma in a few weeks. George continued to farm, an occupation he loved, and Luther got a job as a U .S, mail carrier. Delly continued to write letters about the big money to be made in Fort Lauderdale, but his sons were not tempted to return. One of those letters to George is on page 208 of this book.

In the fall of 1926, Delly's hopes for a fortune in Florida were literally blown away in a killer hurricane. Being very near the beach, the small houses of the Ikards neighborhood, were quickly swept away by a rising surf. Neighbors came to the still-standing Ikard house. Twenty-five people took refuge in the Ikards small but sturdy house, wailing and praying. Fred said that Delly behaved like an old sea captain. He was in his glory.

"All you men put your shoulders to this east wall. Not a soul will get a scratch in this house," he commanded.

Eventually the roof went as did the partition walls. Water was ankle deep in the house, but, as Delly prophesied, no one got a scratch.

Yet the hurricane was a bitter blow to Delly's dreams. He had invested the money from his farming venture in a number of bungalows in Fort Lauderdale. All of them were destroyed by that vicious storm. He could thank God that all his family had survived the storm; many others were not so fortunate. Even the land on which his houses had stood was worth little after the trauma of so devastating a storm.

This time, sadly, the Ikards returned to Cyril, Oklahoma. Delly had no heart to start farming again, as he could not buy land and had only two unmarried sons, neither of whom cared much about farming. Winded, the starch was gone from him, Delly was now an old man. He and Betty built a modest home on the west side of Cyril. She raised a fine vegetable garden every spring. They lived out the balance of their lives quietly.

When they were young Delly and Betty were Methodists in Alto. Later Delly was drawn to the Assembly of God. Betty preferred the Baptist church but she went with Delly most of the time. George and Alta were Baptists, but sometimes they took their children to worship at the Assembly of God out of respect for my grandparents. During the "testimonial" part of the worship service, my grandfather without fail rose to "testify" about what the Lord had done for him. With great dignity he stood, a tall erect, very large man with a shock of the whitest hair you ever saw, really a handsome old fellow, and told of the sins of his youth. He confessed that he had drunk to excess and was heartily sorry for that. He used pious terms to enumerate other sins, that I failed to comprehend, then gave great thanks for his redemption. I was moved to pride and tears.

Like so many of his family, Delly had a stroke. Betty nursed him for the months that he was incapacitated. He died September 25, 1935.

Betty continued to live in Cyril, to garden and to travel. During World War II she was ever the optimist and would tell any visitor of the good news in some far away place and predict that the war would soon be over. During this war her sons George and Fred served with the military overseas: George, in the Aleutian Islands

off the coast of Alaska, and Fred in the South Pacific. She maintained a vigorous correspondence with both of them. Letters from Fred and George are found on pages 209 and 210 of this book.

On a train on the way to Florida to visit her daughter Mae, Betty took a nap, and apparently had a stroke during her sleep. She died in Georgia in June of 1944. Letters from Betty to Mae and from Mae to Bud at this time are found on pages 211 and 212 of this book.

James Mosley and Miss Tennie's second child was Isa Nora whose photographs show a poised and confident young lady. She managed to dress fashionably and to present the appearance of one of the "beautiful people" in Franklin County.

At the social gatherings in the Alto area, she could pick and choose a dancing partner from the handsome and vigorous fellows. It has been said that Nora danced all night in Alto to the tune of "Sally Goodin." It was Charlie Garner from Roark Cove who most often took her home from the square dances. Romance bloomed and on February 26, 1890, they married. On page 185 is their wedding picture.

Charlie was the son of Anderson and Jenny Mitchell Garner, Anderson was the caretaker of the historic Rutledge home built just across the Elk River.

Charlie built a home in Alto and started a business at the crossroad that progressed from a grocery store to dry goods and eventually he had a sawmill, and a telephone exchange. Though Charlie was more of an inventor than a businessman, his Alto investment prospered through the years from 1910-1919. With the economic crisis of 1919-20 Charlie's business had more outgo than income, and eventually his creditors foreclosed.

In 1902, the Gammers were living in the old Ikard house across from the cemetery. Nora had inherited this piece of land from her father. Their first child was Pearl Irene. She was often ill. Nora was not too happy about living in the old family house. She somehow felt it was haunted. When Pearl Irene was three, she had a bad bout with the croup. In the night Nora heard three raps at the door. No one answered. But Pearl Irene died that night. Nora felt it had been the death angel who rapped on the door.

Their next child was Thomas Gailor, a bright, well-mannered and very handsome child who brought much pleasure to his parents. Another daughter, Anne was born October 25, 1902. Church records show that she was baptized at the home of Anderson Garner in Alto on May 3, 1903. She was painfully shy and never enjoyed the social life of Alto. One more son named Jesse Marvin rounded out the family.

Gailor was family oriented. Though he lived in Nashville, Tennessee, most of his adult life, he maintained close a relationship with his mother's people in Alto. In 1926, he married the vivacious Fannie DeBow of Nashville. Fannie was charmed

with Gailor's extended family in Franklin County, so the visits continued and their sons Thomas, Jack and Bob had the advantage of long summer weeks in the country with great aunts, uncles and a host of cousins.

Gailor took Uncle Theo and Uncle Frank to visit the Oklahoma Ikards in 1935. The entire family appreciated Gailor's thoughtful and generous gesture, as the uncles were getting old and it was an opportunity for them to visit with Delly's large family. The Oklahoma cousins found it exciting and satisfying to link up with family that went back beyond the thirty year span of history that saw the transition from buffalo culture to row crop farming by venturesome whites.

Gailor worked for the United States Postal Service, sorting mail first from a moving train and later from the large postal trucks. He was working on such a truck when an accident took his life on November 4, 1958.

Jesse Marvin was a striking individual. Quite in contrast to the gentle Gailor and Anne, James Marvin (he had the audacity of changing his name from Jesse to James) was red headed, raw boned and considered something of a hellion in affectionate terms. Perhaps he felt that if he physically resembled his grandfather James Mosley, rather than the handsome Uncle Jesse Ikard, he might as well have the name.

James Marvin enlisted in the Civilian Conservation Corps, (C.C.C.) during the Roosevelt administration. He found the vigorous regimen much to his liking and remained with it, rising to a supervisory position. He married Jonelda Ament from Cookville and had two sons, James Marvin Jr., and Michael Ament.

Jesse Edward Ikard was the third child of James Mosley and Tennie Ikard, born December 8, 1871, in the Alto community. He was an unusually good-looking child with even features, an erect carriage and a strong sense of beauty and order. It was expected that he do his share of the work around the farm, and he did. But throughout his boyhood and adolescence, he was the "dude" of the family. He liked the best clothes he could afford, and he kept them in mint condition.

Of course, he was much admired by the local girls. Heads turned as he walked by. Besides his attractive appearance, he carried himself with assurance. Unlike his older brother, Delly, Jesse courted with a light hand. He liked the girls, but he was serious about none of them. Perhaps he enjoyed the carefree years of being the Ikard's bachelor son. With no family to support, he was quick to make plans to go to Indian Territory in response to Uncle Joe's glowing letters.

It wasn't until he met Ada Bell Forsythe, that Jesse changed his attitude. She was a beauty and just as meticulous in appearance as Jesse. Besides being so attractive, she was full of fun, playing gentle pranks, telling jokes and in general entertaining folks. Jesse lost his heart to Ada, and wasn't he glad he had waited for this gem? She

was only seventeen and he was thirty four, but they were quite a congenial and attractive pair.

After they married in 1905, Jesse got serious about farming. He had a place in the Fairwell community between Cement and Chickasha, Oklahoma. He was already settled when Delly's family arrived on the train in Chickasha. No doubt he helped Delly get a farm nearby.

In the next five years, Jesse and Ada had three beautiful children. Stephen was born on October 9, 1906. On October 8, 1908, Edward Clifford was born, and on March 12, 1911, a daughter was born and named for three aunts, Lula May Mable rounded out the family. Ada took pride in her family. Photographs of Jesse, Ada and their children in those years show a healthy, comely and very well dressed family. The proud parents made sure that all of them took part in the cultural events in the community. They attended literary and musical programs at the Community Center.

Yet misfortune overtook this young couple in 1912. Jesse developed Bright's Disease, a serious kidney disorder. He was advised to take treatments in Hot Springs, Arkansas. His mother, Miss 'Tennie' came from Tennessee to nurse and encourage Jesse, hoping for his recovery. Unfortunately Jesse died. Miss Tennie wanted to take Jesse's body back to Alto to bury him in the old Ikard cemetery, just across the road from where she lived. But Ada would have none of this. She insisted on taking Jesse back to Chickasha for burial. A picture of Jesse and Ada is on page 187.

Ada was pressed to take care of herself and three small children. In 1915 Ada remarried and had several children. Her oldest son, Stephen, remained single. Ed married Martha Lois Penn. Lula May Mable married Milton "Tince" Pack at fifteen. They had six children.

Little is known about the Ikard's daughter Lucy Elisa. She was born March 19, 1874, and married William Nunnalee. Apparently they moved to Dennison Texas, and Lucy did not keep in touch with her family. According to the records of Mae Ikard Hicks, Lucy had 5 children, John, Mabel, Bill, Nora and Louis. In the 1930s Lucy, William and their son Louis, about twenty five years old, came to visit Delly and Betty in Cyril Oklahoma. They stayed for a very long time. My Ikard cousins now living in Franklin County have no memory of Lucy at all.

James Franklin Ikard was born April 21, 1876. Like his brothers and sisters, he attended the old Ikard school where he excelled in mathematics and history. Frank was tall, lean and full of fun and tunes with a torrid tempo. He also was strong in his political beliefs, a lifelong Democrat who voted a straight ticket.

No one enjoyed the music and dancing in the area more than Frank. He taught himself to play the classic hoedowns. His fiddle was an excellent instrument, a

Stamer, and stamped on the inside, Aug. 1812. He took first place in the fiddling contest at the May 1940 Franklin County Crimson Clover Festival in Sewanee. An assemblage of Oklahoma Ikards listened on the radio to a fiddler contest at the grand Ole Opry in Nashville. Uncle Frank placed high among the participants, and we sent him a telegram of congratulations.

The highlight of his young manhood was the successful courting of Miss Ida Kennedy. Ida had the same appreciation for "Bluegrass" that Frank did. Lively, light hearted and generous, she was just the sort of woman that Frank could spend the rest of his life with.

What a pair they were! Frank was comfortable inviting friends, neighbors or hunting and fishing buddies for dinner anytime. Ida never knew who she was making a meal for, and didn't care. She put together wonderful dishes, making use of what they grew on the farm and what Frank brought home from field or stream.

At the drop of a hat, Ida would move furniture from the living room to make space for a square dance. Folks could dance all night, then Ida would prepare a generous breakfast for her guests before saying goodbye. Frank and Ida were the most "laid back" couple in all the family, and likely of Alto also.

Besides being a good cook and hostess, Ida was a seamstress, loving to quilt most of all. She had plenty for her home and was always presenting a quilt to nieces and nephews. In 1936, she gave a quilt to my younger brother Gerald to whom she had taken a fancy. Gerald was eight years old but showed the vigor and fun of the Ikards at the time.

Frank was a farmer who made a point of getting the early crops harvested and the other crops "laid by" by the Fourth of July so that he and his sons could fish to their hearts content. Frank was a legendary fisherman, catching fish when no one else could. It pleased him to divide his catch with the neighbors. During season he and his sons also hunted. A judge in Winchester gave them twenty five cents a bird for quail and furnished the shells. That judge often ended up at the Ikard table for a dinner of quail or rabbit with other goodies that Ida prepared.

Frank and Ida went to Oklahoma in the early years of this century, at the same time that Tom and Allie did. Being able to get only poor land and then experiencing extreme drought, they soon used up their resources and turned their thoughts back to the gentle and fertile land of Franklin County. They had to borrow money for the train trip back. Frank obligated himself for the extra cash to pay for the passage of his two favorite coon dogs.

In the early years of their marriage Frank and Ida lost three children, a grievous experience. Those children are buried in the Ikard cemetery. Their first, Eather, born June 6, 1902, lived to be only 7 years old. The second child, Clara, born

November 11, 1904 died as a result of a playground accident on March 13, 1921. On October 10, 1906 a baby boy did not live out the day. They had three more children, all of whom lived to maturity; Jesse Edward was born August 29, 1910; George Washington, September 15, 1915 and Frankie Mae, September 1, 1917. Frank and Ida had a happy household.

Ed married Mary Elizabeth Roberts. They had three children, Linda, Holgam and George Edward.

George married Mary Lee Eslick on April 20, 1946. Their three daughters were born in Franklin County; Sharon Sue on August 2, 1948; Donna Faye, December 15, 1949 and Martha Katherin, February 2, 1951.

Frankie Mae married John Ruskin Keller on March 1938. They bought Frank's and Ida's farm when Frank retired. The Kellers have five daughters: Barbara Ann born February 17, 1939; Alta Sue, April 21, 1943; Janice Marie, September 8, 1946; Deborah Kay, April 30, 1950 and Bonnie Gayle November 29, 1956.

The Ikards next child was Theodore Elijah, born February 10, 1878. He was long and lean like his older brothers, but more gentle. Theo looked remarkably like Delly. Perhaps more than any of the other children, Theo enjoyed school. Throughout his life he read a great deal and wrote without effort. He attended an institution of higher learning in Decherd. Caring for others was his most distinguishing characteristic. Instead of going off to Oklahoma like Uncle Joe and several of his brothers, Theo stayed at home. He helped Tennessee nurse James Mosley when he was ill with Bright's disease. A few years later, he took care of his mother in her last illness. When his younger sister Emma was left a widow with two small children, Hattie Bell and Mary El, Theo moved in with them and kept the farm going until Emma remarried.

In later years his younger brother Tom died, leaving his widow, Allie, with five small children. Again, Theo moved in and ran the farm until Allie's second son, Homer, was old enough to manage on his own. Theo was devoted to all of Tom's children, and they to him. He helped Allie teach the children right from wrong. He attended school activities and gave the children the confident feeling of being from a two-parent home. Though there was never a romance between Theo and Allie, he remained in that household for all his days. He never married.

Homer was a very likable and industrious young man. Theo sold some of his land to him for a homesite. Later he deeded his other land to Allie.

The Oklahoma cousins treasured the visit of Uncle Frank and Uncle Theo made possible by Gailor Gamer in 1935. Though Delly was gone, his grandchildren could see their grandfather all over again as they got to know the uncles. Frank was vigorous, high stepping and great fun. Theo had the shy smile, the same build and

shock of white hair as Delly, though he was leaner. There were back-to-back parties and entertainments to honor these revered fellows. Caravans of Ikards went to the resorts of Medicine Park and Craterville as well as the site of the annual Easter pageant in the Wichita Mountains. For about a month life was a continuous picnic. Delly's children and grandchildren were forever grateful to Gailor for his thoughtfulness in bringing the uncles to see us while they were in their prime.

Theo died September 4, 1983. It was Topsy, Allie's youngest who cared for Theo in his last illness.

Thomas was the youngest son of the Ikard family. He was born January 2, 1881, attended the Ikard school and enjoyed the pleasures of country living. He courted and married the diminutive Allie Henley in 1906. He bought the old Charles Gilliam farm that was just across the road from Theo's land. Tom's and Allie's first two children were born there; Wilbur born March 16, 1907, Homer, November 15, 1908.

Sometime between 1909 and 1911, they followed the other Ikards to Oklahoma. The move was ill-timed. The land that Tom could get was east of Cement. The soil was very poor, sandy, lacking fertility and with considerable roll to it. The landscape near Cement had buttes rising above the hills. One is a well-known landmark called "Buzzard's Roost," an ill omen for the Ikards. In the shadow of this landmark, Tom and Allie attempted to raise a crop. Extreme drought doomed their hopes. Oil was discovered after the Ikards left, and wells are to this day still pumping away. Allie hated the bleak, unprotected countryside of Cement. The wind never stopped blowing, and literally blew away their crops.

The methods that brought good harvests to Franklin County were of no use on this windswept prairie land. The young couple lost everything they had, and were forced to borrow money to return to the green landscape of Tennessee. How pleased Allie was to return to the comfort and beauty of Alto whose citizens knew nothing of droughts and sandstorms.

On their return, to their joy, a beautiful daughter was born on November 26, 1912. They named her Jessie Tennessee, likely for her handsome Uncle Jesse and her well-loved grandmother Ikard.

Two more attractive daughters arrived within a few years. Mildred Irene was born November 19, 1914, a delicate infant with a heart as big as the moon. "Pinky" she was called, perhaps because she was about as big as your little finger. On December 18, 1916, another beauty was born who was named Fannie Eliza. She had red hair, perfect diminutive features and a winning smile.

Tom adored his small daughters and was a bit indulgent. Allie was able to dress them in most attractive clothing because she had learned to turn out lovely garments on the Wheaton Wilson sewing machine that she had bought in Cyril, Oklahoma.

For a while they lived in Sewanee. Tom took his daughters to town and bought each a tobacco sack doll with a China head, legs and arms. When they got home, Pinkie dropped and broke hers. Tom turned around and went back to buy another doll for Pinkie.

Tom often entertained guests by changing and throwing his voice. So effective was this rural ventriloquist that once Cousin High Edward Carrot pulled up a lot of tomato vines looking for the dog, Old Rip, as Tom kept folks in suspense. Funny that Delly became a hypnotist and Tom became a ventriloquist. Perhaps they were following Miss Tennie's notion of entertaining guests to the best of their ability.

Later Tom did butchering and sold fresh meat in Sewanee, on the top of the plateau. The children loved to go with Tom up the winding mountain road to the quiet and beautiful streets of the small town distinguished by the University of the South. It is a college and the seminary for training Episcopal priests. On the way up the steep road, Tom would stop at a spring from time to time. He removed his black hat with a broad brim, filled it with cool spring water, and gave each child a portion. My guess is that the hat felt delightfully cool to his head after each stop.

When I was girl, I went to Sewanee on that climbing road in a wagon with a half dozen cousins. The old mules got too tired pulling such a load up an imposing incline and let us know, as only a mule can. We got out and helped those mules by pushing on the wagon. Going home was a different story, almost a coast going downhill.

Tom' and Allie's oldest son Wilbur developed diabetes before the time of insulin. Little could be done for any of the victims. On January 19, 1918, Wilbur died. He was only ten years old. With heavy hearts, the family buried Wilbur in the lkard cemetery just a stone's throwaway. Allie felt that she could not bear this grief.

On July 9, 1919, another daughter was born to Tom and Allie. She, too, was a redhead, a sober tiny thing. She was named Clemmie White, but as long as I can remember the family called her "Topsy," for the radiance of the flaming red hair that topped her head. The family made quite a fuss about this baby. They must have known that this was the baby.

The family worshiped at the Methodist Church in Alto. Tom's and Allie's girls helped on the farm and when they got older they hired out to other farmers. They could chop and pick cotton, hoe corn, cut weeds in millet and even load hay with a pitch fork. They also harvested potatoes.

Allie kept a neat and attractive home. She was very proud of the house that Tom and some of his friends in Alto built on his property on the Old Alto Highway. Tom knew the value of the excellent land near Alto, and at every opportunity added to his acreage. Allie's skill with a needle was evident on the linens of the house. Her feather beds were plump and clean smelling. Guests were always welcome. There was much laughter in a dwelling filled with merry girls.

Then Tom got inexplicably ill. His mind did not function as usual. The local doctor did not know how to treat his illness. He went into a coma and was in bed for over a year. He died on February 17, 1923. Sadly another trip was made to the Ikard cemetery. In recent years one of Tom's children described her father's symptoms to a doctor and was told it described classic brain tumor.

Now Homer was only fifteen years old, and the man of the house. That is, until the trusty Theo came to live with them. He and Homer grew crops with plenty of help from the girls.

The family picked up the pieces and went on with their lives. Sundays found them worshipping at the Methodist church in Alto, thanking God for their blessings. Box suppers were frequent events that made a bit of money for church or community activities. Each young lady made up a decorated picnic box with goodies for two. Inside would likely be chicken, and ham, pickles, bread and a dessert, either cake or pie. A jovial auctioneer set about making a lot of fun describing the delicious contents of the box and also the charm of the preparer of the goodies. When a fellow bought a box, he had the pleasure of sharing the contents with the lady who fixed it. Supposedly the bidding young men did not know which ladies had fixed certain boxes. But the word leaked out. A fellow who was seriously courting a girl had better be prepared to pay dearly to dine with her, as there were always those jokers who bid again and again on this desirable box.

It is said that Jessie Tennessee's boxes brought top prices. She was a beauty, and most of the Alto fellows would splurge to enjoy her good company and food. Tennessee was popular with friends and relatives. After a visit with Gailor and Fannie Gamer in Nashville, she returned home and went with friends in a wagon to a box supper. Whether she ate too much desert from her box, or caught the flu from the long wagon ride, I don't know. Tennessee, like her brother Wilbur, had diabetes. The flu went into pneumonia and she died within a week. That was March 19, 1933 before penicillin. The whole community mourned this lovely girl, Her family was devastated.

Pinky, was the liveliest, most industrious and high spirited girl one would ever meet. She lived each day to the fullest. When in 1937, Homer took a group of the Tennessee cousins to Oklahoma to visit the Oklahoma Ikards, Pinky went along and won the hearts of all. Her laughter sparked the mood for the many gatherings of that

memorable summer. In the early days of WWII, Pinky went to Akron Ohio, with a Henley relative. She found wartime work there, and also a husband, Stewart Thompson.

When she learned that she was expecting she was delighted. But pregnancy problems developed. She delivered a lovely child, Carol, on November 30, 1945. But Pinky died that very day.

Fannie Eliza was being courted by Speaker Brassfield the summer of 1936 when my father George brought his family and his mother Betty to visit the Tennessee Ikards. It was a serious romance. My younger brothers were taken with the beauty of Fannie, and she accepted their adoration in a gracious manner. A marriage of more than fifty years began for Fannie and Speaker on May 28, 1938. They had two children, Joe and Gayle.

Topsy, a gentle home-loving girl, married Harold Simmons June 27, 1967. It was not a relationship that flourished and divorce followed. Topsy has a trim figure, and a bit of gray in her hair, her crowning glory. She continues to work in Decherd, to garden, to keep up the home where she has spent her life, and the Ikard Cemetery that is on land that she inherited. She possesses a collection of family memorabilia.

The youngest of James Mosley's and Miss Tennie's children was Mary Emma, born February 3, 1883, in Alto. She was a lovely woman with the clearest softest skin I ever saw. Her gentle manners were appreciated as was her appearance. She married Ranson Eldrige Williams on August 12, 1906, while very young and had two daughters, Hattie Bell and Mary Eldrige "El". Both girls took on the pleasing ways of their mother.

Ranson died April 8, 1909, while the girls were small. Theo moved in and helped run the farm until Emma married Richard Mc Gill, July 24, 1922. Richard died December 3, 1923. Then Emma married William A, Green July 19, 1925. This husband helped Emma raise her daughters. Yet he died October 28, 1948. Emma died April 18, 1955 and is buried in the Ikard Cemetery beside her first husband Ranson E. Williams.

A picture of the five sons of James Mosley and Tennie Ikard is on page 182.