

EARLY LIFE HISTORY OF PRESTON LEE PARKS - 1905 – 1923

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**Told by Preston Lee Parks
Entered by Brent Averett Parks**

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Life History of Preston Lee Parks

February 07, 1990

Told by Preston Lee Parks, entered by Brent Averett Parks.

Preston Lee Parks- I was born August 27, 1905 at Desloge Missouri, 45 or 50 miles south of St. Louis. My father was George Washington Parks. mother Rosa Christopher Parks, sister Lena Parks, and brother Perry Franklin Parks. Desloge was a small lead mining town. My father worked in the mines there. We moved to Reynolds County, to the small town of Reynolds. I don't know how old I was at that time. I think around 2 or 3 years old. My sister, Lena, was 11 years older than myself, my brother. Frank, was 9-10 older. I won't attempt to list years and dates, but will try to give an account of events that I remember. I have no history of my family. I am the last one living.

Reynolds was in a radius of 25 or 30 miles of Lesterville, Centerville, Ellington, Bunker, Salem, and Corridon was about a mile away. This was a timber area where my father worked for a saw mill company, Walters and Woodman. He was a lumber inspector. The company had a mill of their own, but bought lumber from independent mills. It probably was after we came back from Louisiana that my father went to work for the lumber company.

On November 08, 1908, my younger brother was born in Reynolds, they named him Christopher Columbus Parks. Pretty heavy name to lay on a baby. My parents didn't ask me, I would've called him John or William. But later on they nicknamed him Irish, and called me Dutch. I had black hair, and Irish was white headed.

We moved to Louisiana to raise cotton. Some of our relatives were down there as well. My dad's stepfather, Grandpa Sanders, was the second husband of my dad's mother. I remember some of them, Jess, John, Mips, and a sister Minta Davis. The John Davis family was down there raising cotton, I must have been 3 1/2 or 4 years old at that time, 1909 or 1910. We were there one season. I will relate a few things that I remember. When we moved our household goods to our farm, we did it with a oxen and a two wheel cart. The plantation owner had blacks working for them and several of the women and men helped us move. We lived in a two part house with a hall running down the middle. I think it was one of the Sanders that lived in the other part.

I remember going fishing with my dad and other members of the family. They fished in a river, I think it was the Bail Mason. This was in the north end of the state. I don't remember any of the small towns near us. They sometimes caught some big cat fish, Blue Cat up to 45 lbs. They did most of their fishing at night using a trow line, putting hooks on a long line, using a float to string it across the river .

EARLY LIFE HISTORY OF PRESTON LEE PARKS - 1905 – 1923

We had a fire and our house was completely destroyed. It started one morning after the men had left for the fields, I was told to go for help. I ran as fast as I could to tell my dad. They had already seen the smoke and were running to the house. My mother lost one of her shoes while on the roof. She had one shoe after the fire, all of our clothing burned. We moved into the chicken house while they were fighting the fire, they put me and Irish on the other side of the fence, and gave us a sugar bowl. I was to baby sit Irish. Relatives and the people gave us clothing and food etc. My mother made the chicken house pretty nice, we got along fairly good. About this time there was talk and stories of Halley's Comet, how people jumped in the river and took their lives in other ways. They thought the tail on the comet would sweep everybody off of the earth. I don't know how many of our relatives went back to Missouri with us, but it wasn't a very profitable cotton raising venture.

After Irish got big enough to walk, he would take off his pants and come home with them over his shoulder. We had a dog, Fido, who went with us every place we went. I remember some things that happened when my brother Frank got married to Ada Rifle (Ed: maiden name was Ruble, not Rifle). She worked for my mother doing house work. She came from Vulcan Missouri, a small town east of Reynolds on the Missouri Pacific Railroad. When they were married they had an oyster supper. I wasn't too much impressed. I didn't like oysters. After their first baby was born, Lorene, our family decided to go to Webb City, a mining town close to Joplin Missouri. As we were going there, Lorene cried all the time. My mother said she had the 6 month colic. Frank rode the rods underneath the train. When the train stopped in Springfield, he came in the train and visited with us. When the train started he went back underneath the coaches and arrived in Webb City with us.

My father had a drinking problem. One time he and Frank were put in jail for drunk and disorderly conduct. While they were in jail, Frank had a fight with a policeman. My mother went down and bailed them out.

We lived on the outskirts of town, water was delivered by a water wagon into a 50 gallon wooden barrel by the front gate. We didn't stay very long in Webb City, we moved back to Reynolds. I remember my mother being baptized in a river west of town, I don't remember the name of the church. My father never showed any interest in any church. There were preachers that came into our community preaching hell fire and damnation, I don't know how much this impressed the people, but they scared the hell out of me. They preached that if we didn't repent and be a member of their church, we would go down to hell and burn forever. I had a dream one night that I was on a tin roof of a building and was sliding down into a burning pit. I woke up before I hit; that that made impression on me for a long time.

The Missouri Pacific railroad ran through Leeper from St. Louis to the south. There was a Southern Pacific railroad that ran from Leeper to Bunker Missouri, through Ellington and

EARLY LIFE HISTORY OF PRESTON LEE PARKS - 1905 – 1923

Reynolds, It was only 55 or 60 miles long. There was a water tank in Reynolds that furnished water for the town and also the trains. There was a daily train, freight and passenger mixed.

There was a lot of lumber shipped out of this small part of Missouri. My father in his work as a lumber inspector used a horse and buggy, and a three wheel speeder that ran on the railroad. I remember one night he came home rather late, pretty much intoxicated, with the end of one of his fingers that was cut off, placed in his handkerchief. He had caught it in the gears. He was usually hungry, my mother would fry several eggs for him. We had horses and mules, my father was also a contractor and hauled lumber from the lumber mills to the railroad. He employed several drivers. All the feed, hay, and grain was shipped on the railroad.

When my sister Lena was married, I must have been around 6 years old. She married Paul Warfel. He had been out in Montana, working on sheep ranches. His family were sawmill operators. Paul's father, Stewart Warfel, owned and operated a mill about halfway between Reynolds and Bunker. Paul's father was hard working man. I remember his family having a hard time getting him to stopping enough to eat his meals. Paul and Lena's first child was born at our home in Reynolds on June 27, 1913. He was named George. He is about 7 years younger than me. I would stay with them for 2 or 3 days at times. I liked mustard and wanted it on everything I ate. One night at supper they weren't keeping an eye on me and I ate so much mustard, I was sick all night. About this time a sawmill blew up, it was east of Bunker on the railroad. It happened one morning just before the mill started to work. There was 2 or 3 people killed. They said the water injector wasn't working, finally they got water to the boiler, it was dry and awful hot causing the explosion.

Paul and Lena moved back to Montana and filed a homestead near Conran. Lem and Meade Helvey lived on a farm a few miles east of Corridon on Sinking Creek. I thought at that time that they were my aunt and uncle, but they were no relation to me. Irish and I used to go visit them and stay for several days. They had a daughter, Ufa, she was about the same age as me. Her dad Lem, had a grocery store and a Grist Mill that made corn meal from the corn people brought in. He milled it for a portion of the corn. Us kids were allowed to help ourselves to the candy in the store. They liked kids, they were very good to us. Irish and I looked forward to visiting them. ???'s Granddad and Grandmother Wilson had a farm about a mile north. They ran the county poor farm, they housed and gave meals to the poor people. Us kids were allowed to eat with them, served country style on a long table. They had good food and lots of it.

The Helvey family raised corn as most of the other farmers did. when the corn matured they cut and shucked it in the field. Uncle Lem sold two wagon loads of corn to a hog feeder in Ellington. Us kids helped shuck the corn in the field and load it in the wagons. We were allowed to make the trip to Ellington, it took all day.

I used to play train, we didn't have the toys kids have now. I used cans and bricks. and made a trench for a railroad. I would play railroading for hours at a time. I had the leg ache, which gave me trouble from time to time. One time my leg got so bad I was on crutches. My mother took me

EARLY LIFE HISTORY OF PRESTON LEE PARKS - 1905 – 1923

to Ellington to the doctor. We stayed ail night with a blind couple, friends of my mothers. I was quite impressed with the way they did their housework. They seemed to know where everything was. They were both preachers, don't remember which church.

The Helvey's had saddle horses, Irish and I learned to ride early in our life. Butchering time was quite an event. Hogs would run wild out in the timber, they lived on acorns. The farmers went into the woods and killed as many hogs as they wanted. At one or two times a year, we went fishing. Several families would go together and at times stay a week, camping right on the river. The children had a good time and would look forward to those fishing camps. The men did most of their fishing at night. The men also would hunt for coons, fox, and opossum. Nearly every farmer had a few hound dogs and would hunt at night, us kids went once in a while with them.

I remember my first experience with tobacco. One Christmas some of our relatives and friends came to our house and stayed three or four days. I picked up a cigar butt and took a few puffs, it made me severely sick. My mother didn't know what was wrong. Somebody had noticed me with the cigar. I didn't know then that the nicotine in tobacco is a poison. Later on when I was older, traveling tobacco salesman would come to town and leave samples of their wares scattered around. Us kids would get most of the samples of cigarettes and chewing tobacco. I learned to smoke at an early age. I tried once to chew, made me sick. That was one habit that I didn't get into which I am glad, as it is a very filthy habit. The Pill family was given this name, but I never knew why, their real name was Allison. They ran the only hotel in town, as well as a store. They had 3 girls and 2 boys. The two youngest were Tommy and Daisy Allison. They were near my age. When Daisy was older, she turned out to be a dancer. One of my first jobs was cutting sprouts for Mr. Allison. He had a small track of new land, the sprouts grew up from the stumps. He gave us kids \$.25 a day for this. Irish and I learned to swim at an early age, there were several ponds around Reynolds. We would fish those ponds also, caught mostly perch, we made rafts to push around on these lakes. One time I fell through and hurt the upper part of my right leg. It healed up fairly soon. We had two cyclones or tornadoes on each side of Reynolds. I remember as we watched the last one, it came within about two miles of us north between us and Bunker. It was a scary sight, you could see trees flying through the air. This funnel cloud was real black and made a loud noise, it blew down a strip of lumber a mile wide and several miles long. A sawmill stationed in Bunker, cut this cyclone track and put a mill in Reynolds to cut this timber. I was given a horse and had 42 gallon water kegs. I would give the men sawing timber a drink, they gave me \$.75 per day for this. I was very happy with this job.

I used to play sawmill. I would use a gallon syrup pail, put the lid on very tight and use it as a boiler. I punched out two holes, whittled out pegs, then I would pull one of these pegs to let out steam. One day I failed to do this soon enough and it blew up and burned my left leg really bad. I wore wool stockings and when I pulled my stocking down, the hide came with it. I had lots of trouble healing, had to have the proud flesh burned off two or three times. They would sprinkle powdered caustic on it which was very painful. I still have the scar.

EARLY LIFE HISTORY OF PRESTON LEE PARKS - 1905 – 1923

The first automobile that came to Reynolds was a Model T. The store keeper, Milt Ruble, Ada, Franks wife's uncle. He would load up a bunch of us kids and take us for a ride.

We moved to St. Louis in 1916, the 1st World War was going on when we lived on Chouteau ave., between 12th and 18th street, in an upstairs apartment. I soon got a job working in a bed factory. I was too young to work, but they allowed me to as long as I attended a night school one night a week. I went to this electric school until we left St. Louis for Montana. We were paid every Saturday, cash in an envelope, a dollar went a long way then. I was pretty much a loner, would go once a week to the Gayety Theater. After the show I would have a bowl of chili and a piece of cherry pie, all for a dollar including my show ticket.

When I was working in the bed factory I did a lot of day dreaming. I sometimes thought that I should get started on a better job. Maybe a railroader or cowboy, or a saw mill man. My mother's brother, Robert Christopher and family lived in St. Louis, he was a conductor on a street on a street car for the city, he was a very friendly and happy person and loved kids. He had several girls and a boy named Lawrence. Mothers other brother, Will Christopher, was a farmer, west of Desoto Mo. We used to visit them. I remember we would drink cider they made in a barrel. We would skim the yellow jackets off and dip in a tin cup. They had kids, but don't remember their names.

It must have been in 1916 when my father left St. Louis and went to Montana, to work with Paul Warfel. They had a logging contract east of Lodge Grass in the Wolf mountains. Paul Warfel my sister, George and my Dad went to work on the X4 Ranch near Kirby on the Rosebud and Indian creeks. The ranch house set near where the two creeks met. In the spring of 1917 my mother, Irish and I left St. Louis to go out there in Montana. It sure was a long train ride. We left the train in Sheridan Wyoming. Mrs. W.V. Johnson met us at the station. She was the daughter of Willis Spear, a cattle rancher in Montana and Wyoming. Mrs. Johnson was a large woman and was very friendly. The ranch house was a two story frame house and quite large. The Johnson family children were Annafie, Phyllis, and Tony. Mrs. Johnson's name was Jessemine. The X4 Ranch was a working Ranch, put up lots of hay and grain. There were several small Ranches connecting the X4 Ranch that Mr. Johnson either had bought or leased. The cattle were all under fence.

Paul Warfel was the Ranch Foreman and my sister cooked. Mable Hill also worked in the kitchen, she was a young girl in her teens. She had a sister, Myrtle that looked after the cattle, she was one of the first Cowgirls. She used to take me with her riding fence and checking the cows. They assigned two indian ponies for Irish and I to ride, and there was 6 Shetland ponies on the ranch, three of them was broken. I started to break the unbroken ones when the Haying season started which lasted all summer. Paul gave me the job of driving the stacker teams. The hay was bucked with buck rakes to the overhead stacker. I would dump the hay on the hay stack, I was paid \$1.00 per day.

During the summer of 1917 Emmett Warfel was born. I remember going after my mother to bring her to the main ranch house, from where we lived about a mile north.

EARLY LIFE HISTORY OF PRESTON LEE PARKS - 1905 – 1923

We started school that fall. Miss Edwards was our teacher. The school was about 2 miles north of the ranch towards Kirby. We moved into Sheridan, my father and mother went to work for the CB & C Railroad. Both worked at the Roundhouse. We lived right close on Crook St. we had an upstairs apartment.

The people we rented from were the Deits'. Irish and I started school, I was in the eighth grade. The Deits gave Irish and I a red wagon. We gathered coal off the railroad right of way that had fallen off the cars. We kept them and ourselves in coal from that. It was there in Sheridan that Irish started his training as a prize fighter. The Deits' gave us a set of boxing gloves. Since my mother worked, that left some of the housework for Irish and I. We would put on the boxing gloves and fight to see who washed the dishes, made the beds, etc.. Irish never did like housework, he would put up a pretty good fight. Sometimes we did more damage to the house and it made more work for us as a result, but we got along pretty good... until we put on the boxing gloves.

It was there that I learned how to make chili. There was a colored man that had a small chili and sandwich wagon. My Dad would take Irish and I there quite often, if his chili wasn't ready to serve, you had to wait until he was satisfied that it was ready. He was a pretty strong person, and outspoken, we saw him throw out one of his customers one time. I think his chili was the first time we'd ever had chili. I mustered up enough nerve and asked him for his recipe, and to my surprise he gave it to me. Years later I cooked in an Eat Shop in Lovell and I used his way of making Chili.

Irish and I went to a lot of shows, William S. Hart, Dustin Farnham, Tom Mix, and a lot of other western stars. These were our heroes. We were there in Sheridan when the war ended on November 11th 1918. Shortly after that our parents were laid off at the Roundhouse.

Our mother and father weren't getting along very good at this time, so they decided to separate. Irish stayed with our dad, and my mother and I went back to Reynolds Missouri.

We still had a house and a team of horses. I hauled lumber and plowed gardens in and around Reynolds. I missed Irish very much since we were very pretty close. My mother and I put in a large garden. My mother was a hard working woman, a very good manager . . . we got along pretty good .

in the spring of 1920, I went back to Montana on the X4 Ranch where the Warfel's were still working. My father and Irish were traveling around the country, my father didn't stay very long anywhere, when I got to Sheridan I stayed all night in a hotel on Big Goose Creek. During the night I was woke up by a car that had run into the creek by a man who was drunk. My night's sleep was ruined... took quite some time to get the car out. They came from the Ranch the next day to get me. I went right to work on the Ranch raking hay, plowing, etc.. On my 15th birthday, my sister Lena had planned a party for me. I quit work a little early to bring in my milk cows.

EARLY LIFE HISTORY OF PRESTON LEE PARKS - 1905 – 1923

I was milking 13 head, they could run in 3 or 4 different pastures and I had a bell on one of them. I searched each of the pastures and no cows. I was trying too hard. I came into the Ranch, changed to a fresh horse and kept looking. It was around 10:30 pm before I found them, in the first pasture where they were laying down in a grove of chokecherry bushes and trees. Paul Warfel helped me milk, it was after midnight when we finished and the party was long over. I hadn't eaten any supper but I did pick up a piece of birthday cake, ate it and went to bed. I can always remember my 15th birthday, the others I can't remember much about.

The Warfel's bought a place on Spring Creek, the Mower place, it was north and west of the X4 about 6 or 7 miles, I plowed about 15 acres for Paul to put in grain. I was alone at the time I did this. I had quite an experience breaking in a range cow to milk. She was pretty wild and mean. I would drive her into the barn, rope and tie her into the stall. I would also have to tie both hind legs. She gave enough milk for me and two colts, but was a lot of trouble. I lost some hide and got some bruises in the process.

I bought a saddle horse from a dry land farmer and rancher, it was a strawberry roan pony. I gave \$25.00 for him. One morning as I was driving the work horses in the corral, I would get them right up to the gate and this horse of mine. Buck, would break away and lead the rest away with him. This happened 3 times. I went in the house, got my 30-30, took 3 or 4 shots at him but just missed.

Rob Hatten a Brother in Law of Paul's married Ruth, they had two or three kids at this time. Ruth moved up to the Hower place to cook for me. Rob Hatten stayed on the X4. It was a good thing I broke the range cow to milk, it gave us plenty of milk for the kids.

During grain harvest I went over on Indian Creek and helped Dean and Mable Johnson harvest their wheat. One evening I rode into Kirby to get the mail, as I was on the way back, it was quite dark, a rattlesnake spooked my horse and threw me off. I had heard the snake rattle and was sure that I would land right on top of it. I reached down at my feet, scooped up a handful of gravel, and threw it from one side to the other until I located the snake. My horse wasn't too far up the road. . . . waiting for me.

Paul Warfel had gone to the ML Ranch across the Big Horn Mountains near Kane and Powell Wyoming, it was one of the oldest ranches in that part of Wyoming. W.V. Johnson and Willis Spear owned the ranch at that time. Paul was planning on buying the ranch. Ruth and the kids went back to the X4 ranch, and Lena, my sister came to the Hower Ranch with Emmett and George. Lee Turley was in the process of buying the Mower place from Paul and Lena. George and I started to go to school near Kirby....we rode horseback. It was seven miles from the Mower place and we had seven gates to go through. There was coal all over the country. You could go out and dig coal for your winter supply of fuel. One Saturday, Lena, the kids and I, went to a small mine east of Kirby and bought a load of coal.

EARLY LIFE HISTORY OF PRESTON LEE PARKS - 1905 – 1923

Lee Turiey was a large man, probably weighed around 245 lbs., before Lena and the kids moved to the Mower ranch. Lee and I were there together in the late summer, one night I was taking a bath in the wash tub when Lee brought in a bucket of cold spring water. He threw a cupful of water on me as I was getting out of the tub. It was quite a shock on my nervous system. I wasn't very large but I told him to never do that again or that I would have to kick the crap out of him. He never did, thank goodness.

I had mixed feelings about leaving the Kirby country for Wyoming, it was a very pretty part of Montana, lots of grass for livestock, coal and lumber. I had broken a team of horses while I was on the Mower place. I was quite proud of my work in breaking horses. I didn't know at that time that I would have an opportunity to break lots of horses in the Wyoming country, my sister had word that Paul was ready for us to come to the ML ranch.

Lena, George, Emmett and I left for Wyoming about the 1st of December, 1920. Mrs. Johnson took us to Sheridan to catch the train. We had to stay all night in Billings. The train to Kane to Kane left Billings around 8:00 am, we got there 11:30 am. Lena left her purse on the train, she told the depot agent, Archie Nelson. He called Greybull, 40 miles to the south, and they found her purse. They then put the purse on the train from Casper to Billings, everything turned out ok with the purse. People in those days were pretty helpful and fairly honest.

Kane was a small town, it had Dakes Grocery and General Merchandise store, Jess Spencer, a crippled man, was the manager. Paul Kennard was the clerk and Art Smith the section foreman. The Pool Hall owner was Harry Quarstron and his wife Annie. The Scott family had the Post Office, Mr. Scott was the water pumper for the railroad, the pump house was about 1/2 mile south of town, to mention some of the Scott family. Some of the other folks were Bill Herschel, May, Vera, George, and Ruth, the Brosious, and Grandpa Smith. There also was Karl Fink, Joe Nebel, Jim Brown, Charley Powell, Walter Schanks, John Spomer, Fred Bassett, Ed Bassett, Harvey Bassett, Lee Hoffman and Norman Hoffman. Also, John Schnider, Greg Them, Honk, Harvey, May, Laura, and Ona. The Abbott family lived about 6 miles north of Kane. Tuffy and Rich were the sons of the Abbotts. There was the Chillcotts, Charley Mansfield and Jim Waters, Jimmy, Edith, and the Bremhalls, Burns and Dicksons.

The ML Ranch was one of the oldest ranches in the state of Wyoming, it was owned by two men, Mason and Lovell. They ran several thousand head of cattle and the range ran from Thermopolis to the Pryor Mountains. The ranch house was a two story frame building. My bedroom was upstairs. there was three bedrooms, kitchen, dining room, and a living room downstairs. There was a large barn, corrals on both sides with a feed rack in the middle. There was also a blacksmith shop, chicken house, ice house, and the old bunk house that was built when the ranch was first started by Mason and Lovell.

W.V. Johnson still had a band of sheep there to lamb out before Paul Warfel took over the ranch. I decided not to start school that year. Paul and I hauled hay, fed the sheep and the rest of the livestock. The Five Spring Ranch was up on the river about four or five miles from where the

EARLY LIFE HISTORY OF PRESTON LEE PARKS - 1905 – 1923

lambing sheds were, we hauled hay from the ML Ranch up there for the sheep. W.V. Johnson came down sick that winter, my sister nursed him through early spring until he was well.

There was a copperbelly stud on the ranch, we didn't know if he was a horse which had been rode or not. We knew he was broke to lead, seemed to be fairly gentle. I saddled him and got on him in the feed corral. He was very high spirited. Warfel and I went to the Five Springs Ranch, we figured that he must have been rode, but not for some time. We had several hundred head of wild horses that ran on Little Mountain. We had heard that there was some cattle snowed in over at Cottonwood Canyon, we called Joe Brosious. they thought that they might be their cattle.

Mr. Brosious and his son Scoot, Paul, and I left early one morning, we had to break trail. We found five head that couldn't get out, turned out they belonged to the ML Ranch.

Scoot Brosious was about the same age as I was. He had about the most foul mouth of anyone I had ever been around. Nearly every word was a cuss word or worse.

W.V. Johnson has lambed his sheep and will leave with them to the mountain. Now Paul can stock up the ranch with his own sheep and cattle. His banker was the Yegen brothers from Billings, Chris and Peter. I have decided to go to Kansas City and visit my brother Frank. I left Kane on the 15th of May, 1921. My brother Frank and his family, Ada, Lorene, and Aldena, lived off Prospect Street. Frank was foreman for the Kansas City Electric Light and Power Company. I played baseball with a Park Team. Most of the factories had a ball team, our park team would play them, Irish and I had played ball when we were in Reynolds. I played all positions, but mostly 3rd base and pitcher.

In August I went to work for a Doll factory, they made dolls and other things for carnivals. It was located behind the Muleback Hotel (Ed: likely to be Muehlebach Hotel in Kansas City, Missouri) in downtown ????. Jack Dempsey fought a Frenchman, Carpentier, who was more of a light heavy weight. The Veterans from World War I held their conventions there, I saw some of the leaders. General ????, General Pershing and others. The parade and everything lasted two or three days. I went to Baseball games, the Kansas City Blues and the Monarchs, a Colored team, played a seven game series that fall. The Monarchs had a pitcher named Bullie Rogan. He didn't wind up, he just reared back and threw hard.

I was still working at the Doll Factory in January of 1922. I was beginning to get homesick for Wyoming and Montana. We decided to bum our way to Kane Wyo. We had enough money between us to eat on, but not for train fare. I packed my clothing and some dolls that the Doll owner gave me. I shipped out by freight. The morning Dad and I left Kansas City, we had lunch, 1 bowl of potato soup, 2 slices of bread, and a cup of coffee for \$.15.

We caught a freight train in North Kansas City for St. Joe, we took the wrong train out of St. Joe, East for 40 or 50 miles and had to come back, to head out west to Alliance Nebraska. We got a room and stayed all night, it was very cold. I nearly froze my hands when we caught the freight, I took my gloves off and put them on my dad's chest to get them warm. I had too many socks on

EARLY LIFE HISTORY OF PRESTON LEE PARKS - 1905 – 1923

my feet which didn't help keep them warm either. We went from Alliance to Gurnsey, and to Casper. We passed coal to the fireman, arrived in Casper early one morning. We were pretty dirty from passing the coal ail night. We got a room and both had slept most of the day. We caught a freight the next morning for Kane. I was glad to get there to the ML Ranch. Irish was glad to see us. I was at the Ranch for the next 5 or 6 years. I will write or some of the events as I remember them, Irish was ready to put the boxing gloves on, he was getting bigger and stronger, he had a good punch in either hand.

Paul Warfel said, "Press, are you ready to start breaking a few horses"? We brought the horses in from the horse pasture, and we cut out 3 that I would start on. I caught them, put halters on them and tied them up to gentle them before I would ride them. I tried to keep them from bucking if possible and I would slicker brake them.

The ML ranch was a stopping place for people and ranchers going to the Big Horn mountains.

My sister, Lena, was a good cook. She always set a pretty good table. Elmer Dorn would stop on his way to the saw mill that he had on the Big Horn. Also Mr. Bob Moncur, who was the Cow Camp Rider at that time. This was where the small farmers and ranchers would run their cattle through the summer months, from July to the end of September. The cows put on reserve, which was called the associtan.

While I was in KC, Joe Brosiais brought my horse and George's from across the mountains on the X4 Ranch. Paul had brought in a band of sheep and around 200 head of cattle. I saddled up the copper belly stud horse, he hadn't been rode since I rode him a year before. He was pretty skittish, wanted to run. He needs riding often. He was on grain. The sheep were to lamb pretty soon, we camped at the Five Springs Ranch. I was the night drop man, we had a good lambing. A man came to the ranch, he was an oil promoter by the name of Williams. There was a rig at the Bethurm place on Crystal Creek that he wanted moved to the Paddock place on the Big Horn River. My Dad and I contracted to move the rig. it was quite an undertaking, we used 5 or 6 teams of horses, and had to use block and tackle on one hill. I hauled them a load of coal from Lovell, we learned to not trust anybody. Williams was a Promoting Crook, we never collected a dollar. We got an education.

There was talk by people, mostly from Lovell, to put a road across the Big Horn Mountain. The Forest Service sent a man from Colorado, his name was Chief Watkins. They set up a camp at the old Boiler. I went to work late spring, it was all pick and shovel work. Pick the bank down and shovel it over the bank. They were shoveling above me and some other men when a Glass Blower and I were working together. When the put off a shot, he had his hand on the bank, a rock hit his hand and cut off a finger.

I got to know the Joe Nebel family. Honk, Howey, and Laura. Honk and I became pretty close friends. I had lots of meals at their Place, they were Mormons. I didn't know very much about the Mormon people. I had read Zane Greys book. Riders of the Purple Sage. He portrays the

EARLY LIFE HISTORY OF PRESTON LEE PARKS - 1905 – 1923

Mormon Elders mostly as villains, it didn't take me long to find out that Honk had a little Larceny in him. He would pick up most anything that was loose. But, he had his good points, very good hearty and friendly.

Pete Garvey had a Homestead on Little Mountain, and Ed Lopat had a Homestead a little south and west of Pete's place. The cattle range the ML had on Little Mountain covered from the Big Horn River to the Forest Service line. One spring I was gathering the cattle, pushing them up to the forest line to the summer range. I stayed at Pete Garvey's, one of my teeth became infected, gave me lots of pain. I wanted to finish gathering the cattle before came down. When I finally started to the ranch, my face was swollen and feverish. When I came to Willow Creek I put my head in the water, gave me a little relief. I went to Lovell, Dr Booth drilled in and drained my tooth and put on a gold cap.

Archie Nelson, who was the Depot Agent at Kane, he and his family would come to the ranch to watch us Buck out the range horses that we were gathering. We would ride them for the fun of it. Nelson would sit on top of the corral and yell "Rowdy Dow". We all called him that, he would answer to Rowdy Dow. One time we had an old blue roan mare in the corral. We thought it would be fun to see her rode. We drew straws and I won, or lost. depending on how you look at it. We saddled her up, is turned out to be a dud. No buck, all she wanted to do was bite at me and bawl. She was just a mean old horse.

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Dan Litsinger, Bill Morehouse and a young fellow named Cook, along with a fellow called Me Smith. He was a character that Caroline Lockhart who in a book called "Me Smith". He was a conceited and pompous man. They helped round up horses that spring and summer. Smith liked to brag that he had a book written for him. He wasn't around very long. Paul Warfel decided that we could get along without him.

I call this the "Cottonwood Mistake" We had a pack horse named Billy Sunday. We were getting ready to go up on Little Mountain and round up another bunch of horses. We went up the Hays trail, planned to use the Cottonwood Cabin as our headquarters. Billy had a habit of running and bucking when he reached the top of the trail. We failed to catch him and he scattered all our groceries for about a mile. We rounded about 125 head of horses and threw them in the pasture. I had a brilliant idea....as I thought, to bring the horses down Cottonwood Canyon. I knew that they couldn't get out and that we could just pick them up as they came out. Dan Litsinger, Morehouse, and Cook all agreed that the plan to bring the horses down the canyon was a good idea. We didn't know the deer trails that lead in all directions. There was no way to get around them. It was pretty frustrating. We spent the better part of the day getting only about 25 head through the canyon. We were all tired and hungry. The 7 blue grouse or fools hens that I killed with rocks, chicken, fried potatoes, and canned corn made a very good breakfast.

Rodeo in Cowley 1923

Dan Litsinger and I were breaking horses on the ML ranch when we decided to enter the Cowley event. Rick Affolt, Charlie (Murts) Johnson and I and 3 or 4 others. I drew a big horse and was the 3rd out. They had no chutes. We had to saddle the horses out in the open. My horse made about 3 jumps then reared over backwards on top of me. I wasn't hurt. But at the that time my sister was pregnant with Edward Warfel. She was all upset. She didn't want me to ride again. Ward Marchant was one of the judges. He told me afterwards that he and 2 other judges had picked me as the winner of the event. Came pretty close to being a champion. We rounded up horses most all summer. I had 5 horses tied up at one time to be broke. All the horses I broke were slicker broke. I never let a horse I was breaking buck. When you drop an old slicker over his head and rump it wasn't all possible to keep them from it. We rounded up and broke horses all summer into the fall of 1923.