

## **Part I: Generation One**

### **Amanda Myrtie Crabtree**



*Amanda Myrtie Crabtree.*

#### **Nebraska Girls**

Oh, Nebraska girls, sweet Nebraska girls,  
With bright blue eyes and shining curls.

They sit and on the organ play,  
'Til some big dude comes in their way.  
They meet him at the parlor door,  
And fly with him forever more.

*—Song Grandma Myrtie sang*

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## Chapter 1

# Amanda Myrtie Crabtree

Birth to Marriage, 1891–1919



Four year old Amanda Myrtie Crabtree.

*Amanda Myrtie Crabtree, the first child of John and Ida Higginson Crabtree, was my grandma. Here is her story in her own words:*

I was born in Nebraska on my father's homestead farm, November 17, 1891. They named me Amanda Myrtie. Our nearest town was Norden, a very small town. The doctor lived there. A little further away was Springview. It was a very small place, too, at that time.

The homestead was land from the government one could get at that time, 160 acres in Nebraska, on which you had to build a house and put out trees. The house was built of sod, like other homesteaders built theirs. The trees were cottonwood trees. They grow fast and can grow in the dry sandy places.

In the spring of that year, they tell me, my father had a fine crop of corn growing and my mother had a good garden with peas about ready to pick, when one of those terrible sandstorms struck—the wind blows so hard—and covered the cornfield and the garden—everything.

### **John, Ida and Myrtie move to Bonesteel, South Dakota**

When I was 6 months old, they moved to Bonesteel, South Dakota; to a town just starting

up good, and my father was the postmaster. It was a very small town. It had a hotel, grocery store, saloons, a livery stable and a Post Office. They had about twice as many saloons as they did buildings. Always had saloons. My father was a good Baptist so they had nothing to do with alcohol.

One time I remember the cowboys coming into town, getting drunk and racing around on their horses and shooting. My mother was afraid and crawled under the bed and took me along.

The Rosebud Indian Reservation was close by and Indians as well as other people came for their mail and they knew us because Father had the Post Office. The Indians were of the Sioux tribe and lived in Hogans. I remember they called me papoose. The government gave the Indians navy blue blankets (big things) to keep warm and also gave meat (cattle) cut in strips to dry.

Mama had an old Squaw, Indian woman, make a pair of moccasins for me when I was still a baby. My mother said she took a straw out of the broom and measured my foot. The next time she came to town, she brought the moccasins. They were made of soft deer skin and all covered with red, white, and blue beads. Real pretty little things. I kept them until my little brother Johnie wore them

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and he wore them out. I was about nine years old when he was born.

When I was just a little girl, Grandmother Shattuck [Ida's mother] lived in Nebraska, and Mother visited her. (Grandmother Crabtree, Father's mother, lived with us.) We had a big horse with a white face and Mama had a buggy to teach school. We came to a stream called Ponca; it was dry. Sometimes, it had lots of water and then the horses swam and brought the buggy.

Other people were afraid to cross the reservation. Mama and her mother could ride across the sacred grounds because they had permission from the Indians who recognized the spotted ponies they rode.

They told me I was the only white child in town until I was four years old. My playmates were dolls but mostly animals—cats, a dog, two horses and two cows, pigs, and chickens. The folks had a garden and a place for the animals on the outskirts of town. I rode the two tame old horses around in their yard. I had a swing and was happy by myself.

My old black cat's name was Simon. I enjoyed dressing him up in doll clothes. When he got tired of it he ran away.

My mother said she gave me a bowl of bread and milk one day. I took it outside to eat and she came out to see where I was. I was sitting on the ground with the cat and dog in front of me. I would take a bite and then give one to the cat and then one to the dog and then one for myself again. I must have had them trained to wait patiently for their turn. That is not natural for a dog and cat to be so patient.

I also had a pet pig, Moses. I'd call, "Here Moses, Moses." He would come running from

## Norden and Springview

### Norden,

#### Keya Paha County, Nebraska

Norden, established in 1885, was named after a town in Germany near the North Sea. One hundred sixteen years after Myrtie was born, Norden—population 10—is still a very small town. It is the current site of the Keya Paha County Fair and Rodeo.

### Springview,

#### Keya Paha County, Nebraska

Springview was a young frontier town when the Crabtrees arrived.

Named for a natural spring west of town, Springview is the County seat of Keya Paha County, and was established in 1884. In July of 1885, Springview had a post office. A year later, they had a courthouse, which was a simple wooden building.

About 25 miles from Springview is Ainsworth, Nebraska, where Clinton and



A photo of an unknown Nebraska town that is in the family picture collection.

Indy Briggs and their son Irwin (Myrtie's future husband) moved in the early 1890s.

In 1892, the Crabtrees moved to Bonesteel, South Dakota. They missed the drought of 1893–1894, when no crops were raised for two full seasons.

There were 244 people living in Springview, Nebraska, in 2000, according to the census.

Cousin Mildred Amick Horton, 99 years young, lives in Springview, and remembers Myrtie. Mildred's mother was Mae Williams Amick, Myrtie's first cousin. ❀



North of Keya Paha County, Nebraska, is the Rosebud Reservation. It is called Upper Brule Indian Reservation on this 1895 Map. To learn more about the reservation, read *Rosebud Reservation* on page 5.

The line points from Norden and Springview, east, across the Keya Paha and Ponca Rivers, to the area of Bonesteel and Fairfax, South Dakota, northwest of Ft. Randall.

wherever he was. Even when he was a huge, full grown pig, Moses would come running when called.

When I was four years old a man came in and started another store. He sold cloth, that is woolens and velvets, that the other store did not. He also sold hats. They were red felt; some had white birds on them. My mother bought one for me without the bird. She and my grandmother didn't think it was right to have birds on hats. That was quite the style for a few years though.

This store keeper was married and they had three children, so I had someone to play with now. One girl was my age, with black curls and dark eyes. Her name was Hazel Harrison. They had a pet lamb that was a curiosity to me. I could only go to visit one half hour to an hour at a time.

My aunt Rachel (father's sister) and Uncle Jim must have come shortly after my folks did to Bonesteel. Uncle Jim started a barber shop in one room of their house. They never had children and Aunt Rachel used to make dinners with her little China dishes for her and me. We had good chicken dinners I remember. She died when I was four.

When I was 12, my Uncle Jim came and gave me the little dishes and a pair of scissors she had had 12 years he said, and asked me to see if I could keep them that long. I tried but lost them before too long.

My father bought grain from farmers to take to the mill. I went with my father when he took a couple of sacks of wheat and one of corn to the mill at Fairfax, a town not too far away. He had the grain made into flour and meal.

He used to get wood from the Indians. The trees grew by the

## Bonesteel, South Dakota



*John and Ida Crabtree with daughter, Myrtie.*

### **John, Ida and Myrtie Crabtree**

Mama and her Papa were great pals. He was not a disciplinarian. He left that to Grandma. One day Mama had done enough that even Grandpa had had enough. He told her she had to go out and get a stick because she needed a spanking. Feeling terrible that her father thought she was so bad, she slunk around looking for the right piece of wood. She finally found what she wanted and gave it to her father who couldn't help but break out laughing when he saw the small chip of wood. Mama said that if it had been her mother, she would have put it in the palm of her hand and given her the spanking she deserved.—*Mildred Briggs Lufburrow and Mary Briggs Austin, Myrtie's daughters* ❀

### **Town of Bonesteel**

In 1892, the land in South Dakota, from the Missouri River to the 99th parallel, was opened for settlement. Bonesteel, as it was eventually called, was one of two trading posts set up that year.

Bonesteel's first building was a store built in 1892. A saloon was built second and a gambling casino was built third.

For several months, Bonesteel was nameless. Then a Mr. Bonesteel offered to contribute \$100 toward the building of a school if the town was named after him. By 1893, there was a schoolhouse in the town of Bonesteel.

Bonesteel had a population of 34,000 people by 1904, and had become a tough town with several hundred gamblers and outlaws. Robbery, shootings, and brawls were common events. The citizens' police, in an effort to deal with the problem, marched up the main street of Bonesteel, stopped at every building and questioned its occupants. If the occupants had no reasonable excuse for living there, they were forced to join what became a huge parade of angry citizens, outlaws, and gamblers parading down the street.

In the early morning hours they were taken before Judge Jim Gaughen and convicted of vagrancy and ordered to leave town or go to jail. No one had time to choose jail because the townsmen took them to the depot and boarded them on a train, and stood guard until they were safely out of town. This event came to be known as *The Battle of Bonesteel*.

The town's population now is about 300. ❀

## Rosebud Reservation

### Sicangu Lakota Oyate or Rosebud Sioux

I never tired of Grandma telling me about her father having a trading post, or about the Indian lady that made her moccasins. I have wondered about the name of the tribe the Indian lady was from. How excited I was to read in Grandma's own words the location and name of the people that were so good to Grandma—the Rosebud Sioux.

The Rosebud Sioux, as Grandma called them, belong to the Sioux that roamed and hunted the Great Plains for centuries. Today, over 20,000 Rosebud Lakota live in south-central South Dakota, on the Rosebud Reservation which has over 900,000 acres of pine-covered hills, canyons, and rolling prairie.

Originally, the words *Rosebud* and *Sioux* were not part of the Lakota vocabulary. Rosebud was the location the Federal Agency designated for the Sicangu People in 1877. It was named for the numerous wild rosebuds that grew along the banks of the south fork of the White River near the agency.

*Sioux*, was the last syllable of *nadowessioux*, the French mispronunciation of the word, *Nadowisiwug*, meaning *snake-lesser*. That is the name which the Ojibwa called the Dakota or Santee Sioux to the west and south. The Ojibwa called the Iroquois, their enemies—*Nadowe* or snake.

The Great Sioux Nation is divided into seven bands which speak three dialects: Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota. The names mean *friends or to be friendly*.



1880: Before the Rosebud Reservation. Photo: [www.manyponies.com](http://www.manyponies.com)

The seven bands form the Seven Council Fires or *Oceti Sakowin*. The Rosebud Sioux belong to the Lakota or Teton Band. They call themselves Sicangu Lakota Oyate or Burnt thigh people.

The name *Sicangu* was taken as a result of a sudden prairie fire in eastern South Dakota that trapped the tribe, and destroyed their village as well as killed many of the people. Some people were able to escape by jumping into a lake. Many had to run through the tall prairie grass which was on fire, and burned their upper legs. Since that time, they have been known as *Sicangu*, which the French translated *Brule* or *Burnt Thigh*.

The US government officially recognized the Lakota as *Sioux* in 1825, and have continued to incorrectly apply the name *Sioux* to the Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota in official documents.

The Tribes of the Great Sioux Nation signed The Great Sioux Settlement with the United States in 1880. The treaty established the boundaries of the Tribes (reducing the amount of their Tribal homelands from earlier Treaties), and recognized their rights as



Indian man on his pony. Photo: [www.manyponies.com](http://www.manyponies.com)

a sovereign government. These boundaries were further reduced by later Homestead Acts.

The treaty promised certain goods would be delivered to the Lakota at certain designated agencies, which did not happen. The tribes were forced to move to these agencies or starve. The Sicangu people were moved five times before the Rosebud Agency was finally established.

Chief Milk, an Oglala Sioux, and his band were the first to settle on the Rosebud, making their home north of Bonesteel. Swift Bear followed and eventually settled south of Burke on Ponca Creek. Later Medicine Bull settled south of the White River. ❁



*Myrtie, as an adult, still loved animals.*

the farmers all had that 160 acres from the Homestead Act.

At first, school lasted one month. Then they got to making it two and three months. We went out to play in the snow at recess and lay down in the snow on our backs and made our arms go up and down and made “angels”.

Everything was held there at the schoolhouse—Sunday School, visiting preachers, Punch and Judy Show. There were no towns around beyond us, so the visiting Preachers just stopped when one happened to go through. A little dog always went to church and sat under the chair. Once a bunch of Free Methodists came to town, got happy and jumped around and one shoe lace came loose and the dog ran out after the shoe lace.

Johnie was born September 18, 1900. In 1901, they put the railroad through. Everyone turned out to see them laying ties. Mama carried Johnie. I can see them yet.

A new town was starting west of us and they gave us a free ride there. Must have been a caboose we rode in. My father and I went, not Mama. Passenger cars hadn’t come through yet, just work cars putting in the railroad.

My father had a wagon shop after he left the Post Office where he fixed buggies and wagons. We had a house on one side and Grandma Crabtree had one on the other side of the wagon shop. I could always go to Grandma’s house anytime I wanted.

**The Crabtree Family Moves to Iowa**

Then my father traded all this property for a farm in Iowa. He was led to believe the farm was one with lots of apple and fruit trees. He believed the man and didn’t go and see it first.

water and the Indians gathered the “jags of wood” as my father called them. They were whole trees, and not cut up. They told the price by holding up their finger: whole finger was one dollar; one-half finger was 50 cents; one-quarter finger was 25 cents. My father chopped them up or if it was too big, used a saw, a buck saw.

I went to school in the school house they built when I was in third or fourth grade. It had four rooms. They came in from the country which was settling up;

## John Crabtree's Business, Bonesteel, South Dakota, 1903



*From the left: Myrtie in the white dress, John and Ida Crabtree, LeRoy in the stroller type cart and Johnie.*

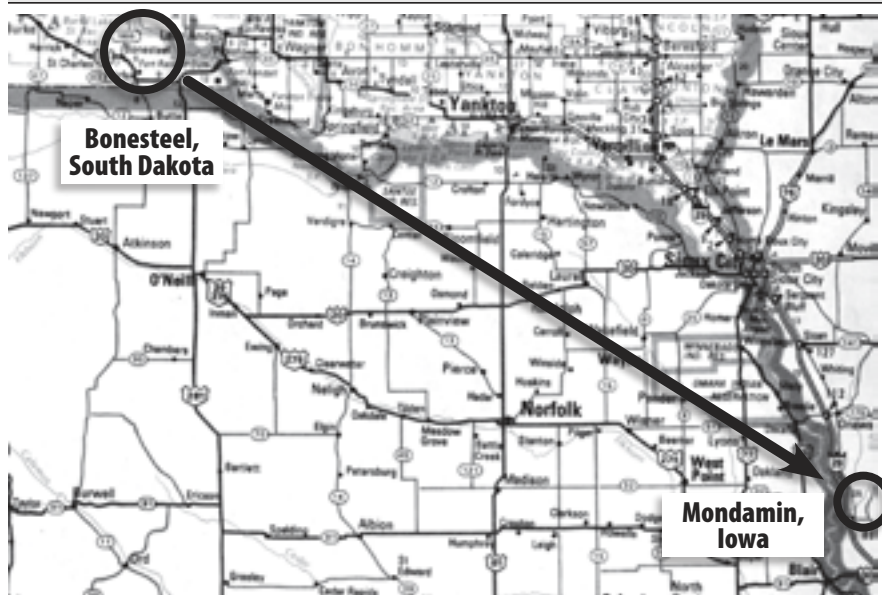
This Bonesteel picture was probably taken in late 1903. Great Grandpa and Great Grandma are in the 1905 *Gazeteer* for Harrison County, Iowa, so they must have been there in 1904, when it was being compiled. My grandfather, LeRoy, was walking by the time the photo was taken, which had to make him between about eight months and a year old. Hence, late 1903, probably, and before spring 1904, the most likely time of the year for relocating. *Photo and comment: Cal Bivens.*

He hired a freight car, took all the furniture and cows (I don't know if he took chickens or not, I suppose a few). My mother and children, (She had LeRoy by then, born January 11, 1903.), went by passenger car train. I was 12 by then. Mama bought a dime's worth of apples to put in our lunch on the train; just a few apples as there were no apple trees in South Dakota, so apples were expensive.

When we got to a place where we had to wait over for the next train, (Missouri Valley, Iowa), Mama walked down to the stores and saw a lot of Iowa apples. She asked for 10 cents worth of apples. They began filling sacks with them.



*Uncle Jim Walker who had married Aunt Rachel Lilly Crabtree, visited Myrtie and her family years later. Back row: Uncle Jim, Irwin Briggs, Laura, Myrtie, Mildred. Front row: Mary (my mom) and John Briggs.*



From Bonesteel, South Dakota, to Mondamin, Iowa, is 227 miles—almost a five hour trip by car today.

She said, “I only asked for 10 cents worth.”

He said, “Well, they’re 15 cents a bushel.”

Mama came lugging those sacks of apples up to the depot and we sat eating apples until time to go on the train.

My father was with the freight on the same train. When we stopped, he had to get water for the animals. Somehow he got all those things out to the farm.

When we got there, the weeds were nearly as high as the house. There were no fruit trees. He was about sick about it. He was one of these people who had more pep than you can shake a stick at. He was a cripple though from the time he was six years old from polio and got around with a crutch.

First thing they did was cut those weeds down. People’d say, “I don’t know what that man would do if he had two legs,” because he did so much and worked so hard.

My father, LeRoy, and I had typhoid fever. Lots of people in

the homestead had had it before we left Bonesteel. We must have carried the germs with us. My father and brother had it light. I got it awful hard. They thought I wasn’t going to live. I was out of school several months. Even though I had gotten started, I had to take that grade over.

In 1906, Mary was born, September 26.

Grandma Crabtree went with us to Mondamin, Iowa. Mondamin means corn in the Indian tongue; used in [the poem] *Hiawatha*. Grandma and Mama did the garden. Father used a riding machine and raised corn. He had a good garden.

We lived between the Soldier River and a drainage ditch. When the Missouri River flooded in the spring, it came up and covered the whole farm up to the house but not in it. It showed water marks one to two feet high where it had flooded into the house sometime, but not while we were there. Water lay on the ground ’til it rotted the vegetables and killed the corn. It went down after awhile.

My folks went from the house to the barn in a boat to feed animals and milk the cows. The boat was an old water tank that was there; kind of a galvanized trough. Each parent had a long pole to push to the barn and to bring back milk from the barn in their boat. Seems it was four feet long or longer.

We were there three or four years. The crops drowned out every year. Father was a real optimist, he’d say, “Well, maybe it won’t do that this year.”

In 1908, a man was going to put a high drainage ditch through; maybe more than one. He bought up all that country. People were so glad to sell out. He bought our place.

### The Crabtrees Return to Nebraska

In March we went to Nebraska the same way we came to Iowa, by train car. Land was so cheap in Nebraska, that father bought 160 acres 18 miles out from Ainsworth, (Pine Glen) and still had money left over from the Iowa farm.

My mother’s sister, Carrie [Williams] and brother, Ed [Higginson], and their families, and their mother [Mary Shattuck], lived close by, and Grandma Crabtree lived with us.

### Miss Crabtree, Teacher

I was 16 that fall in November, and wanted to teach school. Aunt Carrie helped me get my certificate. They didn’t have near enough teachers to go around in Nebraska. I had to take a test for a certificate and I got a school. My only training for teaching: my father said, “Make them like ya and don’t show any partiality.”

My first school was 4 months and I never had any trouble with



discipline whatever, not one little spec. I had from first grade through the eighth. The eighth graders had to go to the County Seat and take an examination before they could go to High School. I only had one eighth grader and he passed the test and went to High School. I read about it in the paper.

I finished my education by going to Teacher's training. (I didn't have High School.) I went to Wayne State Teacher's College. I was there one year and then had teacher's training in Ainsworth School for two years. I always had to work for my board and room to go to school.

One little time in Ainsworth I had enough money from teaching to pay board and room which was cheap at that time. The lady where I boarded taught me to use paper patterns so I could make all kinds of things. I taught my children and they taught their children.

School terms were three to four months: September, October, November, in the fall; then the last of January, February, March, and the first part of April; that was when boys weren't needed to put in crops on the farm. Each district only had that number months per school year, whatever they could afford.

The boys were much bigger and older than me. Their parents said if they didn't behave they would get a whopping. I never had any trouble.

I worked in the home of people two or three weeks at a time when a new baby had come to the house. I got two or three dollars a week. Three dollars was *big* pay.

### The Ainsworth Restaurant

After the last time I taught school, my father had traded the farm

## Mondamin, Iowa

### The first Schoolhouse at Mondamin, Iowa.

Perhaps Myrtie attended this school in Mondamin.

When she got better from the typhoid fever, Mama's hair all fell out. She hated to go to school, but apparently her kind teacher had warned the kids, because when she got there, no one made fun of her loss of hair.

—*Mary Briggs Austin, daughter*

### Typhoid Fever

Typhoid is an infectious disease introduced in infected water or milk supplies. Well water was sometimes contaminated through the soil by outhouses. Typhoid was common in early adult life and especially prevalent in fall and early winter.

—*Merck's Medical Manual*

### Mondamin, Iowa

Mondamin, meaning corn, was founded mainly as a marketplace. It is now a town of about 420 people.

### The Soldier River

The Soldier River flows through the western section of Raglan Township in Harrison County, Iowa, while Steer Creek runs through the central-eastern part. These are most likely the streams that flooded out the Crabtrees in Iowa. They were too far from the Missouri, but probably on a flood plain between these other two streams.—*Cal Bivens* ❀

Photos: [www.itsjudy.com](http://www.itsjudy.com)



The first schoolhouse at Mondamin, Iowa.



Town of Mondamin, Iowa.



Looking northeast from the Mondamin's north elevator in 1906.



Looking south on the town of Mondamin from the North elevator, about 1906.



Mondamin, 1910.



Main St., Mondamin, Iowa.



*Outside the Pine Glen home in 1911: Ida, John, LeRoy, Johnie, Mary, and Myrtie.*



*The Crabtree children: LeRoy, Mary, Myrtie, and Johnie.*



*Myrtie's father takes her in the family buggy to her school to teach. Note the trunk roped on back of seat. Caption on back of photo: "Winter snow on ground in wheels."*

in Nebraska for a restaurant in Ainsworth. They had about nine rooms up there above the restaurant that they rented out. Father and Mother always slept up there to see that things went straight. They rented the house next door for the family to sleep me and brothers and Mary.

When I got there, they told me I was the cook! So I cooked! I cooked roast beef and pork and vegetables and made the brown gravy, and mashed potatoes. Mama bought a new, "New Majestic Range," and baked the cakes, pies, and puddings over at the house they rented. Brother Johnie made the short orders in the evening.

LeRoy and Mary were always around there asking questions. I called Mary question mark. Johnie, in high school at that time I guess, was taking wood working along with other things. I gave him money to buy wood for a mirror and a dresser. When he got it finished, he gave it to me. I wasn't expecting it at all. I still have the dresser, but the mirror got broken. I still have it and I'm 87.

### **Myrtie Meets Irwin**

In between one of these schools I was teaching, I must have been 20 or 22 years old, I boarded at a place where I met my future husband, Clinton Briggs' farm. But he [Irwin] went to World War I and we were not married until he got back.

In the meantime, at my father's restaurant, it was prohibition time. My father, being a good Christian, got after a man who had liquor in his room. I think he brought a policeman up there and got him moved out. His name was "Give-a-damn-Jones" because

## Miss Crabtree, Teacher

### Miss Crabtree's Students

Included in Miss Myrtie Crabtree's students, (although not in this picture), were her own siblings and the McElroy children. One morning, the McElroy children told Miss Crabtree about their new red-haired baby sister, Ollie.

When Ollie was 18, she married Myrtie's brother, LeRoy. LeRoy and Ollie Crabtree's daughter, Hazel, would graciously help both Myrtie and her sister, Mary, in Oregon, 60 years after Ollie was born. You can read LeRoy and Ollie Crabtree's biography written by their grandson, Cal Bivens, in Part II.

### Tall Students

Grandma told me the story how her students were taller than her, but they were not a discipline problem. So I was excited to get the photo from Ron Horton, showing Grandma with some of her tall students.—*Louise Smith*



*Miss Myrtie Crabtree and her students. Several of the younger children (Grace, Floyd, and Lewis), are younger siblings of Irwin Briggs, Myrtie's future husband. Photo: Courtesy of Ron Horton.*



*Myrtie Crabtree on the right with her friend Ortha Bates.*



*Myrtie Crabtree with Verna and Charlotte Briggs Irwin's sisters. The younger Briggs' girls kept telling their teacher, "Wait 'til you see our brother!"*

## Myrtie meets Irwin Briggs



Harry Irwin Briggs.

Clinton and Indy Briggs had 11 children. It was common for a teacher to board with a student's family. So, Myrtie boarded at the Briggs home. The Briggs girls kept telling their teacher, "Wait 'til you see our brother!"

Myrtie's first impression of Irwin was not very positive. He had been in the mines out West, where he had gotten in with the wrong crowd, been in a couple mine cave-ins, and just about died from too much alcohol before he came home.

When he got back from mining, Irwin asked his mother where he could go and get that school teacher to go out with him. Indy said Myrtie might go to church with him.



Amanda Myrtie Crabtree in 1918.

Myrtie did go with Irwin and his sister Verna to a revival meeting at the church and Irwin, "Got right with the Lord."

Irwin then went to Taylor University in Indiana to study for the ministry for a year. World War I broke out and Irwin enlisted. He went to France and served as a Medic and ambulance driver with the American Expeditionary Force for Company No. 1, 37th Evac Hospital.

During this time, Irwin and Myrtle's friendship grew. Myrtle was the name Irwin liked instead of her given name, Myrtie.—*This information is from several sources.*

every sentence he said had that in it. He paid a fine no doubt for having liquor.

A girl came in from the country and rented a room upstairs in the restaurant. Father and Mother heard men going back and forth in the hall all night. Next time she asked for a room, father told her he didn't have any room. He meant for her!

Sunday afternoons, a bunch of men'd gather in one of those rooms and gamble. My father put a stop to that, so people quit coming there and his restaurant failed. They could not starve being good. [They sold the restaurant.]

### **Prohibition**

*Prohibition technically didn't start until 1920, but the amendment passed in 1919, and there was defacto prohibition beginning in 1917. Since Myrtie was married at Ainsworth in 1919, and the Crabtrees were definitely in Long Pine in 1920. I would put that move between September 1919, and June 1920. The move from Pine Glen to Ainsworth was sometime between 1912 and 1918. That one is harder to pin down, but we now have a better timeline for them after the return from Iowa.—Cal Bivens*

### **Myrtie Works in Chicago**

Then I went to Chicago. I found a place where I could sell children's books. I stayed at my father's cousin's house: Laura Grainger, her husband Robert, their two girls, Margaret and Laura, and Aunt Sarah, Grandma Crabtree's sister.

I went to the children's bookstore and had to memorize three to four pages on how to sell door to door. I decided I couldn't

memorize all that stuff, so I took a job in the city running a duplicating machine. I had to stand on my feet all day long. My feet got so bad I had to quit there, so I got a job at Montgomery Ward correcting catalog orders from the catalog where I could sit all day. A lot of other girls worked there, too.

One night I felt like I ought to go and work for two maiden lady teachers who lived in a big house with their old father who was a tailor. I did housework and cooked. They had been praying for a housekeeper. The other girl left and got married. They were so glad I had come. I got nine dollars a week. I put seven dollars in the bank a week, and saved more there than I had before with two dollars to spend. I worked there about a couple years.

### Mrs. H. I. Briggs

While I was there, after the war, my future husband came to see me. I had felt called to be a missionary in India and had written to him about it. After he went home, he felt the Lord wanted him to go as a missionary too and wrote me about it.

He said, "Why don't you come home (there were 10 miles between his parents and mine) and we will be married?"

So I came home.

September 2, 1919, he and my folks met me at the train. All the way, every little while, I asked the conductor, "Are we there yet," until he got to where he made a joke of it and I quit asking.

I went to my home for a wedding supper my mother had prepared. I was so excited I couldn't eat.

After supper I got into my wedding dress, every stitch I made by hand. Brother Johnie took us

## Myrtie, the Graingers, and Chicago



*Myrtie with Laura and Margaret Grainger's mother, Laura (Lorinda) Gill Grainger. The caption on the back of the photo says that Laura was one of the nicest women she ever knew.*



*Sarah Gill, Laura and Margaret Grainger, and Aunt Sarah Crabtree Gill.*



*4518 Wilcox Ave., Chicago, Illinois.*

### Myrtie Lives with the Graingers

This is probably the Grainger home where Myrtie stayed when she lived with them in Chicago.

By September 1916, Myrtie's 83 year old Great Aunt Sarah Crabtree Gill, was living at 4518 Wilcox Ave., in Chicago, with her daughter, Lorinda (Laura). The 1920 Census has Sarah listed as head of household living at 4518 Wilcox with Robert and Lorinda Grainger and their daughters, Margaret and Laura.—*Cal Bivens*

Cousins Laura and Margaret Grainger were such favorite cousins that Myrtie named her first daughter, Laura Margaret. ❀



*The Crabtree children and their Grainger cousins are in a spring wagon on the way to Sunday School at a school house. Laura and Margaret Grainger are in back, LeRoy and Myrtie Crabtree are in front, and Mary Crabtree is in the middle.*

## Myrtie Marries Irwin Briggs



Photo for Irwin while he was in France.

Poem on photo:

"I live for those who love me  
Whose hearts are kind and true;  
For the Heaven that smiles above me  
And awaits my spirit too;  
For the friendly ties that bind me  
For the task that God has given me;  
For the memories left behind me  
And the good that I can do."



Photo of Irwin in France 1918.

### Stealing a March

When Daddy came back from the war, his sister was about to be married, and he couldn't let her get ahead of him, so he suggested that they get married and "steal a march" on Verna who was marrying Felix Flowerdew the next day, September 3, 1919.

So they went to a preacher in Ainsworth and were married. Since neither of them had any money to talk about, when the preacher said as part of the ceremony, "With all of my worldly goods I thee endow," Mama had all she could do to keep from giggling.

As for the ring, they went to the store, Mama tried on rings until the right one fit. Daddy said, "We'll take it!" and she put it on her finger and they walked out of the store. It tickled her to think what the store clerk thought.

—Mildred Luffburrow, daughter ❀

### Brown County, Nebraska Marriages

Sept. 2, 1919, Briggs, Harry Irwin,  
Crabtree, Amanda

Sept. 3, 1919, Flowerdew, Felix W.,  
Briggs, Verna

in a car with my sister Mary and his brother Carl to Ainsworth Methodist Church Parsonage and we were married.

Irwin called his mother on the telephone: "Is this Mrs. C. L. Briggs? Mrs. H. I. Briggs wants to talk to you."

They said she had to find a chair to sit down on. Irwin's younger sister, Verna, was getting married the next day and they were so busy with those

preparations, they didn't pay any attention to him as he got his and his brother's suits cleaned, and pressed them himself.

Irwin told me that two of his younger brothers had already gotten married and he wanted to get married before Verna. Aunt Verna was so upset that he'd been able to pull this off that she said they couldn't see her before the wedding.

The next day we went out to see them all, and his sister Verna was married in the evening, September third. ❀