

+RALPH
Ken Jackson Memoirs

Born 12-14-22 in Heppner Oregon on E. Quaid Street in Heppner hospital that was derived from a former residence. It was a cold, snowy night; my mother was a frail 100 pounder, but we survived. I weighed 10 pounds at birth.

Rafael Jerome Jackson and Cecile Lillian Scott Jackson, my parents, then lived on the wheat ranch about 2 miles off Clarks Canyon road between Lexington and Heppner. Dad had leased the ranch from Padbergs after his family (Jerome and Laura) had not prospered on the Ruhl ranch which they had bought after selling out at Broadacres. They moved up the Columbia on barges, including livestock, to Arlington and then on in wagons in 1916. Grandpa raised mainly hops at Broadacres, unaccustomed to dry land wheat. Grandpa was an excellent carpenter, but an unperceptive manager. Dad worked with Grandpa on the Ruhl place as a teenager, but also worked out for others on farms, became acquainted, and was able to obtain his first lease on the Padberg farm. Uncles Dave and Clark were too young to be of great help. Aunt Margaret taught at Social Ridge school for awhile. I don't know the year. After succeeding economic difficulties, Grandpa sold out and moved to Hubbard, Oregon around 1918 with his family (except Ralph who stayed in Eastern Oregon) where he bought a farm which produced mainly hops. About twenty years after returning to the Willamette Valley Grandpa again ran into economic hardship, and Dad refinanced the ranch for him. Grandpa was at retirement age and let Clark and Dorothy move in and run the ranch. This lasted only a couple of years, as Clark was not a dedicated farmer. Clark then returned to working in a bank in Salem, which also pleased Dorothy. ~~Dad~~^{RALPH} then sold the Hubbard place and divided the net among his siblings, although there would have been no net had it not been for him. Grandma Laura died about 1936 and Grandpa lived with us at Lexington, where we had lived since about 1925) and helped Dad run a band of sheep on the Lucas place and other rented ground. ①

Before I get too far away from Hubbard, I should say that for about five years preceding my teen years, all Jerome and Laura's grandchildren and their mothers would spend time together on the ranch. I remember many good times with the Supples. Jerry was too young to enter in as were Uncle Clark's kids. Another distant relative named Crumme once hung Ric Supple by the leg with a derrick rope in the big barn. I had to get Grandpa to get him down

Before I get too far astray I should delineate Dad's forms of livelihood chronologically. He raised wheat around Lexington from my birth until about 1930, then he managed the sacked wheat warehouses in Heppner, Lexington, and Ione for grain companies during the depression. Then about 1937, he, Craig Carroll, and Henry Collins formed an IHC and McCormick Deering Machinery dealership and opened their first store in Lexington. Dad's first employees were Judge Carmichael and John Carroll, Craig's brother. The company was called Jackson Implement Co. and at one time had stores in Lexington, Condon, Pendleton, La Grande, and Portland. The Portland store manufactured Caterpillar tractor track rollers with a special seal to hold lubricants which added to their life measurably. Craig developed this seal before becoming an alcoholic. Vernon Scott, Mom's adopted brother, was a machinist at this store. Craig's alcoholism left Dad with total responsibility for the dealership – he didn't want to leave Eastern Oregon – said he didn't know whether the mechanics were doing a good job or a poor one since he wasn't a mechanic, so one by one, he sold the stores, Lexington being the last. Oris Padberg was

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his shop foreman and Dad felt comfortable with his overseeing the shop. His son Elden and I worked for Dad when out of school, setting up machinery, and general drudge work. Occasionally Elden, I, and about 2 to 5 older friends would go to Portland on the train and drive new IHC trucks and pickups back for the company to sell. Once, Oris told Paddy and me to cut the top out of an empty gas drum. Paddy knew how to weld, so we proceeded with the acetylene torch – BANG – Blew the top off the drum, singed our hair and eyebrows, but didn't burn us badly. Oris called us dummies and said he thought we were smart enough to at least wash it and leave some water in it before torching. Paddy and I also built soap box cars for racing (ahead of their time) with "gathered" materials and tools. After racing that year, we put a washing machine gas motor on his car (and it worked.) Only one speed though, no shifting, and a slip clutch. Once we were building a tree house high in a huge cottonwood tree and I fell about 30 feet. Didn't break anything, but dislocated two vertebrae and I couldn't stand. Paddy got my mom and she took me to Heppner for Dr replacement. From about the sixth grade on after school when not working, all the town kids would gather to play the sport in season; we had to learn the right way to play because some of the kids were 5 or 6 years older – treated everyone the same. Sometime about here Mom had me taking piano lessons after school. I hated it because I couldn't play ball that day. Needless to say, I never became an accomplished pianist. Dad always had horses around and I learned to ride at about 8. Every evening after school one of my jobs was to feed and water the horses. Sometimes, other kids and I would saddle up and play cowboys and outlaws. Bill Kearns (Dad's grain broker's son) stayed with us one summer. He ran an unshod mare down a gravel road and Dad happened to see him. He got dressed down. (2)

Sports were big for me. When Paddy and I were sophomores at Lexington high we won the district basketball championship at Fossil. We beat Heppner, ^{TRILLION} Arlington, and Fossil for the championship at the spring tournament. The other three starters were seniors, so next year we weren't that good. I was discontent with the small school, six man football, etc., so Dad ^{LET GO} got me ~~into~~ Heppner High and eleven man football. I made the starting team and was then ruled ineligible because of transferring, so Dad sent me to Columbia Prep, where I was also ineligible, but there I graduated. Since I was ineligible, and unable to compete for CP, they let me high jump for Portland University, unattached. ~~I placed in~~ ^{IN 2 MEETS} all the meets in which I competed, then sprained my ankle badly and was on crutches for six weeks. Made friends there, and with old Heppner friends, decided to go to U of O. Entered UO in fall of 1941 and pledged Beta Theta Pi, where I spent some of the best years of my life.

Made grades and was initiated first term. Also made numerals in track high jumping and on sprint relay team. Sophomore year US entered WWII. We all scrambled to get into branch of service we wanted; all joined Enlisted Reserve Corp which kept us out of the draft and in school until real emergencies. Evidently emergency happened because they called the ERC end of '42, before we had completed our entries into preferred service. All went to Fort Lewis, WA for processing, then on to Camp Walters Texas (heavy weapons replacement center, Infantry). Completed basic training there (30mm and 50mm machine guns and 30mm mortar company). Some of us found out they had to give us a chance to take entrance exam to branch of our choice, even though we were already Infantry. After much haggling with our ready room and C.O., we were sent to Love Field in Dallas to take physical and mental exam for US Army Air Corp. In this

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group, Reed, Dotson, Spahr, Steele, MacDonald passed; Mayne and Kay failed color blind test. Should say that our Infantry Battalion was made up of ROTC and ERC from UO, UW, ^{Wyo}~~Uwe~~, Stanford, ~~and~~ Two out of whole battalion were chosen for OCS; the rest were shipped directly into British/German front; many were killed and/or wounded. Our lucky group was sent to Miami Beach for AC basic. After arriving there, they discovered our completed Infantry basic was much more intensive than AC basic so we were excused from participation; met only physical training and chow formations.

Lived in Miami Beach hotels and had a good six weeks. Shipped from there to Maxwell Field, AL for pre-flight training (Rigid discipline, white glove, marching, ground school). Then on to Classification at Nashville TN where we were evaluated to determine skills for pilot, navigator, bombardier. Everyone (or so it seemed) wanted pilot, so if you were picked for navigator or bombardier, you could retry for pilot, but to make it, had to be in the top percent of those chosen. I was picked for navigator, retried, and made pilot. From here to college training detachment at U of Vermont, one of our better stops; spent one semester there taking mainly math, physics, and English; got our first flight there in a Cub over Lake Champlain, about ~~ten~~² hours. Also intensive marching and PT (ran 7 miles per day). Dotson couldn't run that far (leg cramps) so we'd have to cover for him at final roll call. Cadets couldn't own a car while training, but one had been passed down class to class at Vermont, so we (Spahr, MacDonald, Dotson and I) bought the Hudson Terraplane for \$400; very helpful for time off and dates. Spahr handled the sale when we shipped out and we never did get all our money back. We had little chance to negotiate with incoming class concerning a prohibited vehicle. They arrived the same day we shipped out. Hangouts at Vermont were ~~CCC~~⁴³⁸, Maple Tree at Burlington Hotel, Lake Beach at Winooski, and UV dances; great girl selections, and many sneak in/out of quarters tales. From here to primary flight training. Luckily we all got Helena, Ark shipping orders. Went by train, and when we arrived for roll call, on guy was missing. We never did find out what happened to him. Primary is an AC field contracted out to civilian pilot instructors; balance of personnel are Army. We had three man rooms in one story Army type barracks, only a little nicer with fewer men per latrine. Here it began; fly ½ day, ground school ½ day. We flew PT19s (Ryan) and soloed in about ten hours. None of our group of friends had the same instructor, but we were all doing fairly well until my appendicitis finally got bad. I was living with Dotsan and Doar, a new friend I met here. After a bad night Dotsan insisted I go on sick call. I didn't want to because I knew I'd get reverted. Went on sick call, was in an airplane in one hour, flown to an Army hospital at Greenville, extracted appendix same day, rolling bandages second day, back to Helena fifth day, but had missed six days of training, which meant reversion (one class back, we were 44k, I was now 45A). Would fit a class at Clarksdale, Miss across the river; Doar called a friend of his from Princeton there, Bob Chew, who met me when I arrived at Clarksdale, so it turned out OK; got into barracks with Chew and his friend, later mine, named Dimitrikapopolous. That's just his last Greek name, have forgotten his first. Flew PT17s (Stearman) at Clarksdale. Had my check out ride in one and though different, did OK. Second day, I touched a wing tip on a wind tee (no damage) but reported it cause I didn't know who saw it. Another check ride (extensive) and was getting chewed by instructor afterward when he saw my Beta Theta Pi ring, asked, said yes, said he was too, said I passed check ride. Beta Theta Pi or ?? Chew would get air sick on acrobatics; we'd save our cereal boxes for him to heave in if

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necessary on acrobatic flights. Finally graduated from Primary; Chew and I were shipped to Greenville Basic Training, down the Mississippi about 100 miles from Clarksdale. My class and friends from 44K were there so we had some good times. Flew BT13s (Vultee vibrators) there; ~~but~~^{but} heavy, compared to Primary planes, and here we began night flying. Normal exhaust on the left side of the engine, spouted fire, and was unsettling. The wash out rate was 25%. 44K graduated and went to various advanced fields. When we graduated, went to various advanced fields. When we graduated 45A, we went cross state to Columbus, where main training plane was the AT10, with some UC78s and B25s. Wash out rate was still 25%. Much night flying, formation flying, under hood flying (for green card in instruments), and low level cross country. I got the highest grade in formation in class. My instructor was _____ Thomas, Lowell Thomas' son. Lowell gave our graduation address. I got to fly right seat with him and his son on info flight. 45B was the last cadet class in AAC program. I got to instruct some of them in instruments and cross country. After that class, Columbus became a pilot pool for recent grads and returnees, so there was much money in the Officers' club (and much gambling). Mississippi was a dry state so a B25 went weekly for booze to Memphis; also had name brands.

Our class, 45A, got only two assignments. One went to Chew who went to the west coast for B26 transition. The other went to AL for B25 transition. Both finished transition, got crews and orders out, but were stopped at overseas departure ports. Half of 45A received 2nd Lt bars and half received Flight Officer bars (blue). All of my friends and I received 2nd Lt, probably because of previous college, grades, and ROTC.

Because Columbus became a pilot pool base, many pilots (some high ranking returnees) had to share base planes for flying hours. We flew AT10s, UC78s, B25s, and AT6s.

There was not much future for newly graduated 2nd Lts; until one day a letter arrived offering Air Traffic Control school to those who wanted to take the admission test. We also heard of a program to fly PBYS for the Navy search and rescue –which we would have applied to – but it never materialized. Most of 45A took the Air Traffic Control tests, and luckily, MacDonald, I, and about 20 others were accepted. We shipped out to Shepard Field, Texas for ATC school, which was an intensive training course for six weeks. We graduated, after usual washout rates, and received overseas assignments (though we knew not where) and received overseas leaves for two weeks. Mac and I hitchhiked on AAC planes home and back. We landed at Albuquerque to refuel where everyone was running around. We asked “What’s up?” They yelled WAR’S OVER after two atomic bombs fell on Japan. Since war was over, our assignments were cancelled. We went through dismissal processing at Wichita Falls, and were home within three weeks, about October 1, 1945.

I went to Eugene, Beta Theta Pi, where about a dozen other Betas showed up and we reopened the house. Don Mayne was elected president and we started fall term a little late. The G.I. bill gave us each \$125 per month, and it almost covered expenses. Tuition and books were paid directly by the G.I. bill. Mayne and I entered law school after having completed pre law in our first fall term. Stayed in law school about one month, and realized we didn’t want to study that hard/much, and that it would take an extra year to get the degree. So, we dropped out and entered business school. Stayed in school straight through, including summer school, and got BS degree with the class of 1948,

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which was Marcie's class. Mom wanted us to go through graduation exercise. I can't remember whether we did or not, *BUT I THINK SO.*

Came to Portland and got a one bedroom apartment on Park Avenue, downtown, and began to job hunt. I took a job as a credit reported for Dunn and Bradstreet. Reed Nelson was discharged from the Army and lived with me for about one month while job hunting. He landed a job with Standard Oil and was sent to Coos Bay. Then Jack Munro and I got a bigger, better apartment in the same building. He stayed about 2 months and had to move back home (East side) because of financing. I could hardly afford the apartment alone. In about a year Uncle Dave Jackson showed up and proposed the beer business in The Dalles (Miller, Heidelberg, and Virginia Dare wines). Dad had loaned him some money, and I started as route man with one truck. We had Wasco, Hood River, Sherman, and Gilliam counties, and he and I covered it all with two trucks. It was a fairly successful business. We hauled our own beer out of Portland since we couldn't finance a full train car load. We'd get one load per week. Dave would stop at the dog races each time, and there went our profits. Dave never did repay the loan from Dad, which upset my mom greatly. We had to join the Teamsters Union to get loaded in Portland, which was unreasonable.

Dad was still in the implement business, but wanted out. About this time he got most of it sold, and he and I became actively involved in the cow business. (He already had the Kahler Basin and Camas Prairie.)

About this time (fall of 49) Elaine and I got married in Great Falls, honeymooned in Victoria BC, and returned to our Trevitt Street apartment in The Dalles. I worked with the Steen's twins and Dunahue on the docks loading sacked products onto barges. When springtime came, Dad and I spent most of our time at Kahler Basin. Dad acquired Wilson Prairie (1500 acre summer pasture) and the Moore Place (2500 acres). At one time he owned over 10,000 deeded acres. He also had 118 cow permit on the Tamarack Reserve, which joined the Moore place. Kahler Basic was a hay ranch, irrigated from Kahler creek. He also had about 200 acres of wheat land. ⁽³⁾ Dad eventually sold the Basin ground to Howard Evans, who died. Then he sold it to Bob Straub, the governor.

About this time we were living in The Dalles, where Barb and Tom were born. ⁽⁴⁾ The cattle business hit the doldrums. I got a job with Union Oil in Salem, so we moved there. Before moving, and while selling our house, I lived with Tom Kay. Then we all moved a couple of months later. Tom Kay's mom treated us royally.

We would summer the cattle at Camas and Wilson, spring and fall them on the Moore place and John Day breaks pasture which we rented. Then winter and calve in Kahler Basin, fighting ice and adobe mud; but it worked out. Jay Griffith was Dad's foreman then (Mac and Donny's dad), and lived in the house where we stayed. Later, after Jay died, Alfred Wilhelm was foreman. Their wives did the cooking and raised gardens and chickens. About 1955 we decided to build a feedlot and finish our own calves. Elaine and I (with Barb and Tom who were born in The Dalles) moved to Hermiston and built the feedlot. I ran it for three years, seven days a week. Then we sold it and went back to a cow/calf operation which Dad and Harold Evans were running in Morrow, Grant, and Wheeler counties. About 1962 I hurt my back, had surgery, and had to quit the cow business. Harold Evans also had to quit (died) and Dad was left to do it all. We sold our

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respective assets (mine were cattle) and quit the cattle business. Dad sold Camas Prairie to me.

After back surgery recuperation (with a back brace) for almost a year, I had to look for different employment. A friend of Bill Belts had bought McNary city and had started a home manufacturing business there. They needed an office manager, which I took on for about a year. The job was OK but didn't pay much, so I was looking into other employment all along. A friend of Dad's, Pitch Pockets Eskelson, suggested I look into Farm Credit, since that was my background. I did, went to Spokane, talked to my friend Bill Barratt, the VP of Credit Bank then. He kept an eye out for me and was instrumental in my first job as assistant manager in Pendleton with the PCA office. One of the directors didn't like the manager and after about 18 months I was made manager. The office staff was: EKJ manager, Jack Monagle assistant manager, Norm Kessler field man, Sharon Clark my secretary, Carole Innes bookkeeper, and one other secretary half time at 702 SW Dorian in Pendleton. It was a good, respectable, responsible job, which I enjoyed. I had to travel to Spokane three or four times a year to our discount bank which friend Barratt had become president. About half the time Elaine would go with me and we had several good times with fellow farm bankers, wives, and insurance providers.

Pendleton PCA serviced Umatilla, Morrow, Wallowa, Union, and part of Grant counties. We had another office in Enterprise where Willis Bailey and one secretary worked. Our outstanding balance peaked in July at about \$50 million.

I retired from PCA in 1988 and soon found it to be too early. I entered a real estate brokerage with Mike Thorn for about one year. We sold ranches only. I worked for Mautz, Hallman law offices as business manager for three years. Then retired at the proper time.

Happily retired at 315 North Main where we visit friends, family, and neighbors. We play golf, Elaine has bridge clubs, go to the beach one or two times a year, and visit kids intermittently. ELAINE DIED IN 2003, BOB DIED IN 2005.

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