

MEMORIES
OF AN
OLD MAN



BY BILL RENFRO

MEMORIES OF AN
OLD MAN
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III

ABOUT THIS BOOK

This is not your ordinary book, in fact, it is more like a journal of lost memories. I am not a trained author, but just an ordinary pretty face who has become an old man, who, after losing the love of my life and wife of 70 years, have started to write as a way to occupy my time and to keep a record of the memories that are still frozen in my mind.

I have written two other books about the story of two teenagers who fell in love, were married out of high-school and which lasted for 70 years. I will not repeat that portion again in this book, but will try to record the things that I remember as a boy, born in a time long ago, in which the world was a better place to live and raise a family. This story began in the year of 1930.

I hope that this book will cause you to remember the memories that are hidden in your own minds and that they will cause you to appreciate some of the people who were responsible for who you are today.

May God bless each and every one of you, as he did in our own lives. We were watched over more than we ever knew, and blessed more than we ever deserved.



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MEMORIES OF AN OLD MAN

EARLY YEARS

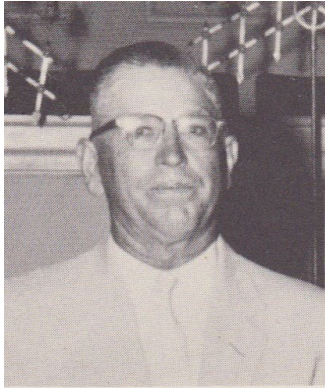
My first memory was as a small boy, born to a mother and father who were tenant farmers in a small town rural area, about 6 or so miles away, on a small farm. All of the farms in this area were small because they were sized from 125 to 150 acres, because that was all the land one farmer could work with two mules. I can remember my father chasing the large and scary things to harness them for work. They were scary to me. I can remember the old wooden home that we lived in that whistled thru the cracks when the wind blew and trying to play with my few toys on a floor that was higher on one side than the other. I remember the old wooden ice box where we kept our fresh cows milk that dad brought in each morning from our very own cow. I remember that we had a paper sign with all the numbers that you may need for the ice man to leave for you when he made his weekly trip down our dusty country dirt road. Mom would place these signs in the front window, with the number of ice pounds that we would need for the next week, so the ice man would not get out of his truck and come to the door first. The ice man came the same each day of the week and was looked upon as one of the big events of the week. I learned early, that if I ran out to the ice truck while he was chipping out the right amount, he would give you some of the chips.





My dad was finally able to trade those mules for an old tractor, which was a great help to him and reduced his work load a lot.

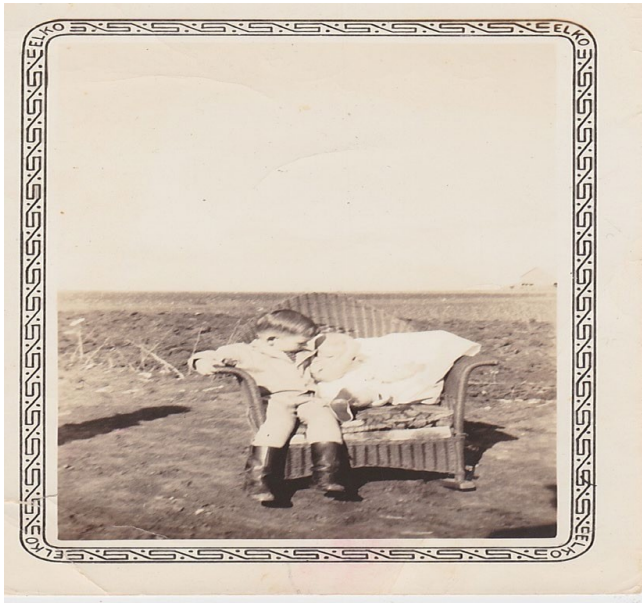




Dewey Renfro



Jennie Renfro



Billy Renfro (me), and my little brother
Charles (Lum) Renfro in about 1934

I remember as a young boy, the time my mom and dad and several families of their friends all got together and went to a large creek where the water was about 4 feet deep and was flowing water. Some of the men had come out several days earlier and put a fish seine thru the creek to stop any fish from going farther down the line, and just before all the crowd arrived had sealed off an area upstream to capture any fish that were there. As it was, the water was full of catfish. While the men got into the water, clothes and all, the women had a large metal wash pot, filled it with water and started a fire, ready for the catfish fry that was to begin. The ladies prepared a big feast on the back of the trailer that had brought the wash pot. The kids all played in the short grass that surrounding the area next to the treed creek. What a great place for a summer picnic. The men had gone into the water and caught the fish while others cleaned and cooked those that were caught. This was country fun at its best, and a good time was had by all.

FARM MOVE

Because my dad was a good farmer and a hard worker, the land owner moved us to one of his larger farms, over one road behind where we had been living. This was a move up for us, for this farm was larger and it had been the home of the land owner's father and the original family home place. This house was larger and

had more rooms, a windmill which provided running water to the kitchen sink. The outdoor privy was also a two holer instead of the one holer that we had in the old place. This was a big move up for us.

I remember the day that my dad brought home a new used tractor because he needed it to work this larger farm. But he also got another one of those dang mules. Because I had grown enough he felt that it would be fun, “ HA HA“, for me to ride the roller when he had planted the corn and cotton. I did not think it was fun riding behind a farting old mule and looking him in the behind all day.

Soon I was old enough to start school and get away from all this fun. I would get to go to a small country school down the road about 4 miles. Too far to walk. I got to ride with my cousin, who lived down the road from us, but it was his horse, so I had to sit in the back. I also remember that he did not ever once let me drive. As I remember, the school was a rather small wooden building about 3 feet above the ground, painted white with a black roof. The building had 5 rooms. You entered the front door into the auditorium, complete with chairs, with a cloak room on each side, for wet clothes and muddy shoes. There were two large rooms off each side, which were classrooms. At this time, only the far rooms were used, each serving 3 grades of students. Grades 1 thru 3 on the left room and grades 4 thru 6 in the right room. Each classroom had one teacher, who did triple duty.

Out the back door there was a small porch and a walkway which was paved and led to the long building where all the horses were kept while they awaited school to be over and they could race their owners home, where they could then begin their long awaited farm chores.

You work on a farm no matter what your age.

Farm work is hard for the body, but is rewarding to the mind. I now look back on these days as some of the happiest times of my life.

Time flew by and soon I had finished the 6th grade and it was time to move into the 7th grade in the big city of Dawson, Texas.

I remember the time when we were living on the home place of the land owner, that dad had put me in charge of keeping the wind mill going and the water tower filled. But one day I was too busy playing with my little brother and forgot to keep an eye on the job and let the water tank overflow and flooded all the back yard and half way out to the road. You have never seen a kid run so fast to the windmill and cut it off. Boy did I hear about that, but I was forgiven on the basis that it would not happen again. One of my other chores was to help mom when she washed the clothes outside in the large metal wash pot that had to have a fire going until the water was hot enough for her to move the clothes around with that large wooden paddle that she used. We then had to remove them from the hot water and try to squeeze all the water out that we could, and

then hang them on the clothes line to dry. This was a one day job and it seemed to come around often. One of my other chores was to help mom churn the milk to turn it into butter. This was a time during the second world war and you could not get butter in the stores, so we would make more than we needed and sell the rest in town. I remember pounding on that churn handle until I thought my arms would fall off, but it was for the war effort, so I only complained to myself.

I remember the times when a neighbor's son would be home for a pass from the army and it would have rained, we would cut long branches from a tree that grew by our tank, I do not remember the type of tree, but the branches were flexible and with a 3 foot long branch we could make a ball from the wet mud in the ditch by the road, and when stuck on the end of that tree branch, made a grate slingshot, and allowed us to stand about 30 feet apart and have a mud ball fight. This was fun until you were the one that got hit .

While we lived at this farm, I also remember that at this time the country was still in WW2, and the Air Force had a training center in Waco, and the training planes would sometimes come over our farm and when they saw my brother and I outside, they would fly low enough that we could see them wave at us. We thought that that was great. I also remember

that my dad and the man that farmed the land directly behind us, were best friends, so we had a road made in our field from our house down the field and into the friends farm and it was well used. I also remember the time that the friend had raised a large crop of onions, and had gotten what seemed about 50 Germans from the war detention camp located near Mexia, Texas.

The German soldiers all seemed to be friendly and well treated because I would think they were happy to be out of the internment camp even though they were having to harvest those stinking onions. This was the first time that I had ever seen anyone but a Texan.

I also remember the time that my dad had been listening on the radio that the police were tracing Bonny and Clyde from Mexia down the road to the Corsicana area. Evidently they got away !

I think that at this point that I will tell you a secret that I have never told anyone, not even my closest friend, not even my wife, but you must never to tell anyone else, OK? Well, when I was a child and alone in my “safe place”, a thing I heard on television, reading my comic books, I was “Superman”. You heard right, that was me. I think that I must have had a split personality, but dad never took me to the doctor, but on saturday night I was “Gene Autry.” I really was !

When you live on a farm way out in the country and do not have a lot of toys and only your brother or sister to play with, you can get pretty inventive. I remember that one of the favorites was to roll an old tire down the road, pushing it with a stick. This was real fun. And if you had a smaller brother or sister that you could talk into getting the tire and rolling with it then you really had fun. If you never did this then you don't know what you have missed.

I think about the days when you could go into the grocery store where your dad did business, get candy, a cold “RC” cola or whatever you wanted and they would put it on your bill, because they knew whose kid you were.

DADS OWN FARM

My father soon had saved enough money to buy his own farm, closer to town, and we moved there the year that I started the 7th grade.. It was the farm that had what we called “the old red house”. And a place that holds many memories for me. It was the place where my family lived through high school and even until I married. My wife and I lived with my parents for the first 2 months until we got a house of our own at the nearby farm of a generous neighbor. We lived there for about a year until my dad bought a home in town and allowed us to move back into the big red house.

Where we lived on my father's farm, you could see 7 farm homes, and I remember that on a cold fall day, we could hear each of the farmer start their tractors, and each having different equipment, made a different sound as they started. We soon learned by the sounds, who was going to work for the day and those who had over slept.

One of my favorite memories of the fall season was when the weather had gotten cold enough for us to have a “hog killing”, where we butchered one of the hogs that we had raised to provide us with ham and sausage throughout the winter months. This was a big event to us and our friends, because it took several men to move an animal of that weight. Dad would put the trailer back gate on top of some barrels to serve as a work table on which we would cut the meat into the proper pieces. The men had placed an open top barrel and set it at a 45 degree angle and filled with hot water which had been heated over a wooden fire close by. The dead pig was lowered into the scalding water and allowed to become hot enough to be skinned and easily cut into the right parts. Once the hog was taken from the hot water and placed on the cutting table, all the neighbors gathered around and began to turn that 300 pounds of meat into winter time eating. All the small cuttings from the big pieces were cut into small ones and run thru a meat grinder which were

made into sausage. My father would mix all these with sausage mix to just the desired taste that we liked, and mom would cook a sample for all to check. This was one of my favorite parts. Dad would then cover all the hams with a mix that would cure them and put them away to age in a safe place. All who had helped in this day long process would each receive a generous portion for their help as we did when it was our turn to help them.

We were only 5 miles from Dawson, which at that time was the place where all of the farmers in our area went to shop for all of their family needs. The little town had grocery stores, a bank, drug store, 4 gas stations, where they still cleaned your wind shield, and brushed out the floor of your car, all while they were pumping your car full of gas. The town also had two clothing stores where we bought our overalls or our khaki pants like my dad always wore. I remember that the drug store made a great thing that they called a “walking malt “. They made a small malt of your desired flavor, and put it into an ice cream type cone so you could carry it off and eat it all.

The town also had one of the best hamburger places anywhere. It was named “Ponders” and was a very small wooden building about ten by twelve feet in size and was located at the corner where the street turned.

The town was L shaped and this was where the joint was located, actually, the joint was located in the

street right-of-way. It had a wooden roof from the store to the wall of the building next to it, to provide shelter from the weather for its customers. The place was just large enough to have room for the two people who worked there and a small lunch counter that had room for only four diners at a time, but the burger that you got was worth it. They made what we now call a big greasy which our government has outlawed as being bad for our health. I guess that is one of the reasons that I have only lived to be 89 years old at this time of writing.

The best part was that the burgers only cost about 25 cents and drinks were 10 cents. Those were the days, and one of the reasons that they had all the business that they could handle at any lunch time.

Some times later the government paved the street through town, and because the store was on the street right- of- way, they had to tear the old place down.

I remember that our family bought our groceries in one of the 4 stores in town “Mathews and Sims”, but the two owners were known to everyone as “Jim and Skinny”. In those days the grocery stores all had goods that were delivered in large boxes, not only the apples and oranges, but all the cookies, and crackers and who knows what else. I remember the store had long walls down one side of the store where all the canned goods were displayed, with a large display

shelf with an open front to entice you to buy. But what I most remember as a small boy, was at the center of the store and the end of this line was where the candy was !

In those days the customers did not have to pay their bills until the end of each month, so I soon learned that because everyone in town knew which kid belonged to who, and if your parents had an account at their store, all you had to do was tell the clerk what candy you wanted and how much, all you had to do was tell the clerk to put it on dads bill, and you could walk out the door without fear, until you got home.

I remember that along the back wall there was the place where all the cookies and other goodies were stored , each type in it's own separate compartment which had a see through, self closing door. Near to the front of this area was the old coal burning stove that kept the store warm in the winter. The stove had a number of chairs located around it because a lot of the store's farmer customers would hang out when it was cold outside. It was also close to the wall full of cookies. You guessed it, the devil would make these grown men slip their hands into these cookie boxes and slip one or two cookies just to keep their stomachs from growling. I must confess that my own father was one of these starved men. But these actions did not go unnoticed by the store keepers, and my fathers monthly bill often had an amount that was only listed as “grazing”.

While this little town had only slightly over 1000 or more souls living inside the city limits, it was our “New York City”, even though all the houses in town still had an outdoor toilet building next to the alley that ran behind each street and allowed the people to keep chickens and sometimes cows, to provide their own food.

The town also had three cotton gins and I can hear the sounds of all the machines running, and the smell of the cotton being ground into small bites. I also can remember the “Doctor Pepper” machine where the gin owner gave free ice cold drinks to all of the customers. There were also free peanuts for all the kids and you have never lived until you have had your drink filled with peanuts.

Town was also the Saturday gathering place for all the country people who came to town for their shopping and for the Saturday movies. (at that time they were, called (Picture Shows), but that was before the time that we were all told that kind of talk was not good enough and if we were to survive ,we would have to change. Shows were 25 cents at that time and you could stay all day if you wanted, popcorn was 10 cents and you could leave to go to the toilet and come back in without paying. The ticket taker was also one of the local school teachers, so she knew who had payed and who had not.

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 bare 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 perp 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 not ever do that again. And as far as I know, he never did. Those are the days that we need back.

I remember that my dad had an old two barrel shot gun that had been passed down to him and even he did not know how old it was, but he always hunted with it. One day when he was away from home, I decided I would take his gun and go down to the area next to the

tank where I had seen lots and lots of doves in the trees every day, so I got the gun when mom wasn't looking, and went to get some birds for supper. Dad had never told me though that the gun would go off sometimes by itself. This would be the day that I had picked, for as soon as I raised it to fire at one of the unsuspecting birds, the old gun fired and raced backwards between my arms, I quickly grabbed at the barrel and caught it at the end of the barrel, which was good because otherwise you may not be reading this story now. Well that was enough to end my hunting day.

I remember that mom was the one who always killed the chickens for Sunday lunch, but on this particular day she ask me to do the job. Well, as it was not to be great fun, I also didn't know how to do it, although I had watched her do it hundreds of times. But I swallowed hard and got on with the task at hand. I soon found out that this was not as easy as it had looked. For one thing, as I swung the chickens neck around and around, the chicken just went with it. But mom came to the rescue to show me how. That was quite an experience that I never wanted to go through again.

I think about the time when little kids said “yes mam, no mam, yes sir and no sir “ and all adults were “mister or misses”. These were the days when if your kid did something wrong or was out of line in any way, and your neighbor or someone else saw them, they did not have to wait until they got home to be scolded,

they got it from the adult who caught them, because everyone knew each other and their families and we all looked after. Then the government took over, stopping spankings and ruined this as they do most things.

I remember the days when we would wait for the most fun thing of the day, that would be the sight of the mail carrier appearing down the road and heading for us. Our hearts raced with excitement, wondering if we might see something put into our very own mail box. We were happy even to get all the advertisements that would normally come but maybe this would be the day that we would get a letter ! But the day most looked forward to was when we got the new “Sears” catalog. My smaller brother and I could spend hours going over each page with amazement and thinking of the day when we could actually have some of the things we saw on those pages. I was drawn to the tool section and that of ladies underwear. I don't know why.

HIGH SCHOOL DAYS

I remember that since we lived at this place we now were picked up by the Dawson school bus each day and driven to school. I had advanced from the 7th grade to high school without anything that was noteworthy happening until my junior year. I had played football and baseball each year, but was not a

great player by any means. It was that our school was so small that if I had not joined in, we would not have enough players to have formed a team.

But on this one particular day, I had asked one of the girls in our English class for a date to the Saturday movie and she had said yes. This event changed the course of my life, for we fell in love on our first date, were married after high school, and it lasted for 70 years. “I have written of our love story in three other books”. These are the things I remember.

I remember the time before we were married, but were dating, we went to Dallas with 2 other couples to the fair. With three couples in the cab, Babe had to ride in my lap. As she sat with our bodies side by side, her face next to mine, I can still remember the smell of her hair, her perfume and holding her close enough to feel her heart beat and I knew that I had found the one that GOD had sent for me, and she would soon be my wife.

I remember the little town had a small jailhouse down the alley just behind the leather shop. It was a small poured concrete structure that was about 8ft. by 20 ft. inside, with just about room for two people, and had concrete walls that you could not drive a tank thru. It had a large door in the center of one side that was made to survive dynamite, but it was open, at least I never saw it with a closed door. The jail door had a

large lock on one side that could withstand anything, except it had no key. None in town had ever seen the key. Mr. Billy Lawrence was the towns only law agent, but I never saw him put anyone in jail. There was a story that had gone around that once a farmhand had done something wrong that he had sent word for him to come into town and go put himself in the jailhouse. Mr. Billy, as he was known, was too busy at his full time job at the grocery store to come and get him. He was also told to get in and close the door with no key, and stay there until he was told that he could go home. People had respect for the law then.

I remember when the old Dawson lake, which had been built in early 1900 or so, when the “Corps of Engineers” built a new and larger one that could serve Dawson and Corsicana. The old lake had been fished for many days by many fishermen for what was to be the largest catfish to have been caught in the world. When it came time to drain the old lake, every fisherman in the county was there to see “big daddy” when he was found. Well, sure enough, when the water level reached the big boulders that were the dams retaining wall, there, hidden between two was the largest catfish you ever saw. They had found “big daddy”. It took 4 men to get him out of the old lake and in to town for everyone to see and take pictures. If my memory is correct, he weighed close to 150 pounds and was about 8 feet long.

I think about going to my grandmother's house where she and her second husband lived, in an old rundown house with a curled up wooden roof which had to leak when it rained, but was always kept clean and painted. My grandfather Miller, which was my mothers maiden name, had passed away years before, so Mr. Dillahey was as much as a grandfather as I had ever known. There was only one rule that I will always remember, and that was, when you knocked and she opened the door, was you ran up to her and got your big hug and your kiss on the cheek. You also got the same as you left. As far as I can remember, this rule was never broken by me or my brother. I believe that she was one of the most loving and GODLY women that I have ever known.

One of the things I remember about the two of them was all of the times I saw them sitting side by side reading the Bible and praying, as they sat and listened to the ticking of the small, wall mounted, grand father clock on the wall in front of them.

Mr Dillahey had bad vision and used a large reading glass to read. This glass now lays on the table before me and is, some 60 years later, helping me to write this book.

And the clock that was on the wall where they once sat, now hangs on the wall, in my brother's house, and has not ticked or chimed since the day my grandmother passed away.

I remember the days before any of us had a television, and had to listen to the radio for all of our weekly entertainment. I enjoyed all of the sit-com programs, some of which I can not call by name, because in this day and time, I would be called a bad name, but you know the ones that I am talking about ! They were all funny and down home and told the story of everyday life. I remember the one with the “jot-em-down” store which reminded me of the actual grocery store where my family traded. When I was younger I would come home just in time to hear the Lone Ranger, Gene Autry and I was an official member of the “Tom Mix” street shooter club, complete with my decoder ring. Those were the days. My mom also had a large number of lady shows that she watched every day as she worked. Ones like “Portia Faces Life”, “As The World Turns” and all the rest.

I remember the “Big Band” era when music was music instead of electronic noise. I can remember that you could actually hear the words of the song. I think that my favorite was “Glen Miller”, but there were a lot of great ones, and I spent many hours after school listening and singing along. Although this was the time of world war 2, I sometimes wish that we had some of these days back.





BABE (POOL) RENFRO AND HER
HUSBAND BILL RENFRO

MARRIAGE

We were married October 8, 1949 and lived on my father's farm and farmed our own place.

We lived most of the 5 years that I was forming, in what we called the old red house, on my fathers farm. The old house had a large front porch where there was a large porch swing, where after the days work was done, all the daily chores and supper was over, we would sit in this old swing, rocking, talking, just loving and being with no other. The old swing was on front of the house, and in the summer, when the skies were clear, you could see the whole country. We spent many hours there and it was a time of great happiness.

I remember the times when she would bring our lunch out to the field where I was working away from home, and we would eat inside the hot car and just enjoy each other. Some times love is looking at someone you love, knowing that they love you too. GOD says that when he joins a man and woman together that they become as one. This was true with us, because we could just look at each other and almost know what they were thinking .

I remember the time after I had just taught her to drive, that she was backing the car out of the garage and she turned before she had cleared the garage door, the right front door caught the car and bent about a foot of the fender. She came crying, into the house, and after I had calmed her down by saying it's OK honey. I said

I can take the cost of the repairs out of your allowance and she calmed down, not realizing that she did not have an allowance.

I think about the times when I passed by her and did not give her a hug, the times that I missed telling her that I love you honey, the times that I should have kissed her when she did not feel loved. I think about the things that I could have done to make her life better, these things I remember but all too late.

I think about the times, when our farm day was over, we would drive over to her parents' home and just sit on the front porch, talking and laughing while the kids played in the moonlight. The moon was so bright, the stars all glowing, and the night so bright that the kids would run and play their simple little games in the yard and around the house. These were the things that made life good and bound families together.

I think about the time when people did not take time to lock their doors any time. Besides not having anything worth stealing, they knew that everyone had their doors unlocked also. Where is the fun in stealing if you can't break the door down?

I think about the time when my wife and I were coming home from town, late one night, and ran out of gas about 3 miles out, in the dark, dark country.

Then all of a sudden there came one of the only cars that had been there that day. It happened to be a guy that owned one of the service stations in town. Here was a guy that I had known for years, but had never done business with. I bet you know the rest of the story already, yes he offered to go and open his gas station, get me a can of gas and bring it to me while we waited in the car. Sounded like a God moment to me.

Another thing I think about a lot is why does everyone ask you “ how are you today “ when they greet you ? It makes me want to tell them, well now that you asked, my back has really been hurting a lot lately down in the lower part and my left leg has been so sore that can hardly make it around sometimes and I still have that kidney problem that I had last year and I have to get up every 2 hours to go pee, day or nite, of course that is the way it is with old folks. And how about you?.

I remember the times that after we had moved to the big city, that I would call her on the phone during my lunch time and we just talked about what we had done during the morning and what we were going to do that afternoon . The two things I remember about the talks were what are we having for dinner and always closing with I love you!!

FATHERHOOD



How can one not remember the first child or even the second ? Our first two children were born while we lived on the farm. What a joy for a parent of any age, even if the mother is only 19 and the father only 20 years old. Our first child was a son that we named Darryl, and our only daughter Ronda. These times run through my memory often and still bring back thoughts of the love and joy that they brought to our lives.



MOVE TO HOUSTON

We moved from the farm to Houston, Texas in 1955. I remember that it had been harder to make a living than

I had thought, but at trying several things, I took a drafting course and got a job with a consulting engineer. I think that I had found my calling in life, because not only did I like the work but soon found that I was good at it.

I worked my way up the ladder and ended my career at age 78. I had self trained myself in the field of engineering, but had advanced to the position of a project engineer.

I remember that I had been lucky to have been first hired by an engineer who taught me many things and who remained one of my best friends throughout his lifetime. I found myself to have worked with some of the best engineers, who were always glad to answer my questions and give me directions. I believe that God had planned for me to be an engineer, but I was too much in love and wanted to get married.

I remember working on some great projects such as NASA, which was just getting started, to one of the first 50 story buildings in this part of the nation.

I remember having gone to the NASA complex and seen all the great things going on in the race to get to the moon. Some time later I was assigned to the project of revising some of the piping in the space capsule that had been used by the USA and Russia, and getting to go inside where the astronauts had been was a thrill to me.

I also remember the time I was made the project engineer for revising the centrifuge building into a large water testing tank where the capsules were to be put for training classes. I remember that the first day that I had to go to show my presentation for the project, I was so scared to walk into the room filled with the nations best engineers, and me not having gone to college that I sat in the car praying for 15 minutes. And the Lord got me through it.

I remember the time that I had done the plumbing design on a new school project that had been built outside a new subdivision that had been built and the project was at the end of all the utility lines. The contractor had called to tell me that there was not enough water pressure to properly flush the second floor toilets and not enough to water the football field which was farther down the line than the school. I designed a temporary pumping system to fix the problem until the main service lines had been extended far enough to provide enough pressure. After the pump had been installed, the contractor called me again to say that the pump was putting out too much pressure and was blowing the plastic piping. The pump had a pressure reducing valve that should have been able to solved it. After several hours we had not found the answer to the problem. I took the problem home with me, in my mind that night, and

as I slept, I dreamed about this problem. I was shown in the dream that the problem was in the pressure reducing valve, and in the dream had seen a picture of the inside of the valve and was made aware that that this valve had to be turned in the opposite direction than an ordinary shut off valve. Well the first thing that I did at arriving at work the next morning, was to go to the catalog files to look at the manufactures catalog and looked up his literature on this valve. Not to my surprise, there was the same internal drawing of the valve that I had dreamed. We were in fact turning the valve in the wrong direction. I called the contractor and told him what I had found. He called the job site, they did as I had directed, and the problem was solved. The dream that I had was without a doubt to me, a GOD thing, because I had never used this product before and had no idea as to its internal workings. What I had seen in my dream was the exact same drawing in the manufactures catalog.

I also remember the times when my precious wife would work for short times when we needed the extra money, but found a job that she loved, at what was then Houston Bible College. She got to do what she loved best, talk about the Lord. She did many jobs in the 10 years that she worked there. She retired after this was over and we moved to Dallas where our two sons lived.

I know that the Bible says that when we get to Heaven that we will not still be man and wife, but that we shall be known as we were known, and that we will love each other, but what worries me is that I may not see her again because I am sure that she will be in administration and I will be in maintenance.

One day that I definitely remember was the day that I brought home a new boat. I proudly leaned out of the truck and called out to my wife, honey, look what followed me home, can I keep it? (I wont tell you what she said at this point) I said, but honey, even JESUS liked boats. To this she replied, yes but he did not run out and buy one, he used other peoples. I thought at this point that I had better shut up.

I remember when our only daughter Ronda, who had developed breast cancer and had been receiving treatment with no success, that her husband decided to take her to Tijuana Mexico to try a different type of treatment. She had to have someone from family stay in the room with her, day and night. One person could stay for 5 days and then had to take a two day rest. My wife took the first 5 day shift and our son-in-law would take the second. My son-in-law and I flew to San Diego, California to a hotel in the center of town, where a bus from the hospital would pick up passengers each day for the trip.

My wife and I had decided that we would have 3 days together while she took her break. On the day she was to go back to the hospital we were waiting in the hotel lobby, she decided to walk down the street for a minute until the bus arrived. While she was gone, I saw a taxi drive up and a man got out and headed into the hotel. The man did not carry a bag but carried a change of clothing on hangers over his shoulder and in the other hand a small bag and a book. The man walked into the lobby and without looking, walked up to me and said “you are from Texas”, I answered “I didn't know that it showed”. He then asked why I was there and I told him the story. He then said that he knew that GOD had directed him to bring this particular book to read. It was meant to be given to my wife and daughter. The name of this book was “My dream of Heaven.” After her mother finished reading this book she no longer feared dying. What an awesome GOD we serve. O yes, I failed to tell you that the man was O.D. Hill, who was married to the only living heir to the Tappan family fortune, who had just flown from New York, on his private jet to spend a few days rest. This happened July 15, 2004.

Our daughter passed away in 2005.

I have looked back and remembered the times that I had a situation where if I did not do something quickly that GOD may take over and ruin things.

MOVE TO DALLAS

I remember the time that I had been working outside in summer heat and had what I now think was a small heat stroke. My wife called a nurse friend of ours to come over and check me, which she did. I remember my wife telling her as she left, that she did not want to lose her husband. I then knew that I was loved.

This heat stroke was what made my wife ask me to retire and leave the home that she most loved, and move to Dallas where our two sons lived. This move was in 2010 and it was good to be close to family again. My wife passed away in December 2018, and her memory has filled my mind with memories of the 70 years that we were married. Our marriage lasted too long to have ended so soon.

I now know that GOD has kept and protected us more than we ever knew, and had blessed us more than we ever deserved.

Even with all the blessings that one receives in their lifetime, it is still hard to look back at a lifetime of working and loving and see it reduced to an old truck, a few pieces of furniture and 2 million dollars.





I have always thought that most people take life too seriously because we are all going to end up at one place or the other. But at about 4 am one morning I changed my mind. I had for 12 days been exposed to life. I had finally opened up my heart that I had never really wanted anyone to see, and there it was outside for everyone to see. While it lay there exposed, the great physician removed the better half and left me for all the world to see. I was told that I should have known that this was going to happen soon or later and that I would get over it. But can one get over a missing leg, an arm that is now longer there ? The only way that I will be healed will be that glorious moment when I again see her beautiful face and again hear that sweet voice say “Billy”. Then I will be well.



BILL AND BABE RENFRO





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Darryl Renfro

The inventor of “Spellcheck“,
whoever they may be.





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;