

A BOOK OF SHORT STORIES



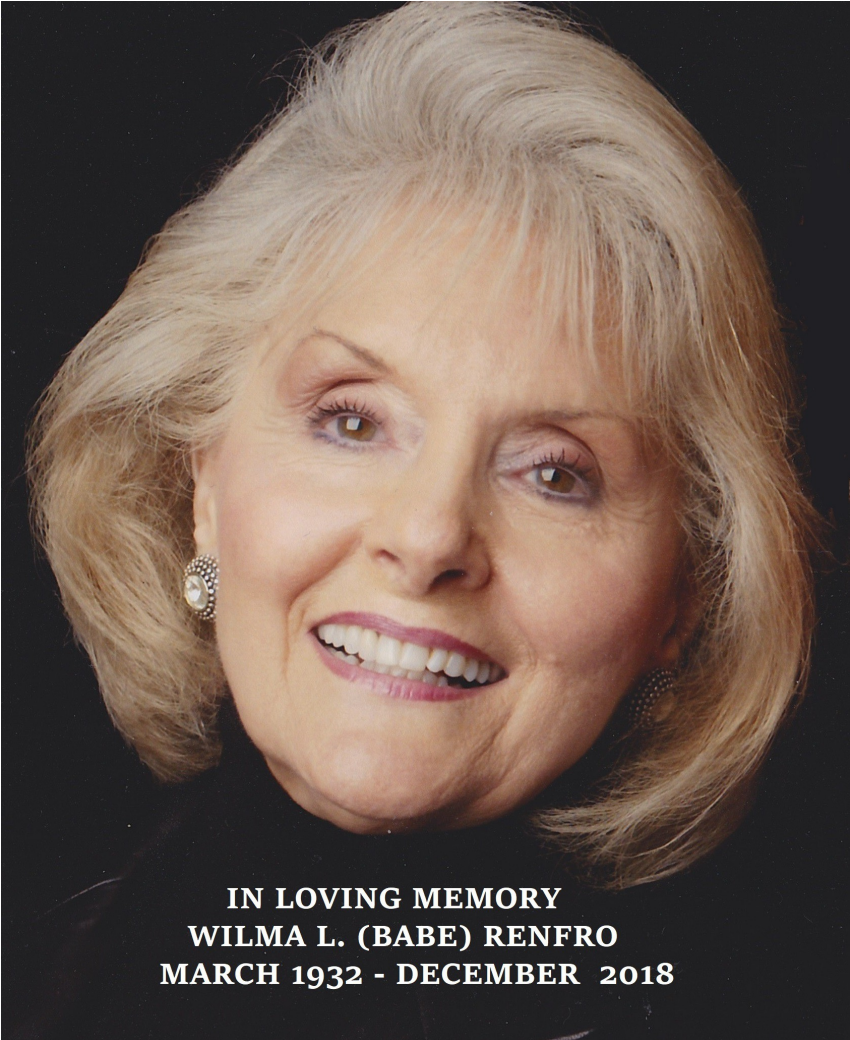
By Bill Renfro

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MARCH 2020

By Bill Renfro

DEDICATION



THIS BOOK

THIS BOOK CONTAINS SHORT STORIES THAT ARE TAKEN FROM OTHER BOOKS THAT I HAVE WRITTEN, ALONG WITH NEW STORIES THAT WERE WRITTEN JUST FOR THIS BOOK. SOME ARE ABOUT PEOPLE WHO HAVE INFLUENCED MY LIFE, WHILE OTHERS ARE ABOUT THINGS THAT I REMEMBER HAPPENING IN MY OWN LIFE. THESE THINGS ARE TRUE HAPPENINGS BECAUSE I WAS NEVER GOOD AT MAKING UP STORIES, BECAUSE I WOULD HAVE GOTTEN A SPANKING IF I HAD. I KNOW THAT SOME OF YOU ARE READING THIS BOOK JUST BECAUSE YOU HAVE NOTHING ELSE TO DO, WHICH AT AGE 90, I HAVE NOTHING ELSE TO DO BUT WRITE. I HOPE THAT YOU WILL GET SOME PLEASURE OUT OF THIS BOOK AND MAY GOD ALWAYS BLESS YOU.



CONTENTS

COVER PAGE -----	1
PAGE TITLE SHEET -----	2
DEDICATION -----	3
THIS BOOK -----	4
TABLE OF CONTENTS -----	5
THE LADY AT WALMART -----	6
THE SOLDIER -----	7, 8
THE DREAM -----	9
MR. CHARLES -----	10, 11
MR. BILLY -----	12
THE RESCUE -----	13,14, 15
THE COWBOY -----	16,17,18
THE POLITICIAN -----	19,20
I REMEMBER LOVE -----	21 TO 32
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS -----	33
BACK COVER -----	34

THE LADY AT WALMART

On one of my frequent visits to Walmart, not long after my wife Babe had passed away, I had completed my gathering as usual, of my Jimmy Dean daily breakfast sandwiches, I had worked my way up the check-out line to the check-out register. As the clerk counted out my small load of purchases, and as I was about to insert my credit card into the register, the lady in line directly behind me, said to me " do not put your card in there". I was at first startled that she had been watching me unload my small amount of groceries, and had noticed my striking good looks, but also I was almost 90 years old and was by myself.

I turned towards her and said " what did you say?", she then repeated the order. "I said that, as she placed her own credit card into the check-out machine, because I am going to pay for your purchase". To this I asked, why would you do that?, to which she replied, " because I wanted to".

Being a Christian myself, I immediately recognized why she was led to show this act of love for someone that she did not know. I thanked her for her kindness and left the store thanking the LORD that he had not forgotten me. She was blessed along with me.



THE SOLDIER

I had just started a new job in the service department of a large company. In the service department, I would be traveling around the area, so I was assigned a worker to help me. He arrived and came over to introduce himself to me. I found him to be a younger man, about my same height but a little less in weight. He was about the right weight for his height, stood very straight and was quick in walk and movement. His hair was well cut and all in place. Then I noticed something different. One eye was slightly farther to one side than the other. Then, on closer look, I saw that his face showed signs of a possible surgery. He was soft spoken and seemed to be a very likable man, so I was not going to ask him about his face at this time. We got along great and we were soon good friends. Suddenly one day, he looked at me and said, I have seen that you wonder about the rough look of my face, so I will tell you. I was out of high school when world war 2 began, so I enlisted in the Army. I was in one of the large battles and had most of my face blown off. I was brought back to the United States to Walter Reed hospital where I spent over two years undergoing surgery, replacing most of my face. We were traveling in downtown at this time so he said, I live with my mom and dad who are only a few blocks from here so, why don't we go by there and I will show you my home." Fine I said, so in a few minutes we pulled up at the front of what was a nice looking home small but typical for the times, and in a nice neighborhood.

We went inside a nice well kept home that looked typical American. His parents were at work, so I did not meet them, but whom I thought would be the loving parents that one

would expect by looking at the well kept home. He took me then to his room where he began to show me the pictures saved from his high school days, which showed the face of a very handsome young man, of pictures of him in his new army uniform and a very large wall framed board filled with war medals. The site of these things had instantly raised my perception of this face scared young man from that of a coworker to that of a war hero.

As we stood looking at the large picture that his mother had placed in a prominent spot in the living room, he told me the story of being engaged to his high school sweetheart and that they had planned to be married when he returned from the service, but that because of his long stay in the hospital and his facial disfigurement, she had left him and married someone else. This statement brought a lump in his voice and a tear to my eyes. Only then did I know what sacrifice was. I then knew why he was quiet and stayed away from people as much as he could. He thought that he was ugly and that no one wanted to be around him. I now realize that he had never healed from his wounds. That day he became a hero to me.



THE DREAM

SOME TIME AGO I HAD A VERY SPECIAL DREAM LIKE NO OTHER THAT I HAVE EVER HAD. I RECALLED HAVING THIS DREAM WHEN I TRIED TO READ A BOOK TITLED " MY DREAM OF HEAVEN"

I WAS UNABLE TO READ THE BOOK BECAUSE OF MY POOR EYE SIGHT AND THE STROKE THAT I HAD SEVERAL YEARS AGO, BUT IT DID CAUSE ME TO REMEMBER THIS DREAM, AND MADE ME THINK THAT THIS DREAM MIGHT HAVE ALSO BEEN FROM HEAVEN.

I DO NOT REMEMBER HOW THE DREAM BEGAN BUT REMEMBERED IT STARTING WITH SOMEONE WHO SEEMED TO BE A MALE PERSON SHOWING ME AROUND INSIDE WHAT APPEARED TO BE A LARGE WAREHOUSE TYPE BUILDING WHICH WAS FILLED WITH LARGE ITEMS OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL FURNITURE I HAD EVER SEEN.

THE DREAM WAS IN COLOR, AND SINCE I MYSELF WAS A WOODWORKER, I WAS AMAZED AT THE DETAIL THAT I SAW IN THESE ITEMS. I DISTINCTLY REMEMBER A PIECE THAT APPEARED TO BE A SIDE CABINET WITH DOORS ALONG THE LONG FRONT, AND THE SMALL HAND MADE DETAILS THAT I HAD NEVER EVER BEFORE SEEN IN A DREAM, AND I WAS STARTLED WHEN I WAS TOLD THAT I COULD PICK ANY ITEMS THAT I LIKED BECAUSE THEY WERE FOR MY NEW HOME.

I CAN NOW ONLY BELIEVE THIS DREAM WAS FROM HEAVEN AND THESE THINGS WERE FOR MY HEAVENLY HOME. AND AS IS THE CASE IN DREAMS, I WOKE UP.

MR. CHARLES

One fine day in the year of our LORD, 1963, I went to work for an engineer everyone called Mr. Charles. I had just been employed to be the chief draftsman for a new company that he was forming for himself. At that time, he was what appeared to be a middle aged man, about a foot taller than myself, rather well dressed and well groomed, all except for his eye lashes which seemed to have never been touched by human. The man had a wife, who I know had told him thousands of times "Charles, get those dang lashes trimmed" But maybe he had never heard her. You know that most men are prone to have selective hearing. But it did not distract from his otherwise rugged and handsome looks.

The first thing that I noticed about him was that he drove an older, but well kept Jaguar, that he never came to work on time, and when he got to the office, he always opened the door, sat there and tied his shoes. This happened the same way every day. I thought that maybe he just didn't like driving with his shoes on, so I just let it slide, after all, he was the boss.

What I soon found out, was that this man was one who turned out to be one of the most brilliant engineers that I worked with in my 55 year career in this field.

While working with Charles, I learned more about thinking for myself and how to be inventive as a designer. My time with him allowed me to work on some of the largest projects in the country including NASA and the first 50 floor concrete structure west of the Mississippi.

Mr. Charles, as he was called by all of the people that worked for him, (I called him Charles only because I was a little higher in rank.) was called that because everyone loved him for his soft talk and kind spirit. I did not ever hear him speak or act in anger, no matter what the situation. He was always the gentleman ! I learned so much from this man whom we should pattern ourselves after. When he entered the room, at work, or in a high level meeting, he entered with presence.

I later found out why he was always late for work. It was because he went by the local weather office on his way to the office. It seems that during the second world war he was a weather officer and still liked it. Later I found out that he had been assigned to the Air Force field in London, where our forces were bombing Germany from. He not only was the weather man, but he was the chief officer who was the one that gave the final order each day if the planes went out or stayed on the base. Now he was still my hero, but he gained another rank. He made all of those around him want to be better. He had a great impact on my life, and I was better for having known him.



MR. BILLY

I remember the old jail house that lay down the alley that ran between some of the stores, and behind the shoe and harness shop. It was a small concrete building that was just big enough to hold two or more prisoners, with an open steel barred door with a large lock.

This was a building that was built to withstand a Sherman tank. The large lock was to hold the worst of criminals. The only thing was no one knew where the key was, so the jail door had always remained unlocked.

The story that had gone around for years was that the town constable, who worked full time at one of the grocery stores, had received word of a criminal act (or so called) that had been done by one of the farm hands. Well since "Mr Billy" was at work, he sent word by the next person who was going by the farm where the so called perpetrator worked and told him to come into town and put himself in the jail and to stay there until I tell him that he can get out. When Mr. Billy had finished his day of work, he went by the place of detention and told the prisoner that he could go home, but that he had better not ever do that again. And as far as I know, he never did. Those are the days that we need back now.



THE RESCUE

It was in the early summer of that year, the weather had been just right, that I called my brother-in law and asked if he would like to go fishing in the gulf of Mexico. Of course he said yes, so we planned a weekend that both our families could go down to the house that my wife and I owned on the mainland side of Galveston island, where I kept a boat just large enough to go 25 miles out into the Gulf of Mexico. All preparations having been made, he and I started our hour and a half trip out into the gulf.

About half way there we spied a shrimp boat in the distance and decided to go a little out of our way, to troll around the boat in hopes of picking up a large fish, which usually hang around under these boats in order to get out of the sun and to pick up a free lunch when the shrimpers threw out the discards picked up in their nets.

We arrived at the boat, threw our lines overboard and began our trips around the shrimper when, before we could get a bite, heard someone calling us from the much larger and much taller boat. I called out to him, "Are you calling us ?", "Yes" he answered !, "could you take me aboard your boat and let me go back to shore with you?". What could I answer but "I could if you have the Captains permission ". " I do", he said. So now came the question of how do you get someone off a boat that is 40 or 50 feet taller than you, and how do you get close enough that you do not hit his craft and damage your own ? We came up with the idea that we would approach the larger boat from the front, where we could go under the bow of his boat which would extend over the top of ours. Now how do we get him down ? I moved

our boat slowly under the front of the big boat while one of us went to the front of the boat and allowed the young guy above to drop his duffel bag down to us, which we caught before it went into the water. Now came the hard part, how do we get this young man down the 50 foot drop from the big ship to our small boat? His much larger ship was swaying slowly with the water, while our small craft was swaying much faster. He had decided that he would drop a large line from the ship down to us and that we would hold the line as tight as possible while he let himself down the rope to us. He let himself down the rope while swaying to and fro with the flow of the water and finally made it down to us where he was so overjoyed he almost wanted to kiss both of us out of happiness.

As we drove away from the shrimper, I told him that we were on our way to the oil rigs, which were another 25 miles or so out into the gulf, to fish for Red Snapper. He said that was fine, that he was just happy to be off that shrimp boat. He then he told us the story of why he was on the boat in the first place, and why he did not like it. He began the story by telling us his name and that he was from a small town in an upper state, that he had been in a traffic accident and was facing a fine and a few months jail time, and at his age, which was no more than 20, was longer than he could think of bearing. He had a girl friend, whom he had asked to marry him, and she had said yes, but the two of them had decided that if he went away some place that the police would never think of looking for him, that in time it would all be forgotten and that then he could come back and get her and they would go away somewhere and be married and live happily ever after.

Such is the reasoning of youth. He told us that he was on the boat with all Mexicans and he did not speak their language and they did not speak his. They also stole his things at night when he was asleep. He also told us that he was miserable

the entire time that he was there, and all that he could think of was his girl who was waiting for him. He had decided to go back home and take any punishment that he might get in order to be able to live a life that they both wanted.

Well, we continued on our way to the oil rigs where we spent the next several hours fishing, from which we brought back a good catch of Red Snapper for our dinner, of which most were caught by our young friend.

We arrived safely back to our home port where we were greeted by our waiting wives, eager to clean the mess of fish we had returned with. (Can't you see that?) My wife made the young man a meal while she also made him a sack of sandwiches and other things that we had around the beach house, while he took a shower and cleaned himself up. After his meal, which was ,as he said it, the only thing that he had eaten during the 3 months he was on the ship, that tasted like food. After finishing his meal and was ready to take the long trip back home, which he began on foot, he thanked all of us for our help and friendship, gave us all a big hug and after turning down our offer of money and to drive him into Galveston, he happily began his long walk home to his world, with a pack on his back and a smile on his face. We never stopped wondering where his life is today!

This was one of the most rewarding days of my life also!!



THE COWBOY

Back in the old days, when I was a cowboy, I had to ride a horse to school each day. This lasted from the first grade through the 6th grade. You see I was born to a family that farmed the land about 10 or so miles from the nearest town, which was Dawson, Texas, so at an early age I began to know and understand horses. Some of which, I later learned in life, were smarter than a lot of people that I came in contact with. So my understanding and love for horses began at an early age and continued throughout my life.

I had fallen in love with a beautiful girl in my class in our senior year of high school, and we were married after graduation and stayed on the farm for the first 5 years of our marriage.

It was a life that we had both been brought up in and we were happy, except with farming, there is a lot of down time, so to fill some of this time, I quickly accepted an invitation to join a local calf roping club, which had been formed by others of like circumstances.

The friend that had asked me to join was a farmer/rancher himself and knew more about horses than I ever did, and agreed to help me find a good horse that had already been trained for calf roping. We soon found a nice horse at a reasonable price, bought a saddle and things, and were soon in the club which met once a week in an old roping pen that we all got together and restored, and were allowed to use with the owner's permission. The club went fine and we all had more fun than we did farming.

One day when I had gone into town, I was approached by one of the local ranchers, who asked me if I could help him with one of his cows? "What is the problem, I asked? He told me that he had one cow in his heard that was not joining the rest of the heard and fighting them, and would run them away from the feed trough as well as not letting the herds bull around her. She was dangerous because she had long sharp horns. "I have been trying for months to catch her and take her to market, but she watches for me and will run away to the treed area of the ranch, which is about 300 yards from the barn where I bring the hay and feed for them. Once she gets into the treed area, there is no way that I can catch her. It seems that she is just smarter than I am".

I asked him , "does she come up to the barn with the others when you bring the feed", "yes she does, but when she sees me, she runs for the trees "" that meant that we only had a 300 foot long space to catch up to her and rope her.

I accepted the challenge, but called on a fellow roper for back-up help. We went home, got our horses and headed out to his ranch, where he met us. We parked a long way from the barn where the feed had already been put out, and the cows were all there, including the one that he wanted caught. After pointing out the cow to be roped, my friend and I mounted up and were walking the horses slowly towards the barn where the cows were, not to excite them, well as luck had it this cow spotted us and began her run to the trees. This meant that we had a run on our hands. As we ran our horses full steam ahead, we came to a small drainage creek, which my horse jumped, and I looked back to see how my friend had made it, I saw him rolling on the ground and his horse running on. I did not have time to catch his horse and the cow both and as I would be paid to catch the cow, I chose the cow.

I was able to catch up with the cow and was lucky enough to rope her. Then the fun began. This cow was as mean as any I had ever seen. She, after being caught, began to run at me and my horse, trying to hook us with those deadly horns. My horse however was cow smart, and was able to dodge every run that she made towards us. I located a small but sturdy looking tree nearby so I was able to work her up close enough to the tree where I was able to get around it and pull the cow up to it and keep her away from me and my horse. My friend who I last saw rolling on the ground, had caught his horse and rode up to join me. He got a rope on her and we found a way to get her away from the tree, and with him pulling her in one direction and me the other, were able to get her to a cattle trailer the rancher had waiting for us with open gate. The rancher was able to get a third rope on her which he pulled through the front of the trailer and got her close enough into the end that I was able to let my rope go and tie onto his and with my horse pull her into the trailer and close her in. The rancher was happy, we were happy, and I now that my horse was happy it was all over with. In fact the rancher was so happy that he gave me and my friend each a crispy \$10 bill. You do know that this was in about 1952.

My friend an I were both glad that we had not been gored and it had made us feel like real cowboys.



THE POLITICIAN

If I were good at math, I guess that I could have figured this out a long time ago. (which I actually did). How can a person run for a congress seat, using millions upon millions of other peoples' money to run for a job that pays \$170,000 dollars a year??. I believe that if it is a beer joint being a place where all the losers hang out, then Washington is the place where all the crooks want to hang out. It is the only place that I know of where you can go with only a hundred dollars in your pocket, and come out 40 years later owning 4 multi-million dollar homes, all in the best locations in the country.

They don't go to Washington to do the will of the people, they go there to get rich!!. They forget all of the things that they promised to do for the people as soon as they get on the plane. There are lots of good ones there who are working to do what is right and good for our country, but they are outnumbered by the ones who are there for their own good.

I believe that all lobbyists should be banned from the capital grounds and only be allowed to meet with senators in back allies and only after dark and out of sight of anyone under the age of 19.

Furthermore, I believe that only country folks be allowed to run for office. They seem to be the only ones around with their heads screwed on straight. Why do we allow a country as big as ours be run by a bunch of idiots from California and New York !!.

At the time of this writing, our country and the world is in the worst outbreak of a medical emergency in the world's

history, and we have a President and his people doing all of the right things to stop the spread, and what does the other party do, they try to slip in their own communistic ideas while no one is looking. These people should be rode out of town on a rail after have been tarred and feathered.

If you are a GOD fearing person, and have read the book of Revelation, you will know that we are to be watchful, for in the last days we will see wars, floods, earthquakes, tornadoes, famines and the last which is pestilence. That is where we are now. We should not fear, because we are near the moment when the church will be taken from this place and into Heaven, and then will be the return of the Lord JESUS back to earth to reign for a thousand years. So let your heart not be troubled, the best is yet to come.



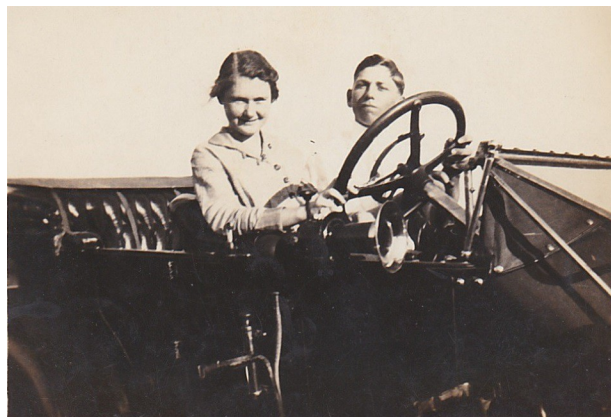
I REMEMBER LOVE

The sun came up brightly on my window this morning, not really awaking me, as I don't sleep all night. I seem to do most of my best thinking and remembering at night. When you have almost reached 90 years of age and have lost your life mate, about all you have to do is remember the past, because you know what the future holds.

I am amazed at the complexity of the mind, and often wonder why you can remember things that happened 90 years ago but you can't remember where you laid your phone.

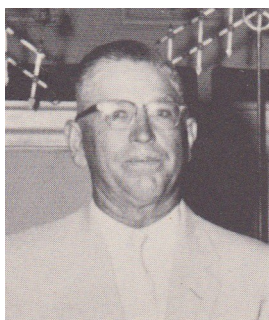
Night time brings back memories that began in 1930. It begins with the memory of two young people who were born and raised in the country and had gone to school together, and after dating, had fallen in love. Sounds

like a familiar story doesn't it? They married and started married life as tenant farmers, during the great depression. My mother actually worked in the fields alongside my dad.



**JENNEY MILLER AND
DEWEY RENFRO
ON A DATE IN ABOUT 1915**

This picture could be 105 years old



Dewey Renfro



Jennie Renfro

MY PARENTS IN THEIR LATER YEARS

I remember the old unpainted wood house where I was born, I remember the wind whistling through the single board walls and the melody it played, I remember the 3 rooms that had little furniture, but I also remember two parents that loved me !

I remember there being no refrigerator, no running water for washing and mom or dad having to go out back of the house and draw up a bucket of rain water from the cistern for us to drink. I remember that the toilet was a small building out back, I remember that the bath tub also served as the wash tub one day of the week. I remember a lot of things, and I remember love. My parents were simple country folks

and lived simple lives, who were not prone to express emotions openly, but who showed me by their actions that I was loved.

I remember the hot days and nights in the summer and the cold in the winter, I remember the big old mules that dad used to farm with, I remember the way they scared me as a small boy.

I remember all the sounds and smells of the farm and they were good.

I must admit however, there was one time that I did not feel loved. It was the only time in my life that I ever had a birthday party, and no one came !!!



You can see the disappointment in my face. I had to eat all that cake myself. There was not enough kids around to come anyway ! I hope you noticed what a sharp dresser that I was, with those boots and hat. Wow !

I remember when my little brother was born, I remember thinking, where did they get this thing ?, but he turned out to be

O K. Not as handsome as I was though.

I remember the neighbors who lived just up the dirt road, of going to their house to visit. I and my brother were treated as if we were their own children. I remember their faces and voices as if it was yesterday, and I remember love.

I remember riding a horse to school for the first six years of my education, making new friends, and learning to love and understand horses, which has lasted for a lifetime. Some of the horses that I have had have actually turned out to be smarter than a lot of people that I have known !

I remember the days of school in that little four room wooden building, out in the wide open field without a tree around, I remember

the faces and voices of all the kids that were from the same type of home as I, I can still hear some of the conversations that we once had.

I can still see each of the horses that they too rode to school, how they could ride and whose horse was the fastest. I was not supposed to mention that, because each of our fathers had warned not to run those old horses, because you could get hurt ! What our parents didn't know was that the best rider in school was a girl ! These were good years with good friends that remained that way for a lifetime.

Our little country school was consolidated into the nearby Dawson, Texas school district in my seventh school year. I now had to make new friends and make my way through a new maze. But again I made friendships that

endured the test of time.

The town was a small rural town with all rural people who just lived in town. Everyone knew everyone and each of their kids. Life was simple in those days and life was good. It was hot and dusty and hard but good. I remember the feeling one got that overall there was love.

People were honest, kind and sincere. Those were the days when the Doctor came to your house if you needed him, and the Preacher and his family came home with you on Sunday to have an old country dinner of fried chicken.

There was not only a feeling of friendship with those you knew but one of love. Christ told us to love our neighbors as ourselves. I sometimes think maybe I should

re-read that passage and tell some to maybe read it for the first time. GOD is love.

My dear mother had played the piano at the church our family attended, for 72 years and was still the main church pianist until her death, so I attended Church a lot.

One day at school, my entire life was changed forever. I asked a girl in my class for a date and for some strange reason, she had said yes. I know now that it could have only been divine providence. This was a girl that I had grown up only about 4 miles from but had not really known her because we went to country schools in opposite directions. I still didn't know her but she was cute so I took a chance.

It turned out to be the best thing I ever did. We fell in love on our

first date, dated for our junior and senior years and were married after graduating high school in 1940. A marriage that only lasted for 70 years until she went to be with the LORD. The marriage has never and will never end because it was through this woman that the LORD gave me as my soulmate that my life was made complete and filled with love, yes, I remember love. She is with me everywhere I go, in everything I do, and In my every thought. I see her face in everything, I still hear her voice and see her beautiful face. I remember love.

Yes, I remember love, It was with me in the morning, it was with me in the day, it was me when I felt good, it was with me when I felt bad, it was with me when I walked, it was with me when I ran, it was with me when I was happy, it was with me when I was sad, it was

with me when I needed it. YES, I
REMEMBER LOVE.

Love came in life early, and has
stayed late. It has been something
that has filled my heart with
happiness and it has been
something that has broken my
heart, but is one thing in life that I
would not have wanted to miss.
Love can lift you up higher than
you ever thought you could fly and
it can drag you down to the
bottom, but it is well worth the
chance you may take.

YES, I REMEMBER LOVE.

I now am old, and all is gray,
but I remember love in every way.



I REMEMBER ALL THE THINGS
ABOVE
BUT MOST OF ALL,
I REMEMBER LOVE



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank my son for his helping an old-school man with his computer.

DARRYL RENFRO



In Memory of

Wilma L. (Babe) Renfro
March 8, 1932 -
December 13, 2018



Ephesians 5:25
Husbands, love your wives,
even as Christ also loved the church,
and gave himself up for it;