

*The First Home. 1875 and Later*

had breakfast. Dad's farm was not blessed with too many rocks to start with, I have been told, but still there was plenty. When you stop and think, you realize that the largest part of the farm land in crop here today was first broke up that way. It is quite a debt, we owe those tough tobacco-chewing, take a snort-now-and then boys. They were stickers and nothing could stop them. There was a chance there for their children to get an education and grow into useful, God fearing men and women.

The first crop on our farm was probably cut with a cradle and bound by hand. Not many acres then, but it took a lot of them. Then as the good years continued, and they had something to sell, Dad bought a Marsh harvester, but still bound by hand. Next, some inventive genius made a machine that would bind the bundles with a fine wire, no hand work. We still have the clippers they used to cut the wire when they fed the bundles into the thresher. All this was changed with the invention of the twine knotter by John Appleby. That revolutionized the harvest.

Undoubtedly, Dad was breaking up more land each year to enlarge his operations. Some of the land would be backset, or plowed again in the spring. This mellowed the soil and made it easier to work. My older brother told of breaking half mile lands with the oxen.

The farm implements were rather crude then. To prepare the land, they would go over it several times with the wooden drag, equipped with iron teeth. It was probably factory made. There were plenty of implement dealers, even then, to help relieve the horny-handed sons of toil of the hard-earned cash. The new improved implements saved the farmer a lot of handwork and sole leather.

Dad sowed his first crop by hand. With a sack of seed on his shoulder, he walked back and forth across the field, scattering the grain by hand. A circular motion with the arm and a handful of seed did the trick. Dad was good at this and usually got a good even stand. The seed was covered with a drag, pulled by a yoke of cattle or a team of horses. Many years afterward we had a three-section iron drag. It was painted a beautiful sky blue.

It was several years before Dad got a disk and seeder. The seeder was a wooden wheel affair, six feet long, and was pulled by one team. The six foot box, that held the seed was a dandy place to