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into the pine hills of Dawes County on the evening the family arrived to settle in the new land. Mom is quietly proud of her pioneer roots and particularly admires those strong pioneer women who went before her. She has always reminded her daughters that it was not only men but women working right along beside them who built the West. In her lessons of family history to us, she offered up as models not only her mother and grandmother but less traditional women as well. One woman I remember Mom talking about was a distant relative who was one of Nebraska's first attorneys and a suffragette. The message from my Mom to her daughters was, women are workers and doers, whatever you decide to do it is okay with me. Upon graduation from high school Mom attended Chadron Normal School and, like so many young women then, was out teaching in rural schools by the time she was 19. Being the third of seven children meant there were still younger brothers and sisters at home and, with times being as they were in the 1930s, she did her best to help out her family from the modest salary that a teacher earned. She continued to teach in Dawes County rural schools for a number of years, then moved to the Crawford city schools, and from there to an elementary school in Scottsbluff. In 1944 she left teaching to marry my Dad. Together they went about the business of building a herd of hereford cattle and in a few years bought a wheat farm, the place I now live on. Those years of growing up on that farm were almost so idyllic, from my perspective, that it was only in adulthood that I realized how hard my parents were working just to hold things together. I suppose the reason for my naivete' was largely due to my mother's philosophy that children should be spared the cares and burdens of adults. Childhood is meant to be fun, a time to learn, to experiment and grow. Consequently my sister and I weren't given any particular responsibilities unless we asked for them. We were, instead, encouraged to pursue whatever happened to interest us at the time. I remember Mom encouraging all the phases I went through, from five year old water colorist to six year old tennis player, on up to ten year old 4H sheep herder and entomologist. Mom is an avid reader and that is a love that she has passed on to her children. She is also a student of nature. Much as my grandmother taught her to recognize the wild flowers and the birds and trees of northwest Nebraska, my Mother has taught my sister and me that as well. I see today my sister passing that interest on to her children. I suspect that my personal interest in water, soil and wildlife conservation springs from that