

The Winds of God

**The Story of
The Early Pentecostal Movement (1901-1914)
In the Life of**

Howard A. Goss

by

Ethel E. Goss

THE WINDS OF GOD

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Contents

Preface to the <i>fourth printing</i>	7
Foreword	11
Prologue	15
1. Beginnings in Missouri and Kansas	19
2. From Voltaire to Victory	34
3. Birth of a Nation	48
4. Kicked into the Ministry	57
5. Train Ride to Glory	76
6. This Is That	87
7. United in Doctrine and Marriage	97
8. Holy Boldness and Willing Hearts	108
9. Life on the Evangelistic Trail	120
10. Living by Faith	134
11. Persecuted, But Not Forsaken	143
12. Ripe for Revival	151
13. The Gifts in Operation	163
14. Consecration and Worship	184
15. Malvern, Arkansas, Etc.	194
16. Oh What Singing!	207
17. A Love Story	217
18. Those Early 20th Century Disciples	235
19. Hot Springs, Arkansas	249
20. Grievous Wolves	258
21. The Birth of an Organization	271

1

Beginnings in Missouri and Kansas

Immediately after the Civil War, my grandfather, Larkin Goss, moved from Tennessee and settled near Steelville, Missouri.

His son, Clinton, with his Kentucky school teacher bride, Margaret Gillette, soon followed and homesteaded land near my grandfather's acreage. In 1883, on these three hundred twenty acres of virgin soil, only partially cleared, I was born.

In those days, anyone who homesteaded land in Missouri could have all he needed. When my father and mother arrived, they settled amidst beautiful scenery. If the heavily wooded mountains and hills were covered with stones, the fertile valleys lay ready to feel the edge of the axe and—after much hard

work—the bite of the plow.

They soon found that the forests around them abounded in wild game: turkeys, deer, wild hogs, bear, opossum, wild fowl and small game—food for the experienced hunter as it came from the hot maw of his great wood-fired oven. Swift mountain streams teemed with fish. Forests of tall oak furnished the logs from which their two story houses and barns were constructed.

Into this boy's paradise seven sons were born, I being the fifth of the seven. Later, two daughters made it a family of nine children.

We were a hardy people, and the country matched us in hardships. There were no toys other than those we devised for ourselves. I used a large, old, discarded iron skillet, with a string tied through the handle, for a wagon.

While books were a necessity in our home, shoes, which had to be handmade in our locality, were considered a luxury that could wait until we were older. I was twelve years old when I had my first pair, which was sooner than most boys in the neighborhood acquired theirs.

We all worked from the peep of day until the darkness had settled down. Christmas Eve and the Fourth of July were our only holidays. On the "Fourth" we all attended a "Democrat" picnic, our only celebration of the entire year.

On Christmas Eve we all drove to town to do our shopping.

Sunday afternoon was the only recreation time in the week. Then, we were free to roam the hills, fields, and woods for our own amusement. Early on I became an expert with the bow and arrow, and shot predatory birds in the trees. I speared fish in the streams in this primitive Indian fashion. My older brothers had two guns for hunting, one a Winchester rifle, and the other a muzzle-loading rifle. We had no feeling about lacking what today would be called the comforts of life, because our life seemed full and complete to us. Compared to those around us, it was. But, we learned to work hard for everything we received. What we did have was plentiful enough, but money was very scarce. My father often sold a full wagon load of his finest Northern Spy apples for ten cents a barrel.

A few incidents will suffice, I think, to depict my childhood days.

Teasing a large, vicious bulldog was one of my main diversions. I would go up into the hay loft where the dog couldn't reach me, and throw hayseed down at him until he would become angry enough to tear me to pieces.

Sometimes he would come so near to catching me that, when I would dash across the yard in answer to the dinner horn, I would