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My parents came to this country in 1900. I was born in 1902 in the house you live in now on Pass Creek Road by the spring. My mom ran the Post Office at Gardner when I was small. The mail changed horses at Badito and went on to Malachite and Redwing. My Dad taught school everywhere - Chama, Gardner, Malachite, Redwing. I went to school at Malachite - at the old adobe school. There were 75 or 80 students in grades 1 through 8. There were 40 and 50 year old students coming to school to learn to read and write and to learn math. There was a lot of Homework. The older men took care of the boys and the older women took care of the younger girls. My Dad never had to do any discipline. Those guys were dead-eyed dicks. They could shoot accurately. They were hunters don't you know.

My Dad had a new schoolhouse built out of stone at Malachite. Most of the students were Spanish - maybe it was 50% Spanish. The Spanish people came from old Mexico. They moved where the living was easy. They liked the good grass, the creeks, places where they could raise calves and hogs. They would render the lard from 10 hogs at a time. There was no Spanish spoken on the school grounds. The Spanish kids grew up with the white kids and all the Mexican kids learned English. They didn't know how to transact business. 40 and 50 year old men would come to school to learn how to transact business and to learn how to speak English from my Dad. They didn't know what a quart or a bushel or a ton was. Papa taught them all. They learned how many bales in a haystack. They got so they knew. Their kids ran wild like animals. This was years ago. They knew how to hunt and fish, but they didn't know how to transact business. My Papa liked to take guys like that and watch them progress. My Dad was a king bee. He was a lawyer. My Dad civilized people. Nobody grunted when Dad talked. The Spanish people didn't know how to weigh pinones. Those people didn't know nothing. They had a little language and a sort of a sign language. They didn't know the value of grain or hay. The Mexican women didn't know how to can fruit. They ate tortillas, eggs, etc. Papa called tortillas shoe leather. The white women taught them how to make jelly. When my Dad showed up, they were really happy. They had the minds of 5, 6 or 7 year olds. The kids that went to school overtook their folks in no time. This was back a long time ago - maybe 100 years ago.

If I had my life to live over, I don't know how I'd improve on it. I had a Daddy that could answer any question, And he could make you understand. Everyone dropped in to ask Mike questions. He went clear through law school and he had plenty on the ball. No bragging or boasting, my Daddy was a smart man. He didn't like being a lawyer because he felt things were right, or they were wrong, and he didn't like to try to prove that they were different. That was why he became a teacher.

My Dad was a peacemaker. People would sit down around the wood pile visiting while my Dad chopped wood. If a couple was having a fight, my Dad would patch it up for them. I never knew a couple to split up if my Dad was around. He would just talk to them until they got it straightened out okay. He'd say: "Your're a man, and do you mean that you would fight your wife? You just don't do that. You got to remember she's your compadre. You don't fight women do you?" When he'd get through with them, they'd say, "Mr. Wyatt, you've sure been lovely to us." My Dad felt there was nothing too bad that you couldn't settle it among yourselves. Two people have to live together and be kind to each other. My Dad would sit down with people and talk with them for half an hour and they would see that that wasn't the way to do.

When I was a kid, a group of us broke out window lights at the school. My Dad heard about it and talked to me. "Do you know anything about that? Were you there? You don't know? That's funny. Don't you ever do that again. Let's go down and look at those window lights. You boys fix them and never do it again and we'll just forget it. And I won't say anything more about it."

People don't know how to talk to each other without getting mad these days. That's the way you learn. My Dad had law and order on his side all the time. It's hard for a lot of people to say their sorry. My Dad didn't rough you. He'd sit down and talk, and no more window lights were ever broken out. He'd let someone diagnose it themselves. He wouldn't get mean or mad. He could shame you to where you'd do anything to fix it up. He wouldn't ball you out and crowd you. What fun is in it? You just get in trouble that way. My Dad kept order up there. People would say, "See Mike, he'll fix it up." We should have counselors,...someone to say, "Now listen, this thing isn't worth arguing over." When you get through, everybody loses. It's hard to fight something that's right. "Say you're sorry and give them a hug and they'll just melt."

I used to fight when I was a kid. My Dad would say, "I'm going to let you go till you get hell kicked out of you. I'm not going to mention it again. Let's forget it. It's hard to say" "It's my fault. What do you think?"

I've been the luckiest guy in the world. I started out playing baseball and then I played basketball when I was in High School. I loved to play. I'd live in the gym. I'd play by myself. I played all kinds of sports. I had a good teacher in Castle Rock, and I won a lot of medals because of him. I went to High School in Castle Rock and I boarded there for four years, so it was just like home.

The summer before my last year of high school, I took a train to Denver and then on to Lander, Wyoming. I was looking for work in the oil fields or in the refineries. I took me six days to get a job and it was the best I ever had. I got hired, because

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I was a good ball player. Everyone was crazy about baseball, and they had a really good ball team called the Oilers. When the boss saw me playing ball, he decided to hire me even though I was only 18 years old. You were supposed to be 21, but he wanted me to be on his ball team, so I got a job. I stayed with a family whose sons were all grown and away from home. They treated me just like a son refused to take any money from me. I made good money on my job and got paid for seven days a week. I got paid to play ball two days a week. By the time I was ready to back home to my last year of high school, I had \$1,000 in my pocket. That was the best job I ever had.

Dr. Chapman was a friend of My father's. He was the best doctor there ever was. He worked for CF&I for Rockefeller in New York City. He had a pass on every railroad in the country. When you get that good, you're really somebody. Him and my Dad were great friends. He had a son and a daughter. He could figure out what's wrong with you. He invented the drug zonite to fight poisons. Zonite killed blood poisoning and it cured yellow fever. Dr. Chapman had land and automobiles but he had too much to do. He would forget what he was doing. He just wanted to concentrate on being a doctor. He had a driver to take him around to the mines and places in the middle of the night. He could keep you alive. They'd call him in when everybody else gave up. He was called in whenever there were mine accidents and emergencies and he figured out deep things. He knew how to fight poisons. Dr. Chapman died when he was 87. He fell down the steps of the Post Office and broke a hip.

There used to be 10,000 coal miners in this country and Dr. Chapman was their doctor. He was the Doctor of the Year for the whole United States, twice. He'd say, "Don't you take this thing too seriously. You're going to be all right." He'd figure out things himself. He was The most wonderful guy I ever knew. Dr. Chapman met my Dad in 1902 here in Walsenburg. They both smoked cigars. They would smoke 50 cigars between them in 3 days. My Dad was a lawyer, but he got fed up with it. He knew right from wrong. He and Dr. Chapman were great friends. Guys that have that kind of mind don't just run in bunches.

Dr. Chapman didn't know anything about money. The CF&I paid him. He never charged for anything and he never paid for anything. Mr. Rockefeller took care of everything for him. He told him just not to worry about money. He told him, "Forget money You're a doctor. Don't think about money." And he never did. He couldn't even make coffee. He just thought about being a doctor. He had a heated garage for his car so it could start any time. Doc started doctoring at 18. If someone was sick and called, he would stay all night, eat breakfast and ride back to town. He would stay days on end and be there to save lives day and night. He would go in on mules where someone had broke his leg or neck. John D. Rockefeller called up Doc and asked him to come to New York and spend a week or ten days with him. He said "I'm worried about this strike they're taking about and want to talk to you about it. The coal miners killed one doctor taking care of a woman having a baby. They had a battle on the hogback.

Dr. Singer in Pueblo was a good doctor too, and so was Corwin.

Back in the dancing years, everybody danced. The house you live in was a dance hall when we lived there. Beeheimer built that house long before I was born in 1902. It may have been a hotel for a short time, but it wasn't used much as a hotel. There were about four acres with the place when we lived there. We had picnics there. There were swings on the trees. There was lots of water, apples, and gardens. There was about four or five horse barns, pig pens, and chicken coops. We had ducks, geese, and chickens. There was an old goose that caught me by the seat of my pants and pulled me down and flapped me. It didn't hurt me, but sure scared me to death.

People used to be dance crazy. They loved music and they liked having a place to go. They would put on the best bib and tucker they had. The women would curl their hair and polish up the kids. They would go to a dance in a wagon and stay all night. They used to have a guitar, fiddle, harmonica, banjo, etc. That would be the orchestra. People would arrive at dark. There would be 8 or 10 people in each wagon. They would just drown the tongue. They would start home at daylight. "We had lots of fun, oh yeah, lots to eat, oh yeah." The Mexican people are all musical. All of the musicians at the dances were Mexicans. They always hired Mexicans to play for the dances. It is just natural for Mexicans to play a fiddle. The Mexicans had separate dances. If you were there, you were welcome. But they had their dances, and we had ours. The Mexicans have more music in their veins. They are kind of bred that way. They can give you a good old hoe-down. That was the dancingest country I ever saw. Back in the dancing years, everybody danced. The coal miners and their women were tougher than nails or they couldn't survive.

I lived in the best time this country ever knew. All of the things that sounded impossible, to me have happened. Automobiles. The 1st Model T. Dancing was the big deal. Waltzes and two steps. There were dances every Saturday. We grew up raring to go. There were fights and little things that would come up. It got pretty rugged.

My Dad had a store where Carol MacDonald lives now. He ran a Post Office there also. Later I had a garage across the road for 30 years. I had the garage and gas business. We had saddle horses. My Dad hunted buffalo, coyotes, and wild turkey. People planted corn, had gardens, raised pigs for ham and lard and grew apple trees. People raised spuds, corn, grain, cattle, pigs and sheep. Badito was the County Seat. The county went almost up to Colorado Springs. The Court House in Badito was made of adobe.

There was a gold mine at Blanco a crusher, sluice boxes and a pulley for cars. My Dad worked in the summer up there. They brought rock down to Tioga in horsedrawn wagons. The bottom of the wagons opened up to let the rock out and load it onto rail cars which took it to the smelter in Colorado Springs.

Nobody has had more fun than I have. I loved that country around Malachite. It was always good to us Wyatts. I've had the best of everything. I told the truth even if it took the hide off. My Dad impressed that on my mind. When you went someplace you were a gentleman and you were on the square.