



Chapter VI

TRAGEDY IN THE FAMILY

When I was about ten years old there was a tragedy in our family. Almost three years before Gladys Marie had been born into the family. She had gotten to be a pretty little girl with long blond curls and was just at the cute age. I can remember her sitting on a stump in the yard one day and she got to saying "damn it." Mother heard her and came out and tried to get her to stop. She knew she had done something cute, so every once in a while after that she would say, "damn it, damn it, damn it." Soon after that she got sick. Granny was there at the time as another baby girl, Pauline was born two weeks before Gladys Marie took sick. Granny and Mother were both pretty good doctors and Mother always had some kind of medicine for what ailed us, but in spite of all they could do Gladys Marie kept getting worse. Father was not home at the time. He was driving a team from Redding to Trinity County and only came home about once a month. Mother and Granny decided to send for a doctor. At that time we either had to send someone twenty miles to Redding to get a doctor or send someone six miles to Bella Vista and telephone for the doctor. My brother Bill went to Bella Vista and telephoned for the doctor. I remember when he came back he said to know if we had the money to pay him. We had twenty-five dollars all right, but that was about all we did have. The doctor came and he decided that Gladys Marie had diphtheria. He left some medicine for her and before he left he put up a red sign on the house that said 'Quarantined'. A few days later Gladys got still worse. Uncle Ben who worked on a ranch two miles away came and he and Mother and Granny together decided to have the doctor come again. This time Uncle Ben went to call the doctor. The first thing the doctor asked was did we have another twenty-five dollars? Uncle Ben just said 'Yes' over the phone but when the doctor came and got his second twenty-five dollars it was Uncle Ben's money that paid him this time, so I guess Uncle Ben thought he had a right to say what he pleased. He only earned thirty dollars a month and his board at farm work. He was a little short man, about five feet two, but when he got mad he could use some of the tallest cuss words you ever heard. I am sure that if our old dog would have gotten the cussing that that doctor got, he would have tucked his tail between his legs so far he never would have gotten it straightened out again.

The incident gave me a feeling against doctors that I have never been able to outgrow in my long life. Even though I realize that doctors do a tre-

mendous good in the world, the mercenary attitude of some causes a lot of unnecessary heartache. Gladys Marie died a few days after the doctor came the second time. I remember Father came out from town in a two-horse surrey with a fringe on the top that he hired at the livery stable. He took us all to the funeral which was held in the Redding Cemetery. Gladys Marie died on September 8, 1899, being two years, six months and one week old.

Baby Pauline soon got to the cute age and took the place of Gladys Marie in our hearts. Though it took Mother a long time to get over the loss of Gladys Marie.



Lottie Sutton and Roy Wilsey taken in 1911, one year before their marriage. Both 21 years old.