GreatHearts Irving

Remote Learning Packet

Please submit scans of written work in Google Classroom at the end of the week.

May 4-8, 2020
Course: 10 Art (HS Art II)
Teacher(s): Ms. Clare Frank

Weekly Plan:

Monday, May 4
☐ Enter photographs from the art recreation photography project into your Google Slide document
☐ Add written components: a title page, titles of works, and begin the written components.

Tuesday, May 5
☐ Continue working on the written components in your photography project on GoogleSlides.
☐ Edit your writing and design formatting for clarity and beauty.

Wednesday, May 6

☐ If needed, take up to 10 minutes to fine-tune your photography project, then submit.
☐ Prep for next project: read through the article on the storyboard for Hitchcock's film *The Birds*.

Thursday, May 7
☐ Watch instructional video, a reading from "The Worst Hard Time" by Timothy Egan.
☐ Prep for next project: read excerpts of the book "Pioneer Women" by Johanna Stratton.
☐ Beginning your storyboard project "The Worst Hard Time": read project overview.

Friday, May 8
☐ attend office hours
☐ catch-up or review the week's work

Statement of Academic Honesty

I affirm that the work completed from the packet is mine and that I completed it independently.

I affirm that, to the best of my knowledge, my child completed this work independently

_____
Student Signature

_____
Parent Signature

Monday, May 4

Today you will create a presentation of your Art Recreation Photography Project in a GoogleSlide document, allowing your project to be seen like a slideshow or booklet. There is room for individual expression as you develop the presentation and the content, particularly as regards the written component.

Today's objective: **complete the steps below at least through step 5 today.** (Submit later in week)

Steps and guidelines to follow:

1. Open your personal copy of the GoogleSlides document from the project page for Monday, May 5.
2. Look through the slides already in place: you will see that there are example slides (which you will later delete), instruction and tips slides (which you will also later delete, when you no longer need them), and slides ready for you to edit or fill in with your own work.
3. Import the photographs from your project: the image of the famous artwork, and your own three recreation photographs. Center nicely in the slide (see example)
4. Title the photographs - you will see the text boxes are already in place for you.
5. Design your title page and end page.
6. Determine and write your Preface, Afterword (depending on your Preface), and Credits. (Note that you are able to introduce additional slides as needed.)
7. Edit and format for clarity of language and design.
8. Retitle the file if Google Docs lets you, and submit!

Note: I am hoping that in the following week or so we will be able to have a "gallery" for viewing each other's presentations.

Tuesday, May 5

Continue developing the slide presentation of your photography project, working your way through steps 6-7 from the guidelines listed above. After completing the written component, edit your presentation for clarity and beauty.

You will have up to 10 minutes of tomorrow's class time to fine-tune and submit your presentation.

Wednesday, May 6

1. If helpful, take up to 10 minutes of class time to fine-tune your photography project, then submit.
2. For your next project you will be conducting research and making a storyboard. Prepare for the storyboard project: read through the attached article on Alfred Hitchcock's film *The Birds.*

Thursday, May 7

1. **Watch the instructional video,** found as a Material for **Thursday, May 7**

2. **Read the attached excerpts** from Joanna Stratton's book Pioneer Women: Voices from the Kansas Frontier. This book is compiled from memoirs by 800 women, solicited by Joanna's great-grandmother Lilla Day Monroe, and found many years later by Joanna in a filing cabinet in her grandmother's dusty attic. I've included excerpts from the Foreword, Ch. 3, and Ch. 5.

3. **Read over the following overview** for the project **"The Worst Hard Time" ***:

   Your next creative project involves you designing and drawing a storyboard about a phase of family history. For this project you will conduct interviews with elders (oldest members) of your family - people whose memories reach back - and ask them about the worst hard time they remember in their family history, and what they did to get through those times.

   Who should you interview? Grandparents or great-grandparents, great-aunts or great-uncles, or elderly friends who are as close to you family as if they are related.

   How should you interview them? Call them up, chat a bit about you each are doing, and then let them know you want to know about their lives. Listen! Listen, take notes, ask follow up questions. Once you start listening you'll find people will talk, and some have stories to share that haven't been shared in a long time, if ever. I used to have an elderly neighbor who'd call me up and ask "Baby, you got a minute?" And if I did, he would talk. I got a picture of rural life century deep South I hadn't heard before.

   If you need to bring up the topic of hard times, you might on the first call, or maybe on a follow-up call. You can let them know you are working on a project. Find out what were some of the hardest times they lived through and what they did to get through it. What stories do they have?

   Next week you'll be conducting interviews and taking notes, and then you'll start brainstorming. Following that week you will make a storyboard of at least 6 panels. Media will be fairly open on this project - so open a slot in your mind for the ideas to play!

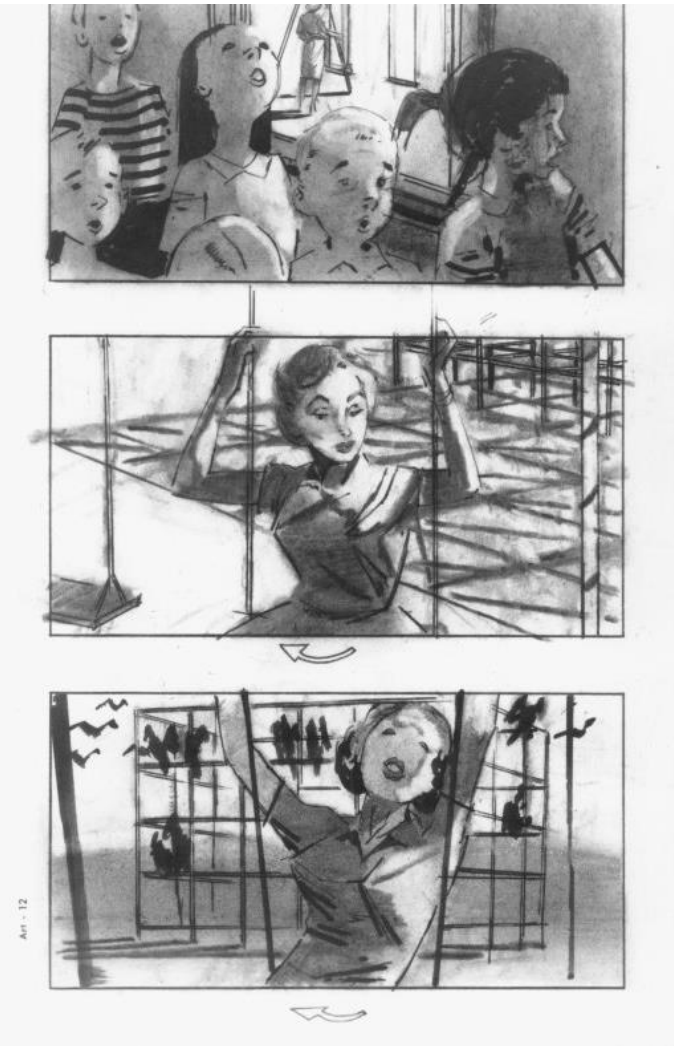
* Credit for the title of this project is owed to Timothy Egan, a journalist and the author of the book The Worst Hard Time: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dust Bowl.

Friday, May 8 Attend office hours or catch up on the week's work.

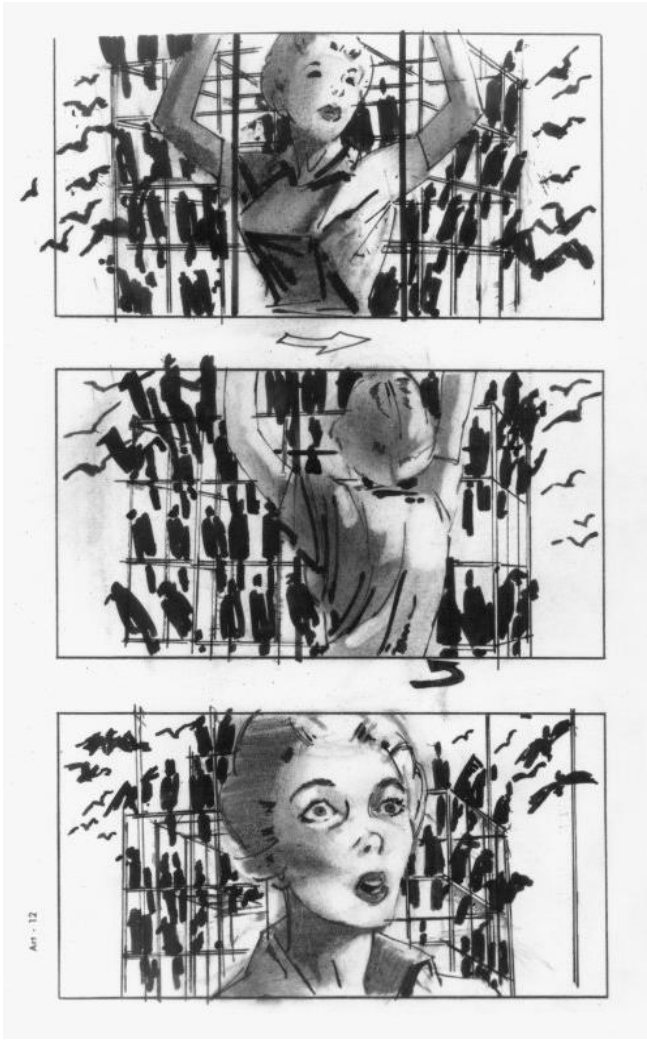
Storyboarding terror: Hitchcock's *The Birds* turns 50

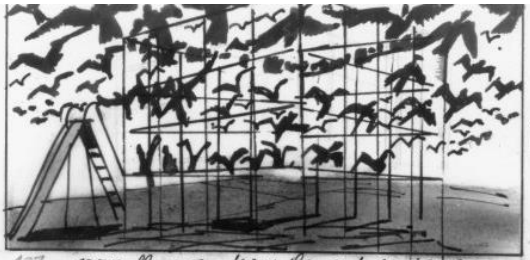
By Samuel Wigley, updated 5 February 2014
https://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/news-bfi/features/storyboarding-terror-hitchcocks-birds-turns-50
(slightly abridged)

It's 50 years since Hitchcock's *The Birds* first flew into the world and revolutionised on-screen horror. These storyboards reveal the intricate planning for the classic schoolhouse attack sequence.



Fifty years and a day ago, birds were still those benign winged creatures you might happily have left nuts out for in the garden or tossed breadcrumbs to in the park. But on 28 March 1963, all that changed forever. Fresh from making the domestic safety of the shower a thing of abject terror in his 1960 chiller *Psycho*, the Master of Suspense Alfred Hitchcock turned his attention to nature and the skies, imagining what would happen if our feathered friends flocked against us.





437- crows fly away from playground equip at sound of children running.

438 crows over school.

438A crows head for children.

C-2

439 Melanie - turns - runs.

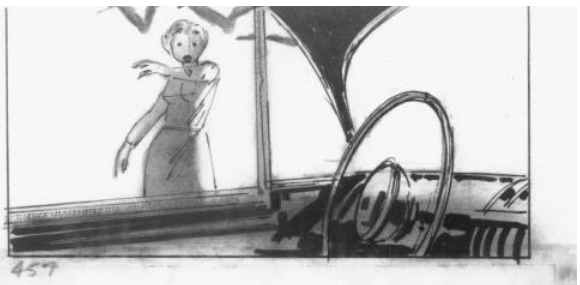
440 children - (foreground against Sodium Screen) Background Bodega school with michele and 2 or 3 children

440A continuation of 440. - Melanie turns past camera

447 Michele & Cathy on foreground road - Background Children & bikes on Sodium background plate.

448 Melanie - legend - Birds - running children - Background

448A



457

457A

457B

Adapting Daphne du Maurier's short story 'The Birds', Hitchcock moved the action from windswept Cornwall to the distinctly Cornwall-like coast of northern California. The setting for Hitchcock's avian apocalypse is the quiet little town of Bodega Bay, where San Francisco socialite Melanie Daniels (Tippi Hedren) has followed Mitch Brenner (Rod Taylor), flirtatiously gifting him with a pair of lovebirds. Then, on leaving town, she is attacked by a seagull, the first of a series of escalating strikes from the air, as a one-sided war begins between man and bird.

The Birds (1963)

By this point as well-known as a consummate showman as a master filmmaker, Hitchcock was coming off an extraordinary run of films which few have equalled for their originality and influence. Though many of these would take years before finding full appreciation, *Vertigo* (1958), *North by Northwest* (1959) and *Psycho* (1960) by now need little introduction as some of cinema's richest pleasures.

… With its soundtrack of eerie electronic bird noises (by composer Bernard Herrmann) and its chillingly effective special effects, [*The Birds*] was at once avant garde and remorselessly inclusive in its appeal to our collective nightmares.

Opening on that early spring night at RKO Palace in New York, Hitchcock's latest masterpiece shared the muted, even negative, critical reception that had greeted Vertigo and Psycho. [Looking back, however,] *The Birds* was an undoubted milestone in the cinema of apocalypse, its legacy clear in vast strains [of film since].

To celebrate this very special anniversary, we present these storyboards (courtesy of the artist, Harold Michelson, and Universal) for the classic sequence in which Melanie Daniels sits outside the Bodega Bay schoolhouse, pensively smoking a cigarette but oblivious to the crows which slowly amass on a climbing frame behind her.

The sequence is Hitchcock at his best, as each cut back to the climbing frame reveals ever more winged threats perching on its metal bars. A terrifying onslaught – timed for the schoolchildren leaving the school in their unsuspecting droves – is just moments away.

Below: movie frames from Hitchcock's 1963 film *The Birds*:

Addendum: Apparently Hitchcock was very particular about story-boarding his films out all the way through. I am showing you this work not as an example of your upcoming project exactly, but more as an example of storyboards, and for you to see the care Hitchcock took in compositions – which even shows in the frames from the films, as in the movie frame above!

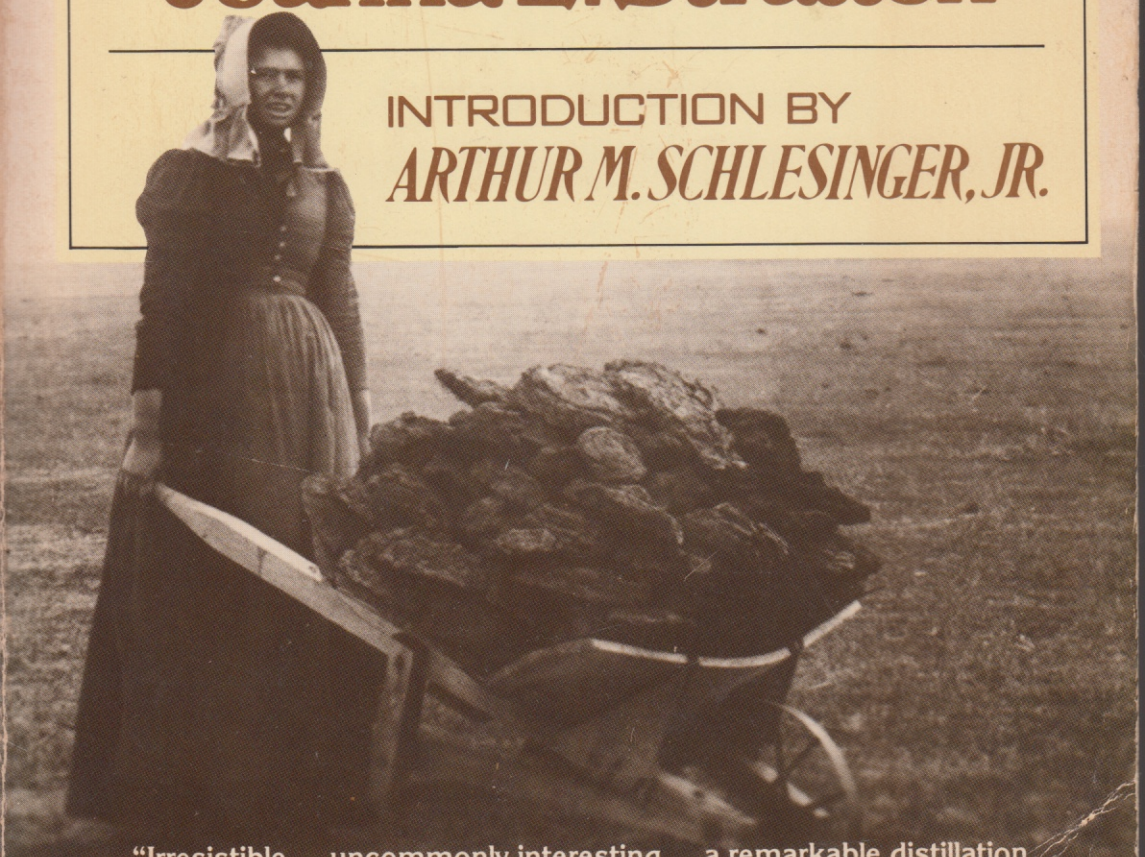
I hope you have enjoyed this fabulous snippet of visual culture!

PIONEER WOMEN

VOICES FROM THE KANSAS FRONTIER

Joanna L. Stratton

INTRODUCTION BY
ARTHUR M. SCHLESINGER, JR.



"Irresistible . . . uncommonly interesting . . . a remarkable distillation of invaluable primary sources."

—Peter S. Prescott, *Newsweek*

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To my great-grandmother for her independence.
To my grandmother for her wisdom.
To my mother for her strength.

Foreword

EVER SINCE THE EARLY DAYS of my childhood, my grandmother's spacious Victorian home had been a source of endless fascination for me. Built in 1887 on one of the elm-shaded brick streets of Potwin, Topeka's historic district, the stately frame house offered a quiet link with the past. With its high ceilings, elaborate woodwork and tiled fireplaces, the house possessed a warm and graceful grandeur. Downstairs, the family parlor was comfortably furnished with a Victorian loveseat, old wing chairs and inlaid tables. The elegant library, with its well-worn books and its handsome corner secretary, was a relaxing spot for afternoon reading or evening card games. On hot summer nights, the screened veranda, with its swinging gliders, was a favorite place for family talk. A curving walnut staircase rose to the airy bedrooms above.

But my favorite place of all was the expansive third-floor attic of the house. Tightly crammed with an assortment of family heirlooms and forgotten mementos, the upper rooms had always been a storehouse of surprises. As a child, I spent countless hours there, exploring the trunks of antique gowns and feathered hats and the collection of old campaign buttons. As I grew older, I was enthralled with the shelves of old books and magazines, the boxes of family correspondence and the packets of faded daguerreotypes.

In fact, it was my continuing curiosity about the attic's hidden treasures which led me, during one particular visit, to the filing cabi-

nets wedged beneath the eaves. It was the winter of 1975, and I was visiting my grandmother during a semester break from Harvard. Making my annual pilgrimage to the quiet upper sanctuary, I decided to explore the corner cabinets. Rummaging through the files of family letters and business correspondence, I came upon several drawers filled with old yellowing folders. Carefully labeled and arranged alphabetically, they contained the personal memoirs of eight hundred Kansas women. There lay the collection of pioneer reminiscences which had been a part of my family since the 1920s when Great-Grandmother Monroe set out to record the legacy of frontier women.

It was an exhilarating moment of discovery for me. As I sat poring over the carefully penned writings, a human pageantry came alive before my eyes. There were stories of pioneer mothers and Indian squaws, schoolmarms and circuit riders, cowboys and horse thieves. There were tales about coyotes and grasshoppers, blizzards and cyclones, surprise parties and suffrage campaigns. Some accounts bemoaned the trials of homesteading and the loneliness of pioneer life; others recaptured the excitement of frontier towns and the joys of prairie childhoods. As I read on, I was gripped by the candor of these women. They did not attempt to glorify their accomplishments or minimize their struggles. They did not ask for praise or present self-eulogies. Instead, their writings were filled with the simple details of their day-to-day lives. They described their families, their homes and their communities; they wrote about their fears, their hopes and their dreams.

I paused that morning at the words of Katherine Elspeth Oliver:

> I have been thinking as I wrote of how mother would demur at this autobiographical enterprise: "Writing about me? Oh, there is nothing to be said about me of importance to Kansas—nothing thrilling or momentous about my pioneering days." That is what they will all be saying—these modest pioneer women.
>
> No, they didn't do anything "outstanding"—many of them. There were very few heroines with a capital *H* in the story of Kansas. Their service was their valor; valor to "carry on" . . . in dugout or shack, in tent or "room 'n' lean-to," with the same industry, persistence and cheerfulness as in the comfortable homes "back east"; to carry on and to bring forth with heroism strong sons and daughters for the new Commonwealth.

Inspired by the warmth and grit of these women, I decided to retrieve the treasured narratives from their attic repository. Returning to Harvard with the manuscripts in hand, I set out to rediscover the brave but forgotten lives of a generation of women who had the determination and tenacity to conquer loneliness, withstand privations and overcome long odds.

It was my great-grandmother Lilla Day Monroe who first envisioned this book. Born and raised in rural Indiana, she first came to Kansas in 1884 as the frontier period was drawing to a close. Settling in Wakeeney on the barren western plains, she was an early witness to both the hardships and the pleasures of pioneer life. As she watched Wakeeney develop from a quiet outpost into a lively community, she was continually struck by the strength and resilience of the pioneer women she encountered there. It was her early memory of them which led her, forty years later, to work to record their lives and to preserve their legacy.

In her own lifetime, Lilla Day Monroe was widely acknowledged as one of the most dynamic and influential women in Kansas. Shortly after her arrival in Wakeeney, she met and married a promising young attorney, Lee Monroe. In addition to caring for their four children, she studied the law and worked as a clerk in her husband's law office. Eventually, she gained the legal expertise required to pass the bar examination and, in May of 1895, was admitted to practice before the Kansas Supreme Court, the first woman ever permitted to do so.

When her family moved to Topeka in 1902, Lilla Day Monroe became active in the struggle for woman suffrage. In seeking to establish an effective lobbying organization for the cause, she founded and presided over the Good Government Club. At the same time, she edited her own magazine, *The Club Member*, to better inform women about the suffrage campaign, pending legislation and current events. Likewise, she assumed a prominent role in the Kansas State Suffrage Association, serving as its president for a number of years. When the suffrage amendment was eventually submitted to the Kansas electorate in 1912, she managed the statewide campaign for its final acceptance.

Her lobbying efforts, however, did not end with the passage of the amendment. With the support of women's clubs across the state, she continued to strive for progressive welfare, labor and property laws

to protect the well-being of women and children alike. Among her many interests, she lobbied vigorously for equal property rights, minimum-wage standards, improved working conditions, child-hygiene regulations and state primaries.

In later years, Lilla Day Monroe saw the need for a publication that would help women become intelligent voters and informed citizens. In December of 1921, she initiated her second newspaper, *The Kansas Woman's Journal.* Published monthly, this journal served as a statewide forum where women could freely express their views concerning pending legislation, women's rights, welfare issues and current political events.

It was during the 1920s that Lilla Day Monroe launched her effort to chronicle the history of Kansas pioneer women and began to seek out the survivors of the frontier period. Initially, she intended to collect only a limited number of remembrances for a lengthy magazine article. As more women heard of her undertaking, however, the collection began to grow rapidly. By 1925, her efforts had expanded into a full-time project. With the assistance of the Woman's Kansas Day Club, she wrote countless letters to women across the state, urging them to write about their daily lives and experiences as early settlers. In addition, she solicited further contributions through her own *Kansas Woman's Journal,* where a number of the reminiscences were eventually published.

Intending to compile an anthology of these memoirs, she observed:

> Of making books there is no end. Therefore it seems another book ought to carry with it a good and sufficient reason for its being, not merely an excuse but a reason. The reason which seemed to me not only good but most inspirational was the fact that no history, not even the archives of our State Historical Society, with which I soon became connected after coming to Kansas in 1884, carried a good portrayal of the pioneer housewife, and no history of the part women played in the early struggles to make Kansas, a state unique in its cultural ideas, an empire of hard-headed settlers who loved peace enough to fight for it and who brought their children up to love Kansas soil with a passion of patriotism.
>
> From a family of pioneer women, women who had pioneered in Ohio and Indiana, my sympathies were with the Kansas pioneers. Their troubles were so close at hand, their sacrifices cut to the quick, their surroundings were so drab and disheartening that it always brought a lump to one's throat to think of the old days. But the women were so brave. They were such valiant soldiers that it seemed to me in some way they should be immortalized in Kansas history.

Read + here

Ad Astra per Aspera
To the Stars Through the Wilderness

—KANSAS STATE MOTTO

CHAPTER THREE

Aprons and Plows

Daily Life on the Prairie

"What was the work of a farm woman in those early days? . . . Hers was the work of the Wife and Mother, the Helpmate of her husband, the Home-maker and Home-keeper."

—Clara Hildebrand

IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY the home was regarded as the proper "place" for women in society, a sphere where women were expected to serve diligently as wives, mothers and housekeepers. For the wealthy woman, this meant a life of leisure; for others, it entailed the endless drudgery of housework and homemaking. Without full legal standing or widespread educational opportunities, most women at this time could not by themselves escape the confines of home and hearth.

To the pioneer woman, home and hearth meant work loads that were heavier than ever. And yet that work was the work of survival. In its isolation, the pioneer family existed as a self-sufficient unit that took pride in its ability to provide for itself and persevere in the face of hardship. Men and women worked together as partners, combining their strengths and talents to provide food and clothing for themselves and their children. As a result, women found themselves on a far more equal footing with their spouses.

Ch 3 Aprons and Plows

clothes of ground-in dirt and stains. Once clean, the garments were hung on the line or spread along fences and shrubs to dry in the hot Kansas sun.

Read the section on soap and agree

At this time, the soap itself was a scarce and valuable commodity. Only by collecting scraps of fat and preparing special ashes was the family able to produce a limited quantity for its personal and laundering needs. As a pioneer, Emeline Crumb followed an old New England recipe for the making of her soft soap. "Soap making was a complicated matter. First, if one was to have good results, it was necessary to burn the right kind of wood. This was hickory as first best, with white oak second. Walnut and other woods, giving a dark ash, were useless.

"A leach, or Hopper, was constructed, of rived clap-boards, set upright on a board platform, with their lower ends converging, and spaces between the boards battened with narrower strips. This platform was grooved around the outer edge, just as is one for cider making. The upper parts of these clap-boards were held in place by a frame with posts at each corner. Then a liberal bunch of straw or hay was placed in the bottom of the hopper. The ashes were put in when taken from fire places or stoves each day, always being careful they contained no fire, for there was always danger of fires getting started on the prairies. If much rain fell, boards were used to cover the leach, it being desirable the ashes should be all collected before they were wet down.

"When the hopper was full, a depression was made in the middle, and clear water poured in each day, until at last the lye began to drip from the groove in the platform. A wooden bucket or stone jar was set under to catch the drippings. When the family did not possess these convenient articles, father went to the woods, cut a proper log, and hewed out a trough, which answered the purpose, just as it did to also water stock, or rock the baby for a cradle.

"If the ashes were leached slowly enough, the lye would be very strong. To be perfect, it should bear up an egg. A fresh egg—not an addled one, which will float anywhere.

"When a bright day came—in the right time of the moon—father set the big soap kettle in the back yard, and brought plenty of dry wood near. All the grease and scraps of fat trimmings that had been collected during the year were brought to the place. In the case of grease which had been tried out, such as that from the entrails of

hogs, or saved from the cooking, it could be made up at once. There were likely to be some pounds of meaty scraps and rinds, and these were first cooked in a weak lye, by the most particular housewives. When thoroughly cooked, water was put in a wooden tub and the mess turned in and set aside to cool. The debris settled in the bottom, and a mushy grease on top was partly made soap, later to be used as was the more pure grease. When the grease was thus all prepared, the real presiding genius was called to put the finishing touch.

"A noted painter was once asked, by a fellow artist, what he mixed his paints with to produce such wonderful results. The reply was 'BRAINS.' And this was one ingredient of pioneer soap making.

"The grease being in an indefinite state, it was a matter of experienced judgment how much to put into the kettle of boiling lye. Not infrequently some eastern dame was invited to superintend the process, who invariably brought her knitting along, and sat in the hickory bottomed rocker, out in the sunshine near the soap kettle, telling of bygone days when men hunted bears and women fought Indians in their absence. When the soap was declared done by the best authority present, it was carefully ladeled into a wooden tub containing a few quarts of water, covered and left to cool. If a little salt or rozin had been added it would be hard and could be cut into bars for drying as hard as soap. Turned into a firkin or barrel, and in which it remained until used, it was the popular soft soap. The kind housewives used to scrub their tables and floor. Not the sort used later by politicians."

In addition, women also took on the responsibility of keeping the family healthy. For the pioneers, disease was an insidious adversary. Weakened by poor nutrition and substandard living conditions, they were highly susceptible to illnesses of all sorts. At best, cleanliness was difficult in the confines of a one-room soddy or dugout. Qualified doctors were scarce, hospitals were virtually nonexistent and medical supplies were difficult to obtain. As a result, settlers by the score fell victim to cholera, malaria, smallpox, typhoid, pleurisy and pneumonia.

Among the young, malaria was particularly devastating. Spread by mosquitoes, it attacked its victims with severe chills and fevers. Like others, Minnie Mickel remembered her childhood bouts with the ague. She wrote: "As is usual in new countries where much land is newly broken, there was a great deal of sickness of a malarial nature. Few families escaped the ague and fever. We had our full share of 'the

shakes' and were all taught to take our quinine before the days of capsules. Many were the plans to try and disguise the awful bitter, but with indifferent success. Sometimes the whole family would resemble a temporary hospital with all the nurses sick.

"In the better understanding of maturity I often think what burdens father and mother bore of poverty and work and care, which I though willing could not share. I remember their sad, anxious faces when the dark angel seemed to hover over some of us."

Sometimes, however, even a sudden case of the ague seemed to have its practical side. Remembering her father's illness, Anna Biggs wrote: "Malaria or ague, as they called it then, was the bane of the early settlers' lives. When Mr. Biggs was so with it that Mrs. Biggs had to cut the wood, she put the baby behind him on the corded bedstead where his shiverings joggled the baby off to sleep. The early settler in Kansas couldn't waste even an ague chill."

In the home, it was the women who assumed the major burden of nursing and caring for the sick. With calm deliberation, they used what little medical knowledge they had to treat their stricken families. Old-fashioned remedies and potent herbal brews were concocted to ease their patients' pains and cure their ills. Often, these medicinal recipes had passed through family generations. Wild herbs and plant roots of all sorts were brewed into teas or beaten into poultices to quell chills and calm fevers. Along with quinine for the ague, the pioneer mother administered sassafras tea for fevers and buttercup tea for asthma. Strong doses of whiskey, kerosene or turpentine served as antiseptic solutions, while raw beef slabs or live chicken flesh were used to draw the deadly poison from a snake bite. Occasionally, the ailing settlers were even lured by the promised cures of patent medicines.

Read to this point.

Along with her special home remedies, Sarah Jayne Oliver made her family follow a strict diet and a hygienic regimen to prevent undue illnesses. Her daughter, Katherine Elspeth Oliver, recalled her mother's determination to keep the family fit:

"My mother loved Kansas from the first. We, her children, have often marvelled that she who had been 'brought up' to the conventional refinements of life and its ordered ways, prepared neither by training nor anticipation for the life of a plainswoman, should have adapted herself so readily to its demands and have conceived a keen zest and pleasure in her new experiences and life, that in all its vicissitudes she should have distinguished herself so gallantly.

CHAPTER FIVE

Days of Darkness
Fighting the Elements

"There were many tearful occasions for the tearful type. There were days and months without human fellowship, there were frightful blizzards, drouth destroying seasons . . . and many pitiful deprivations, but there were also compensations for the brave, joyous, determined pioneer."

—LULU FUHR

FOR ALL THE TERRORS of isolation or attacking wolves, the frontier family soon learned that its worst enemy was nature itself. In Kansas, each season carried its own perils. Spring might favor the farmer with sunny skies and balmy temperatures; yet often melting snows and spring rainstorms caused torrential floods that menaced home and field alike. Tornadoes, with their deafening roar and deadly funnels, often ripped across the land, obliterating everything in their path. Summer, in turn, was apt to unleash droughts and hot winds that withered the crops and crippled the fall harvest. Plagues of grasshoppers devoured entire cultivated fields and miles of prairie foliage. Finally, the bitter winter season brought numbing temperatures and crushing blizzards.

Dwarfed by the endless sweep of grass and sky, the frontier family found little protection or relief from these seasonal adversities. Out on the empty plains there were few trees to shade them from the sun,

(skipping to the grasshoppers)

still more misfortune. As one woman lamented, "All, or many, of the elements of nature seemed to work together to discipline the early Kansas settlers, they were not allowed to grow soft with ease and luxury, and as though hot winds, droughts and Indians were not enough, the grasshoppers came along and did their part."

During the first twenty years of its settlement, the Kansas frontier was relatively free from any sizable grasshopper infestation. Although grasshoppers had aggravated the farmer in relatively small numbers from time to time, they had not been a particularly serious problem. As a result, the pioneers were largely unprepared for the massive onslaught of the insects which would literally eat their way across the state in 1874. In fact, the infestation was so overwhelming and devastating that the year was later identified as the "Grasshopper Year."

In the beginning, 1874 seemed to have the makings of a very good year. "In the spring of 1874," wrote Mrs. Everett Rorabaugh, "the farmers began their farming with high hopes, some breaking the sod for sod corn, others plowing what had been broken the year before, sowing spring wheat, corn and cane, and with plenty of rain everyone was encouraged at the present. The neighbors would meet at some little one-room house and put in the day visiting and eating buffalo meat boiled, and cornbread and dried 'apple sass' that some relative back east had sent, and the men talking about the bumper crop they were going to have that year."

Although the summer had been typically hot and dry, the crops were growing well. By August, the wheat and the oats were mostly in the shock, and the lush green pasture grasses gave promise of fat and healthy herds of cattle. For the farmers evaluating their prospects, a plentiful harvest seemed assured. But their anticipation turned to despair as millions upon millions of grasshoppers blanketed the sky. "They looked like a great, white glistening cloud," recalled one bewildered pioneer, "for their wings caught the sunshine on them and made them look like a cloud of white vapor." Swooping down on the fertile fields, the insects began a feast of destruction.

"August 1, 1874," explained Mary Lyon, "is a day that will always be remembered by the then inhabitants of Kansas. . . . For several days there had been quite a few hoppers around, but this day there was a haze in the air and the sun was veiled almost like Indian summer. They began, toward night, dropping to earth, and it seemed as if we were in a big snowstorm where the air was filled with enormous-size flakes."

Alighting to a depth of four inches or more, the grasshoppers covered every inch of ground, every plant and shrub. Tree limbs snapped under their weight, corn stalks bent to the ground, potato vines were mashed flat. Quickly and cleanly, these voracious pests devoured everything in their paths. No living plant could escape. Whole fields of wheat, corn and vegetables disappeared; trees and shrubs were completely denuded. Even turnips, tobacco and tansy vanished.

"When they came down," remembered Mary Roberts, "they struck the ground so hard it sounded almost like hail. Father had tried to get a start in fruit trees as soon as he could, and we had a greengage plum tree in our yard that was full of plums that were almost ripe, but it was thought too green to pick yet. We had to postpone dinner while 'all hands' gathered garden stuff and plums to save them. We picked every plum, as they would soon have all been devoured by the hoppers had we not done so.

"There was a watermelon patch in our garden and the melons were quite large and long. They were not ripe, so we could not save them, but by the evening of the second day they were all gone. I think we found one or two pieces of rind about the size of the palm of our hand in the whole patch. Such enormous appetites they had! In a few days they had eaten every green thing. They soon had every twig on every tree or bush eaten off and the trees were as bare as in midwinter."

Stunned by the continued onslaught and desperate to save what little remained, the pioneers grabbed whatever coverings they could find to shield their crops and shrubbery. Out came the bedsheets, blankets, quilts and shawls. Even old winter coats and greasy burlap sacks were ripped apart to spread over precious vegetables. Yet these coverings proved useless; the grasshoppers ate straight through the cloth or wormed their way underneath. As the settlers soon learned, these creatures would stop at nothing.

"They devoured every green thing but the prairie grass," continued Mary Lyon. "They ate the leaves and young twigs off our young fruit trees, and seemed to relish the green peaches on the trees, but left the pit hanging. They went from the corn fields as though they were in a great hurry, and there was nothing left but the toughest parts of the bare stalks. Our potatoes had to be dug and marketed to save them.

"I thought to save some of my garden by covering it with gunny sacks, but the hoppers regarded that as a huge joke, and enjoyed the awning thus provided, or if they could not get under, they ate their way through. The cabbage and lettuce disappeared the first afternoon;

by the next day they had eaten the onions. They had a neat way of eating onions. They devoured the tops, and then ate all of the onion from the inside, leaving the outer shell.

"The garden was soon devoured, and when all of these delicacies were gone, they ate the leaves from the fruit trees. They invaded our homes, and if our baking was not well guarded by being enclosed in wood or metal, we would find ourselves minus the substantial part of our meals; and on retiring to bed, we had to shake them out of the bedding, and were fortunate if we did not have to make a second raid before morning."

Within hours, no part of the countryside was left unscathed. Having eliminated all the crops and foliage, grasshoppers by the thousands moved on into barns and houses. Besides devouring the food left in cupboard, barrel and bin, they attacked anything made of wood, destroying kitchen utensils, furniture, fence boards and even the rough siding on cabins. Window curtains were left hanging in shreds, and the family's clothing was heartily consumed. Craving anything sweaty, the insects took a special liking to the handles of pitchforks and the harnesses of horses. Lumbering cattle stood by helplessly as the pests crawled all over their bodies, tickling their ears, eyes and nostrils. Young children screamed in terror as the creatures writhed through their hair and down their shirts. Men tied strings around their trouser cuffs to keep them from wriggling up their legs.

Lillie Marcks was a child of twelve when the grasshoppers scourged these prairies. In her memoirs, she relived the anguish of witnessing the unexpected devastation of her family's homestead. "Several days before the plague of grasshoppers, my father and his hired man, Jake, came home from the near-by village with tales of trains that could not start or stop because the tracks were slick with crushed grasshoppers. So thick were the grasshoppers that the sun could scarcely be seen.

"One morning, I had a chill and shook for hours. Mother made a pallet for me on the floor near the front door and covered me. I fell asleep. After a long rest, I awoke burning with fever. Mother had placed a wet cool towel over my face to reduce the fever. The sun was shining over my pallet and I felt so ill. Oh dear! Then Jake's voice rang loud and clear. 'Mrs.! Oh, Mrs.! They're come! They're come! The grasshoppers is here! You can jes' see the trees bein' ett up!' I raised the towel from my face and eyes, looked toward the sun. Grasshoppers by the millions in a solid mass filled the sky. A moving gray-green screen between the sun and earth.

"Riding his pony like the wind, father came home telling us more tales of destruction left in the path of the pests. They hit the house, the trees and picket fence. Father said, 'Go get your shawls, heavy dresses and quilts. We will cover the cabbage and celery beds. Perhaps we can save that much.' Celery was almost an unseen vegetable in that time and place—they wished to save it. They soon were busy spreading garments and coverings of all sorts over the vegetables.

"The hired man began to have ideas. Everyone was excited trying to stop the devastation. Bonfires began to burn thru the garden. 'Now I'll get some of them,' Jake said. Picking up a shovel, he ran thru the gate. Along the fence they were piled a foot deep or more, a moving struggling mass. Jake began to dig a trench outside the fence about two feet deep and the width of the shovel. Father gathered sticks and dead leaves. In a few minutes, the ditches were filled with grasshoppers, but they soon saw the fire covered and smothered by grasshoppers. Think of it, grasshoppers putting out a fire.

"Ella, my five-year-old sister, was shooing and beating them off the covered garden by means of a long branch someone had given her. I was ill and so excited over all of this battle and could only be up a few seconds at a time. Then all at once, Ella's voice rang out in fear. 'I'm on fire!' Forgotten was my fever. I ran to the door and saw a flame going up the back of her dress. In less time that I can tell this, I ran to her and tore off her dress from the shoulders down. Then I turned and looked at the writhing mass of grasshoppers on the garments covering the vegetables and called, 'Ma! Ma! Come here! They are eating up your clothes!"

At least the clothes the grasshoppers ate in the Marcks household were on the ground and not being worn. Adelheit Viets was not as lucky: "The storm of grasshoppers came one Sunday. I remember that I was wearing a dress of white with a green stripe. The grasshoppers settled on me and ate up every bit of green stripe in that dress before anything could be done about it."

For the beleaguered settlers, the devastation continued long after the grasshoppers had moved on. To their dismay, everything reeked with the taste and odor of the insects. The water in the ponds, streams and open wells turned brown with their excrement and became totally unfit for drinking by either the pioneers or their livestock. Bloated from consuming the locusts, the barnyard chickens, turkeys and hogs themselves tasted so strongly of grasshoppers that they were completely inedible.

"Hearts were heavy," lamented one victim, "every bit of our crops gone for that year, and how were we to live? The question was solved in various ways. Some were still hopeful and stayed there to try again. Some gave up and went 'back home.' We sent back home and borrowed money to buy wheat to feed horses and pigs, going many miles east to find the grain."

To make matters worse, the insects had deposited their own eggs in the soil before departing. By the following spring, hordes of grasshoppers hatched and continued the onslaught. "One day the whole earth began to crawl and move," wrote one woman, "grasshoppers by the millions were hatching, pale sickly-looking white bugs at first, and once more they mowed down all of God and man's work." This time, however, the farmers had time to replant their crops, thus preventing any repetition of the wholescale destruction.

With the pestilence finally behind them, the stricken homesteaders tried to overcome their troubles and resolutely confront the future. "How shall I describe that time?" wrote one woman. "Life made miserable in so many ways, for in that memorable year of 1874 life was wretchedly uncomfortable, we were poverty stricken, without the means to sustain life through the coming winter. In those days, there were no aristocrats on Spring Creek, we made the most of our circumstances and of one another. Life was yet before us, and it was the same danger that threatened us all: *hard times*. The men went to work with heavy hearts and put in cane and millet for the winter, and kind friends in the East sent us 'aid' such as bedding and clothes, food and shoes. We lived principally on cornbread, cornmeal, coffee, gravy, sorghum for sweetening, and the men smoked grape leaves for tobacco." In true pioneer spirit, she added one more recollection: "Life was worthwhile, even then."