

Chapter 4. Denison, Iowa: It's a Wonderful Life

Denison was a wonderful town to grow up in and go to school in. It was almost quintessential America. The American dream of equal opportunity for all was nearly true.

As for me, I failed to take advantage of the opportunities. Even though it was a different era, maybe some insight can be gleaned from a character seemingly uninterested in growth.

Denison sits calmly on a hill, one of the hills pushed by the snout of massive, mile-thick, slow-moving glaciers that descended from the north time and again, stealing soil of Canada and Minnesota, depositing it in heaps¹ in the American Midwest. Denison sits within the acute angle formed by the lazy Boyer and East Boyer Rivers. The rivers meet just southwest of town and flow as one, still lethargically, in a southwesterly direction to join the Missouri River.

Denison was established in 1856 by an enterprising New Yorker, Rev. Jesse Denison. It was a decade before the railroad arrived, but Rev. Denison expected the railroad to run along the flat Boyer River valley. Rev. Denison was an agent of the Providence Western Land Company, which used elaborate advertising, depicting steamboats at anchor on the Boyer River, to induce eastern capitalists to invest \$51,000. In reality the Boyer could only float a steamboat moving downstream during a spring flood. Some of the money was used to purchase land warrants from military veterans. The U.S. government had issued warrants of up to 160 acres to veterans of the war of 1812, the war with Mexico, and some “Indian” wars.² The veterans could claim a homestead or sell the warrant. Rev. Denison paid as little as 60 cents per acre.

Rev. Denison had a ‘way’ with officials, according to Roscoe Lokken.³ Denison met with the federal agent in charge of land disbursement prior to the day on which claims could be staked. On that day, Denison was allowed to have the first hearing, during which he laid claim to a 23,000-acre site in the Boyer River fork, defining the town that bears his name. Next he got Judge John R. Bassett to locate the Crawford County Court House on the Denison hill, after agreeing to purchase 300,000 shingles from the judge at a price of \$3.50 per thousand. The judge, on the side, had a shingle business. Normally such ‘arrangements’ are discreet, but in this case Rev. Denison’s papers describe the deal in a signed letter in which he cautions “This between you and me – and I would not have it said between others.”⁴

Denison's first settlers were native-born Americans of English and Scottish extraction. Next came Swedish immigrants, soon overwhelmed by Germans. *Die Denison Zeitung* was launched in 1879, and soon thereafter an independent German newspaper, *Der Denison Herold*. There were so many Germans in the Denison area that the 775-seat Deutsche Opernhaus Gesellschaft von Denison was built in 1914 at the corner of Main Street and Broadway. By the time I was a youth this had become the Ritz Theater with adjoining Candy Kitchen and soda fountain.

The most famous Denisonite, born in 1921, Donnabelle Mullenger, was of German heritage. In Hollywood, she changed her name to Donna Reed. She won an Oscar for her performance in *From Here to Eternity*, but is probably better known for her role in *It's a Wonderful Life*, the 1946 Frank Capra Christmas movie classic in which she co-stars with Jimmy Stewart. She starred in *The Donna Reed Show* on television from 1958 to 1966.

The Denison water tower broadcasts above the treetops: Denison "It's a Wonderful Life". The Ritz Theater is now transformed into the Donna Reed museum. An effort has been made to make the Denison streets resemble those of Bedford Falls, the town depicted in *It's a Wonderful Life*. Denison of my youth seemed as sturdy and commendable as Bedford Falls.

At the base of the Denison hill, Highway 30 ran from New York to San Francisco. Called the Lincoln Highway, it was America's most used cross-continental transportation. At the top of the hill, Broadway also runs east-west, so Highway 30, four blocks south of Broadway, is Fourth Avenue South on street signs. Main Street runs down the hill, perpendicular to Broadway.

On Lincoln Highway in 1945, not far from the intersection of Main Street and the highway, there was a bar, Russell's Place, with a jukebox and good cheer, where my father became a bartender. A few blocks to the west, at the southwest corner of Denison, was Cronk's Café, a place known to truckers from coast to coast, where my mother, a few years later, would become a waitress. These places provided fuel for a rage that tore our family apart.

Our peaceful family life became chaotic after we moved to Denison in March 1945.

Denison brought an instant improvement of facilities. None of the farms had electricity. Only one, the Denison farm, had water in the house, via a kitchen lift pump connected to cistern water.

Our Denison house had electric lights and one water faucet. The faucet was above a rectangular sink in the corner of the kitchen. That kitchen sink was shared by all eight of us for personal use, and eight became nine when my brother Lloyd was born in 1946. Oddly, I do not remember ever fighting over use of the sink. I suppose that we were very efficient in washing our faces in the morning, and we were happy about the upgrade from farm life.

Our house was moved to 318 North 11th Street, at the west end of town, the year before we bought the house and property. One of our new neighbors, Fred Nemitz, says that the house fell off the truck part way up 11th Street, a rutted dirt road. The fall caused a crack that ran from the ceiling to the floor in the wall between the kitchen and living room. We papered over the crack in the living room, but the crack was always visible in the painted kitchen wall.

The house, as moved, had four rooms: two small bedrooms and a kitchen and living room. This house was placed over a hole in the ground to provide a cellar under one bedroom and the kitchen. The cellar was useful for storing canned produce from the garden for year-round

consumption. Two rooms were added onto the house: a small bedroom, which our parents used, and a porch, used mainly for storage, as there was only one closet in the house.

Baths, not too frequent, were in a round tub in the kitchen with water heated on the cookstove. It was a lot of work to change the water, but I don't think we all used the same water. If my older sisters took such baths, it was after we younger ones were in bed. Personal modesty was the rule in the 1940s and 1950s. I remember seeing my sisters in bras, but never once with bare breasts.

Our toilet situation did not improve immediately: we still used an outhouse. The way that works, the outhouse is placed over a hole in the ground. When the hole is half full, the outhouse is tipped over, a new hole is dug, dirt from the new hole is used to fill in the old hole, and the outhouse is placed over the new hole. Fortunately, after two years in Denison, we got a toilet in the corner of the cellar, connected to a septic tank. Unfortunately, the only access to the cellar was via outside steps down to the cellar door, and the path from our house's backdoor to the steps was often muddy. This was still our plumbing situation when I was 18 and left to college.

Why describe our meager economic situation? I will argue that opportunities for youth in low income families were much better in that era than today. Deterioration of educational opportunities is a correctable government failure. I failed to navigate school and social matters well, so I was academically far behind when I got to college. You need to avoid the mistakes I made. It is difficult to make up for mistakes later – you do not have the time to waste.

Denison had awesome money-making potential for kids. Columbia Hall, a dance hall, was one block from our house. Cars filled the parking lot and lined North 11th Street on Saturday night. Coca-Cola and Seven-Up bottles, discarded from vehicles, were worth three cents each, and beer bottles two cents. People went to their cars to talk or make love. They did not seem to care about the three cents. The next morning we got a haul of bottles sufficient for several of us to see a movie at the Ritz Theatre and get candy at the Candy Kitchen before the movie.

Other money-making activities were paper routes, babysitting, table waiting, dish washing, pin setting at the bowling alley, and tutoring. Donna was the leader. She was 15 when she got a job as a waitress at the Spot café. Then she got a more lucrative job as a telephone operator, although she had to stop temporarily when they found out she was underage.

Lois took me on her paper route when I was in second grade. I remember freezing toes and fingers in winter, but sometimes a sympathetic person invited us in for hot chocolate. In third grade I got my own paper route delivering the Omaha World Herald, about a dozen customers that Karen gave me from her bigger route. The price of the paper was 25 cents for six daily papers and 15 cents for Sunday. I paid 20 cents for the dailies and 12 cents for the Sunday paper, so I made eight cents. Profit was about a dollar a week, and increased as the route size grew.

Donna was a dynamo at making money. From her jobs as a waitress and telephone operator she made enough money to buy us a refrigerator on time payments. Before that, our neighbor, Mrs. Lohrmann, let us use her refrigerator to make jello. Thanks to Donna, we had our own luxury.

Donna graduated from high school at age 17. She then worked for a year to save money to go to nursing college in Sioux City. After she left for college in 1949, there would be no luxuries on my father's salary, which could hardly support the remaining family of eight people.

A wrenching event occurred between our parents during a year-end holiday season. Mr. Potter, owner of Russell's Place, ran out of his best whiskey, which he gave to his best customers. There was a limit on purchases from the liquor store, but because my father was a teetotaler, his ration was available. Mr. Potter gave him \$12 for two bottles. My mother wanted to help. My sister Karen was with her when she bought the two bottles. Unfortunately as they went to the car, it was icy, my mother slipped, dropping a bottle and as she tried to catch it, she dropped the other. Both broke. Our father was furious and merciless. Mom came home and wept uncontrollably on Donna and Eleanor's bed. It was traumatic for mother and the children who witnessed it. The event gradually receded, but was never forgotten.

I was eight years old, starting 3rd grade, when my mother took a job at Cronk's Café. My father was furious. My parents' arguments occurred mainly after we children were in bed, but it was a small house and when his voice rose in anger I woke up. My father pounded the table with his fist, shouted a vehement curse against the owner of Cronks, and demanded that she stop working for him. I feared repetition of the fights, which occurred several times.

One night I had a dream: my father, in a fury, was shooting the cookstove with a blunderbuss. There was a huge hole in the stove, smoke was pouring out. I sat up in bed screaming repeatedly "no, not the cookstove!" It woke my parents, but not 5-year-old Patty and 3-year-old Lloyd, who were in the same bed with me. Then I realized I had been dreaming. My father was standing by our bed. I was afraid. I laid back down and pretended to go to sleep. He went back to bed.

I had misunderstood their arguments about the stove. I was attached to the cookstove, perhaps because it was my job to bring in fuel for it, a basket of cobs from the cob pile in the backyard. However, my mother actually wanted to get rid of it, to get a gas range. After window shopping, she agreed to buy a gas range on time payments, to be paid from her job at Cronks.

My father was furious. There was a big scene in the kitchen, as my father insisted that the stove be returned to the store. He accused Mr. Wilson, proprietor of Skelgas, of various things. Mr. Amsbury, the Minister of the RLDS church, appeared on the scene, probably called by my mother, trying to calm the waters. My mother did not return the stove. Arguments and recriminations continued that year. Mr. Amsbury tried to mediate several times. At last, apparently as a concession to save their marriage, my mother quit working at Cronks.

If the waters were calmed, it was the calm before the storm. In the summer of 1951, when I was 10 years old, between 4th and 5th grades, my mother started to work at Cronks again. Her work shift was 5 PM to 3 AM. My father was furious when he realized she was working again. He went to the house of Tom Shaddy, owner of Cronk's, demanding that he not employ my mother.

When my mother arrived home at 3 AM she knew that my father was on the rampage, so she locked the door from the inside and left her key in it, so that his key could not open the door. When he began kicking the door, my mother called the police and hid behind clothes in the closet. With his kicking, the key fell from the lock and my father was able to get into the house, but the police arrived and so did Tom Shaddy. Shaddy argued with my father, saying that he had to eat onion sandwiches when he was growing up – one of my sisters says they were trying to "out poormouth each other." If the intent was to calm my father, it did not work. My mother was afraid, so the police arrested my father, putting him in jail for the night. The next morning he was released from jail, came home, laid down on their bed, and wept.

My mother filed for divorce. My father would not accept, so a trial was held in December. The judge, in his Decree, made several statements revealing his opinion about the role of women, for example: "It is natural that a man, traditionally the supporter of the family, should be displeased and chagrined at the wife's doing what he should do."⁵

The judge did not find evidence of physical harm. "Plaintiff complains defendant once kicked her and injured her back. Her evidence upon this claim is very weak." Also "Plaintiff complains she feared defendant intended to do her harm because he once demanded that she produce the family rifle which she had hidden. It appears that when it was produced he loaded it and hung it over the door in the place where it was usually kept. There is no evidence that he said anything, or did anything else, to indicate that he expected to use the rifle. He says it was always kept loaded. She says it had not been kept loaded recently. The court is convinced that plaintiff is exhibiting a synthetic fear, built up through a desire to attribute fault to her husband."

The judge concluded that "It is clear that the plaintiff wife did not react to her husband with understanding, with tolerance for his viewpoint or with love for him. In the family life, at least recently, and at the trial, she showed by her actions and by what she said that she intends to do as she wishes and insists that the husband make complete concessions and adapt his thoughts and the governing of the family life to what plaintiff wants to do."

The judge ruled for our father. Divorce was denied. Arguments and recriminations continued. My father's greatest anger was expressed as slurs against Mr. Shaddy. When my mother began to smoke, it was a new source of anger. My mother refiled for divorce and in 1954 the divorce was granted. My father got a one-room apartment on Main Street. I never went to see him.

My older sisters spent limited time at home and by the summer of 1953 the three oldest were married and living elsewhere. Our family life, with mother and four children, was very different than the crowded, raucous family of nine. Our mother worked from 5 PM until 3 AM or later six days a week. We each had our own lives, with the children following four very different paths.

We seven children saw different slices of our parents' lives, even though the slices overlapped. Our oldest sister, Donna, gives a balanced view of our parents' faults and strengths; our father was her hero during her 14 years on the farm. Another sister says, yes, he was a 'male chauvinist pig', but we should judge him in the time he lived. Maybe so. We do not tear down George Washington's statue because he had slaves; he was living in a different world.

I probably had the worst view of our father, because I was at a vulnerable age when a changing world brought out his worst. Early in high school I saw a 'western' on television that ended with the cowboy philosopher saying "There is so much good in the worst of us, and so much bad in the best of us, that it ill behooves any of us, to criticize the rest of us."

Denison had an excellent public school. Equal opportunity was reality. It did not matter that our family's economic status was near the low end of the range. Most houses were bigger than ours, but in school it was not obvious where kids were from. Everyone was treated the same.

My older sisters took advantage of opportunities in the Denison school and did well. In contrast, I made poor choices that retarded my academic, social and physical development.

The best years for me were kindergarten and 1st grade. In kindergarten we each had to supply our own little rug to take a nap on. At recess there were see-saws, a slide, a merry-go-round, and a jungle gym, but I never climbed above the first rung.



Sixth grade class photo – Sam and James in lower left

The first grade teacher, Miss Malone, was crabby. There are 32 kids in the first grade class photo, so maybe that is why. She rapped our knuckles with a ruler if we did something bad.

Steve J. and I walked home together, about half a mile, in kindergarten and 1st grade. My mother usually gave me a nickel to buy a drink, so we would stop at a soda fountain, Candy Kitchen or Denison Drug, order a Cherry Coke or a Green River, put in our straws, and share the drink.

Parents did not worry about kids walking home. We were in no hurry. I picked up Popsicle sticks, which I collected. Sometimes we stopped at a pond beside the Dodge/Plymouth dealer, across the street from the firehouse. The pond had frogs and tadpoles, and maybe fish. Recently I learned that the pond, a bit below street level, was in the remnants of the basement of the German Veterans Bruderschaft Hall that burned during World War I, probably not by accident.⁶

After first grade our class was divided into two classes by the first initial of last name, A-H and I-Z. By the time the classes came back together, in high school, I was asocial and avoided contact with Steve J., who was then class president and captain of the football team.

In the sixth grade class photo, when I was 11 years old, I am sitting next to Sam D. Sam had just moved to town. He was one of the smartest kids I ever knew. Sam tried to befriend me. Maybe that was because in the ‘Iowa tests,’ which were used nationally, I got the highest scores in mathematics and science in our A-H class and he got the highest scores in all other areas.

Sam once walked with me on my paper route all the way to my home, where he sat down and talked with my mother. He was very polite, calling her “Mrs. Poncho.” Sam was supposed to be Cisco Kid and I was his silent partner, Poncho. She was amazed by this kid who could talk up a blue streak. He asked if I could stay overnight at his house, which she agreed. We went to a Boy’s Club meeting that his father ran. I was not interested and never attended again.

You can see the difference between Sam and me in our faces. Sam was bright and enthusiastic. He knew about political issues and historical events. He knew music. He could hear a song and say “that song was stolen” by one country artist from another, but he also knew classical music.

Sam read books and magazines. His father, who I think was half Native American, had gone to college – it might have been Oklahoma State – where he was a good baseball player. He hit ground balls to us once, but Sam was not very interested in playing sports. Once Sam said to me “do you know err is pronounced urr, so if a player misses a ball it should be an urr-urr, not an air-urr”. He was making fun of a ridiculous pronunciation. He seemed to think about everything.

When Sam said something it came in my ears, registered in my brain, and I remembered it, but I did not think about it or respond or ask questions. I should have been inspired by Sam to think more and read more, but I was not. Sam became exasperated with me once and criticized me for being so placid, but instead of taking it in a positive way, I let it hurt my feelings.

Maybe my failure to emulate Sam was because the gap between us was too great. The Hansen family pre-K education system did not work for me. Karen took me to the library a few times. The first time it was to the children’s section, showing me Dr. Suess books. I thought they were weird and I wanted nothing to do with them. Years later she showed me books she was reading, Nancy Drew mystery novels. By the third one I was bored. When I left Denison at age 18 my total reading from the Carnegie library was two and a half Nancy Drew mysteries.

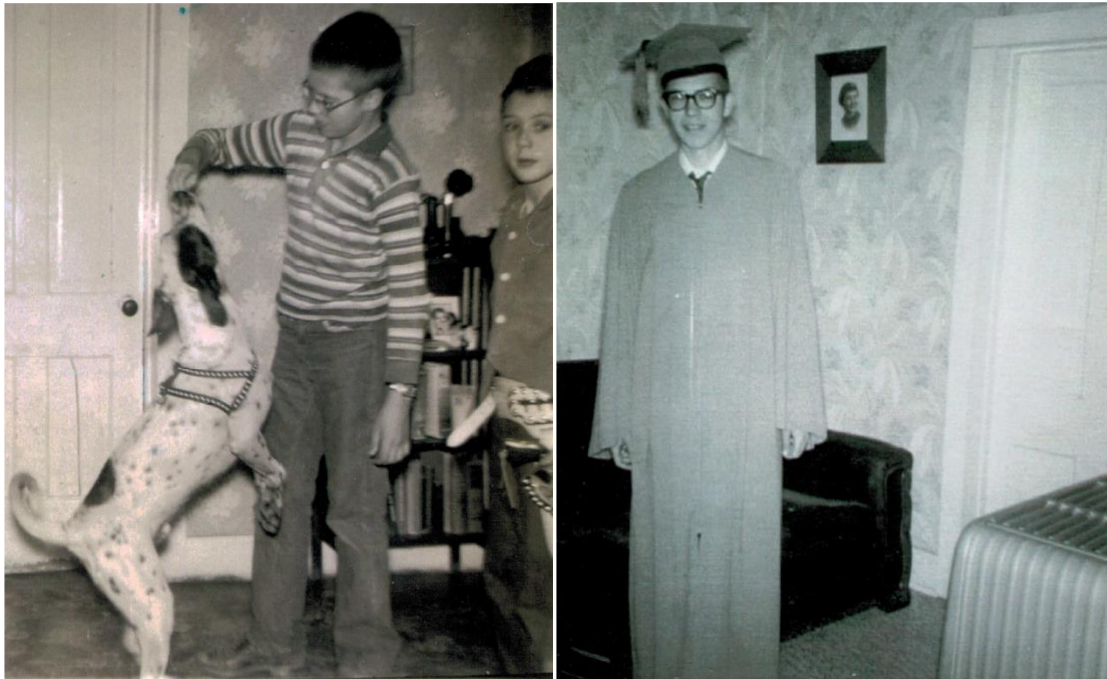
I did read about sports. In 1950, when I was nine, I saw a baseball magazine in the Candy Kitchen with a glossy cover photo of 18-year-old Mickey Mantle of the class C Joplin Miners. It was expensive, but I coughed up some of my hard-earned paper route money to buy it. Mantle went to spring training with the New York Yankees in 1951 and made the team, although he was sent down to the Yankees top minor league farm team, the Kansas City Blues, for about 40 games. I could get the Kansas City games on the radio. I became a Yankee baseball fan and began cutting out Yankee box scores from the Omaha paper and calculating statistics.

My social development was wanting. Sam and I went to a movie at the Ritz. An actor had a pamphlet in his back pocket. The camera zoomed in on the pamphlet and the audience laughed. I asked Sam what the words were. He looked at me and said “you can’t read that! You need to go see the nurse!” I did. I had to get quite thick glasses, which exacerbated my shyness.

By seventh grade we started to get interested in girls. Sam was explicit about the parts of their bodies he was engrossed with. He was not attracted to their butt, he said, because “we had the same thing.” Sam was gregarious and could easily talk with girls. Once, in the home of a girl about two years older than us, Sam was talking with her when she went into her room to change from a shirt into a sweater. She noted the inconvenience of her boobs as she pulled the sweater on. Of course she was wearing a bra, but Sam was beside himself when he told me about it.

I did not think girls were interested in me and I was too shy, so Sam and I gradually parted company. He moved away from Denison the next year.

Steve J. was a role model for physical development. Once as I walked past his house he was climbing a rope hanging from a tree. He advised me to do that, which he said was useful to strengthen his body. But I was very passive, ignored the role model, and did nothing to develop physically. By high school, Steve was a lean 175 pounds and became the center and captain of the football team. I was almost Steve’s height, having grown to five foot 10 or 11 inches by the time I graduated from high school, but I weighed only 130 pounds, and even so I was pudgy.



Left: our dog skeeter, James (age 14), brother Lloyd (age 9). Right: James (age 18)

It was not that I didn't like sports. I played baseball and basketball in junior high school, but with limited success. In baseball I could field flawlessly at second base, but with 90-foot bases I was hardly strong enough to hit the ball out of the infield. A new kid, Gary Z. had moved to town. He was good, clearly one of the best two players at our age level, but also a smart aleck, always joking, and his baseball 'chatter' in the field was sometimes biting. He also thought that he was a better coach than Coach Potratz, and he thought that I should not be the starting second baseman. Once when I could not reach a ball hit up the middle he said, "see, no range!" When I came to bat during a simulated game, with Coach Potratz pitching and Gary playing centerfield, Gary came in very shallow behind second base. Coach Potratz said, "what are you doing Gary?" Gary did not move. Coach Potratz pitched, maybe an intentional fat pitch, and I hit it as hard as I could, a fly ball to straightaway centerfield. Gary bolted back, sputtering, and I ran hard, thinking I had at least a triple. I am sure Coach Potratz was smiling. However, Gary caught the ball over his shoulder. He had made his point. At least he was quiet for a while.

I put up a basketball hoop in our backyard and practiced shooting with nobody guarding me. Coach Potratz had a free-throw shooting competition the day before each game. The winner got to be game captain. I was captain five times out of our ten games. I was a clueless captain. I just went out on the floor with the other team's captain before the game and listened to the referee's instructions, but it meant that I was a starter. As soon as I made one basket they guarded me tight and that was it. Four points was the maximum that I ever scored in a game.

These limited social interactions in junior high, via sports, disappeared in high school. When I went to a football game I would go under the grandstand behind the players bench. Field view was limited, but I avoided going into the stands where I would need to interact with classmates. My entertainment was to go to a pool hall in the evening, but not the pool hall on Broadway frequented by most high school guys, instead the Uptown Club, a smoke-filled bar frequented by farmers, with the jukebox often booming with the deep voice of Johnny Cash.

One or both of brothers Ernie and Larry S. were usually there. They were big muscular guys, and very good pool players. I was only about average, so I negotiated a spot before a game of snooker. The only thing at stake was that loser pays for the game, but that was enough incentive for keen competition.

The best thing that I did in school was to decide to save money for college. The college idea came up when I was in the 5th grade. Eleanor was in the 12th grade. She had taken stenography and was able to do shorthand and type at phenomenal rates that seemed physically impossible, keys flying and yet not getting stuck. Eleanor was hired to work for the Principal, coming in very early before school started. One day she came home with the information that I had tied some guy in high school for the highest IQ in school. That guy was known as a brain, so I concluded that I could probably be successful in college. Inexplicably, I did not seem to realize that I had better become more involved academically.

My academic achievements in Denison were limited to hints of potential. Once in grade school a teacher was puzzled by a question in the mathematics book “20 times 20 is 400 so what is 19 times 19?” I said instantly “it’s 361, they want you to subtract 20 and 19 from 400.” I saw that without going through the logic which is: subtract one 20 to get nineteen 20s, which is the same as twenty 19s. But you want nineteen 19s, so you must also subtract 19.

In high school I took Physics. In the first week, Mr. Heinzelman gave us an exam to see what we were starting with. I got minus 3, while the next best score was minus 19. Mr. Heinzelman said he was only giving one ‘A,’ because there should not be that large a gap. Nobody was annoyed at me – in that era kids were not under pressure, life was easier. So I knew that I had potential, but I did nothing to develop scientific talent. I did not come in for lab work or extra activity. I had the excuse that I needed to take papers to Denison businesses in the morning and after school divide up papers for the newsboys and newsgirls, but still – what was I thinking?

Bill Nye says that every scientist is already a scientist by grade school. That was not true in my case. I would have to struggle to catch up, if that were possible at all, and there would be a price to pay. The delinquent misses opportunities.

I graduated 23rd in a class of 93 students, the last person in the upper quarter. I did not realize how lucky I was until I received a letter of acceptance for admission to the University of Iowa. The University waived tuition, because I had high college entrance test scores and was in the top quarter of my class. In-state tuition was \$440 per year when I was a freshman, so if I had been 24th, instead of 23rd, I would have run out of money by my second year of college.

We will return to Denison, Iowa, in the final chapter. Denison is America, if not the world.

Becoming a scientist is not simple. You don’t go to school, get filled up with education, and come out a scientist. The best that can happen is that you get pointed in the right direction.

Becoming a scientist is a process, not easy to explain. I will try, by relating my experiences. I had unusual opportunities, even if I did not recognize how remarkable the situation was. I took my first step as a result of a peculiar requirement imposed by Professor James Van Allen.

¹ The Des Moines Lobe of the last great glacier, 20,000 years ago, skirted the northeast corner of Crawford County. The Denison hill may have been formed by one of the earlier glaciers. Surface soil, in the Southern Iowa Drift

Plain, originated from glacial action at different periods in geologic time, and may include some of the loess that forms thick dunes closer to the Missouri River.

² Abraham Lincoln was granted 40 acres for 'fighting' in the Black Hawk War, which some would describe as a massacre, not a war. Lincoln never raised a rifle, but he was conscripted. Lincoln's 40 acres were on the edge of Denison, on Vernon Voss road, just down the road from my mother's final home. Lincoln never set foot in Denison, but there is a marker on what was his property.

³ Lokken, Roscoe L., *Iowa Public Land Disposal*, Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, 318 pp., 1942.

⁴ *Denison Bulletin*, *Denison Centennial 1856-1956*, page 2, 24 August 1956.

⁵ For context, the judge's full paragraph read: "Plaintiff says defendant was morose, sullen, did not speak for days at a time and that at such times he refused to eat with the family. There is some foundation for this. It does appear that when defendant disapproved of his wife he withdrew to himself. His disapproval was always due to his dislike of her night work. It is natural that a man, traditionally the supporter of the family, should be displeased and chagrined at the wife's doing what he should do. Defendant evidently did not adapt himself to the family situation, and did not demonstrate his displeasure in the usual way."

⁶ Maharidge, D., *Denison, Iowa*, Free Press, Simon & Schuster, New York, 260 pages. Anti-German feelings and actions, which Denison prefers to forget, seem to have disappeared by the time I was growing up.