

This is a story about a little girl, Ada Isabella, born May 26, 1872, in Bowie County, Texas, near the present city of Texarkana. Her parents were James Marion Spear and Martha Spear, nee Downey, very substantial pioneer farmers of that community.

When Ada was a very small child her mother died, leaving her and four more brothers and sisters, vis., John Downey, Eudora, Ada, Ida and Scott.

For a few years they were cared for by the father and near relatives, but eventually the father remarried and it seems from the very beginning there was enmity between the stepmother who was very young and the motherless children. The older ones soon left home or married. Ada was converted and joined the Methodist church and at the age of 15 years, on the 8th day of December, 1887, was married to William Thomas Ferris, a young man 21 years of age, who was a tenant on her father's farm.

For a time they farmed in Bowie County, but hearing so many tales about the Indian Territory, they to leave relatives and friends and seek their fortune in the new territory. In September of 1891 they packed their few earthly possessions into a covered wagon, one horse leading behind, and their three small children, and her younger brothers Scott Spear and Archie Gray, headed for the new country. At several places they stopped and worked at different kinds of work in order to get food for their horses and family.

Ada had a dutch oven to cook food in, and after the days work was done she would put the children to bed in the wagon. Once the baby Iantha, fell out of the wagon on some black walnut hulls and hurt her head severely. While they were in Choctaw Nation one of their horses died and they swapped the other for a team of oxen, and with the ox team they landed at the Ten Acre Rock, near the present village of Reagan, in the spring of 1892.

Ada surely relied upon the promise the Lord made to Isaiah when he said, "Fear not, for I am with thee, yes, I will help thee, yes, I will uphold thee but the right hand of my righteousness", for she was always the deciding factor in the family and she decided they had gone far enough. There was rich fertile soil, and plenty of wood and an abundance of clear sparkling water. Her husband Tom traded for a small crop of corn and cotton. There were no fences or roads. The following autumn they moved to Blue River near the present sight of Connerville. She was the only white woman in that community, but she didn't take time to mourn. She stayed busy caring for the needs of her family as best she could. People passing through the country would say, "There is a very unusual woman, her children, her house and her yard are always clean".

Within a few years, a widow, Mrs. S. H. Hooser, moved near. Mrs. Hooser was several years Ada's senior and taught her much concerning the making of clothes for her family. These two women were good Samaritans to the entire community (for there were quite a settlement of white people by this time) feeding the hungry and caring for the sick. Though they were neighbors for only a few years, they have been lifelong friends and their families have been bound together by lasting friendship.