

## MY BOYHOOD.



Y GRANDFATHER, David Ingram, came from Leeds, England, and settled in Southwick, Mass. in the year 18. . . . My father, also David Ingram, was born in Southwick, and married my mother, Fannie Granger, who was also born and raised in Southwick. I was born in Southwick, May 12, 1830, and when I was a small boy my father and mother moved to Saratoga, (Old Saratoga, it was then called). I was the fourth of a family of nine children, five boys and four girls, of whom only myself and my brother Julius Ingram, also a resident of Eau Claire, are living.

My father died when I was eleven years old, and soon afterwards I went to live with a family named Palmer, seven miles south of Glens Falls, N. Y., towards Saratoga Springs. I lived there about two years and then went to Bolton, N. Y., to visit my mother, who had married again and was living on a farm on the shore of Lake George. I found her lonely and anxious to have me stay near her. I had expected to remain with the Palmers until I was twenty-one, but I arranged with them to let me off, on account of my mother's anxiety.

My mother arranged with a family named Boyd for me to live with them, do chores for my board, and go to school. They didn't live far from the schoolhouse and treated me nicely.

That winter Uncle Nathan Goodman, who lived about two miles from Boyd's, at Goodman's Corners, visited them. He took a liking to me, and wanted me, in the spring, to go with him. The Boyd family had two sons who could do the work in the summer and they were willing I should go to Uncle Nathan. He had a good farm, and his wife was very nice. They had no children, but had adopted a boy some years before who was something of a bookworm, and perhaps I might say a little in-

clined to be lazy, as he was willing to let me do all of the work while he would stay around the house and read. In the winter I got up at four o'clock in the morning, depending upon Uncle Nathan to call me, and I sawed wood in the woodshed by the light of a lantern until breakfast, by candle light. After breakfast I milked the cows, fed the horses, and got ready for school. Aunt Lucy always had a nice lunch for me, in a little dinner pail, that I carried to school, which was about a mile and a half distant. I worked on the farm in the summer, and while I was yet a mere boy, fifteen or sixteen years old, I did a man's work.

When I went to Uncle Nathan's it was an understanding that I would remain there until I was twenty-one; but that kind of life was monotonous for me, and I was curious to see my birth-place, and arranged with Uncle Nathan to let me off. He furnished me money enough for my fare on stage to Troy, N. Y., and on the Boston & Albany Railroad, then new, to Westfield, Mass. I had the few things I possessed in a small trunk which I left at the Westfield station, and went afoot to Southwick, where my mother's brother lived, with whom I had been corresponding. Southwick was a pleasant New England village, and my uncle was anxious to have me remain there. But I had heard a good deal about the armory at Springfield, and about young men who went there to learn trades, and it seemed to me that would be a good thing for me to do. It was eleven miles by wagon road to Springfield, and my uncle, who was a prominent man in Southwick and knew the commander at the armory, who had told me if I was anxious to go there and get a position he would go with me, so I talked with the gentleman in charge of the armory, who told me he could register me for a position, and said: "You may not get a position for three months, or six months, or perhaps a year, for I have a long list of applicants, and they will be taken according to dates, but your turn will come after awhile." That was rather discouraging, and after leaving the armory I said to my uncle that I

would like to go to the large locomotive works, at Springfield; that perhaps I could get in there. We went there, saw the superintendent, who told me they paid young fellows fifty dollars for the first year, with board and clothing; one hundred dollars the second year; two hundred dollars the third year, and three hundred dollars the fourth year—provided they were steady and willing to take hold of the work; and said I could have a position when the next vacancy occurred.

I returned home with my uncle, feeling somewhat discouraged. He was determined to keep me there, and found that the landlord and proprietor of the Loomis Hotel wanted someone to act as clerk and general hand, but could pay only small wages. The town was then a great cigar manufacturing town, the cigar makers were a tough lot, as a rule. At that time in Massachusetts there was a great deal of cider brandy made, and those fellows would hang around the hotel when off from work and drink too much and get quarrelsome—so much so that the proprietor would frequently order them from the place. The Congregational church stood on a corner opposite the hotel, and one of the trustees came to me soon after I started in at the hotel and told me he could give me so much a week for ringing the bell at six o'clock in the morning, twelve o'clock noon, and six o'clock in the evening. I do not remember how much he gave me, but it was a small sum, but the job helped to keep me employed and out of mischief.

After about six weeks, work at the hotel proved to be tame and unsatisfactory, and, I remembered that Mr. Bronson, whom I knew in New York, had said to me that if I didn't like it in Massachusetts he would, if I would come back, give me a good position at lake Pharaoh, where he had large interests in a saw mill and a large body of timber. Mr. Bronson's wife was a sister of your mother and usually spent a part of each summer at Bolton, which was close to Lake George, while Mr. Bronson was putting in most of his time at Lake Pharaoh, looking after

the saw mill. When I went to work for him, Mrs. Bronson was at her father's with her twin babies, Erskine and Gertrude, about a year old. Mrs. Bronson was about ready to go back to Lake Pharaoh, and I was to report there to Mr. Bronson. It was arranged that I should accompany Mrs. Bronson and the twins. It was a long day's drive in a double-wagon, with heavy springs under the box and the seats arranged with the trunks behind them to rest our backs against. The twins were so small they had to be held. I held one of them most of the time, and their mother the other. We drove to a place called Garfield Hotel, on the shore of the lake, reaching there in time for dinner. It was eleven miles from there to the mill, but there was a road from the head of the lake to its outlet, where the mill and the headquarters and the boarding house were, and where the families of the mill men lived. They usually had a boat at the head of the lake in which to go down to the mill, but when we reached there we found someone had taken it, and it was necessary (it was almost dark), for us to drive two miles and a half through the woods, over a rough road, and Mrs. Bronson, with one child on her lap, and myself, with the other, as you can imagine, were pretty well shaken up, and very tired when we got there. Mr. Bronson sought to learn who had taken the boat, but I don't remember whether or not he found out.

### BEGINNING IN LUMBER

The first work I did in the mill was on the edger, edging lumber. The edger then used had a narrow carriage, 12 or 14 feet long and 14 to 16 inches wide, and on which we placed a board and pushed it through by a saw which took off one edging, and when brought back we turned the board over and pushed it through again, taking off another edging. That would be a strange method to men in our modern mills, with modern edgers. Wages were \$13 a month, and board, during the sum-