



## "Bless the Beasts and the Children" -Hawks' Family Pets-

"I will mention our household pets, which were old Caesar, the Newfoundland dog who hated Indians and would growl when they were coming a hundred yards away; two fox squirrels that played with me like kittens; and 40 wild geese that we raised.

Old Caesar was bitten by a rattlesnake and had to be shot.

The squirrels did not take kindly to the new house and after hanging around the old log house awhile they left for the woods. The wild geese would wander off to the rivers and lakes but would return to be fed.

Some of them were shot by settlers who mistook them for wild game. A few mated with domestic geese. We counted fewer at each succeeding (?) time and finally they all disappeared. No doubt it was case of the call of the wild.

An anecdote of the squirrels - The night Francis was born (July 2, 1844) Mrs. Hill was in attendance (your grandmother boys) in passing through a dark passageway that connected the new frame addition to the log house one of the squirrels jumped from some high place down onto Mother Hills shoulder.

The yell that the good woman discharged scared the whole community. The passage was dark and no doubt Mrs. Hill imagined she was attacked by Indians. Another: A mason named Chester Daly (Chet we called him) lost his apron.

A long time after it was found made into a nest by the squirrels.

In later years after leaving the log house, I had a raccoon for a pet. I must have been 7 years old, and I trained that coon to do many cute things.

I would point my finger at him, and he would cover his eyes with his paws, as though he was ashamed. I would put him in a little bed, and he would play sick, and I would cover him. This coon would follow me around and purr like a cat.

I would catch minnows out of the river - Bark River - which flows through the village putting them alive in a wash basin.

It was amusing to watch Mr. Coon feel around in the basin and bring out his fish and eat it.

A pet of my infancy was a cat which I named "Bildy". I am sure I don't know where I got the name and I must have been guilty of the charge when I called my toddy (brandy and sugar) "Dobbazoo".

It was doctors order as a tonic probably when I was a weak little two year old.

Sister Fannie had a green parrot "Lora" about 1854 that Father bought from a lady in Waterville.

The parrot could talk, laugh, and sing but couldn't whistle. Lora kept the neighborhood entertained and imitated every new noise. One of her best imitations was of a child with whooping cough."

From the scrapbook of Nelson C. Hawks  
copy from his Grandson Horace Hawks of Petula, California, Oct. 1981

