

1-1955

It Happened to Us

Class of 1954 Communications Students

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IT HAPPENED TO US
1955

PART 1 8:00

Martha Smart, Editor

I T H A P P E N E D T O U S

PREPATORY NOTE

by

A Class of First Semester Freshmen
Communications Students
Fall 1954

The personal experience narratives which make up this book and its four sister volumes were written as class assignments in five freshman Communications classes during the fall semester of 1954. The assignment followed the lead of Philip Wylie's "And What About Hurricanes" and Cecil De Mille's "Stand By For Torpedo," in the text. It was probably because of these two articles that most of the students who had had experiences with tornadoes, floods, bombings, or other disasters reported these in their narratives. Students whose lives had been placid and uneventful felt themselves at a disadvantage, but they were not encouraged to over-write their less dramatic experiences.

After the students had received their marked papers back from the teacher, many took advantage of the invitation to come for a conference on how to make their narratives more interesting. Some didn't. When the rewritten versions were all in, each student was given a copy of the projected book and was instructed to have it typed.

Part 1.....8:00 o'clock Class

Martha Sue Smart, Editor

Each class section had, at the outset, selected an editor from its number. It was these editors who worked out the "format." It was they who made the final decision to have five individual limp-backed volumes, one for each section, instead of one large bookman-bound volume. Then when the typed narratives were all in, each editor settled upon a sequence and prepared a Table of Contents and an Author Index for her volume, ready for final typing.

The five editors are Martha Sue Smart, Patsy Vaughn, Ivoane Taylor, Reeda Hardy, and Patsy Keller.

These volumes will be placed, for a time, on reserve in the College library, so that all contributors and other interested persons may read them. Later they will be placed in the library of the English Department, as working suggestions for future classes.

Clara E. Korman, teacher

English Department, Ouachita Baptist College
Arkadelphia, Arkansas
January 1955

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man standing with a pistol, pointing it at me. I don't know what all went through my mind but I turned around and started tearing back for the truck. This, I guess, was from force of habit. Just as I got off the porch, I heard the first shot. That only caused me to accelerate that much more. By the time I had made it back to the truck, he had fired the pistol five times. He missed, though.

As soon as I got to the truck, which didn't take very long, we left.

I enjoy a little excitement but that was enough to last me for several years.

I had settled down by daylight, so we went back to the spot to find out the reason for the shooting. The people in that section could give us no information at all. I still do not know whether the man thought I was a burglar or whether he was just drunk. The latter seems to be the best answer, since it was not his home.

If anybody likes excitement, join up with the milk company. But as for me, I'm no longer with them.

THE SINKING OF THE U. S. S. BLOCK ISLAND

By

Lewis E. Clarke

With D-Day on France drawing near, the U. S. S. Block Island-baby aircraft carrier, was ordered from her overseas port in Africa to clear the subs so the Allied Forces could make a successful landing. We weighed anchor and began to move out of the harbor. On our way out we had to pass the mast of one partly sunk ship and on the starboard side a great French battleship almost completely destroyed by the German bombers. This made us remember the kind of war we were in.

Our captain gave the order for full steam ahead so we could get to our post of duty at once. We were not at our post of duty long until we had made contact with the subs. One of our four escorts changed course and made preparations to have an encounter with the sub, but it had to remain over the sub seventy-two hours before it surfaced to recharge its battery. When the sub surfaced it tried to ram us, but could not do so because of the heavy armor plating around our ship. In their attempt to sink us they also tried to board our ship and gain control, but they were unable to do so. Their sub was sunk and the crew picked up.

We were now about eight hundred miles off shore and working

around the clock. Our bombers and fighters were also flying every minute of the day and this caused us to know we were in heavily infested sub waters. In the face of these conditions a heavy watch was imposed on all of the ship. About three bells in the morning general quarters were sounded and every man on the ship charged to his duty station. I had reached my station and I stood in complete darkness on the flight deck, when suddenly a light flashed in the distance. This light caused our ship to send our fighters to investigate the reason it was on in the middle of the ocean.

While all of this was going on around us I was really scared. Our planes reached the light and found it to be a Spanish ship oiling German subs. Before our planes could drop a flare and bomb it, it vanished.

There were not many of us that could go back to sleep with a German sub close by that might attack us any time. The morning came and found us still on the hunt for the sub, but night followed quickly and we had not as yet found it. Late in the evening, when I lay down for a few moments, a crash from a torpedo sent me sailing into the overhead. I remember nothing more until water came in over me and I revived. When I came too I stumbled through the tangled mess of steel and managed to get topside. When I arrived topside they were taking a muster, and while this was going on we had another direct hit in midship.

After this happened, the captain gave the order to abandon ship, and in a short time I was going over the side into the cold,

THE BURNING OF OLD MAIN

By

Alan H. Thomas

I was awakened in the middle of the night by some unusual noise. At first I thought it was the thunder that was going on when my mother returned at 10:00 p.m. from the Ouachita College commencement exercises. Then I found that it was a bell--a telephone bell. My mother had answered it.

She replaced the receiver on the hook and came to my room. She said, "The Administration Building at Ouachita is on fire." I turned to the window beside my bed and saw a reddish hue over the dark treetops.

My mother and I dressed hurriedly and rushed to the car. We started toward Ouachita but we were stopped by a policeman at Fifth and Cherry. We turned the car toward home and parked it. Then we walked the rest of the way. The rain was still coming down very hard.

When we arrived on the campus the Arkadelphia Fire Department was making a feeble attempt to control the blaze. They realized they could not stop the fire and sent someone from the crowd near us to call the Gurdon and Malvern Fire Department.

Relay lines were formed to save many valuable books and trophies from the building by passing them through the windows. There were many people from the college and town standing around watching. The Ouachita Alumni, who had just finished a grand fellowship, were included in this crowd. After it started raining heavier, we realized that we could not help, and we returned home.

Many people advanced ideas about how the fire had started. This was cleared up the next morning when mother told me that Harold Tedford saw lightning strike the freshly tarred roof. That same day we learned that Dr. Mundie of the Biology Department suffered the greatest personal loss with the building. He had many slides and specimens that he took great pride in. These were destroyed and many of them have never been replaced.

A new building has been built very close to the location of "Old Main". Today only the memories of the old building are left.

LOSING A LOVED ONE

By

Ethelene Clarke

To most people in town it was just another Sunday afternoon but it shall never be erased from my mind. All day friends had come in to say hello and also a word of comfort. Now it was about two o'clock in the afternoon and there were only three of our dearest friends standing in the room and Lewis my husband came in and sat on the side of my bed. As I raised my eyes to the door two men came into the room carrying a small gray casket and lowered it beside my bed. Then they opened the casket and we saw our son, Jonathan Edward. As I saw him then he was the most beautiful baby, as babies always are to their mothers. He was altogether different from our first child, having brown hair and dark eyes.

As they took him away my mind wandered back a few days before when in the hospital I had heard the usual words from the nurse, who was one of my best friends, "Well, my dear, you have a wonderful baby boy," and my reply, "Is he all right?" "Yes, he is fine," said the nurse.

The next day as I held him on the side of the bed admiringly, I saw his fist draw up and a frown on his face. The nurse was called in and I was assured everything was quite all right. But some-

how that empty feeling in my heart would not go away.

The following day, when, I was discharged, I was told the baby would have to stay for another seven days, and again I was told he was going to be all right.

About nine o'clock that same evening our telephone rang and as my husband answered it he stepped around the door into the other room. The doctor's message was that the baby had died at six-thirty. We had not been notified earlier because he was out on call and the nurses could not send out a message without his permission.

As Lewis put down the telephone a friend of ours came in and also our son, who was now six years old.

This was a great loss to him, who for months had longed and waited for a baby brother or sister. Everything he did or thought was concerning the new baby. Now he was standing in the doorway crying and also angry at everybody, especially the family doctor.

As he cried he said, "It's all the doctor's fault. If he had only given him a shot like he always gives me he would have lived. Mama don't you ever take me to that old doctor again 'cause he made our baby die."

Then I forgot for a little while about my loss and tried to explain to David how it was nobody's fault and how God gives us the things we have and God takes them away because he can see things that we don't know about.

It was with this same thought and these same words that the minister spoke to me the next day, which was Sunday.

"The Lord knows best for each of us," he said. "He knows best for us adults and for the tiniest ones. He has been merciful."

Charlotte Kendrick

Being selected representative of the Rogers High School Homecoming Class in 1952 to reign with the homecoming queen at the time and to be in the homecoming parade, I was very honored. I thought that was the best--the all important item along that line that would ever be mine. But it was not. Something else, which was more but meaning more in many ways, came my way only two years after that. The time was October 30, 1954. The place was Washita Baptist College, Arkadelphia, Arkansas.

I was told one evening while waiting for vespers to start that I had been selected the Beta Beta representative for the Homecoming festivities. The Beta Beta Social Club is a group of which a large percent are ministerial students. I was not a member at the time of the nomination and selection of my candidate, but he was not at their meeting the particular day they selected their representative. I later learned, much to my surprise, that it was Bud Henderson, a senior, who had suggested me and that the vote was unanimous. Needless to say, this should have been an honor to any college girl, but my being a ministerial student made it a special thrill to me. If I had been an ordinary girl, it might not have meant so much. It gave me a

satisfying and warm feeling to know that I had come to a school, completely unknown by practically everyone, and almost right away had found that in some small way, I had made a good impression on not just one, but a group of people. Becoming acquainted is one of the essentials of college, and I was getting a good start.

Naturally my first action was to share my honor with my family. I wrote them a letter that night and told them all about how the homecoming queen was to be selected by out of town judges. These judges would determine the winner by the prettiest float and girl. Of course, I did not for an instant hope to be winner. To me it would have been an undeserved honor.

Had it not been for my folks coming from Rogers, Arkansas, on homecoming day to share with me the excitement of the parade, the crowning of the queen, the game and the reception, I would not have had the completely wonderful day that I had. About one o'clock Saturday afternoon, I was wondering if they were going to make it in time. Shortly after that time they did arrive, and seeing the pride in my mother's eyes was the most valuable and memorably thing to me.

My day had started early. I went to work, as usual on Saturdays, that morning and in between typewriter pecks, I went to and completely covered both of the women's dorms looking for a pair of yellow gloves to wear that night, as I could see no use in buying a new pair for that single occasion. Confidentially, every outfit I was required to wear, I had to borrow. This kept me in circles for awhile, but everything turned out perfectly in

that way.

By noon I was anxiously expecting my family and I was also getting excited about the soon-to-be parade. But in another way of thinking, I would be glad when it was over. I had spent so much time preparing and anticipating, it would be a relief to have it all behind me.

The parade was to begin at three o'clock, and we got to the starting place approximately fifteen minutes early. It was a cool, crisp, clear fall day, a perfect setting for a parade. It was football weather at its best. We took some pictures and I had a good deal of time before the start to get situated on the float. By that time I was beginning to feel conspicuous, sitting all alone on an enormous float waiting for a parade to begin. The float on which I rode was the last in the long procession of floats. The float, I might add, was a huge representation of a modern jet plane.

During the ride, it was interesting to me to note especially the children, their expressions and reactions to the parade. Once, while rounding a corner, I got a little jolt and nearly fell backward. I was glad to get back to school.

At the football field that night the pre-game ceremony was brief and simple. The candidates, all fourteen of us, wore navy suits, shoes, hats and purses, with yellow gloves and scarves. The announcement was made and we rejoiced when Miss Marion Sullivan received the queenship. Deep down there was the natural hope that I might win, but at the same time I felt relief that I did not. I

have mixed emotions about such things.

All in all, it was a lovely day and I shall always remember with fond memory the Homecoming of 1954 at the Ouachita Baptist College.

Shot By A Blank Pistol
By
Bill Gill

My father had told me time and time again but I wouldn't and didn't heed his warning about playing carelessly with firearms. As I lay on the doctor's table, the question arose between my parents and myself as to whether or not I would be able to see again out of my right eye. The doctor was as uncertain as we were, as he worked busily putting medication in my eye. After two hours of pain and worrying on my part, the doctor said that my eye was not damaged seriously and that it would be normal again if I took good care of it. Although I had to wear sunglasses and a bandage over my right eye, I was grateful that my eye was not seriously damaged.

It all happened the same day as I was at school working in the athletic dressing room. Everyone had gone home except us managers. As we were cleaning up the dressing room, I noticed the starting pistol lying on the table. In a playful manner, I decided to scare another manager. As I put a shell in the magazine I did not realize that the hole in the top of the pistol was the hole that the burnt powder and other matter escaped through.

As I stood behind the boy, I had my head directly above the hole in which the powder and other matter were discharged. When

I pulled the trigger and the gun went off, the burnt powder hit me in the face, piercing my skin and lodging under it. Three or four of the particles became embedded in my eyeball, less than 1/16 of an inch from the iris of my eye. At that moment, my face was numb and both eyes were closed, but one of the other managers, in a quick thinking way put eye-wash in both my eyes. Even after my eyes were washed out I could open only my left eye. My right eye was very painful and would not stay open. One of my friends took me home and then to the doctor's office.

As I wore the bandages my right eye healed but my left eye was strained a little trying to do the job of both eyes.

MY ACCIDENT ON THE HAYRAKE

by

W. L. Hooten

The day of August fifth had its beginning as any other day in my fourteenth year. My father had mowed the hay on the fourth. The phone rang the night after the hay had been cut. Mr. Kemp, my father's employer, needed him to work on a special order. Mr. Kemp had been so good to Father that he thought he was obligated to work even if he did have his hay down.

That left my brother and me to rake the hay for my father to bale when he finished working on the special order. To rake the hay we used a nine foot rake, which is pulled by two horses. We finished the job by three-thirty.

My brother decided to run home. I was to drive the horses home. He said that he was going to beat me. Determined to beat him I got the horses in a trot. That wasn't fast enough to satisfy me, so I whipped the horses into a short gallop. From a short gallop the horses went into full speed on their own accord. I was having fun until I decided to slow down. I pulled back on the reins but the harder I pulled the harder the horses seemed to run. I came to a gate and I hit it. After breaking the rake the horses went one way and the rake another way, and I went up and straight out for about ten feet to make a third way. Where could I hit except on my head. The blow didn't knock me out,

but it tore my shin on my forehead and left my skull in view.

When I got up, blood was running into my eyes. I was so weak I

Had to sit down before I fell down. For the first time in

my life I was scared. An elderly man saw me and helped me walk

the remaining quarter of a mile home. Mother was scared more

than I was but she managed to drive me to the hospital. After

a half hour's wait I was examined and my wound was sewn up.

Within a week I was out of the hospital, but I wasn't on

that rake until the next year.

MY EXPERIENCE WITH THE OUACHITA RIVER

by

Carl Nash

Our family has lived near the Ouachita River all of my life, and we have crossed the river on the ferryboat located at Nix's Ferry many times. We had never experienced a crisis, however, until on one occasion, as we were returning from a visit, the ferryman almost dumped us into the river by making a mistake while hooking up the ferryboat.

In order to tell how he made the mistake, I shall describe the ferry. The boat was about thirty feet long and about fifteen feet wide. There was a cable stretched across the river to which both ends of the boat were attached by chains with pulleys on them that rolled on the cable. The front of the boat had a shorter chain than the rear of the boat, and when the current struck the boat in midstream and flowed down it's recedive side and around it's rear, the boat was pushed forward by its force, and thus was propelled across the river.

As we were returning from our visit, we had to cross this ferry. As soon as we had got safely onto the boat, the ferryman took his hook, which he fastened onto the cable to move the boat from the bank, and started the boat to moving from the bank out into the swift water. As soon as we reached the swift water,

we saw that the ferryman had made a mistake this time by hooking both ends of the ferryboat equally distance from the cable. This mistake produced results that were almost disastrous. With the chains hooked equal distances from the cable, the swift water began to push the side of the boat that was upstream under the water. In the meantime, the boat had stopped moving. We all became frightened when all of our attempts to move the boat were in vain. If the side of the boat that was upstream had sunk a little more, it would have turned over and probably drowned our entire family and the ferryman.

About this time some men on the bank saw the position of the boat and came to our rescue. They brought some hooks that could be attached to the cable, and they pulled the boat safely to the bank. As soon as we reached the bank, we shook off our fears and thanked God for sparing us.

A DAY I WILL NEVER FORGET

by

Thomas Hollanger

One day, when I was ten years old, my mother, father and myself drove into Stuttgart, which is twelve miles from my home town; Almyra. We had done this many times before. The day was cloudy, but then it started to get even darker. I was too young to be worried, but my mother and father must have realized that a storm was coming. We then started home. I can remember the old truck we were in, because I remember looking up through the windshield and seeing some things flying through the air. I then realized what was happening. We then stopped and waited for the storm to blow over. We happened to park close to some trees, and I remember that they were bent pretty low by the wind. I thought that at any time they would be uprooted and blown over on us.

I don't remember how my father and mother reacted to this storm, because I was so busy watching and hoping that nothing would hit us. I don't think they were as frightened as I was.

When the storm had grown less violent, we started home. On the way, I saw that we had only been in the edge of the storm. Where the storm had hit directly, the homes were completely destroyed. A bed was found more than a mile from the house it belonged to, which shows the fury of the storm. By the time we

got to the edge of Almyra, the telephone and electric linemen were out getting the lines off the street. We then went to our home. Our house was not damaged at all. There were some trees in the yard that were uprooted, but that was the only damage.

Now when the sky gets very dark, I have a fear inside me. There are very few things that happened to me when I was ten that I can remember, but I can remember the storm very plainly, and how I looked up through the windshield of the truck and saw buckets, boards, and parts of roofs flying overhead.

The weather was bad and snow was falling when we left home. We thought we would soon be out of the snow. After we had driven a few miles, the snow stopped falling but the road was beginning to get slick and icy.

We were driving in some mountains and the road was completely covered with ice. We were driving along very slowly when all of a sudden a car in front of us began flashing a light as a signal for us to stop. The road was sloping and there was a large ditch on the lower right side of the road. When we started slowing down we began sliding toward the ditch.

When the car finally stopped sliding, we all got out to see what the light was about. We found that a man's car had slid down to the edge of the road just as our's had, and he was trying to get someone to help him out. The road was so slick we could hardly get up, so we all got back into the car to keep warm.

MY WRECK

By

Mike Collier

Late one afternoon we were coming home, to Mount Ida, from Hot Springs after a long day of shopping and visiting friends. There were three of us in the front seat, Mother, Daddy, and I, and the back there were parts of an old pump organ. In the back end there were several jugs of water.

When we were about ten miles out of Hot Springs, a farm truck pulled up on a side road, and slowed up as if it were going to stop. There was a stop sign for him, and it never crossed my mind that he wouldn't stop. But instead of stopping he came right out onto the highway. We weren't going fast, but we were right on him before he pulled out. We slid for about twenty yards, and met him, head-on, in the middle of the highway. The jugs of water pushed through the back seat and crushed the old organ.

In the truck there were three people, a man, his wife, and their daughter. The man's wife broke the windshield with her head, but other than some minor cuts on her head, and some bumps on my mother's head, no one was hurt.

Some people from home came by right after it happened, and since my mother was nervous and scared, she and I rode home with them.

When we got home, I called for a wrecker to come pick me up to go get the car, and called Margaret, my girlfriend, and told her I would be late for our date.

When we got back to the scene of the accident, my daddy and some other men had gotten our car off the highway, and someone had pulled the truck on to Hot Springs.

We made it back to Mount Ida with the poor remains of our car, and I was only three hours late for my date.

THE DAY BEFORE EASTER

Bebe Booker

Today is Easter, but it is the day before Easter that I want to tell you about. It is the normal thing for a girl fifteen to want to look her prettiest and nicest on Easter day. Of course, I wanted to look my best too. I had bought a new light blue dress, a new white hat with the same shade of blue ribbon trim as in the dress and a brand new pair of white linen dress shoes. I was all fixed for Easter day. But the afternoon of Saturday before Easter is when everything happened.

This particular Saturday afternoon my Mother was lying down, taking a short nap. I was just wandering idly around the house having nothing in particular to do when I had the "brainstorm" of surprising my Mother by baking a cake for her. This idea would have been fine if I had known a little more than I did. As you know, before you start mixing a cake you should light the oven and let it be heating while you are getting the cake ready for the oven. On our oven you turn on the gas and ignite it with a lighted match. I turned on the gas and touched the match to it but nothing happened. I left the gas on and went to get another match. When I returned, I bent down to the oven and reached down to light the oven. Boom! The gas oven exploded

in my face. There went all my eyelashes. There went both my eyebrows. My face was blistered and the front of my hair was singed. I knew I was ruined for Easter day. I couldn't dress in all my new attire with my face looking like a bad sunburn. Of course, I scared Mother but when she learned what had happened, she said, "Don't you know better than to put a flame near gas fumes? I was in sorrow about ruining myself for Easter but after that I was always extra careful around an oven.

The quiet town of England, Arkansas, when suddenly the sky turned black and it started to rain a little. My friend and I thought nothing of it and went into the store. In a few minutes a man came running into the store yelling that a tornado was coming. We rushed outside to see the sky as black as the blackest coal. The whole town was in an uproar with cars moving back and forth, children screaming, and people rushing along the sidewalk. We glanced up in the blackened sky and saw, to our horror, a large, funnel-shaped cloud coming very fast to the spot where we were standing. We could see articles that looked like tin, tree limbs, and house shingles in the air.

He rushed to the car to try to get out of its path. He got to the car and sped to the far edge of town. He barely made it out of the way. He got out of the car to see what was happening. I was shaking so I could hardly stand.

The tornado had hit a lumber yard, sending lumber flying in the air like straw in a windstorm. Bricks were scattered throughout the sky. We could see the tops of houses being blown off.

In a Tornado
By
Donald Hathcote

At 3 o'clock one Friday afternoon last summer, a friend and I were standing in front of a drug store in the quiet town of England, Arkansas, when suddenly the sky turned black and it started to rain a little. My friend and I thought nothing of it and went into the store. In a few minutes a man came running into the store yelling that a tornado was coming. We rushed outside to see the sky as black as the blackest coal. The whole town was in an uproar with cars zooming back and forth, children screaming, and people rushing along the sidewalk. We glanced up in the blackened sky and saw, to our horror, a large, funnel-shaped cloud coming very fast to the spot where we were standing. We could see articles that looked like tin, tree limbs, and house shingles in the air.

We rushed to the car to try to get out of its path. We got to the car and sped to the far edge of town. We barely made it out of the way. We got out of the car to see what was happening. I was shaking so I could hardly stand.

The tornado had hit a lumber yard, sending lumber flying in the air like straw in a windstorm. Bricks were scattered throughout the sky. We could see the tops of houses being ripped off

their perches. A large warehouse was torn to pieces as easily as tearing up a paper house with a small firecracker.

As the tornado passed us, leaving a path of destruction, it sounded like a dozen freight trains. After it had gone we tried to drive back to the drug store, but the road was blocked. As we walked along the street, we wondered at the power of this monster which we had just encountered. Lumber was scattered all over the place. A two-by-four was rammed through the door of a car. Pieces of lumber had gone through store windows. The warehouse was completely destroyed. Bricks were scattered about a distance of six blocks. One Negro man lay in the street with a hole in the top of his head where he had been struck by a flying brick. Another man was trapped under a huge limb. Everywhere we looked we could see somebody hurt or dead.

Ambulances started arriving about ten minutes after the tornado was over. My friend and I helped dig people out from under bricks, lumber, cars, and trees. The police guarded the place so people wouldn't steal things. In about three hours my friend and I went home. I have come to the conclusion that I never want to experience a tornado again.

WHAT ABOUT OIL WELLS?

By

Betty Ann Holloway

It is a thrilling and exciting experience to see oil gushing from the top of a tall derrick and spraying down on the people below. Some thirty years ago that was not an uncommon sight in the area surrounding Smackover, Arkansas, my home town. I have never witnessed such a scene but I have been told of the wonder of it by my mother and father. With only an average imagination I can visualize a scene such as this very vividly.

Though I haven't seen gushers, I have seen oil wells being drilled, all my life. It is interesting just to see how every step takes place and finally to see if the efforts have been successful. When a company begins the job of drilling a well, they never slack from their work till the job is finished.

There are some people who have never seen an oil well. It seldom enters my mind, however, because I have been seeing and hearing oil wells since I have been old enough to remember.

I have a friend who came from the East to visit me who had never seen an oil well. She was amazed to see how these wells were operated and also to see so many of them. In the Smackover area they are very numerous. At night the different ones can be heard for several miles. Though some of them have electric units, which

operate quietly, there are many that are still operated by gasoline motors.

Drilling oil wells is the first step in producing the many oil products that our country needs and uses. The first aim of a person or company in drilling a well should be to keep up the oil industry and the second should be his desire for a better living through such.

There are many different kinds of people in the oil industry. They range from the hard-working "roughnecks" to the presidents of the oil companies. Most of the wells are owned by companies which, of course, are made up of individual stockholders. There are some small companies which are owned by just one or two people; and then there are individuals who just own one or two wells. People who are not familiar with the oil industry have the idea that all people connected with the oil industry are rich. That is not true. It takes a lot of money to drill an oil well and unless you are well equipped before you begin, you'll probably come out with a large debt. The oil industry is a great one, however, and without it our country could not survive.

My First Blizzard

By

John C. Vaughn

My first contact with a real blizzard was when my family and I moved to northern Nebraska. I was just a small child, and the prospect of moving north where there would be plenty of snow was an experience to which I had looked forward for some time. I was sorely disappointed that there was no snow on the ground when we arrived. For that matter, it didn't even snow for so long that I had about given up hope. But when snow finally did begin to fall, I thought it would never stop.

I remember well the afternoon when it began to snow. My wish had been fulfilled. Little did I know to what extent it was being fulfilled. The next morning it was still snowing. It was beginning to form drifts against the house and fences, and was bending the trees to the ground. Evidence as to the weight of the snow was brought out when, after three days, the telephone lines were forced down.

Each day the level of the snow crept higher until after a week it was well up along the windows and I was getting rather tired of snow. Now I began to wish even harder than ever that it would stop snowing and that the icy wind would stop howling and blowing around the house.

A THURSDAY TO REMEMBER

by

Kenneth Hilton

One Thursday at nine o'clock in the morning about ten years ago, I was visiting my aunt in Greenwood, Mississippi.

My cousin and I were outside playing when my aunt came out and without showing too much excitement ushered us indoors with a "You stay there" expression on her face. We looked out the front window and much to our surprise saw the most terrible cloud that I have ever seen or hope to see in my life. Branches were flying through the air and it seemed to us as if it was raining "cats and dogs" outside. The only thing that saved us from having the roof blown off the house was three gigantic oak trees standing in the front yard which served as a small, but efficient windbreak.

About ten o'clock the same morning we went outside to inspect the damage. One block from our house, there was what was left of two houses, and a large tree lay across another. It was the same all over town, and the radio report gave a long list of those persons who had lost their lives and had been identified. There was much sorrow in the homes of those who had lost loved ones, and ever weekend many funerals were held and the undertakers business was very prosperous.

After the streets had been cleaned of the debris and the city

probably will wear them the rest of my life.

THE STORY BEHIND MY EYE DEFECTS

were many times I could not play in a game, because I was afraid

by

of breaking my glasses. But I know now that it isn't unusual to

Frances Cate

wear glasses, because many people my age do wear them. I am just

thankful for my glasses and that I wasn't hurt worse in the fall.

While I was playing in the kitchen of my home one day about fifteen years ago, I pushed against the screen door at the back of our house and went tumbling down a rock stairway. Of course, my parents did not know that the fall would cause so much pain and worry. They realized that I was hurt and they comforted me, but they did not realize that the fall had crossed one of my eyes and had affected my nerves in some way.

Before I started wearing glasses my eyes caused me to feel inferior. One eye was crossed and both were weak. Now, when I see someone with one or two eyes crossed I know how he feels.

I can remember the first time that I was taken to see the doctor about my eyes. I was about five years old. His office seemed very large and he had many things that he used to test my eyes. It seemed as if I wouldn't ever get through straining my eyes through machines and answering questions. This doctor told my folks that I was too small to wear glasses yet, and that he wouldn't put glasses on me. About a year later, my folks took me to another doctor. He said that he would put glasses on me, and if I had waited a month or two later to come to his office, I might have lost the sight of the crossed eye. Since that time, I have been wearing glasses and

probably will wear them the rest of my life.

It was hard for me to wear glasses, being so young. There were many times I would not play in a game, because I was afraid of breaking my glasses. But I know now that it isn't unusual to wear glasses, because many people my age do wear them. I am just thankful for my glasses and that I wasn't hurt worse in the fall.

"I'm sorry, but the leg will have to come off."

I heard those words only faintly and in my semiconsciousness didn't realize their importance to me until my mother's voice reached me sobbing, "Please try doctor, please try." Then I began to recall the events of the last few hours.

That was eight years ago on the day after Easter. I had worn my new Easter dress to school, little knowing that about four o'clock that afternoon my new dress would be torn from my body.

It had been an ordinary school day and after classes were out I had boarded my bus as usual. I had no funny feeling or premonition of the tragedy that was to strike, as some people have had. When the bus reached my home I got off and started across the highway to our miller as I was in the habit of doing. That was when everything went black, for I had not seen the cattle truck coming rapidly toward me. The last thing I remember was the conversation between the doctor and my mother.

The doctor agreed to set the leg although he didn't think a bone crushed as badly as mine would mend.

The six weeks of waiting with half my body in a cast seemed like an eternity. Finally the day came when the cast was set back.

THE DARKEST DAY

By

Martha Sue Smart

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"Was it straight? Could I walk again?" These were the questions uppermost in my mind.

Yes, it had mended and was now as good as new. Four years ago the last trace of my accident disappeared when I had a broken front tooth repaired.

No one I meet today could ever guess how close I came to being an amputee.

The summer of 1949, Warren, Arkansas was stunned by the fact that half the city had been swept away by a tornado. Families were separated by death. Children were left homeless and lonely. Homes, businesses, churches and schools were completely demolished in the twinkling of an eye.

I saw the other side of life that day. I would never have dreamed this could happen to us and my friends. Panic-stricken people screamed for mercy as they lay helpless, because some member of their body had been torn away. I look back with a shudder at the sight of death. Two men were walking down the street joyously talking and laughing. One man had his head and neck cut off and the other was unharmed. Mothers were in hysterics when they discovered that their babies had been crushed to death by a falling tree or a flying brick. I saw several steel beams twisted as I might see a shoestring.

Everyone that was in this tornado will remember the overcrowded hospital facilities and the lack of medical supplies. The only clothes many people possessed were the ones they were wearing when the tornado struck.

The wounds have healed, now, but the scars can still be seen. Only time will make the people forget the horrible tornado that struck on that warm summer day.

My First Encounter With A Tornado

by

C. D. Cheatham

During the summer of 1949, Warren, Arkansas was stunned by the fact that half the city had been swept away by a tornado. Families were separated by death. Children were left homeless and lonely. Homes, businesses, churches and schools were completely demolished in the twinkle of an eye.

I saw the other side of life that day. I would never have dreamed this could happen to me and my friends. Panic-stricken people screamed for mercy as they lay helpless, because some member of their body had been torn away. I soon grew hardened to the sight of death. Two men were walking down the street joyously talking and laughing. The next instant one man was dead and the other was untouched. Mothers wept in sorrow when they discovered that their babies had been crushed to death by a falling tree or a flying brick. I saw several steel beams twisted as I might tie a shoestring.

Everyone that was in this tornado well remembers the over-crowded hospital facilities and the lack of medical supplies. The only clothes many people possessed were the ones they were wearing when the tornado struck.

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THE PURSUIT OF A HIT AND RUN CAR

by

Robert Mize

As I looked at the great red streak down the left side of my yellow Mercury, I didn't know whether to go ahead and call the highway patrol or to try and catch the car that had hit mine. It was still speeding down the highway. A car that had been in front of me stopped and its occupants returned to see if they could give any aid. I told them that we didn't need any and they continued on their way. I decided that I was going to try to catch the car that had struck mine. I turned my car around and sped after the hit and run car in an attempt to catch it. The company with which I had my insurance policy would not fix my car unless the name and license number of the hit and run driver were reported to the proper authorities.

It all seemed very clear now as we sped over the highway in pursuit of the other car. Homer, John and I had attended the L.R.J.C.-Ouachita football game and were returning to school. Homer and John were half asleep as I drove along Highway 67 South of Benton on my way back to Arkadelphia. My headlights pierced the darkness as my car rounded a curve. Then suddenly, it seemed from out of nowhere, came a car weaving crazily back and forth

on the highway. We were traveling south and the oncoming car went first up on the left shoulder of the road and then back across the center line of the highway, striking the left side of my car with a loud crash. The sudden blow caused my car to rock crazily from side to side. John, who was asleep beside me in the front seat yelled out "Blowout!" Homer from the back seat cried out "What happened?" I let up on the accelerator and applied the brakes, bringing my car to a halt. We tried to collect our senses to see if we could determine what had happened.

We wondered what we would do. Could we catch the car that had hit ours? These were our lesser thoughts as we pursued the hit and run car. Our first objective was to catch the car that had struck us.

Soon we saw a car ahead stopped on the shoulder of the highway. Tension began to rise. Was this the car we were looking for? We came to a screeching halt as we pulled in front of the parked car. We were looking for a red car with a yellow streak down the left side. It was red, exactly like the streak on the side of my car. Jumping from my car, we began to look the parked car over. A close inspection revealed that this was not the hit and run car. We apologized to the man in the car for troubling him. He was drunk and we were unable to secure any helpful information from him.

We had lost valuable time. Now we began to question one another. Could we catch them? Had their car been fast enough

to outrun us? I said, "I don't think they will go very far without stopping to inspect their damage." I pressed the accelerator downward. The Mercury quickly responded and we approached the 100 MPH mark on the speedometer. Entering a long narrow stretch of road, I started to give the car more gas. Then suddenly, the tail lights of a car parked on the shoulder of the road became visible. I let up on the accelerator so that we might see what type car it was. We coasted by the car. That was it! It was a red car with a long yellow streak down its left side. We turned off the highway, stopping in front of the car. We jumped out immediately so that they couldn't get away.

The two occupants were Negroes. We asked them if they were the ones that had struck our car. They denied the accident. They said that they hadn't hit anyone. But the evidence was there and there wasn't anything to do but to notify the proper authorities. They would decide who was to blame.

A problem arose unexpectedly now as to who would notify the police. If I sent one of my friends in my car, the Negroes might make a break for it. Cars were passing by us on both sides of the highway, but none ventured to stop. My answer came when a car loaded with students returning to Ouachita recognized my car and stopped to see what the trouble was. We sent them to notify the police.

When the officer arrived, he made an investigation. After we were both questioned at the Benton courthouse, the blame was placed upon the Negroes. At the courthouse we made out reports

of the accident which were then sent to headquarters in Little Rock. The officer gave me copies of these reports and told us there was nothing else we could do. The guilty pair would have a trial and would receive their just reward for their crime.

I later sent my car to Memphis, where I turned the reports of the accident over to my insurance company. The car was repaired and as it stands now you are unable to detect the slightest hint of an accident.

VINEGARROONS

by

Dorothy West

It was a very usual morning. Bettie, my sister, came in to awaken me. However, I was already awake. In fact, I had slept very little during the night that had just passed. The incident seemed very funny then; but, oh, the night that I had seen those awful, poisonous animals!

It all began when I came home from church one Wednesday night. No one else was at home and the house was in darkness. Cotton, my brother-in-law, had gone to the farm. I had had no time for supper before church, so I went straight to the kitchen and fried some eggs and bacon and made toast.

As I finished eating, I happened to see something crawling across the living room floor. There was no light on in the room and the shadows from the dining room light made it hard to see what was there. At first I thought it was a stinging scorpion. I picked up Cotton's boot and killed it. It was after I turned the light on that I discovered that it was not a stinging scorpion, but a whip scorpion, more commonly known as a vinegaroon. It was dead, so I went on about my other activities.

A few minutes later as I was on the couch reading the Bible, another vinegaroon ran right through the front door! This time

I was terrified. Those things scared me. With goose bumps from head to toe, I retrieved the boot and slayed him. I was in a pretty nervous condition by this time. There had to be a stopping place. As I opened the door to find out where the scorpions were coming from, one ran in, right under my feet. The action was on. He evidently realized the danger he was in, because he certainly did travel with speed. But I was not to be outdone. I quickly grabbed the broom and knocked him from under the piano. Before I could get to him, he had gone into the bed room. It was dark in there and I was afraid to go in. But I went in and turned the light on. He was going under the bed. I smashed him! That was three. I felt I could take no more. But back to the front door I went. This time there was none. How relieved I was; but still I could not rest.

When Bettie and Cotton came in, a short time later, I was sitting in a chair in the middle of the living room, facing the front door. Feet under me! They laughed about what had happened and went on to bed. It was after mid-night when I finally turned the light out. Even then, when I closed my eyes, all I could see was vinegaroons.

And so when Bettie came in to awaken me next morning she found that my experience with the vinegaroons had been a serious occasion for me.

CALM DURING THE FIRE

by

Jean Hinson

To remain calm during an exciting happening is very hard to do. My mother is easily upset when something goes wrong, but one time she remained a little too calm.

It began during Christmas vacation in 1942. I had been having trouble with my tonsils and our family doctor told my parents I should have them taken out. The date was set for a few days later. It was a cool, crisp morning at eight o'clock when I crawled onto the operating table. The doctor put a mask over my face so that I had to breathe that terrible smelling ether. In a few minutes I thought I was in an airplane flying around in the room. Then the next thing I knew it was about three in the afternoon. The tonsils were out and the doctor said I could go home; so off I went in my first ambulance ride. I thought that was something special. My brother did not get to ride in an ambulance when he had his tonsils out.

All my friends came to see me and brought me gifts. I was treated like a queen. My brother was very good to me and I wondered what had given him a change of heart. Only the week before, he had chased me all over the block with a butcher knife while our mother was in town.

The accident happened the second day after my operation. I was still kept in bed upstairs. My father had gone to work and my mother was fixing breakfast for my brother and me. Our water pipes had frozen the night before, leaving us without any water. Dolphus, my daddy's cousin, was living with us. He decided he would try to thaw the pipes out. In a few minutes he came running into the house to tell mother to call the fire department. He had let the fire get too close to the house and the siding had caught on fire. He jumped the fence and went to our next door neighbor's house to get some water to try to put out the fire. My mother got her hair brush and sat down in the kitchen and started brushing her hair. Our neighbor phoned to report the fire; Dolphus was rushing like mad to put it out; but mother sat calmly in the kitchen brushing her hair. She suddenly realized that I was upstairs not aware of what was going on. She called to me and told me to put on my robe and come downstairs, because our house was burning.

The fire trucks arrived soon and they put the fire out without too much trouble. When mother finished brushing her hair she went out to see how much damage had been done. Only the bathroom was damaged and we were very thankful.

Mother taught me two things then and they were that getting excited does not help and being too calm does not help much either.

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