



Jake's wife, Nannie Journeycake Bartles, was ardent community worker.

nearby the Osage Agency—and was soon doing a turn-away business.

(Mrs. Bartles' father, Charley Journeycake, was a famed Delaware chieftain and an ordained Baptist minister. He was one of the few missionaries who dared the darkest and most treacherous reaches of the Indian Territory—and steadfastly refused to accept a single cent for his services.)

"God's work was not meant for personal profit," he insisted. "I am a farmer by trade and thus will I earn my living from the soil."

Shortly after his arrival in the Cherokee country, Jake began dreaming of building an empire. He dreamed of the day when the entire Canadian River valley, all the basins of the Verdigris and the Caney, would be sown golden with wheat. He dreamed of seeing thousands—tens of thousands—of yellow acres rolling back as far as the eye could see from the banks of the Caney River. He dreamed of seeing a mill in operation there—a roller process flouring mill—just like those in St. Louis, Kansas City, and Chicago. He dreamed of seeing a city spring up around that mill. A real city amid the wilderness, its streets illuminated with electric lights and strung

with telegraph lines. A city that would bear his name.

A futile dream? Impossible? Couldn't happen?

"Those who doubt me need only look at the history that went into the making of Chicago," Bartles insisted. "It arose from out of the midwestern frontier to become one of the greatest cities in the world. The same thing is going to happen here!"

While wrestling with this dream, young Bartles came to hear about a mill property that had been put up for sale. A grist mill on the east bank of the Caney River not twenty miles from Crystal Lake. Cap'n Jake astounded Nelson Carr, its owner, with his ideas.

"You're gonna what?" Carr demanded.

"Buy you out!" Jake answered forthrightly. "Buy out your grist mill and convert it into a wheat mill."

"Wheat? Boy, you must be outa yer mind. Thar ain't no wheat in the Cherokee country. Ain't never been and never will be."

Young Bartles took off his Stetson hat and threw it disgustedly into the dust. "You're right about the past," he said heatedly, "but wrong about the future. You

let me worry about the wheat that ain't here. I'll take care of that later. Your problem is with Injuns. Right?"

Carr scratched his grizzled chin and looked thoughtfully at the young man. He had indeed only recently succeeded in fighting off a raiding party of Arapahoes. That was exactly what had prompted him to put the property up for sale. He was indeed tired of "Injun trouble."

"Well then," Jake Bartles said, "ye'd best take my money fast. Otherwise I might change my mind . . ."

"Okay, kid," Carr abruptly interrupted. "I've got a price on this property 'n' you're willing to pay it. That's all that matters to me. Come along 'n' we'll draw up the papers. But don't say I didn't warn ye. What ye've got in mind is crazy!"

(Carr, an adoptee of the Cherokees, had been the first white man to trade in the Indian Nations.)

During the weeks that followed Jake Bartles' behavior became "crazier" than ever. First he closed down the mill, halted the roller wheel, stilled the mill stream, and bolted up the front entrance. Next he did what no other man had ever attempted to do in the Indian Territory. He sowed his land in a grain never before raised there, and while his puzzled neighbors scratched their heads in bewilderment—and even before the plants began breaking through the soil—he hitched his team to a buckboard, flicked his whip down against their flanks, and was away in a cloud of dust.

"Now where's he goin'?" the Indians and squatters all wondered aloud.

They didn't have to wait long to find out. Within a few days Jake was back from Kansas City. Back with the very latest in roller process milling mechanisms, and installed it "right smack dab" in Carr's mill.

"Doesn't this poor starry-eyed storekeeper know anything?" his neighbors wondered. "Doesn't he know there is no wheat grown in the Indian Territory. Does he think he can raise enough wheat to keep a flour mill in operation?"

"No," Jake said, smiling wryly at those curious enough to inquire, "I don't think anything like that. I'm not worrying about my wheat. It's *your* wheat I'm going to mill. The wheat *you* are going to raise on *your* property."

Now the dissenters laughed louder than ever. What made Jake Bartles think he could tell them what to raise? What made him think *he* could decide what *they* did with *their* property? They had never raised wheat. What made him so sure they would begin now?

During the months to follow the Indians became all the more bewildered by Bartles' behavior. He did not even attempt to mill the wheat that sprang so free and golden from his soil. Instead he had it all picked for seed and packed in

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