Roots in the Great Plains

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Roots in the Great Plains

The Applied Psychology of Harry Hollingworth, Volume I

Harry Hollingworth

Edited by Ludy T. Benjamin Jr. and Lizette Royer Barton

A REPRODUCTION OF THE ORIGINAL TYPESCRIPT,
WITH A FOREWORD BY DAVID B. BAKER AND
AN INTRODUCTION BY LUDY T. BENJAMIN JR.



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Cover photo (original photo pictured above): Archives of the History of American Psychology, The Center for the History of Psychology, The University of Akron, Harry L. and Leta Stetter Hollingworth papers. Harry Hollingworth's notation reads, "Author and father working at the trade" and the original image can be found on page 129A of this manuscript. The image has been tinted, cropped, and repairs have been made for use on the cover. Cover design: Amy Freels.

Roots in the Great Plains was designed and typeset by Amy Freels, with help from Zac Bettendorf, in Goudy Oldstyle, printed on 60# Natural, and bound by BookMasters of Ashland, Ohio.

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Foreword David B. Baker

It is hard to believe that a year has passed since publication of the inaugural volume in the Center for the History of Psychology Series. The series is designed to make available unpublished primary source materials from the Center's collections. The response to the first volume, Walter Miles and His 1920 Grand Tour of European Physiology and Psychology Laboratories, has been positive and encouraging. It has provided the proof of concept that we envisioned for the series.

We are fortunate that the Center for the History of Psychology has an embarrassment of riches. It is satisfying to select the next work in the series and once again, the task was easy. We are pleased to present the unpublished autobiography of Harry Hollingworth (1880–1956). The autobiography provides detailed and descriptive information about the development of applied work in psychology. The reader will find much of interest about Harry Hollingworth, Leta Stetter Hollingworth, Nebraska history, graduate education in early twentieth century America, and the rise of applied psychology. The work is published in two volumes. This makes the size of the autobiography more manageable and most importantly, is true to the manner in which Hollingworth himself conceived and prepared the work. Both can be read in their own right, the first volume telling the story of Hollingworth's Nebraska roots and the second providing a first person account of the rise of applied psychology in the industrial northeast of America. Taken together these two volumes provide a glimpse into a transformative time in American history and psychology.

It was only natural that Ludy T. Benjamin Jr. of Texas A&M University serve as one of the editors for this volume. Professor Benjamin is recognized as a leading authority on the history of American psychology. He has researched and written extensively about the life and work of Harry Hollingworth. He is joined by Lizette Royer Barton, senior archives associate at the Center. Ms. Barton was an editor on the first book in the series and brings the skill and knowledge necessary for another successful project.

I am certain that the reader will find in these pages new insights and understandings of psychology in twentieth century America.

Introduction Ludy T. Benjamin Jr.

This is the first volume of Harry Hollingworth's previously unpublished autobiography, which he wrote in 1940 at the age of sixty. The unexpected death of his wife, Leta Stetter Hollingworth (1886–1939), in November 1939, prompted this examination of his life. The Hollingworths had what psychologists today refer to as a companionate marriage, a relationship in which the husband and wife are wholly dedicated to one another. That does not mean that they did not value friendships, of which they had many, or that they did not value their relatives in Nebraska. It means that they had a singular devotion to one another, manifested in a very happy marriage, with professional and leisure activities typically enjoyed together. Thus the loss of his partner was especially devastating. Hollingworth was bitter and angry at the loss of someone so young (she was fifty-three) and so promising in a career that had thus far benefitted so many, especially children. Going forward with his life suddenly became much more difficult.

The second volume of his autobiography, entitled From Coca-Cola to Chewing Gum: The Applied Psychology of Harry Hollingworth, also published by the University of Akron Press, details Hollingworth's applied career, beginning with his graduate study at Columbia University and chronicling his varied and successful career in applying psychology to the world of business. His career began with research on the psychology of advertising and his classic work on the effects of caffeine on behavior and mental processes, which he did under contract with the Coca-Cola Company.

This volume of Hollingworth's autobiography, which he entitled "Born in Nebraska," is an intimate and fascinating portrait of the first twenty-six years of his life, embedded in the context of his rural Nebraska roots. In 1880, he was born into poverty in DeWitt, Nebraska, a village of approximately five hundred people, founded only about eight years before his birth. The town, located fifty miles south of Lincoln, was a rail station on the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad line, which connected Nebraska towns Beatrice and Crete.

Hollingworth describes his hometown and its characters in richly-illustrated descriptions that transport the reader to late-nineteenth century Plains life, during a time when European immigrants and Americans from the East established farming-based

communities on the former hunting grounds of the Plains Indians tribes. Hollingworth's descriptions are of weather, topography, commerce, revival meetings, small town drifters, social life, and the permanent residents of DeWitt. Hollingworth was curious about the local population—where had they come from? Why were they here?

The individual people of our town I used to watch intently, and often wondered about their origins, their lives and destinies. Many of the adults had some mystery connected with them which was never wholly revealed to me but was vaguely sensed from chance remarks or conversations I was not supposed to be in on. As a matter of fact in many cases, particularly in the early days, there was a special reason why the adults had left some other place and come to this obscure town to spend the rest of their lives. In time of course most of the people who lived there had been born there, but this was not the case in my childhood.

The impact of place is very evident in Hollingworth's tale. The boundaries defined by small town life are constant themes in his life story. He wrote that in the late 1880s on the Great Plains,

a boy's town was his world. Small towns were scattered over our corner of the state at intervals of seven to ten miles in any direction and many of us grew to adulthood with only the most casual acquaintance with neighboring villages. The farms about us walled in our town and circumscribed our lives in every conceivable way. They prescribed our play, our education, our vocational information, our courtships and helped determine the parentage of later generations.²

Also significant in Hollingworth's development was the death of his mother at age twenty-three, when he was still an infant. His father soon remarried, creating a feud with the family of his former wife. In the midst of these domestic troubles, the infant Hollingworth was kidnapped by his maternal grandmother. Hollingworth's father successfully sought redress through the courts to recover his son. But the family lived in fear of another kidnapping and Hollingworth's father took measures to deal with that possibility. "Burned into the palm of my right hand was a firmly welted brand which persisted throughout my life, a capital H which was an infallible means of identification. It served as a constant reminder of a troubled infancy."

If Hollingworth's maternal grandmother feared that Hollingworth's stepmother would be the evil stepmother of so much children's literature, then her fears were wholly unfounded. The reality was that his stepmother was a loving and caring mother for her stepson. Hollingworth described her as patient and intelligent and wrote that "no boy could have had a better mother than she was to me."

As a young man Hollingworth's father had ambitions to be a physician; however, he stuttered horribly, making communication virtually impossible and he abandoned

those aspirations. Instead, he learned the trade of carpentry. During his life, he built many of the houses, barns, and churches in DeWitt and the surrounding area. When Hollingworth was eleven years old, he joined his father in this trade. His father was meticulous in his work and demanded the same of his son. Working for his stern, perfectionist father was difficult for Hollingworth. A school incident of Hollingworth's, when he was approximately nine years old, reveals a lot about his relationship with his father. Hollingworth participated in a school oratory contest of temperance speeches. The winner received a medal and the opportunity to compete in a regional oration. The second place finisher received a gift from a local merchant. He describes his fate in this contest,

Third place was to be awarded a hair-cut by the town barber, the regular price of a hair-cut being twenty-five cents,—"two bits." I considered myself fortunate when the judges gave me third place, for I had never had a barber's hair-cut and was quite set up about it. But I forgot to reckon with father. He personally visited the barber shop and claimed the hair-cut, since I was a minor. Then he came home and cut my hair in the usual way, with the family scissors and the edge of a pie-tin to guide him around the back of the neck. I expected him to offer me the "two bits," for I did not consider the home-made hair cut a prize, but this was a mistake on my part.⁵

Even with the constant scrutiny of his father, Hollingworth had time for less serious pursuits. He wrote that a "favorite pastime while shingling a roof was to write short spontaneous verses on the underside of shingles before nailing them down, thus recording for posterity events of the day, incidents of the job, and bits of juvenile philosophy." No doubt those shingles are long gone now, burned in stove boxes or fireplaces for the quick burst of warmth they provided in bitterly cold Nebraska winters.

The limitations of small village life were evident to Hollingworth in his youth, although not to the extent that he would later recognize. His autobiography contains numerous references to these limitations and their affect on his development. Yet he also recognized that in the austerity of his community and the poverty of his family there was a richness that he inherited, a competence and resourcefulness that he referred to as "the cult of self-reliance."

As I look back now on life in our town it seems to me that one of its most conspicuous features was its cultural poverty. Nature was bountiful enough at least often enough that our immediate organic needs were usually met. We fed and dressed, kept warm, slept soundly, mated and propagated, without hindrance. What we lacked most of all were the products of man's own inventiveness and manufacture which provide so rich a social heritage in modern life. Lacking these things, we were thrown upon our own resourcefulness and this endeavor promoted attitudes of self-reliance which were perhaps the best gift the community had to bestow upon its children.⁷

Playing "Indians" meant making bows and arrows. Marbles were made from rolling and baking clay. Professional baseballs were too expensive, costing a dollar—a day's wages—but could be made from winding twine around a small object and covering it with a homemade hand-sewn leather cover. They made their bats, boats, wagons, and sleds; it was what children in Hollingworth's circumstances learned to do. And, he would argue, those lessons served him well throughout his life.

There was no library in DeWitt in the more than twenty years that Hollingworth lived there. He recounted that books were scarce in his community, except for religious treatises and collections of sermons. The few books in existence did not reside on open shelves, where they might be perused by the illiterate or mishandled by those with calloused and clumsy hands. Instead, books were considered treasures and were often tucked away in drawers or chests. Hollingworth's home had very few books and his school only a few more. But they awakened in him a yearning for what he sometimes referred to as a life of the mind. One can imagine him atop a roof with hammer and shingle in hand and his mind wholly in another place.

Hollingworth's discovery of what he labeled the "University of Montgomery Ward" was critical to his youthful development. The company's catalog of classic works provided him entry to a new world. In time he bought more than seventy of these books, ranging in price from seventeen to sixty cents; works by Plutarch, Aristotle, Bacon, Emerson, Carlyle, Darwin, Spencer, Locke, Mill, Pope, and others. They awakened intellectual pursuits in him that had seemed unimaginable. Like Francis Bacon, Hollingworth admitted to having taken 'all knowledge as his province.'8

Hollingworth completed the ten grades of schooling in DeWitt, graduating valedictorian at the age of sixteen. He was eager to pursue his education beyond his hometown, hoping to attend the state university in Lincoln, but saving the necessary funds proved to be a problem. He secured his first teaching position at the age of eighteen in the nearby community of Vroom. He was paid \$23.50 for each autumn month, which was raised to \$27.50 in the winter months—a sort of combat pay—the end of the harvest meant that the bigger boys, who were difficult to handle, would be in attendance. On cold mornings, he arrived at school early to build a fire. He patched the holes in the school walls and roof with the backs from geography books. And, reluctant though they were, he sought diligently to educate his charges.

After three years of work, Hollingworth had amassed a fund of two hundred dollars, enough to realize his educational dreams. Around the same time his father found a school in Chicago that promised to cure his stuttering. In an act of great personal sacrifice and family love, Hollingworth gave his educational funds to his father so he could attend the Chicago school. Hollingworth wrote, "This speech impediment was really such a source of misery to all of us that it seemed to me that the only loyal thing to do was to tell him to take the money and go to Chicago." His father returned from the promised cure stuttering worse than ever.

Seven years after his high school graduation, Hollingworth entered college at the age of twenty-three. In the interim, he had tried his hand at many occupations. Beyond his carpentry work and teaching, he was also a grocer, a grave digger, and an apprentice minister. He even briefly tried raising silk worms.

Hollingworth's interest in the ministry led him to seek a career as a missionary. After a short while, his religious interests seriously waned and he realized that he was not cut out to be a member of the cloth. He looked for a way to continue his education and a minister told him about a preparatory academy offered by the Methodist Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln. Matriculation there would allow him to finish his high school work and prepare for college at the nearby state university. Further, the minister told him that his tuition at Nebraska Wesleyan would be reduced by half because of his ministerial aspirations. And so Hollingworth, "with some reluctance continued to profess [his] ecclesiastic intentions." His experiences at Nebraska Wesleyan were both positive and enriching. He returned to DeWitt in the summer for carpentry work, in the hope that he could make enough money for nine months of university study.

I went back to the carpenter gang that summer, having decided that when I next came to Lincoln it would be to register in the State University. The prospect was exciting to the extreme. I had found a summer job which would apparently be mine so long as I wanted it. It would enable me year after year, if my Wesleyan experience was any guide, to come back to college. I might still have to be economical and might have to forego many interesting activities, especially those of a social character ... What was of equal importance, the world of learning had really been opened to me. I had been introduced to a great variety of subjects, every one of them overwhelmingly interesting.¹¹

While at Nebraska Wesleyan, Hollingworth decided that his intellectual interests lay in the field of philosophy, especially the new field of experimental psychology, which had emerged from philosophy. He entered the University of Nebraska in September 1903, intending to study philosophy and psychology. The department of philosophy included a laboratory in experimental psychology, founded in 1889, and probably the sixth such laboratory in the United States. The lab was founded by Harry Kirke Wolfe (1858–1918). Wolfe was one of the first Americans to earn a doctoral degree in psychology from University of Leipzig, the world's first psychology laboratory, founded by Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920) in 1879. In 1896, due to a conflict with the university's chancellor, Wolfe was fired from the University of Nebraska. He was replaced

by Thaddeus Lincoln Bolton (1865–1948), a psychologist who held a doctorate from Clark University. Hollingworth had attended a Bolton lecture on psychology during his Wesleyan days and was excited about the prospect of taking courses from him. Bolton helped Hollingworth become an experimental psychologist. They remained friends for life and later enjoyed occasional meetings when Bolton was on the faculty of Temple University in Philadelphia and Hollingworth was in New York City. However, experimental psychology was not Hollingworth's only interest at the University of Nebraska.

One day during my sophomore year there entered the stack room of the library ... a small dark haired girl wearing a scarlet Tam-O-Shanter. I had already seen her on the campus and had been struck by a certain pensive quality in her features and a characteristic animation in her activity.¹³

She was Leta Anna Stetter, age seventeen, from Valentine, Nebraska, and a student in literature and psychology. By senior year, they had pledged their lives to one another. Hollingworth wrote, "Early in that last year we agreed (I can still visualize so clearly the spot where this took place) that we belonged to each other, and that when it became humanly possible we would pitch our tent together."¹⁴

In 1906, Leta and Harry graduated from the University of Nebraska; she as valedictorian. Hollingworth hoped to secure a university teaching assistantship that would allow him to pursue his doctoral degree in psychology. Despite his excellent academic record and the strong letter of support from Bolton, he did not find a position. Instead, Hollingworth accepted a job as principal of the high school in Fremont, Nebraska and Leta accepted a position as teacher and assistant principal of the high school in Hollingworth's hometown of DeWitt, Nebraska.

In September 1906, Hollingworth began his job as principal. He was in that role for a little more than two months when a telegram arrived from professor James McKeen Cattell (1860–1944), informing Hollingworth that a psychology assistantship was available at Columbia University and asking if he would be able to start January 1. Columbia had one of the premiere programs in psychology, headed by Cattell, editor of the prestigious journal *Science*, and with Robert S. Woodworth (1869–1962) in charge of the psychology laboratory. Across the street at Columbia's Teachers College was another distinguished psychologist, Edward L. Thorndike (1874–1949). These three psychologists gave Columbia a star power that rivaled any other university at the time. In a plan of compromise, Hollingworth was able to delay his start at Columbia until the first of March, which allowed him to finish important obligations at Fremont High School. Still, he was leaving his teachers, students, and community with only about six months of service, as reported in the Fremont school newspaper.

The resignation of Mr. Hollingworth as principal of the Fremont High School has brought forth from the students of the school expressions of the most profound regret. There can be no doubt that our present principal has been one of the best Fremont High has ever had ... Every member of the High School joins in wishing pleasure and honor to this gentleman, scholar and friend. May his future be as full of pleasure for himself as his sojourn in Fremont has been full of pleasure for others.¹⁵

His train trip from Fremont, Nebraska to New York City is where the second volume of his autobiography begins.

The first volume of Hollingworth's autobiography, is much longer than the second volume, even though the latter chronicles roughly two-thirds of his life. This first volume is a story of place, but also a story of people. And in its essence it is the story of the myriad ways in which one is shaped by the other. It is a story of discovery, of awareness, of loyalty, and of ambition. It is the story of a life, but a life that offers touchstones for all of us in our own experience, especially as we think about the interface of people and places we have known.

Notes

- 1. "Born in Nebraska" (1940), p. 44f.
- 2. Ibid., p. 1.
- 3. Ibid., p. 79a.
- 4. Ibid., p. 83
- 5. Ibid., p. 109.
- 6. Ibid., p. 90a.
- 7. Ibid., p. 69.
- 8. Spedding, J. (Ed.) (1861). The letters and life of Francis Bacon, Vol. 1 (pp. 108–109). London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts.
- 9. "Born in Nebraska" (1940), pp. 207–208.
- 10. Ibid., p. 209.
- 11. Ibid., p. 251.
- 12. Benjamin, L. T., Jr. (1991). *Harry Kirke Wolfe: Pioneer in psychology*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- 13. "Born in Nebraska" (1940), p. 279.
- 14. Ibid., p. 281. See Hollingworth, H. L. (1943). Leta Stetter Hollingworth: A biography. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press (republished by Anker Publishing, 1990).
- 15. "Born in Nebraska" (1940), p. 306.

Editorial Note

Harry L. Hollingworth's two volume autobiography is part of the Harry and Leta Stetter Hollingworth papers housed in the Archives of the History of American Psychology at The Center for the History of Psychology, located on The University of Akron campus. The manuscript is reproduced here as an archival facsimile. The original is available for viewing at the archives on an appointment basis.

The manuscript has been reproduced in its original typescript. Hollingworth included numerous photographs in his autobiography and many of the images appear throughout the facsimile. Please note that a few images are missing and appear to have been lost to history, as they could not be located within the Hollingworth papers. Pages 173a–173f were originally folded in half with the note "Probably Omit" in Hollingworth's script. Due to the importance of the genealogical information contained on those pages, they have been included in this manuscript and page numbers have been assigned where the original page numbers were edited out. Pages 234c and 234d were also folded in half with the note "Probably Omit." These pages have been included and page numbers have been assigned. The original manuscript does not include pages 313 or 314.

Hollingworth typed the manuscript and later penciled in page numbers, photograph descriptions, and additional notes. Over time, the writing has become very faint. Despite our best efforts, much of the handwritten script remains difficult to read.

These pages have been modified in the following manner: the scale has been reduced to fit within the pages of this book and section pages and headings have been added to enable the reader to navigate this work.



2 — original page number

In a genuine sense, as well as by corporate fiction, a town in those days had a spirit, - a personality and tone that might sharply distinguish it from other towns. In recent years social scientists have tried to quantify this spirit, in the case of cities, and to derive statistical formulae for computing the "goodness" of such places. Small towns may not lend themselves quantification, and the present standardisation of towns would make the calculations a waste of time, in any event. Such spirit as the modern town has comes over the radie, from the tourist camp, from chain stores and national advertising, from compulsory education and routine curricula. But in the days and place of which I write the spirit of a town emerged as a net resultant from the personalities and the histories of its inhabitants.

original

typescript

In a sense ***** even the statistical indices of goodness for larger communities have only a historical value.

The libraries, barber shops, pool rooms, and school taxes of a given city were not first established by the Lord, so many of each per thousand of population. Even the furniture of a city as exhibited in the statistical formulae had first to get there before it could be counted. These things do not constitute the spirit of a city, - they are only rather late and superficial expressions of that spirit as it existed at some earlier date.

The small towns around the one of which I write had, for given periods at least, their recognizable essences. It is probable that there is less lag in the spiritual expression

new page number

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Roots in the Great Plains The Applied Psychology of Harry Hollingworth

BARNARD COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
NEW YORK

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Carbons
Copies 2 ###

Frist draft of

Born in Mebraska'

Not publishable

See Revisions.

Com Complete Shake

BORN IN NEBRASKA



bу

Harry L. Hollingworth

Illustrated.

II

PREFACE

The original motive for this volume was purely personal. It issued from a struggle for self reorganization at a critical period ical period when the goals and values of a life-time were suddenly wrecked. The only justification for resorting to reminiscence was that I wished to do so; the only impediment was a conventional medesty, which was easily banished. My life has been tame and mostly civilized. I have consorted with no kings, conquered no centinents, tracked down no ferocious beasts, patented no inventions and announced no startling discoveries. I have lived and labored; loved and lost; and through it all pursued an eager quest for a better understanding of that amazing thing called mind.

This is, in fact, the summary of all that is to follow. But the way has been devious and the project of sketching some of its details has promoted a better understanding of what all the travail has been for, and to what it has come, and what future directions the course may reasonably take. The project resulted in other volumes as well. One describes the life and work of Leta Stetter, who was my wife. Another is an account of our joint experiences in the latter half of life. The present volume is concerned with both of us, but its organizing thread is my own life almost up to the time of our marriage.

III

There is however in this volume another theme, which has its own unity quite aside from any personal motivation, namely, the portrayal of conditions of life at a certain time and place. The time and place of which it is in part a description have been inadequately recorded in our literature, which has secussed mainly on the epoch just preceding it or on the era following it. The time was the quarter century between the end of the sod house frontier (1875) and the beginning of the machine age (1900) which so strikingly transformed life on the prairie as elsewhere. The place is the seutheastern corner of Nebraska, neither great plains nor sand hills, but much like the older state of Iowa in character.

The time and region had a characteristic flavor. The roadbed for the freighters and the highway for the covered wagons had settled down to a somewhat stodgy agricultural career. Homestead No. 1 was in its very center, only six miles from my birthplace. There may be some interest in this account simply as a chronicle of life there in those transition decades.

There is also another collateral justification for such a narrative. Comparative studies have shown that, in proportion to its population, Nebraska stands third among the states of the Union in the production, in that period, of individuals destined to be listed in directories of leadership in science, the arts, government, industry, management and business. During this period, moreover, the state was new and with but meager educational equipment. These individuals are not always men and women who will live in history, but they are people of creditable performance and of more than local distinction. There is some

III

reason for this rather surprising outcome, although the sociological studies have not yet uncovered it. Perhaps it can be
revealed by faithful accounts of the early careers of individuals better than by statistical studies of groups. At least
the picture of the general environment can thus be presented.
In each individual case there were surely special factors also
that exerted their influence.

The subject of this biography is a random sample of just such children of Nebraska. His own life was of so little public importance that few readers, unless they should chance to be his intimate associates or relatives, could identify him from the description. For the purposes of such a volume this is an advantage. It will minimize the danger of being misled by the exceptional factors, intrinsic or extrinsic, that play a role in the careers of the great. It should assist in deflecting attention from the detailed facts about the individual to the typical circumstances and influences which his life exemplifies. It should make it easier to neglect the purely personal items which constitute the individual flow of events, in favor of the extraindividual theme of which the individual is but an example. It may well be that biographies of people of modest accomplishment contribute more to the psychology of normal development than do those of the world's heroes. If this is true we should have more of them.

T

That I was born in Nebraska has been, I think, one of the strongest influences in my life. Perhaps it is a mistake to limit the influence in such narrow geographical terms. The same determinants might have operated had I been born in Kansas or Dakota. They would have been less likely had the place of my nativity been Ohio or Illinois, although their direction might have been similar. In Tennessee or Georgia these influences, whatever their nature, would surely have missed me; and it is extremely unlikely that one with my disposition and mental physicgnomy should have come at that late date ##### out of New England or New York.

These remarks are not made without having given the subject thought. Their validity is to some extent confirmed also by empirical evidence which may find a place to appear on these pages. Nor is this the place baldly to state the nature of these influences, nor to identify the factors which, so far as I can see, conspired to make me whatever manner of person I am.

Nebraska is furthermore the place where most of all I still feel at home. This is in spite of the fact that a good deal more than half of my life has been spent elsewhere, and that it has been more than forty years since I left my home town. The East, where I have lived longest and done the greater part of my work, and where I have many more acquaintances and friends than in the West, has remained alien to me. It may or may not be that, as this narrative unfolds, the reasons for these considerations and feelings will emerge. Under any cir-



cumstances my conviction in the matter is sufficient to justify the title chosen for this volume, and one of my chief interests is in inquiring into the grounds of this conviction.

There was no original intention to expose these chronicles to the eyes of others, except in the case of the volume recording my wife's early life and later career. But since the rest of the record appears to be only the common story of men like me it is possible that acquaintance with it may help others to know themselves better or to be more contented with their lot. If this should be the case I no longer mind the exposure. With me the account has already served its good purpose and others are welcome to find in it whatever instructiveness they may.

H.L.H.

May 4, 1940

TII.

C G N T E N T S

PART I - OUR TOWN

Introduction
A Village Is Born Again
Living Conditions
Topography and Personnel
Signs of Initiative
Sensory Memories
Things To Eat
The House Mover
Summer and Winter Sports
A Few Local Personalities
Animal Pests
Small Town Drifters
Our Town Needs a Library
Our Criminal History
Surrounding Farm Regions
The Sult of Self Reliance
Regression



PART II - PUBLIC SCHOOL DAYS

First Public Appearance I Cause a Family Feud My Folks Warned Not To Become a Scholar A Scribbling Family A Chip Off the Old Block Family Discipline The Pangs of Poverty My Mother Earliest Memories Gurtaman and substitution of the contract of t Intimations of Mortality An Amnesic Gap Develops I Am Awarded a Hair-cut I Attend High (?) School The Class Baby An Inspiring School Man First Academic Honors Outside of School Hours A Therapeutic Experience Some Origins of a Character Trait Industrial Training my Catastrophobia Family Discipline, Softens We Raise Silk Worms We Become Telegraph Operators The Destruction of Curly Delusions of Invulnerability Psycho-sexual Considerations Ged and the Devil I Join the Church A Religious Worker Det Sand Stay Sand The Marked Man Begins to Backslide A Backslider Testifies Medicine as an Alternative to Religion Medical Substitutes in Our Community Random Recollections First Extra-sensory Perception



PART III - CAUGHT IN A TRAP

Independent Study is Attempted A Fling at the Grocery Business Saved by a Hold-up Jew and Gentile I Fall for a Book Agent My First School Contract Early Transportation in Nebraska My First Day as a Teacher The Year Drags Its Slow Length Along The Family Mystery Deepens and Clears Grandma and I Get Together I Burst into Print District No.149 Offers \$30 Why College Was Postponed The Higher Education is Sighted Again Food for the Body We Set Up Housekeeping Social Life at Nebraska Wesleyan Academy My First and Only Hanger Strike Galahad Strides His Two-wheeled Steed Across the Prairie Adventures on the Road Disagreement with a Labor Union I Become a Municipal Grave Digger A Confirmed Book Worm The University of Montgomery Ward and Co. Back to the Trade Again Soldiering on the Job A Profitable Academic Year Respects and Gratitude to Wesleyan Escape from the Trap



PART IV- ON BOARD

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Part I

OUR TOWN

PART I

OUR TOWN

Introduction

In the days and place of which I write a boy's town was his world. His elders were little better situated, for that matter. Except for occasional long journeys by train, people of necessity kept close to home on the plains of Nebraska. A day's journey and back by team or horseback did not take one far abroad and the geographical environment of the young was bounded by regions which they could get to and return from in a day's walk. Small towns were scattered over our corner of the state at intervals of seven to ten miles in any direction and many of us grew to adulthood with only the most casual acquaintance with neighboring villages. There was in fact a town not more than six miles from ours that I have never yet seen, andothers only a few miles farther away. The farms about us walled in our town and circumscribed our lives in every conceivable way. They prescribed our play, our education, our vocational information, our courtships and helped determine the parentage of later generations. An individual thus became more or less a product of the spirit of his town to a degree thatis mot common anywhere in the world today. Improved transportation and communication , and numerous technological advances, have taken care of that.