

fire I had started to build an addition to the old sod house and had the sod wall laid up about two feet high. There being no place to tie this stallion my wife held him, she standing on the sod wall. The other stock I had put on a plowed field."

"Every able-bodied man, woman and child fought fire and tended the burned and injured for the lives of all of us were at stake. Many men were caught in the fields, some as they were crawling through the wires of a barbed wire fence."

"My neighbor, Mr. Scandle, and his hired man were caught in the fire while they were breaking a furrow with a team so they could set a back-fire to meet the fire coming from the northwest. The change of wind was so sudden and so strong it came upon them burning the horses so badly they had to be destroyed. Scandle wasn't burned outside but he had inhaled the heat, burning him inwardly. His hired man whose name was Lilly and who came from Brown County, Kansas, was badly burned outwardly. His clothes were all burned except woolen underwear, shoes and gloves. They managed to get to the house, and immediately a woman was sent for me to come and help care for them. However I sent one of the boys up to Baker's for him to come and see to the stallion as his premises were not in the fire. Then I hastened over to Scandle's."

"As I entered the house I saw Lilly stretched out on the floor, his face black and swollen, the backs of his gloves burned off and the palms of his hands run together with the leather so they rattled. I hurriedly went over to Scandle lying on the bed, getting up and down in great pain. He having a full beard was not disfigured. However I could do nothing to relieve him. He died about 2 A.M."

"Eventually we got the fire under control in our own immediate community by plowing furrows and setting back-fires. Thirty coffins were ordered after this fire."

I was requested to take care of the body of Scandle and in the morning I started for Plainville, seventeen miles away. It was a terrible trip, the prairie black with burned stubble which, with the wind blowing at the rate of forty or fifty miles an hour, was driven into the horses faces and mine, though I had put double sideboards on the wagon box to protect me from the strong north wind. On returning I prepared the body for funeral the next day."

"Afterwards I and some of the neighbors took turns sitting up with Lilly who could lie only on his back not daring to move one way or another else the blackened skin would slip off. He lay that way for weeks, improving every day, finally recovering so he could walk around, then going back home and securing surgical relief by grafting flesh on his ear rims, nose, lips and eye lids, so that finally he looked nearly as good as new."

"Just to show how the elements conspired against man at that time, I want to tell you about three different crops which I planted on the same section of ground in the course of one year. I had planted winter wheat. Along in April, when it was nice and green, about a foot high and already jointed, there came a frost, killing it to the ground. A frost or freeze does not ordinarily kill winter wheat before it is jointed; after jointing, it does.

"I turned this winter wheat under, prepared the ground and drilled in barley with a good drill. Because the ground was so well prepared it seemed as though every grain grew, and by June it was rank and green and also about a foot high. Then the hot winds began to blow and cooked this barley until it rattled. I was pretty badly discouraged, but I thought I would try another crop — broom corn, after turning the barley under and preparing the ground to a good seed bed. Again every grain seemed to grow, making a wonderful stand. I cultivated this crop thoroughly and it grew rank and fast until along in September I could ride into the corn on a good-sized horse and just reach the top of the stalks. Again the hot winds began to blow and cooked all but the most forward stalks. I harvested these, threshing the seeds off the brush on a home-made cylinder that I had put nails in to strip the seed from the brush. After stripping the seed, I picked out the best brush and had a bailer come and bail it. I sold it, but disremember what I got, or how much of it there was."

"The next season I leased a hundred and sixty acres three miles from home and sowed it to wheat in the fall. I also had a hundred and sixty acres at home, sown to wheat and planted to corn, all of which looked fine up until June. On a Sunday I inspected the three miles from home acreage and decided to start harvesting that in the morning thinking that I was going to have a fine crop. However that evening we had a heavy hail storm which beat the grain into the ground, but the storm did not touch my crops at home, and I thought I would get along with these. But in August the winds dried that up."

"I was completely discouraged and, at last, decided to leave Kansas. At this time I didn't have anything to turn into cash. I owed six hundred dollars in small amounts to several different persons. But I was determined to have a sale of everything we had and go to Washington where an uncle of mine had settled after leaving Wisconsin. My folks in Washington knew what hard times we were having in Kansas. I saw everyone to whom I owed money and told them my plans, promising that after the sale I would pay them as far as the receipts of the sale would go, and if there were not enough to satisfy my creditors, I would send them the balance from Washington as soon as I could get it. Everyone said, 'O. K. Mason. I wish I could get away.'

"I traded around until I secured three mules to take us to Washington. I still had some young cattle, three half-blood Percheron colts, household goods, farming implements, etc., but even this was short of my debts. After the sale we sent the boys to our neighbors, the Bakers, to stay while my wife and I went to Plainville seventeen miles east to sell the rest of our household goods, and to pay up as I was able, from notes received at the sale and a little cash. We returned from Plainville late that night after having sold everything with the exception only of our bedding and things we needed for travelling. We made our bed on the floor. I investigated our capital and told my wife, 'We can't possibly go to Washington, nor any place else. I've only two dollars left.' "

"There was not a chance of getting work there, nor on the way if we did leave. However, I kept preparing for the trip, thinking that I could arrange it in some way. In the meantime, the boys came down from the Bakers' with the mail and among the letters one was from Washington. I opened that first and found a money order for a hundred dollars with a letter saying to use the money to get out of Kansas, or if I was not able to leave, to return it. I well remember how broken-up I was. All I could say was, 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow! "

"Soon after, while I was working on my wagon, a Mr. Mickey from Plainville drove up, passing the time of day. He said, 'I see you are taking three mules. I think you should let me have one of them. I'll sell it and after taking out the thirty dollars you owe me, I'll send anything left to you.' This was another blow since I had already seen him and he had said it was all right to pay later. We argued some time 'good-naturedly'. Finally I said, 'You go over to the Bakers' and Charlie Mead's stating your proposition to them, and whether they agree with you or not, I'll do as they decide.' In about an hour Mickey came back hailing me and said, 'O.K., Mason. When you get the money, send it to me.' That was a great relief to me."

"We left Kansas in September (August) 1896 with my Hundred and two dollars to pay expenses, and our only possessions provisions enough for the trip. On leaving the old homestead, the first forenoon we came to a blacksmith's shop where I had to have my mules shod. We camped there for the night. The next morning we were off on our trek to Washington, going through western Kansas and crossing the Colorado line. After days of travelling we came to where we could see the first mountains and camped near Greeley, Colo. near an old Kansas neighbor who was a son-in-law of Mr. Scandle who was burned in the prairie fire.

From there we went on to Cheyenne and across the Rockies, camping at the top one night. We boiled potatoes for our meal, and I mean boil, boil, boil, but they would not cook at that altitude. After

crossing the Rockies we came down to Laramie on the old Freighters' Trail to Fort Steel. From Laramie we would be crossing the Great Desert. Everyone discouraged me from making this trip across the desert. We stayed there a day or two trying to make up our minds what to do. I finally decided that I would not have my wife and baby make the trip, and I bought a train ticket to take them to Fairfield, Washington, where my uncle was. The boys and I were going to make the trip, but the more I thought about it the more I was convinced that we should not try, so I set about disposing of my outfit in order to buy tickets for the rest of us. I was offered only a hundred dollars for my team and outfit. Well, I hitched up after buying a few supplies for camping out, and the boys and I started through the town. We were going to try it anyway. But we met the fellow who had made me the offer, and suddenly, I said, "You can have this outfit." He said, "O.K."

We packed our belongings that we wanted to take along and bought our tickets for Fairfield. Thus we were starting a new life with nothing but the clothes on our backs.

The next day after arriving there I went to work for my step-brother, Martin Walser, who bought and sold grain and had a grain warehouse. The farmers would bring their sacked wheat alongside the warehouse in their wagons and if a price agreement was reached another man and I would "buck" the one hundred and forty pound sacks into the warehouse. During the winter when there was less grain bought and sold, my step-brother kept me on while I did his bookkeeping and bucked the grain by myself. Well, I got to be pretty husky with this good hard work, plenty of fine food and the good environment.

"I got along with my neighbors in Fairfield and liked them fine. One merchant, by the name of Coy, who owned a hardware store in the town, had a hundred and sixty acres of land two miles away. Eighty acres of this land was sown to winter wheat, but there had been but little snow that winter and he was sure that his wheat was frozen out. He offered me this wheat crop as it stood providing that I would prepare and plant the other eighty acres with winter wheat for him. On this deal he also offered me three horses, a cow, and farm implements, and the whole thing was to cost me three hundred dollars. I told him I didn't have any cash money, but would think it over if he would allow me to pay the money out of proceeds of the wheat harvest. He said that he had noticed me working around that winter, and he thought he would take a chance on me. I asked the advice of my folks and other neighbors around, and without exception, they all discouraged me. But I am a great one for asking advice and finally doing what I myself think I should."

"In spite of everyone I made the deal in the spring. While the ground was still hard and frozen I cultivated the wheat with a harrow. It proved to be a rather thin stand, but what grew produced a very heavy, well-filled head of grain. I went ahead and cultivated

and sowed the other eighty acres in winter wheat for Coy. I harvested my own wheat and sold it at the warehouse for eight hundred dollars. All it had cost me was thirty days labor of myself and boys, and my team. This was the first real break that I got since establishing my own family. The year was 1897 and I was thirty-six years old. Thus I was able to pay all my previous debts within two years, including my Kansas friends whom I owed."

"After this harvest I rented one hundred and sixty acres six miles from Fairfield in Rock Creek Valley, and we moved out there. With my three-horse team and the farm implements I had bought from Mr. Coy I started farming for myself. Everything went along fine. Wheat was very cheap at this time. I was getting from forty to fifty cents a bushel, but I figured it was costing me only twenty-five cents a bushel to raise."

"I had farmed my one hundred and sixty acres a year when my neighbor, Mr. Coy, approached me with a proposition. He was a merchant in the town of Rockford and was also agent for the Marshall Field lands there. Marshall Field owned six hundred and forty acres of fine farm land adjoining my leased farm, and Mr. Coy farmed this for the company. He had been farming for them for several years, but he grew tired of it. He asked me one day why I did not lease this six hundred and forty acres from Marshall Field and farm it for myself. I told him that I couldn't handle it. It would take too much of an investment for horses, implements, feed and seed. He answered me with, 'I've got the feed and seed for next year, and I've got the horses and implements. I'll sell it all to you on time, and you can pay me the next year after your harvest.'"

I hated to go into debt again, but we dickered around a bit on the price. Finally I agreed to give him two thousand dollars for the whole outfit. My four boys were all good workers and could all handle horses, even the youngest, Tom, ten years old was driving four horses. I would have three and four teams in the field at a time. And I was doing fine. I farmed this section and other leased quarters for five years. I would have some of my lands lying fallow, but my harvest was usually about a thousand acres.

"In the meantime, I was breeding my mares, and raised five or six foals while working the mares all the time. Also my neighbors were bringing their horses to me to break for farm work, and I was using them for my own farm work in their breaking. I paid most of my two thousand dollar debt the first year, and cleared it up the second. It was while I was farming here that my youngest daughter, Lela, was born in 1898. She was our last child."

"A banker, B. F. O'Neil, had four hundred acres of good wheat land adjoining the town of Latah, which was forty miles south of Spokane. He wanted to lease this land because he was retiring, or rather going into politics, and of six or seven people who wanted it, he

decided to let me have it. This was good land with a good house and improvements and near a high school which I appreciated as much as anything. Latah is where the boys finished high school. When I first went to Latah in 1905 I had bought eighty acres of good farm land with all good improvements, but I leased it out because I preferred to live on the O'Neil land. However, in the second year the O'Neil farm was sold, and I had to get possession of my own land and move there. Very soon I was able to sell my farm for a good profit, so I moved back into town, establishing a breeding and sales stable of pure-bred Percherons and American Saddlebred horses."

"I had taken a trip back to Bloomington, Illinois, and bought the first Percheron stallion which I myself owned. I bought him from E. D. Hodgson, who lived at El Paso, Illinois. While there I also bought my first five-gaited Saddlebred stallion, 'Cyclone', registry number 1886, by Benjamin Whielwind."

A month or so after arriving back home I received a letter from some people in New Zealand stating that they had seen this stallion at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904, and they asked a price on him. I gave them a price which they accepted, writing me that they would give shipping orders later. I was working Cyclone trying to learn the proper suggestions for the different gaits. Seemingly he was trying to help me, and he was improving while I also improved, so I decided to show him at Spokane that fall.

"Along in August I received shipping orders through their San Francisco agent from the New Zealand persons to whom I had agreed to sell Cyclone. Since they had paid no money on the deal yet, I wrote them that he was no longer for sale. I kept working him and myself, showing him later at Spokane, Walla Walla, Puyallup, the Seattle-Alaska-Yukon Exposition in 1909, Portland, Vancouver, B. C., and Winnipeg, winning every show."

"At the Lewis and Clark Exposition in 1905, I one day rode Cyclone from the Exposition grounds into downtown Portland. I was riding south from the Imperial Hotel when I felt that there was a crowd following me. I stopped, and immediately all those people were crowding about me asking what kind of a horse that was. I told them he was an American Saddlebred horse, sometimes known as a Kentucky-bred Saddle Horse. They wanted to know what his time was, and I replied that he had no time but was a five-gaited horse. They didn't understand this at all so I had to explain the gaits. In the meanwhile, along came a cop and told me to move on. I did so, circling the block, only to find there was another crowd following with all the same questions to ask. Again the cop made me move on, and dispersed the crowd. This clearly shows what a nine-day wonder this type of horse was in the northwest here at that time."

Cyclone had never had a bandage on his legs, nor worn boots. He had a natural tail set without any artificial aids having ever been applied to it. He could trot or rack at a three minute clip, and had a perfect canter and slow gait.

"At that time I was selling Percherons to breeders of draft horses, and Mr. Grey, of Pullman, Washington, was my strongest competitor in the Percheron class. Cyclone was getting so much publicity that he decided to offset that by having an American Saddlebred and rider shipped out from Missouri. He showed his new horse for the first time in Spokane. Cyclone showed rings around his horse and won first and trophy. In those days they didn't have cash purses in the Northwest. I showed my Percherons also, usually taking second to Mr. Grey."

"In 1908 I moved to Spokane from Latah and specialized in American Saddlebreds. I formed a partnership with Mr. John Sengfelder as 'silent partner', with him furnishing most of the money. We built a fine riding, boarding and training stables. This was three or four years premature though. I had about fifty applicants for fine saddle horses, hence I went down to Missouri and Illinois to buy them. In Mexico, Missouri I had my friend, Tom Bass, spot them for me. I loaded sixteen head in an express car, and included with them were five which were sired by Rex McDonald and one by Charles Read; three I had bought from Ben Middleton; all were fine saddle horses. Arriving at Spokane, we unloaded at the Fair Grounds until our new building was completed. I immediately set about contacting my prospective buyers. We sold all but four or five. Nearly everyone had an alibi; they were undecided or thinking of buying an automobile instead. This was in 1907 or 1908, at the beginning of the auto craze!"

"Captain and Agnes McDonald of Spokane had bought three head from us and were very well pleased with them. While they were wintering at Santa Barbara, Captain McDonald had been telling his friend, Colonel Perkins, of the Potter Hotel, about the Saddlebred horses we had. Upon returning home Captain McDonald rode by and insisted that I write to Colonel Perkins. He said that the colonel would buy a pair of five-gaited, combination horses. I did write him, saying that I would deliver them to him, guaranteed as represented for \$2,200.00 for the pair. In his answer the colonel said that that was more than he expected to pay. Since I wanted to see California anyway, I proposed to deliver them to him for \$2,000.00"

"I shipped them by freight in a box car with a box stall at each end. They had a barrel of water and feed, and I broke up a bale of straw in each stall for bedding. We were on the road for seven days and arrived in Santa Barbara on a Sunday. Upon being unloaded the horses were no different than they were at home. On the way from the train to his well-equipped stable the colonel told me that he would like me to show the horses in the morning to some of his

friends. I said, 'Colonel, these horses should stand in their stalls, knee-deep in hay for a week to get over the motion of the train.'"

"He still insisted and I finally gave in. Monday morning his friends were there to see them under saddle and in harness with all approving. The colonel said, 'I would like you to show them again tomorrow morning to some more of my friends.'"

"This I did, and they seemed delighted with the two Saddlebreds which were something new to the Western Cowboy idea. Again the colonel wanted them shown to still further people the next morning. By this time, most everyone knew I had arrived with the colonel's five-gaited horses. We had a good crowd that Wednesday. Mr. Potter, the manager of the Potter Hotel and a horse fancier, was one of the boosters. After I had shown them successfully and while I was on Tommy Mac, I rode up to Mr. Potter, dismounted, and told him to throw his leg over the horse and see how he liked him."

'I don't know a thing about a five-gaited horse,' he protested.

'Get on him!' I insisted, 'and do as I suggest. The horse will do the rest.' Mr. Potter put him in all his gaits. Getting off, he said to the colonel, 'This one is worth the price, Colonel.'

As we were going up to the hotel together, the colonel handed me a check for two thousand dollars, saying that the horses were better than he expected. And Mr. Potter said, 'Mason, we invite you to be our guest at the hotel for thirty days. Look around here. We need a horseman of your calibre.' The result was that I leased the Potter Hotel stables and moved to Santa Barbara in 1911.

"At this time there was no English equipment there; all western, buggies, surries, talley-hoes, etc. I hitched saddle horses single, double, and six-in-hand to the talley-ho, taking as many as sixteen tourist passengers on the mountain drives; also I would take eight or ten tourists out camping for a week or ten day trips in the Santa Ynez Mountains with pack horse to carry cooking utensils and bed rolls. We slept under the stars. A good part of the time I did the cooking....."

"At Santa Barbara I trained, boarded, bought and sold horses. At one time I had six Saddlebreds that I sold from our stables at Spokane; I mean that I had them as boarders. I also gave instruction in riding and driving."

"I have forgotten the name, but I well remember a man from Syracuse, New York, who came to the Potter Hotel to winter. He had very poor health although he looked hearty enough, weighed two hundred and forty pounds and was six feet in height. He told Mr. Potter that his doctor had advised him to ride a horse; medicine would never do

him any good. So Mr. Potter told him to go and see Mason; that I would fix him up. He brought his wife and young daughter over one morning, and he stated his wants and condition, asking if I had a horse he could ride. I asked him if he had ever ridden much and he said, 'I have never been on a horse, but the wife and daughter can ride well.'"

"We showed him the horses I selected for them, and he said to saddle them, that they would take a ride that morning. So I did, they mounted, and as they were going out I advised him not to stay out too long. They came back after riding an hour and a half. As they were dismounting I asked how they had made out, and the man said, 'Oh, fine! Have these horses on the floor here every morning at nine o'clock. I'll take them by the month.'"

"I never saw them for a week. Going over to the hotel I intended to look him up, and while in the lobby I spied him. He said, 'Mason, this is the first time I've been downstairs. I guess I will have to give up riding.'"

'Oh, no, you won't!' I answered. 'You took too big a dose. Now, when you are all healed up, get on your horse and do not stay out more than twenty minutes. Ride every day, gradually staying a little longer each day.'

He said, 'Do you think I can make it?'

'You certainly can!'

To my surprise they did just that, finally taking lunch with them. That man was as good as new in the spring when he left California.

"He came to the stables a day or so before leaving and wanted to know how much I would take for those three horses. 'If we can make a deal I will ship them to Syracuse. You may think I am foolish. However, we are familiar with these horses and it might take a month to find three that suit us as well.' I sold the three horses to him and shipped them back to their home."

"There were about twelve stables in Santa Barbara and they all had only shortlegged cowponies and western tack. Of course these old timers there were all very much interested in my eastern tack and my Saddlebreds. They said, 'Mason, you are going to use these fine horses and flat saddles on these trails are you? What you want are cowponies and stock saddles.'"

"I said I was going to go ahead and see how I would do with them first. And I had my horses trained to anything on these trails. There was as much difference between them and cowponies on the trail as there is between a deer and a cow. My riders all had a pleasant ride, and coming back they could ride along the beach if the tide were out.

"My experience with horses in general tells me that Saddlebred horses can do anything that other breeds can do under the saddle, and quite a bit more, including jumping. I don't mean that just because a horse is a Saddlebred he can compete with the best of other breeds, he must also be the best of his breed."

"While at Santa Barbara, I had a very fine high schooled horse that was sired by Forest King, exhibiting this horse on the beach on Sundays or other public days, I think was my greatest source of publicity. As Cyclone gave me publicity at Spokane and surrounding country, so Starlight King gave me and his breed publicity at Santa Barbara."

"I also worked my saddlebreds in harness both single and double, and you can just imagine the difference in appearance between them drawing a buggy or carriage, and the short-legged cowponies everyone else used."

The highly trained Saddlebred show horse is not the horse for pleasure use; they usually have too much action and spirit. The same goes for Thoroughbreds. If you should select a horse for pleasure use, from either breed that had been trained to show, you certainly would be disappointed.

"Although the Thoroughbred predominates in the foundation of the Saddlebred, in regard to the Thoroughbred I had particular reference to the Thoroughbred that has been trained to race. In speaking of Thoroughbreds we mean the race horse of that particular line of breeding, not the pure-bred Percheron nor the pure-bred dog. I have known many Thoroughbreds, not trained to race, which have made fine, showy pleasure horses. Nevertheless I will still hand it to the Saddlebreds for being the very best of pleasure horses, for they have been in-crossed and out-crossed in their breeding for more than a hundred years to establish this one type of horse. Therefore in buying a horse select the one that has been bred to the purpose you want to use him for."

"There at Santa Barbara I had a very fine clientele drawn largely from the wintering tourists from the East. Among them I met many thoroughly capable horsemen, but as is always the case, I met a few who very much exaggerated their horsemanship qualifications. A man who once came to my stables wanting a horse demonstrates this last class of rider. On the strength of his statements, and always wanting a rider to be pleased with my horses and have a good ride, I gave him one of my best horses that was established in the five gaits."

"He rode this horse up in the mountains on the trails and came down to the beach at Montecito to return to the stables along the beach. He didn't know the difference between the tide being in or out, and in this case the tide was in, leaving only loose sand to be ridden

in on the beach. Well, naturally, the way was home and the horse was glad and eager to return to the stables. Arriving at the stables the horse's flanks were heaving, his nostrils were dilated, and he showed extreme signs of distress from being over-ridden. I told the man that he had over-ridden the horse. In some indignation he replied that he had not, that he had never touched whip to the horse."

"And I said, 'Evidently, from the condition of the horse, you never touched the reins either. This horse is ruined for at least a week or two. I shall have to lay him up with special care for that time, and I'll have to take the chance on his being ruined entirely. This ride will cost you twenty-five dollars. At that, it is cheap considering what I may have to lose. Make a memorandum of this as a lesson to you in horsemanship.'"

"At this he went up in the air and refused to pay it, but I told him that this amount would be on his bill at the Potter Hotel. He paid it, but never returned. Fortunately, with proper care, the horse came out of it in a week or ten days. Had I, through ignorance or carelessness, given him too much water at this time or stood him in a draft, he would have been hopelessly foundered."

"By this time all my boys were grown up, and my son, Tom, had married and gone to Idaho to farm. While there he became laid-up due to an old injury he had received from a kick on a shin bone. All the boys, while youngsters, had horses, and when Tom was following another horse too closely once, the horse ahead kicked at his, and Tom caught the kick on his leg. Tom continued to ride and handle horses, however, with not too great discomfort, but in Idaho the condition became aggravated and he was soon in a plaster cast, on crutches, and unable to farm. His case was diagnosed tuberculosis of the bone, particularly of the hip bone."

"In my letters to him I kept insisting that he come to Santa Barbara, but he didn't want to since he could not work. However, he finally gave in."

I said to him, "Look here, Tom, let's have the doctor here look at your leg. Maybe we can turn it loose."

On the doctor's recommendation the cast was taken off, one crutch was done away with, and Tom went on the one crutch and cane with greater ease, and seemed to do all right. He improved week by week.

"About this time I wanted to get out on a stock ranch. I met a Mr. Eddie Meiers, who was a Los Angeles brewer. He asked me how I would like to be superintendent on his ranch at Santa Suzanna."

I told him, "I don't know you, nor your stock ranch. How about taking me to see it?"

"Well, Mr. Meiers had a fine ranch of eight or nine hundred acres. He had a mixed herd of ordinary horses, and had purchased a Saddle-bred stallion, Missouri King, from Mexico, Missouri. He also had a Percheron stallion, a jack, and a herd of milking Shorthorns. He took me around the ranch and explained the different angles of the outfit. All the supplies, hay, grain, vegetables, milk, butter and eggs were purchased off the place. This was just what I wanted; something I had experienced on my own capital. I told him I liked it fine, and he asked me how much I wanted. I said, 'Well, how much have you been paying?' He replied, 'A hundred dollars a month and food.' I said, 'Well, I couldn't take it for that. I'd have to have two hundred.' He said, 'That is too much. I've never paid over a hundred.' I said, 'Oh, but you have. All your feed and supplies are bought off the place, and the place should produce its own. If you hire me I will manage all the different departments instead of your having a man for each one as you have now.'"

"He said he still thought this was too much money so I told him, 'Hire me, and, if at the end of the month you are not satisfied, fire me.' We finally agreed on that."

He said, "Well, come on, Mason. Show me a little bit of what you can do. I'd like to see you ride Missouri King."

"We saddled him up and I found him to be a perfectly trained, five-gaited show horse. I showed him all the gaits without a mistake even though I had never seen this horse before."

Mr. Meiers said, "Fine, Mason! The first time I've ever seen him shown in all his gaits!"

The previous superintendent had been trying to produce the gaits in this horse, even using hobbles. None of them knew anything about a five-gaited horse.

Mr. Meiers then took me out to look at his mares and horses, and I saw that there was a young stud colt about two years old running with them. I said to him, "Why, Mr. Meiers, are you letting that colt run with those mares?"

He answered, "To tell you the truth, I didn't know I had that colt."

I told him, "He ought to be gelded."

He said, "Well, I'll see if any of the boys here can do it."

He sent someone around to find out, but none of them could handle it.

I told him, "Come on, I'll take care of that colt right now."

Mr. Meiers had a fine operating table and in little time I had the job done. While the colt was still on the table a neighbor of Mr. Meiers came in looking for a young bay colt that had strayed from him. All of us looked around at each other. Mr. Meiers said, "I'm not really sure that this is my colt."

The neighbor replied, "Sure looks like mine."

Everyone finally agreed that it must be the neighbor's. But the man said, "That's all right about your having gelded him. I was going to do it anyway."

While showing me further around the place, Mr. Meiers asked me if I drank. I told him, "No, I never touch it."

He said, "That's fine. And if any of the boys bring anything on the place, fire them. Let's keep this place dry."

"As superintendent of the Meiers ranch, I proceeded to reorganize. I found one man among the crew who was really handy. I put him as flunkey or handyman, feeding, milking, etc. I purchased fifty Leg-horn laying pullets, and set the handyman to making butter after securing a separator. I put another to farming to raise our own feed, and persuaded the gardener to plant a kitchen garden. After a time, we had vegetables, eggs, butter, etc., of our own raising, and also buttermilk for the boss and a few guests."

"The Meiers Brewing Company had a novel system of publicity. Up in the canyon they had a barbecue and picnic grounds. There were three barbecue pits, each large enough to roast a beef. It was reported that gatherings there were as high three thousand, perhaps one-time saloon keepers and bartenders, or another time Elks and their families. We had to prepare for these parties, hauling four horse loads of keg beer for each occasion."

Mr. Meiers expressed himself as being well-pleased with his new superintendent. He and a few guests usually came out on weekends.

While with Mr. Meiers, his Saddlebred stallion proved to me to be one of the finest five-gaited horses on the Coast, and we had decided to show him at Sacramento that fall (1914). He was working fine for me. Finally, one morning near show date, after I had worked him I handed him over to a very efficient groom to put him away. I rushed on to attend to some other work. In about half an hour the groom hailed me saying, "King doesn't seem to be just right. Come in and see what you think is wrong."

"As soon as I saw him I suspicioned pneumonia. Looking for the cause I found he was cross-tied in a direct draft. I immediately called the vet from Los Angeles, but King died the second day.

The cause: Thoughtlessly tying a hot horse in a draft."

The fall of 1914 was the election of a Wet or Dry Administration in California. The Liquor Association informed Mr. Meier that his ranch superintendent was a Dry. They demanded that he fire him. While in his service I had never advocated my sentiments, though he approved of my being an abstainer. SO WHAT! One day he sent his brewery superintendent up to look things over as he usually did each month. He was seemingly perfectly satisfied, and complimented me on the improvements. Even so, he said, 'Mason, I have an embarrassing duty to perform this trip.'

I told him, 'Shoot!'

He then referred to the Liquor Association demand and said, 'We won't need you after today.'

I said, 'Give me my money.'

He did this, with one month's salary in advance."

"In 1917, my two daughters and their mother moved to Seattle so the girls could attend the State University. I was superintendent of the Kirtland Farm located ten miles from Medford, Oregon, on Rogue River at the foot of Pilot Rock, where it is said the Indians made their last stand."

"I bought the foundation stock for this farm, consisting of purebred milking Shorthorns, Percherons, American Saddlebreds, Durock Jersey hogs and Rhode Island Reds. I showed 'La Goldendrina' in Portland — 'not so good'. We improved this place and established Kirtland Farms for fine stock. The owners of this place were Mrs. Withington and her daughter, Mrs. Clemons, both widows. So what! In 1920 a very good friend of mine married the daughter, and they no longer needed a superintendent."

"I went from there to Olympia, Washington, training Standardbred trotters. Among them were Maxey Bingen, Halgretta the Great, and William Grey. We raced them at Centralia, Gresham, and all the Northwest circuit, including Salem, Oregon. George Plummer of Seattle was the owner of these horses."

"Having finished with the Plummer Stables, I went to Elizabethtown, Kentucky to ship out a couple of horses for Mr. Landsburgh, delivering to Roy Davis at Santa Monica. Afterwards I took charge of, and remodeled, his leased stable at Palo Alto, California. I didn't get a chance to do much with horses there, so I went to Long Beach, and took over the Mason School of Training and Riding there. After doing business with a fine class of riders, I sold out to Bob Henry."

"Later I assisted as superintendent of stables at the Ambassador Hotel Horse Show. There I met Mr. W. W. Mines, and he employed me

to take charge of his stable at Altadena. Getting through, I took charge of H. B. Grandan's stable at Monrovia, California. He had in his stable Masquerade and Miss Nuisance. I mannered Miss Nuisance so that one man could hitch her up where before it required two or three."

"I lined up both horses in their five gaits ready to show. I showed them at San Diego first, winning with Miss Nuisance in the combination class, and with Masquerade in both five-gaited and pair classes. I showed Masquerade at Pomona, taking second to Carnation Rosebud. Masquerade had taken second at the Royal to Joanna Jones in 1926. She had been shown at the Ambassador the year before placing fourth. Mr. Grandan, not being a horseman, dispersed his stable, leaving me out as usual."

"Having made a favorable impression at the San Diego Horse Show and through the persuasion of Mrs. Harriet Wegeforth (who, by the way, is one good sport), we bought the Balboa Stables, it having been vacated by Mr. Stewart. We equipped it with new tack and horses, nearly every horse being good enough for private use after I had mannered and bitted them to my idea of a pleasure horse. While at Balboa Park I trained and showed Mickey, Jane Allison, and a buckskin five-gaited horse, all belonging to Mr. and Mrs. Croften. I also trained and showed several for Dr. Burger, Mrs. Loomis and Pat O'Roark."

"I sold out later in 1930 to Harry Simpson, who unfortunately had a fire that burned seventeen head of these good school horses."

"I was out of business a few months and then I met Mr. Allen of Bonita who owned a very good jumper named Prosperity, but he was very badly spoiled for jumping. I contracted to work Prosperity over, after which I leased the Bonita Stables including tack and eleven head of horses. That was sixteen years ago, as of this date, August 1948."

"It seems I am always starting from scratch; I was never destined to be a wealthy man. However, I have really enjoyed my life since leaving the poverty-ridden country of western Kansas. I've been up and I've been down. Many of the very wealthy people with whom I have ridden have told me many times that they would gladly exchange my good health for their wealth; I must admit that there have been times when I would have been disposed to accept."

"Throughout my more than sixty-five years of being actively engaged in the dealing and trading of livestock, especially horses, with the public at large, I've always been able to sleep at night. I never wanted to feel that I would have to cross to the opposite side of the street if I should espy one of my erstwhile customers approaching. I would have made many enemies if I had resorted to sharp practices, especially among people who didn't know too much about horses. I have had the opportunity of many good deals which

really meant money to me, but I have passed them up because there might be some dissatisfaction later on. I hope that I will be pardoned for this seeming self-praise. I just want to point out that honesty is the best policy."

"I was seventy-two years old when I started business here in Bonita, and at that time, and for many years thereafter, I admitted to no handicap in my handling of horses or my business. In my previous business ventures I had always taken advantage of my credit, thinking that by so doing I should be able to advance myself. But there was always the persistent worry of debts to be paid. Here at Bonita I operated on a cash basis, and in order to remain on the right side of the ledger, I did all my own stable work with only very occasional help. This I found a much better business operation."

"I positively recommend that the outside of a horse is best for the inside of a man. I also claim to be able to make bad horses good, and good ones better. I have trained and gaited horses mostly that others had spoiled simply because they had not studied the nature of the horse. A horse is not naturally mean and vicious, except that after he had been severely punished and he has not understood what he was being punished for, his instincts are to protect himself, and he out-smarts the person handling him, which makes him suspicious of man. Then again, you will often find a spoiled horse that a woman can do most anything with. Why? Because a woman (wearing skirts) has never abused him."

"You can generally judge the disposition of a horse's master by the way the horse acts. Without patience you cannot succeed with most horses. One must be very firm and kind until your horse understands what you want him to do. The way some near-horsemen act when handling a horse, you might suspicion that the horse was deaf. You don't know whether the man is trying to show off, or doesn't know any better. If you are so provoked in training a horse or youngster that you are about to lose your patience, that is the time to put the animal in his stall and examine yourself!"

"While here at Bonita I bought quite a few horses, mostly for school work. Among them was a Quarter Horse type broken for a cowhorse. After using him for a while as a school horse I decided he might be taught to be a good jumper and I proceeded to train him to jump. He developed into one of the best. I named him "Flying Dutchman". While I owned him he never refused anything he was pointed into and would clear five feet as easily as a hurdle."

"I well remember a horse brought to me from the Benson Lumber Company of San Diego. He weighed over fifteen hundred pounds and was considered a man-killer. In fact he had kicked a man in the head and killed him. The owner told me, 'He is the best work horse I have but the company won't let me keep him on the job. What do you advise? I understand you breed bad horses.'

'Yes, I do,' I answered, 'but I don't care to handle these big draft horses.'

He said, 'He kicks, strikes and bites.'

I replied, 'It doesn't make much difference to me what a horse does. I always start from scratch. After you first conquer the horse and win his confidence, you can teach him most anything. I mean not to conquer him by beating him up but by taking advantage of him. I'll work him over for you.'

He was loaded in a trailer, and I started in beside him to untie him. The owner said, 'Don't do that! I'll get him.'

And he did, by untying him from the outside. He asked me when he could get him and I answered, 'In a week or ten days.'

Every misdeed this horse had, he had been beaten up for, and, because he hadn't understood what they beat him for, he finally won out with his viciousness. I first laid him down and tied his legs so he was helpless. In that condition I petted him in the most touchy places, handled his legs and other parts that he didn't like to have touched, until he didn't object to anything I would do to him. I whip-broke him after letting him up, and was kind to him by petting him as a reward for doing what I asked of him. I have never handled a bad horse that responded to kindness as did this horse.' "

"Just a warning in whip-breaking a horse — by that I don't mean you should put a horse in a high corral and beat him up. Sure, you must touch him up sometimes quite sharply, but never touch him with the whip except on his hind parts, and then only when he is going away from you. He will soon learn which end to protect. (Nature again comes in there.)

I have in mind one fine Saddlebred mare who, after being sold to a very high-tempered party, was whipped for every little thing not knowing why she was punished, and she developed into an outlaw. I don't often blame a horse. It is most often the rider's fault.

In manning a horse intended to be used as a roping horse, I think it is best not to whip-break him, for when you would dismount to tie the animal, the horse being trained to follow you, he would do the same here, whereas he should be holding the rope taut.

From these and many other systems I have used in my lifetime association with farm horses, logging horses, broncos or stock horses, heavy harness horses, Standard-breds, five-gaited horses, and jumpers, I have been fairly successful, and yet many trainers would not approve of them. However, I have used any system that proved a success."

Subsequent to J. E. Mason's move to Bonita, California and his wife's move to Seattle, Washington they were divorced. He later married Maude Lavine who survived him by several years. He lived to be ninety-four years, six months old dying 14 Nov. 1955 and was buried in the Glen Abbey Cemetery, Chula Vista, Cal. Viola Mason lived with her daughter, Lela, for several years then went to make her home with Ruth, now Mrs. Arvid E. Anderson, in Salt Lake City, Utah. Business took the family east where he was connected with the American Cyanamid Company and later with the Bethlehem Steel Company settling ultimately in Lebanon County, Pennsylvania. Viola Mason lived to be ninety-five years, six months old dying 13 Oct. 1956 after a long illness. She is buried in the Quentin Cemetery, Quentin, Pennsylvania.