

MY LIFE STORY

(I hope it will be of some benefit to those who read it)

I, Mack C. Emmons, was born February 12th, 1874, second child in family of five (4 boys and 1 girl), to William Fountain Emmons and Columbia Louiana Gibbens Emmons on their small farm in Newton County, Mississippi, between Hickory Station and Decatur. The name originally given me was Eldridge McDuff Emmons but I was immediately nicknamed Mack. When I was about eight years old, I changed my name to Mack C. because I thought it looked more important, as a local merchant had a big sign, which I got quite a kick out of, with the name "McDonald". People called him Mack so I thought that was the way my name should be written also and I have used that form ever since.

I lived an ordinary child's life in the country. I didn't get much education as we were too busy farming and working at my father's saw mill. He was a slow, easy-going man, who always tried to rear his children to be honest, upright and industrious. Mother was very religious, reading the Bible to us often, and very ambitious for her children to amount to something and not let any of our neighbors surpass us in anything. I think her training had a great influence over my life. I was large for my age and enjoyed hunting, ball-playing, wrestling and boxing, also fishing. Whenever I lost at a game, it grieved me very much for I did my best to win. I was always pulling some joke on the crowd and sometimes they backfired. There were several Choctaw Indians around in our neighborhood and I enjoyed their company and learned to speak some of their language. I also played Indian Ball with them.

When I was seven years old, my oldest brother got after me to go fishing during our dinner hour. While I was catching some bait, a brier struck me in the eye and left a thorn which looked like it was just in the edge of the sight. When it was finally removed, it left a very small speck in the eyeball. When I was fourteen, I was playing with a brother in the cotton house late one afternoon, when another brother thought he would surprise us and threw some heavy clots of dirt through the door. One of these struck me in the eye, bursting the eyeball at the same spot where the thorn had been years before. I suffered terribly. One doctor said I should be taken to a specialist at once but our family physician said he thought I would soon be alright, and kept on giving me morphine to ease the pain until I almost became a dope addict. We later learned he was one and I thank God for my mother, who had the strength to take dope from me when she saw the danger as I got to where I craved it. It also turned out our doctor was wrong in what he had done for my eyes and was responsible for my losing the sight in the good eye. His son came home from medical school on a visit and after seeing me, told his dad what he had done wrong and urged my father to take me to a specialist in Meridian. This was about five weeks after the accident and the eye specialist quickly

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removed the bad eye and bandaged my other eye for protection and ordered me to stay in a dark room. How well I remember the day my bad eye was removed for it was the last day I saw. My dad had me slip the bandage and look at the first electric light put up in Meridian, which was a wonderful sight to us; then on the way home, he had me slip the bandage again and see if I could tell him where we were..... I was kept in total darkness for about six months and was under the specialist's care and a local physician's. Mother was wonderful to me and I don't know what I would have done without her. It was a terrible blow to me when the doctor finally broke the news that I would always thereafter be totally blind! The other eye had gone out in sympathy with the injured one purely from lack of proper medical attention at first. Therefore, I always urge anyone with the least eye infection or trouble to see an eye specialist. I was very blue and worried about how I was to make a living. However, soon after this I heard of a blind man who was making a living on a farm, having his place share-cropped. (I expect that is one reason why I have been so crazy about the farm, notwithstanding the fact the farming part of my life has been a complete failure. However, in buying and selling of farms, I feel like I have done fairly well.).

After I had been blind about a year, an uncle wrote my mother, telling her she should send me off to the school for the blind in Jackson, Mississippi as they taught the blind to re-seat chairs and make foot-mats out of corn shucks. I thought that was a bad proposition but I had better learn that much anyway, so my parents sent me off to school. An older brother took me over to the school and left me at the door, saying he would be back to see me before he left. If he had, I would have gone on home for I was so homesick. The music teacher, who met us at the door, led me down to the sitting room and made me acquainted with some of the boys. They ganged around me and began fingering my face and ears and asked my age and height. When I told them, they measured and weighed me and learned it was true that I was 5'11 3/4" high and weighed 164#. One of the boys said he wouldn't believe my mammy and daddy if they were to come in and tell him that I was only fifteen years old. Of course, I took exception to this and wanted to fight him, but he knew the place and kept out of my way and that made me just that much madder. The next day was Sunday and one of the boys came to me and asked me to go to church with him. However, when I learned he was going to take me by himself, I refused, saying I wasn't going to let a blind fellow lead me down the street and get killed. He laughed and said we wouldn't get hurt, that he went all over the city alone. He finally prevailed upon me to go and everything was alright. That gave me more confidence in being blind and it wasn't long before I was going around on the streets by myself.

My folks were poor and I needed a little money very badly at times. Several of the boys at school were peddling brooms and feather dusters about the city on Saturdays and I started doing likewise to make a little money.

When I went down to the workshop, I found out they not only made mats and reseat chairs but also taught how to make mattresses and brooms. I immediately became very much enthused over the broom and mattress business and after I had been there a few days, my teacher came over and told me to try my hand at making a broom. My father had run a little saw mill and farmed so I had been used to many different kinds of work and was right handy with a knife. The teacher helped me make the first broom and as I started on the second one, he was called off but told me to go ahead and see what I could do. When he came back, I had it made and he said it was better than many of the boys who had been there in the shop ten or twelve years. He said if I kept that up he wanted me to work for him in his own broom factory during vacation. Of course, that kind of gave me the big head for I had only been to blind-school two months and twenty days. When school was out, he told me to go home and see my folks and he would send after me in the next week or ten days. When he sent for me though, he only offered me \$10.00 a month and my board, and inasmuch as I had found I still loved home very much and my father had told me I would be worth more to him, sawing logs for his mill, than the teacher offered me, I didn't go.

When school opened again, I went back over there. I had gotten more used to being blind and to what a blind person could do and I went down to making brooms and studying mathematics. I continued in school through the third term and decided I had learned enough to go into business for myself. In the meantime, my parents had moved to Meridian, Mississippi, so that I would have a good market for my products. I was inexperienced in business and had no money to start out on, so I started out trying to borrow \$50.00 to get in business on. My next door neighbor found out I wanted it and said he would lend me \$25.00. At that time there was a blind fellow in the furniture business who was well fixed, and I thought all I had to do was to go to him and tell him what I wanted and he would help me out. However, he readily refused to do so and said he would be doing me a great injustice in starting me out in a business of that size for if it turned out to be a failure I would probably give up and never try again. Of course, that was very discouraging but I went on around town to several of the merchants and told them what I wanted and that the business would be theirs and everything I sold would be turned over to them until they got their money out of it. They didn't let me have any money but said they would buy my products after I got started to making them. Some of them referred me to a very religious man who was well fixed and very charitable. I called

on him, made myself acquainted and told him what I wanted. He asked me what church I belonged to and I told him none. He then asked me what part of town I lived in and after I told him he said he taught a Bible class in that neighborhood every Wednesday night, and invited me to join his class the next meeting. I didn't much believe in that church and decided if I had to go there to get the money I would do without same. However, later he told me to have my brother take me to see him and to bring my papers of recommendation from my teachers. I went there feeling very hopeful of getting the money but when I gave him the references he said they were very fine and that he was raised with one of my teachers and they were very close friends and members of the same church. We talked on a good little bit and then he said, "Well, you didn't come and join my Bible class Wednesday night." I said, "No, sir." However I didn't explain why. We talked a while longer and finally he said he was very sorry but he found he was not going to be able to lend me the \$25.00. (After living in the city with this man for some fifty-three years, I can't help but believe his reason for not letting me have the money is because I didn't go to his Bible class. However, this is just a supposition). I was pretty badly discouraged again. Then I decided I would get out and go from house to house, trying to get chairs to resew and mattresses to work over as that wouldn't take but two or three dollars for supplies. I called on one lady who said she wanted a child's mattress made and she gave me the order for it. When I got it ready, I hired a colored boy to deliver the mattress to the house. The lady didn't have the right change to pay me so she sent the boy to the store and told me to come in and have a seat until he got back. I did and she asked me what I was figuring on trying to do. I told her I had been trying to borrow \$50.00 to get in the broom and mattress business and hadn't been able to borrow it so far. Well, she said a certain man had plenty of money and his boy was blind too, so why didn't I go to him. I told her that inasmuch as this man already knew what I was up against and hadn't offered to help me, I didn't care to go to him. She then asked about the neighbor who was to lend me \$25.00, as I had told her about him, and said if I got that \$25.00 she would lend me the other. I went to get the \$25.00 from my neighbor and learned he didn't have it and was going to borrow it from his grocer for me. He made me acquainted with this grocer and explained what we wanted but was refused the loan. Then, I couldn't go back to the lady with the \$25.00 and as school was then reopening, I decided to go back there and stay until Christmas, when I would make another effort to borrow the money.

I then went to a local hotel manager I was acquainted with and told him I would like to work over some of their mattresses Christmas week and he said he had some that certainly needed making over and that would be a good time to have the work done. Well, I went back then and made the mattresses over

on the hotel's second floor porch. While I was working there, the lady who ran the hotel across the street asked me to do some work for them as soon as I got through with that job, and of course I was very glad to get the job. In January I saw the lady who had agreed to lend me the other \$25.00. She said she would see what she could do and I told her I certainly would appreciate it. I was getting very badly discouraged after I waited about three weeks, when she sent word one Sunday evening for me to bring my brother and come over. We were very much amused when we went in and she made us acquainted with her husband for she was fixing him a drink and he said, "By God, if it don't take over \$50.00, I will let you have it and if I lose it I don't care." That made me feel kind of bad as it seemed as though he thought I was going to lose it. He told me to come down to his plant the next day and bring my money and he would order the material and what machinery I needed to get in the business in the smallest way possible. I ordered second hand machinery and one bale of broom corn and handles to work up same. When it came in, he notified me and only had to lend me \$19.00, instead of \$25.00 as originally required, to pay the bill in full. I was very happy then.

About this time I joined Fifteenth Avenue Baptist Church, and the night I was baptized the minister read some scriptures (Matthew 6:25-34) to me. I was greatly impressed by these verses and thought, "Now, this is what I have done and I will see if all these things are added unto me." God has blessed me and has added them unto me and I feel sure that if any of us will be obedient to His commands, He will add more blessings; but He will not give more than we can stand for our own good.

I had been in the broom and mattress business about one and a half years when the blind man I tried to borrow from when I first tried to go in business asked me how I would like to have a partner. I told him, "Fine, if he has enough to put into the business in case we should need more capital." He then asked me how much I had in the business and I told him about \$257.00. He had sold out his furniture business and said he would like to get in with me, and he thought he would be able to furnish what money we might need alright. With his having plenty of money, I felt like he was just what I need. However, I found out after six months that he was not really interested in improving business like I wanted to, so I started trying to buy him out. He wouldn't sell, but after we had been together four years and had only cleared about \$30.00 each per month, I decided I should do better by myself, so I made another proposition to either buy him out or sell to him and he refused to do either. I told him I was mighty sorry that he took that view of it but I was not satisfied with what we had been making and I was determined to try it alone. He got kind of mad about it and told me he would give me an answer the next morning. He came

down early the next morning and told me I had worried the life out of him ever since we had been partners to get him to sell back to me and now he was going to do so and he would give me twelve months to lose what I had made. I told him he might be right and that I might lose it in less time, but I couldn't help thinking I should get more money out of it than what we had gotten. So I bought him out.

I had two brothers younger than I and that night I got them together and asked them how they would like to go in with me and that each one of us would take just enough money out of the business to pay the grocery bill and buy our clothes. One of them said he wouldn't go into it unless he got so much per week, which was considerably more than I felt like the business would justify. I knew we could get along on. The other one said that suited him alright. He was taking a business course at that time so I told him to go ahead and get through with it and then go in business with me. That was about the middle of June and he finished his course and came in with me about October 1st, 1898.

The first six months we worked together, we cleared \$600.00 which made me feel mighty good. The first few years were pretty hard but each year we made a little more and kept adding to the business. We were doing considerably more business and also bought some real estate and began making money on it outside of our regular business. In the course of a few years, we had enough money to run our business and buy stock in such quantities that we had no trouble in meeting competition anywhere. We also made some money buying stock when it was real cheap and selling it when it was high. We had also bought the two-story brick building where we were running, which was on Front Street and a good location for our business.

At 28 years of age, I was a very heavy smoker and the doctor advised me to cut it out. One morning, I left my smoking materials at home as I had decided to quit. However, I had only been at the factory a short while when I wanted to smoke so badly I started downstairs to get a pipe I remembered I had there left in a machine which was close to the elevator. I had been told that the opening to the rope elevator which we used to convey materials to the second floor, had been left open; but in my eagerness to get the pipe, I forgot about it and stepped off in it. I realized what had happened at once and grabbed out with both hands to catch the floor but only caught with my right hand; and as I slipped loose, I fell about sixteen feet on my left hip and elbow, which were both crushed very badly. I had another blue spell then, thinking it was all up with me surely but soon decided it wasn't so bad for I could still walk and do some work. My brother and I worked on together and each year added a little to our capital. I had thought all along that when I got enough money to take care of a wife I would marry if I could find someone who would suit me. However, when I did get the money, I was

afraid the girl might marry me for what I had financially, so I put it off again. After I lost my parents though and my sister and brothers married off, it got pretty lonesome for me, so I decided I would take a chance on marrying if I would find someone who would have me. I was then 32 years old. I was thinking a lot of a young lady I was calling on but we were fussy. I was out on the road selling brooms, mattresses and bed springs most of the time and one night I had a dream that the girl I was courting was not the right one for me, and that I would receive a letter from her when I got back home and just what the letter would say, all of which came true. I also dreamt in the same dream that the girl for me was in the city where I was spending the night, Selma, Alabama. Of course, I thought all of this was just an idle dream but the next morning, while calling on the grocery stores in the city, I went into one that had just opened up and the owner told me he was needing some brooms. He called his daughter to help him select some and in this way I met her. Of course, my dream probably made me think she was the one for me. When I got back home, I wrote her and we corresponded eight years before I could get her to marry me. We have been married thirty-two years and have no regrets for believing in my dream.

Speaking of dreams, one of my hobbies has always been farming and one night I dreamt that I was walking over a farm, one which I had really been fascinated with for some time, and while there I could hear the people hollowing and talking in the city--at that time a good ways off. Of course, I thought merely of it as a dream, but it wasn't long before we bought that farm. It was then just outside the city limits. It has since been taken into the city and is in sight of the heart of town.

While telling dreams, I had more that came true. After we had been running our spring factory a while I dreamt that two of our employees, one a white and one a colored man, got a finger cut off. The next morning on my way to the office, we met one of the partners taking a colored employee to the hospital with his finger off. I told him, "Well, you will carry another man with his finger cut off today also." He asked what I meant and I told him my dream. That day at noon one of our white employees went back to see how the accident could have happened and was feeling around the machine and cut off one of his fingers.

As I have said before, I have always been crazy about farming and wanted to live a piece out of the city. Before I married, I had bought a place $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles out from Meridian and was figuring on moving out there on same as soon as I could get it arranged to suit me. When I married, I told my wife that we could either fix up the house in town to suit her; or if she had rather wait a while, we would build a nice house out on the farm. She said she would rather wait and get out in the country, so in 1916 I decided to fix up and move out soon. We made preparations to put in the water works system and were hoping to move in the next few months. Then, an older brother, who lived

across the street from us, died and left his wife and three little girls. They asked us not to leave them but to stay there, which we did. My nieces grew up and moved out of town in 1935, so I told my folks I was either going to move out to my farm then or give up the idea. I built a nice brick bungalow with all modern conveniences (such as water, lights, etc.), and moved out in the early part of 1935. My wife and I have enjoyed the country very much since then. We have cows, chickens, etc., with three families on the place to work the farm for us and look after things generally. A concrete highway runs by my place and I have a concrete driveway up to the house. My wife takes me to and from the factory every week-day. I am now 73 years old and think I have plenty to live comfortably the rest of my life, but I still like to make and save money. I buy only what we need for we never know what the future may hold for us.

This is about the end of my story but I wish to say I don't think anyone should give up on account of their afflictions. The last fifteen years or so, I have suffered a good bit with my hip that was broken when I fell through the elevator shaft years ago. I also have high blood pressure neuritis, so I have not been really well for a long time. However, I am thankful to be alive and able to keep going. I enjoy being at the factory, answering the phone and talking to customers and friends who drop in. I have a radio there and one at home, which I get much pleasure out of. My wife and I do not have any children but I have always enjoyed having my neices and nephews around me.

I have tried to help others get an education and make something out of themselves; and have had the pleasure of seeing many of them make good. I feel that my life has been fairly successful and I attribute my success (if you want to call it that) to God as I feel like He did ehat He promised me in the scriptures I mentioned above. It is up to us to do right and He will do the rest!

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When school opened again, I went back over there. I had gotten more used to being blind and to what a blind person could do and I went down to making brooms and studying mathematics. I continued in school through the third term and decided I had learned enough to go into business for myself. In the meantime, my parents had moved to Meridian, Mississippi so that I would have a good market for my products. I was inexperienced in business and had no money to start out on, so I started out trying to borrow \$50.00 to get in business on. My next door neighbor found out I wanted it and said he would lend me \$25.00. At that time there was a blind fellow in the furniture business who was well fixed, and I thought all I had to do was to go him and tell him what I wanted and he would help me out. However, he readily refused to do so and said he would be doing me a great injustice in starting me out in a business of that size for if it turned out to be a failure I would probably give up and never try again. Of course, that was very discouraging but I went on around town to several of the merchants and told them what I wanted and that the business would be theirs and everything I sold would be turned over to them until they got their money out of it. They didn't let me have any money but said they would buy my products after I got started to making them. Some of them referred me to a very religious

man, who was supposed to be well fixed and very charitable. I called on him, made myself acquainted and told him what I wanted. He asked me what church I belonged to and I told him none. He then asked me what part of town I lived in and after I told him he said he taught a Bible class in that neighborhood every Wednesday night, and invited me to join his class the next meeting. I didn't much believe in that church and decided if I had to go there to get the money I would do without same. However, later he told me to have my brother take me to see him and to bring my papers of recommendation from my teachers. I went there feeling very hopeful of getting the money but when I gave him the references he said they were very fine and that he was raised with one of my teachers and they were very close friends and members of the same church. We talked on a good little bit and then he said, "Well, you didn't come and join my Bible class Wednesday night." I said, "No, sir." However, I didn't explain why. We talked a while longer and finally he said he was very sorry but he found he was not going to be able to lend me the \$25.00. (After living in the city with this man for some fifty-three years, I can't help but believe his reason for not letting me have the money is because I didn't go to his Bible class. However, this is just a supposition). I was pretty badly discouraged again. Then, I decided I would get out and go from house to house, trying to get chairs to reseat and mattresses to work over as that wouldn't take but two or three dollars for supplies. I called on one lady who said she wanted a child's mattress made and she gave me the order for it. When I got it ready, I hired a colored boy and held his arm and led him to the house to deliver the mattress. ^{to that house} The lady didn't have the right change ^{in a suit of clothes & had a bill} to pay ^{him by the door on the way} so she sent the boy to the store and told me to come in and have a seat until he got back. I did and she asked me what I was figuring on trying to do. I told her I had been trying to borrow \$50.00 to get in the broom and mattress business and hadn't been able to borrow it so far. Well, she said a certain man had plenty of money and his boy was blind too, so why didn't I go to him. I told her that in as much as this man already knew what I was up against and hadn't offered to help me, I didn't care to go to him. She then asked about the neighbor who was to lend me \$25.00, as I had told her about him, and said if I got that \$25.00 she would lend me the other. I went to get the \$25.00 from my neighbor and learned he didn't have it and was going to borrow it from his grocer for me. He made me acquainted with his grocer and explained what we wanted but was refused the loan. Then, I couldn't go back to the lady with the \$25.00, and as school was then reopening, I decided to go back there and stay until Christmas, when I would make another effort to borrow the money.

I then went to a local hotel manager I was acquainted with and told him I would like to work over some of their mattresses Christmas week and he said he had some that certainly needed making over and that would be a good time to have the work done. Well, I went back then and made the mattresses over on the hotel's second floor porch. While I was working there, the lady who ran the hotel across the street asked me to do some work for them as soon as I got through with that job, and of course I was very glad to get the job. When I finished both hotels, I had \$25.00 of my own and around the first of January I saw the lady who had agreed to lend me the other \$25.00. She said she would see what she could do and I told her I certainly would appreciate it. I was getting very badly discouraged after I waited about three weeks, when she sent word one Sunday evening for me to bring my brother and come over. We were very much amused when we went in and she made us acquainted with her husband for she was fixing him a drink and he said, "By God, if it don't take over \$50.00, I will let you have it and if I lose it I don't care." That made me feel kind of bad as it seemed as though he thought I was going to lose it. I told me to come down to his plant the next day and bring my money and he would order the material and what machinery I needed to get in the business in the smallest way possible. I ordered second hand machinery and one bale of broom corn and handles to work up same. When it came in, he notified me and only had to lend me \$19.00, instead of \$25.00 as originally required, to pay the bill in full. I was very happy then.

About this time I joined Fifteenth Avenue Baptist Church, and the night I was baptized the minister read some scriptures (Matthew 6:25-34) to me. I was greatly impressed by these verses and thought, "Now, this is what I have done and I will see if all these things are added unto me." God has blessed me and has added them unto me and I feel sure that if any of us will be obedient to His commands, He will add more blessings; but He will not give more than we can stand for our own good.

I had been in ~~the broom & mattress~~ business about one and a half years when the blind man I tried to borrow from when I first tried to go in business asked me how I would like to have a partner. I told him, "Fine, if he has enough to put into the business in case we should need more capital." He then asked me how much I had in the business and I told him about \$257.00. He had sold out his furniture business and said he would like to get in with me, and he thought he would be able to furnish what money we might need alright. With his having plenty of money, I felt like he was just what I needed. However, I found out after six months that he was not really interested in improving business like I wanted to, so I started trying to buy him out. He wouldn't sell, but after we had been together four years and had only cleared about \$30.00 each per month, I decided I should do better by myself, so I made another proposition to either buy him out or sell to him and he refused to do either. I told him I was mighty sorry that he took that view of it but I was not satisfied with what we had been making and I was determined to try it alone. He got kind of mad about it and told me he would give me an answer the next morning. He came down early the next morning and told me I had worried the life out of him ever since we had been partners to get him to sell back to me and now he was going to do so and he would give me twelve months to lose what I had made. I told him he might be right and that I might lose it in less time, but I couldn't help thinking I should get more money out of it than what we had gotten. So, I bought him out.

I had two brothers younger than I and that night I got them together and asked them how they would like to go in with me and that each one

us would take just enough money out of the business to pay the grocery bill and buy our clothes. One of them said he wouldn't go into it unless he got so much per week, which was considerably more than I ~~knew we could~~ ^{felt like the} ~~business would justify~~ get along on. The other one said that suited him alright. He was taking a business course at that time so I told him to go ahead and get through with it and then go in business with me. That was about the middle of June and he finished his course and came in with me about October 1st, 1898.

The first six months we worked together, we cleared \$600.00, which made me feel mighty good. The first few years were pretty hard but each year we made a little more and kept adding to the business. We were doing considerably more business and also bought some real estate and began making money on it outside of our regular business. In the course of a few years, we had enough money to run out business and buy stock in such quantities that we had no trouble in meeting competition anywhere. We also made some money buying stock when it was real cheap and selling it when it was high. We had also bought the two-story brick building where we were running, which was on Front Street and a good location for our business.

At 28 years of age, I was a very heavy smoker and the doctor advised me to cut it out. One morning, I left my smoking materials at home as I had decided to quit. However, I had only been at the factory a short while when I wanted to smoke so badly I started downstairs to get a pipe I remembered I had there. ^{left in a machine which was close to the elevator} I had been told that the opening to the rope elevator which we used to convey materials to the second floor, had been left open; but in my eagerness to get the pipe, I forgot about it and stepped off in it. I realized what had happened at once and grabbed out with both hands to catch the floor but only caught with my right hand; and as I slipped loose, I fell about sixteen feet on my left hip and elbow, which were both crushed very badly. I had another blue spell then, thinking it was all up with me surely, but soon decided it wasn't so bad for I could still walk and do some work. My brother and I worked on together and each year added a little to our capital. I had thought all along that when I got enough money to take care of

Wife I would marry if I could find someone who would suit me. However, when I did get the money, I was afraid the girl might marry me for what I had financially, so I put it off again. After I lost my parents though and my sister and brothers married off, it got pretty lonesome for me, so I decided I would take a chance on marrying if I could find someone who would have me. I was then ~~forty~~³⁹ years old. I was thinking a lot of a young lady I was calling on but we were fussy. I was out on the road selling brooms, mattresses and bed springs most of the time and one night I had a dream that the girl I was courting was not the right one for me, and that I would receive a letter from her when I got back home and just what the letter would say, all of which came true. I also dreamt in the same dream that the girl for me was in the city where I was spending the night, Selma, Alabama. Of course, I thought all of this was just an idle dream but the next morning, while calling on the grocery stores in the city, I went into one that had just opened up and the owner told me he was needing some brooms. He called his daughter to help him select some and in this way I met her. Of course, my dream probably made me think she was the one for me. When I got back home, I wrote her and we corresponded eight years before I could get her to marry me. We have been married thirty~~one~~^{two} years and have no regrets for believing in my dream.

Speaking of dreams, one of my hobbies has always been farming and one night I dreamt that I was walking over a farm, one which I had really been fascinated with for some time, and while there I could hear the people hollowing and talking in the city--at that time a good ways off. Of course, I thought merely of it as a dream, but it wasn't long before we bought that farm. It was then just outside the city limits. It has since been taken into the city and is in sight of the heart of town.

While telling dreams, I had more that came true. After we had been running our spring factory a while I dreamt that two of our employees, one a white and one a colored man, got a finger cut off. The next morning on my way to the office, we met one of the partners taking a colored employee to the

hospital with his finger off. I told him, "Well, you will carry another man with his finger cut off today also." He asked what I meant and I told him my dream. That day at noon one of our white employees went back to see how the accident could have happened and was feeling around the machine and cut off one of his fingers.

As I have said before, I have always been crazy about farming and wanted to live a piece out of the city. Before I married, I had bought a place $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles out from Meridian and was figuring on moving out there on same as soon as I could get it arranged to suit me. When I married, I told my wife that we could either fix up the house in town to suit her; or if she had rather wait a while, we would build a nice house out on the farm. She said she would rather wait and get out in the country, so in 1916 I decided to fix up and move out soon. We made preparations to put in the water works system and ~~was~~ ^{were} hoping to move in the next few months. Then, an older brother, who lived across the street from us, died and left his ^{wife +} three little girls. They asked us not to leave them but to stay there, which we did. My nieces grew up and moved out of town in 1935, so I told my folks I was either going to move out to my farm then or give up the idea. I built a nice brick bungalow with all modern conveniences (such as water, lights, etc.), and moved out in the early part of 1935. My wife and I have enjoyed the country very much since then. We have cows, chickens, etc., with three families on the place to work the farm for us and look after things generally. A concrete highway runs by my place and I have a concrete driveway up to the house. My wife takes me to and from the factory every week-day. I am now 73 years old and think I have plenty to live comfortably the rest of my life, but I still like to make and save money. I buy only what we need for we never know what the future may hold for us.

This is about the end of my story but I wish to say I don't think anyone should give up on account of their afflictions. The last fifteen years or so, I have suffered a good bit with my hip that was broken when I fell through the elevator shaft years ago. I also have high blood pressure

and neuritis, so I have not been really well for a long time. However, I am thankful to be alive and able to keep going. I enjoy being at the factory, answering the phone and talking to customers and friends who drop in. I have a radio there and one at home, which I get much pleasure out of. My wife and I do not have any children but I have always enjoyed having my nieces and nephews around me.

I have tried to help others get an education and make something out of themselves; and have had the pleasure of seeing many of them make good. I feel that my life has been fairly successful and I attribute my success (if you want to call it that) to God as I feel like He did what He promised me in the scriptures I mentioned above. It is up to us to do right and He will do the rest!