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## *The Farm House*

*Norm:* " When Mom and Dad (Clem and Lizzie) got married, the first place they rented was on Old 81. It was owned by Sharf. They lived there 1-2 years. It was about 1 mile west and 3 ½ miles north from where we lived when we grew up. Then they lived on a place that was about 1 1/2 miles south of where we grew up. They moved to the third and last place when Grandma and Grandpa Stoddard moved to town in 1919. Dad and Mom bought the farm from Grandma Stoddard in 1939 or 1940. It cost about \$1500-\$1800. It was in Farmington Township, Grant County. A banker Harvey Fenner came out to take inventory- he had to list all of the cattle, horses, etc. Dad was a good friend of Harvey's but he had to go through the proper process in order for the Bank Board to approve the loan.

There were three rooms upstairs, south, north and west. The west room was used for storage. The girls had the south room and the boys had the north. The stairway came through the boy's room, and the chimney came through the south room, where the girls slept. If it got too cold, the boys moved to the warm side. Grandma would string up a wire, and hang sheets on it, to separate the boys and the girls. Then we had wall-to-wall beds. We slept in long winter underwear and socks. You could see your breath; we'd pretend we were smoking".

*Barb:* "I can remember how cold those old houses were. I remember Mom calling up to us on a cold winter morning, telling us to get up. I would throw my shoes down to make it sound like I was getting out of bed, so I could get a little more sleep. DeEll told me he used to do the same thing".

*Norm* " Dad only had to holler once. I can still remember the sound of his feet hitting the floor in the morning as he got up to make the fire".

*Barb* " Sometimes it was so cold the water in the pitcher was frozen".

*Norm* "The house was in bad shape when we bought it from Grandma Stoddard. The roof was bad over the north room and there wasn't any tarpaper or shingles on the roof boards. We shingled the roof on the house and put a new foundation under the old barn. The old barn had a foundation of rock, covered with mortar. Mr. Harry Eilers had a way of jacking up the barn, and then I dug out the old foundation, and hauled it to the rock pile. They put in a new cement foundation, and then we bolted the old barn to the new foundation"





### *Cooking*

*Norm* "I remember Ma had some kind of oven that sat on top of the chimney, the heater was in the living room, it went up through the floor into the room above. The chimney had an elbow where the smoke would go to the outside. The oven was on the stovepipe. Heat would go through the heater as it went up to the floor upstairs. That was the only heat we had. We had it well insulated so it wouldn't start the floor on fire, but I can remember a couple of fires that started because the floor got too hot. We'd carry water to beat everything then- what a mess!"

*Norm* Noon was always the big meal, with fried potatoes and meat for supper. Noon meals were dinner and snacks were called lunch. Evening meal was supper.

### *Chores:*

*Iva*: "I can remember ironing with a flat iron, we would heat it over a kerosene lamp and use a clamp to pick it up and iron the clothes. We would have to wash the lamps every morning because they would be so black with soot. We would also have to clean the cream separator every morning. That was a stinky job.

### *Beauty Secrets*

*Iva*: If we wanted to curl our hair, we would stick the curling iron into the flame and then wind our hair around the curling iron. Sometimes our hair would smell singed. We would soak fax seed and that would make a good wave set".

### *Old Automobiles*

"When Marge was teaching at the school house near Mazeppa church, we had a 1930 Chevy. The radiator was around the crank, so you had to be careful not to damage the radiator when you took it out. We kept the car in the barn behind the horses, where it was warm. After she got to work she would cover the hood of the car with a horsehide blanket to hold in the heat".

Don was in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) when we had that 1930 Chevy. It didn't have a trunk, but you could pull the back seat forward and there was room to haul a cream can and whatever else we needed. Everyone usually had to sit on someone's lap because there wasn't enough room- except Marge wouldn't let us because she didn't want us to wrinkle her dress. Those breaks were never any good- we took it to Earl Fenner, he was supposed to be some kind of a mechanic- he had the gas station in town. He waited for it to rain before he brought it out and had to slam on the brakes. When the brakes dried out they were still no good. We always had to shift it into low gear before we could stop.

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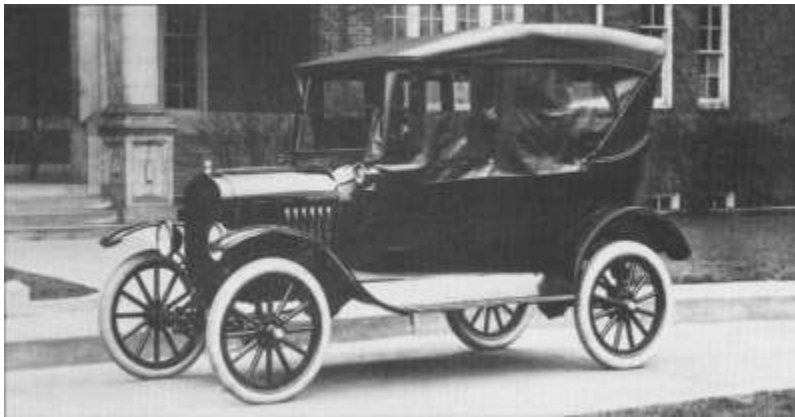
*Norm* "Dad and Ray shared an automobile to start with, and after they each had a car, they still shared the license plate!"

*Norm*" I don't remember which car we had but it would make an "EEK-EEK-EEK noise and DeEll would mimic the car noise when he was little"

### *Winters*

*Norm* "In the winter they didn't see our friends like we did in the summer time. I can remember when company did come in the winter, they would take big blankets to cover the hoods of the car in hope of keeping the radiator from freezing up".

" There used to be a lot more snow. The telegraph poles would be so covered with snow that we couldn't do anything. If we had to go into town to get groceries we put chains on our model T. I was 6 or 7.



1923 Ford Model T

<http://auto.howstuffworks.com/1923-1927-ford-model-t1.htm>

*Marian* " I can remember staying home for six solid weeks. We played a lot of cards. Of course, in those days, you were more used to staying in. Oney rode to town with a horse to get groceries. You could take two gunny sacks and fill them with groceries, and then balance them on either side of the horse".

*Norm* "Ninety percent of people who rode horses in those days did not use a saddle-we'd ride bare back, all we had was a bridal and reins, the horses were tame".





*Norm:* "I remember there was a blizzard in Waubay one year, it was Max's BD. Grandpa was a poor driver and wouldn't let me drive, instead of turning in to Summit he ran into a ditch on the far side. Freddie Frankenhoff was working for Knutsen at the gas station. Grandma was still living in town, we stayed there for the night. Dad and I went to town the next am and then he let me drive".

### *Trips to Town in the Winter*

*Iva* "Years ago, when people lived in the country and the roads were blocked from blowing snow, all the neighbors would ban together and all go to town at the same time with horses and sleighs for their supplies. Groceries, coal and sometimes someone needed shoes or clothing. They would take turns breaking the path in the snow because it was eight miles and father for some and the horses would get tired".

"The men placed benches at the side of the sled to sit on and we all had fur blankets at that time for warmth and also took along heated bricks to put by our feet. We always looked forward to these winter trips and had lot of fun. When we arrived in town we all had relatives to go see and get a hot meal".

*Dad* "Everyone had to have bob-sleds to go through deep snow in the winter. It had a front and back bolster to let the front turn with the horses. We cleaned the barn with the bobsled. We took off the grain bin and put dump planks on the bobsled, they were like 2x6's , really long planks, then you would throw the manure on the planks, and take it to the field. When you split the board apart the manure would fall through. In the spring, we could plow it under if we were going to plant grain. You always had a certain place to scatter manure so it was never the same. That was good fertilizer.

### *Sleigh Rides*

*Norm* "We would sit in a grain bed, it was about 5 feet high. They would take an old iron, heat it up on the stove, or heat rocks in the oven, and cover them up and put them in the box with us, cover us up with a horse hair blanket and we'd stay snug as a bug. We sometimes played a game, and hang our legs outside the box to see who could take the most cold. Nick Pies always won, he had an artificial leg".





### *Church*

"We used to go to the Marvin Catholic Church, it was on the south side of the RR tracks. Old Man Nick Faith said there was bees in the belfry at the Marvin Catholic Church. Later we started to go to Waubay. One of our teachers, Mary Gannon, was Catholic, and she helped us with our lessons. She would bring out lessons up from Milbank, that's where Ethel and I got confirmed, at St. Lawrence. I knew right away I did not want to be an altar boy and they did not ask me. Marvin used to be South Marvin and North Marvin. It was on the railroad line, and at the end of the tracks at one time. They had lumberyards and livery barns".

### *Holidays:*

*Norm:* " We had a real Christmas tree when I was growing up. We had candles that we lit on Christmas Eve and that was it. We followed Lent really strict, we couldn't go to dances or parties, nowhere, except on St Patrick's Day, there was always a dance on St Patrick's Day. Otherwise, during Lent, we ate cheese, sardines and salmon.

### *The New Barn*

*Norm:* " The old barn blew down in 1944. Then we built a hip-roof barn, they were less expensive to build. The Butlers were carpenters, they cut all the rafters for the barn, people from the town would come out after supper and help us put up the rafters until we had a skeleton of the barn built. Then all we had to do is put on the rough boards and shingle. The floors had a gravel bottom; we would clean them by putting in fresh hay. Dad used to get mad at me; I could never stomach the smell of manure, especially if it was a male horse. He always would give me heck, but I have always gagged easily. Up until a few years ago, I gagged just from brushing my teeth".

"The summer of 1944, I was seventeen, DeEll was eleven and Gene was eight. Gene was supposed to help me put new shingles on the barn. I would nail the shingles side by side, and I thought he could help by laying a shingle over each crack.

He was putting shingle on top of shingle and I was trying to tell him how to do it and he climbed off the roof and ran into the house and told Mom I was picking on him. She told him "If Norm is picking on you, then you don't have to help him anymore".





"The roof on that barn wasn't too hard to walk around on, but the old A-frame roof was. We had to nail 2x4's down- that was the hardest part. Then we would use those to get a grip when we walked, and we had to walk leaning in".

"Dad had DeEll help cut the grain with a grain binder. The tractor had a hand clutch. DeEll drove the tractor and Dad drove the grain binder. He tied a rope to connect the grain binder to the tractor, and he would pull the rope to make sure DeEll was awake. It wasn't hard to fall asleep up there, especially when it was hot. Also, if something was wrong with the binder, he could stop the tractor".

"The new barn had grooved lumber on the side of the barn. It was really in good shape. The barn was later sold and moved off the farm, to a farm in Milbank".

"The house is in Milbank now, too. I remember there was a row of big cottonwoods next to the house; I used to take a blanket out there and lay in the shade. In the winter, the snow would get so high after a storm that we could walk into the top door of the granary. There would be such a big snow bank around the house that we would have to cut steps. During a blizzard, we would have to hang on to each other when we went outside."

### *Hay*

*Norm* "They used to put hay up in big bales. Dad would make us take the hay off the end; we would cover it and tie it down with twine and rocks. We would throw the twine over the hay and tie a rock to each end. Didn't have to look too far for rocks, there was usually some along the edge of the fields. You could bury those rocks, but they always worked their way to the top".

### *Hay Mow*

*Norm* "It was dangerous in the haymow. There wasn't any electricity, if you had to go up the haymow after dark, you would have to climb the ladder with the lantern.

One would go up a ladder, steps that would be right up to the haymow, and then throw the hay down to the other one. It was easy to start a fire, and the hay dust made it worse. If it was nice, we fed the cattle outside; the only time you had to throw hay down was if there was bad weather".

### *Picking Rocks.*

*Max and Norm* "Picking rocks was a family activity, everyone helped. Every year after the field was plowed, new rocks would show up. After they went through the field with a digger shovel and a digging bar on the tractor, we would go back and dig the rocks out. They had a flat carrier, low to the ground, that we would





put the rocks on, and they would haul them to the end of the field, that is how the rocks got along the fence line or the low land".

*Norm* "Usually, we would go back to get the rocks with the flat carrier, but when I was working for Ernest Richter, if we were plowing and the plow hit a rock, he would make us stop plowing and dig it out on the spot. We kept a shovel and bar right on the tractor. He didn't want us to hit it again. Rocks broke machinery, and it was a lot easier to dig up the rock right away than it was to buy new machinery".

Dad "Ernest Richter hired me during WW 2 because there was no one around to help- they were all at war. He had he had 3 brothers- if the other brothers needed me he would take me over to their farm. They also had August Adolphsen as a hired man. I was working hard digging post holes with an auger, for a new fence to go around a quarter if their land. I asked them why August wasn't helping! They discussed it and brought him in to help out- he went ahead of me and cut the sod so I wouldn't have to dig so deep." (Ernest was married to Lillian Mogen, Fred was married to Hazel Poor and Albert was married to Dora Nelson. They had a cousin Otto who was married to Loverne Moyer.)

### *Cattle*

*Norm* "Several families let their cattle graze on the Pederson and Cook quarter. The Pederson farm was ½ mile east and the Cook quarter was a mile east. There was a grove of trees there and I would sit under it and eat my lunch. I would borrow a horse from Ervin Woolseys to round up the cattle. I would walk a quarter of a mile over there in the afternoon and then herd the cattle back to each farm. They just seemed to know where to go, they would separate from the herd when we came to their place. I was about eight or nine, then. I liked Mrs. Woolsey-she would give me butterscotch candy- I still like those. One day Mr. Woolsey said he wasn't going to let me use the horse anymore. He thought I was riding it too hard; it had sores on its back, under the saddle. I knew why it had sores- the barn was so full of manure; the horse scraped its back on the top of the door going into the stall. I went home and told Dad and I guess he got it all straightened out. That was a nice horse, they called it a sorrel; it had a white face".

### *Horses*

*Norm* "Dad paid 500.00 for a team of horses- that was a lot of money in those days. We use to raise a lot of horses. We had a mare Tricia; she maybe had four colts. Then we had a brown horse Babe, she had three colts. Trixie was white and Billie was brown, they were a good team. Billie got old, about twenty years or so,







and become skin and bones. Grandpa didn't have the heart to kill him, he died of old age.

We had Blackie and May also. One time we bought a horse from Curtis Southwick, we led her home behind the Model T. Shortly after that, she stepped in a badger hole, and broke her leg. Dad had to shoot her, he dug a big hole in the ground and buried her".

"Uncle Chris had those great big work horses, like Belgium's, and he had them hooked up to his four wheel buggy. One time he got stuck with the threshing machine. His two horses couldn't budge it. Grandpa had a small team of horses and he was able to get them out. Chris didn't like it that our little horses got the job done".

"There is the story about the guy who sold his blind horse to another guy. The other guy came back to him and said, "Why didn't you tell me she was blind". The other guy said "I did; I told you that she doesn't *look* so good!"

"That was the first thing a kid learned was how to drive horses. I'd see Dad unhook the machinery and I'd run down to meet him. I'd want to drive the horse home. You'd be pretty tired at night, after you planted, north and south, and then you'd drag east and west to cover up the seeds. 20 rounds in the morning that would be 10 miles, that was pretty good going for the horses. The west 1/2 section, there was no potholes, just land."

"One thing about horses, they were always willing to stop when you hollered 'Whoa'. Grandpa Clem used to say it was a good horse when it rolled over all the way after we worked it all day. They rolled in the hay to get the sweat off of them. Horses can eat anytime, we would feed them in the morning, and sometimes at noon if we were working them hard."

"The first thing you did in the morning was feed the horses their oats and milk the cows. While we did that, Grandma would be making breakfast, French toast, scrambled eggs, pancakes. You could eat a lot of French toast, that is a good way to use up old bread".

*Dad* " Back in the thirties, it was really dry out west of the river and the wild horses didn't have any food. The government shipped them here by rail- they didn't want to slaughter them. Whoever needed them could go get them, but you had to break them. Uncle Ray got two of them, but Dad didn't. Back in those days the cattle and horses traveled by rail and they would stop at the towns that had stockyards and people would unload them and feed them,





and load them back up again. You could make a good living doing that. Summit had a stockyard- Uncle Ray had quite a time bringing them home from Summit. He pulled them behind the wagon with heavy-duty halters- it was hard work. "

"One time, Dad, Uncle Ray, George and Ed Fransen found critter outside of Summit. The people unloading the cattle at the stockyard must have forgot one. The butcher, Nels Kroenoken, said, "If you guys catch it I will butcher it and we can share it".

### ***Bulls***

*Norm* "Chris Jurgeson lived on the Woolsey farm before they did; I was pretty young. I think it was pretty dry that year; Chris had a deep well and plenty of water, so he let our cows come over to drink. Don and I went to get the cows, and one of Chris's bulls came after us. Don went into the hayrack and I went into the culvert. Don kept trying to irritate the bull so he would stay away from me; the bull kept trying to sniff in the culvert. The bull got so mad at Don, he tried to tip over the hayrack. Finally, Don ran out of the hayrack and up a tree. The bull finally left."

Max remembered when Grandma was stuck on a hayrack and had to wait for Grandpa to come in from the fields before she could get off. All of the kids were in the house. She kept telling the kids not to come out.

*Norm* "It was a good thing the kids were in the house. You had to be really careful, it didn't take much to make a bull mad. Anything red, or even the flapping of a women's dress would set them off.

*Norm* "One time we were threshing at Chris Fransen's, he had an ornery bull. I needed some water, but I was afraid to get out of the hayrack. We told Laura Jean Fransen to get the bull out of there. She picked up a pitchfork and he was scratching and backing up, then he turned around and got out of there".

### ***Dogs***

*Norm* "We had a lot of dogs named Spot. We kept losing them; they would go over to Hiway 81, chasing cars, and we find them in a ditch. We had an old female dog, she kept having pups. Finally, Dad tied her out in the pasture one day. He headed out there with a shotgun to shoot her. He couldn't aim very well, because he only had one eye. He ended up shooting the rope in two. The dog ran home and died of old age".

"Once when I was alone on the farm, I saw the neighbor's dog get into our hen house. I decided to get the shotgun. I knew I would be in trouble if I shot him, so





I decided to shoot over his head, just to scare him. When I came out of the house, the screen door slammed, and he took off running. I shot over his head-and he dropped! I was so scared! I knew I was in big trouble.

I decided I had better get the shovel and bury him. I went back into the house to put the gun away, and then headed out to get a shovel. The screen door slammed behind me again- and the dog got up and took off running! I was never so relieved. The sound of the gun must have scared him. I was about eight years old then”.

### *Chickens*

*Iva* " I remember the first time I had thrashers, Mom came and helped me clean a couple of chickens. We killed them [Grandma would wring their necks] and then we cleaned and cooked them. We had the chicken with gravy and biscuits; that was really good. We used to have to fire up the stove, and then we would let it cool down to bake our cakes or bread. That was the hardest part of cooking; you would have to get it just right. I got a bottle-gas stove as soon as I could".

*Max* "We always had chickens. We had a metal wire with a snare at the end, we would use that to catch the chicken, then we would wring their necks and dress them. If we had company, Grandma would tell us to go get a couple chickens, so we could have fried chicken.

Marge would catch them, and tie them up by their legs, and then go along and chop their heads off. That way the blood would drain out of them. Iva would take a blanket along. After she killed the chicken she would have to lay down, she would always get sick to her stomach".

"But those fresh chickens were so good, people would always talk about Grandma's fried chicken. She would can the chicken, too. She would thicken the broth and make gravy and biscuits when she served it”.

*Marian* "I remember that chickens would get coccidiosis, you had to give them iodine or they would peck at each other in the rear”.

Barb remembers an old story that Grandpa Pugh told. One chicken ate a piece of string, and eliminated it. Through the process of eating and pecking, several chickens ended up being strung together..... [*I think this qualifies as a true "Skunk-tale"!*]

### *Pigs*

*Gene and Norm* "One year, we didn't have any money to buy feed; we had a sow and 8 or 9 pigs. Someone said they were about 110 pounds, I don't think they were that big, they were just piglets. A scalper came through and we were able to





sell the sow, but he didn't want the pigs. No one had feed for them- that was in the Dirty Thirties. We had to butcher all those pigs that year. We skinned them and put them in the granary, covered with old sheets.

Whenever anyone had some time in the evening, they would bring in a quarter of pork and start cutting it up to put in cans” .

“We packed the jars full, and sealed them with lard, just on the top. Then they were baked in the oven, then they could be stored without refrigeration. We only butchered them that way because we had so many. Usually, we would heat water over a wood stove in a 2 handled copper boiler, then we would pour that into a 55 gallon barrel out in the barn. We would put that on a platform, something between two saw horses, then we would raise the pigs up and down in the scaling water, and then we could scrape off the hair and whiskers. Then we would clean it, wrap it in butcher paper and take it into the house to put in crocks; that preserved it. We would keep them in the root cellar. We'd have side pork and salted pork; sometimes we would make head cheese, that was the meat off the head. Grandpa would cut under the ears and twist the head right off. We would always butcher in the winter, he would take the head and stand it up in the snow bank. Some people would grind up the meat from the head, we cut it into cubes and cooked it, the gel would come to the top and we would skim it off. It was mostly fat. They never threw any thing away back then, tongue, brains, kidneys, every thing but the squeal.

Some people made blood sausage and blood baloney, and they would use intestines for the caseins for sausages. We made pork rind out of the hide. We would fry it up real crisp. At butchering time we would always have a meal of liver and onions. Uncle Ray was just across the road from us. Dad would give him half of any pig we butchered. Ray would butcher a beef cow and give us half. That was about all you could can in those days. We didn't eat beef very much, I didn't like it as well; it was hard to get used to. We never had a locker until later. Then we took the critters to town and they would butcher the animal” .

“We still did not have electricity, so that was the last place we stopped before going home; we had to keep it in the cellar in the summer or we could keep it outside in the winter” .

"Sometimes when we'd render the lard from the fat we'd have to get rid of the little crispy things. We always had a lot of lard; I guess that is why Grandma always made doughnuts. We also had canned chicken, geese and turkeys. Rhode Island Red chickens were for eating” .

*Gene* “Grandpa Clem Pugh always called pigs “morgage lifters”. He said he paid





off his first mortgage by raising pigs. The interest rate was 14 percent and he paid it off 7 years early. He also told about not being able to meet mortgage payments so the bankers in Summit would refer you to the bank across the street. At that time Summit had 2 banks. Then the bank across the street would send their customers back. That was a way to prevent foreclosure by the bank. It didn't pay for the bank of foreclose because they wouldn't get anything for the land anyway".

*Norm:* "Marge was a teacher, her first job was in Hill City, South Dakota. She was staying with Chuck Starkey's because the winter was so bad. This was after they were married. There was a bad blizzard, so the folks thought I should go over and see how Joe was doing. I took something along, cake or donuts, I can't remember. I rode the horse over, and I hung my coat up. It didn't have a hood, but a collar, and it was sheep-skin lined and it kept me warm when I was riding on the horse. I hung it on a hook where you hang your harness. There was a pig in the pen and he must have stood on its hind legs and pulled my coat down into the pig pen. That was my favorite coat and it was ruined. I don't know how Ma got it clean but she did- she might have even put on a new outside, but she fixed it".

### *The Smart Little Runt*

*Gene* "We had a runt pig that we were keeping for pork chops. We put it in the barn, next to Whitey, the cow. We put slats in the pen to keep the pig in. We noticed that Whitey didn't have as much milk on some mornings, and one morning we found the pig sucking the milk from the cow. So we put the slats up higher, but we were just teaching the pig how to climb the ladder; it kept getting out. Finally, Don said, lets tie a rope on the leg to keep him from getting to the cow. We gave it enough slack to be able to get around inside the pen. One day we found the pig hanging by it's back leg. We gave him enough slack to hang" .

### *Milk*

Some people named Gram lived north of Summit. Donnie's critter got out of the pasture, they let him know they could get it any time. We went to get the critter when they were milking. They would separate the milk and cream, the container must have never been cleaned, it was so thick and crusty- that was before pasteurizing and homogenizing and refrigeration- the milk would just lay there and get thick and rotten. That's why I never cared for milk. As a young kid that was the rottenest tasting stuff there was. Still today, if we don't have cereal, I don't have milk.

Dad was on the milk run , you had to get up early every am, they had 10 gallon cans, poured milk there. If you ran out of space, the milk would have to go to the





hogs. If you didn't get up in time, when the milk truck came, you didn't get your milk. They could bring butter and ice cream. They would have a certain time they would be there, and the milk better be ready.

### *Lockers*

*Norm* "Before you had lockers, you had to can your meat. Afterwards, you kept your meat in the locker. When we went to town, we would stop at the locker last before going home; you didn't bring home too much meat. Gilbert Slauthaug would be open; he'd get all the meat Ma wanted.

We would have to get extra meat when we were thrashing. Dad would have to go into town at 6 so he would be home by 7 or 8 before the threshers came. It was a lot of work just to go to town and get groceries, and buy meat enough for all the help. Fern, Aunt Blanche, Grandma and Uncle Frank were all in on the run and they would help each other, but they would be busy for at least eight days. It put a lot of pressure on the family. The food they put out was wonderful, bigger quantities always taste better".

### *Farm Equipment*

*Norm* "The 1530 McCormick Dearing tractor that my Dad had, that was the tractor that Eddie Zirbel got killed on. Lloyd Munsrud got it after Eddie got killed and then he put it up for sale and Dad bought it. I think the problem was that Eddie was walking along beside it doing something, he was moving the thrashing machine and something wasn't working right. That governor never worked on that tractor; I think he was down there trying to do something to it. Once you got them going, it would go straight, you didn't have to steer it at all. Anyway, a car came over the hill and hit him.

" I think Dad was pretty close to Pete Morrissey, his sister's husband. One time Dad was cutting grain, every bundle was tied with twine, he was getting low, so he called Pete and told him if anyone was coming down his way, to send it. Pete carried that heavy bundle of twine and walked all the way down to our place, it was about seven miles- he must have been a husky guy. "

" The binder was an invention way ahead of the hand sickle. The blades were about seven feet long and about three inches wide. It worked back and forth, and had to be sharp, the undercut was green. The bundles had to cure and dry out . The binder was pulled by horses. The sickle would cut off the grain, and a big wheel with arms on it would push the grain upon a canvas into the bundle maker, then it would be tied and cut automatically. Then it would kick the bundle out to the bundle carrier. The guy running the binder would trip it after 5 or 6 bundles, and then the bundles would fall to the ground. Then he would have to trip it again to make the bundle carrier go back up. They would call that





a swath, 10 bundles of oats would be a shock. [The Germans called it a swat, the Irish said swath. The Norwegians called a swing tooth a swing toot. We used to ask Joe what he was doing, and he would say he was out “swing-tootin”.

“Don and I would be there helping, about the third swath we would take 3 piles of bundles and go all around the field, then we would get one round of rest. Don was such a worker. I always thought it would make more sense to wait until Dad did the whole field, but Don wanted to be right behind him. One year I started school about a week late, we were still hauling bundles”.

“ Every year, Dad would check out the machinery so he knew what parts would need replacing. You didn’t want to break down in the fields. In those days you maintained your own machinery. I can remember he would be pretty upset if a wrench slipped and he skinned his hand. He didn’t like that”.

"One year we got a brand new John Deer tractor, and I drove it in from town. Max was painting the house and she told me to get the hayrack so we could put the ladder on it and get the peak. Ma would throw the ashes out by the chicken coop and the chickens would scratch in the dirt. I got the wheel in one of the holes and it tipped over and bent the exhaust pipe over. Grandpa was not too happy that day. I got a pipe and bent it back over pretty good though".

*Norm:* Roy Scharf and Dad were real good friends and he would let us use his small tractor to seed the flax. It was really cold one April- you had to have a heavy coat on to be out there riding that tractor. We had to jump in the car to warm-up -the tractor had a cold seat and was wide open. We would trade off- even Manley would go for 2 to 3 rounds. I must have been 12 or 13 years old.

### ***Plows***

*Norm* “Don had an M Farmall. Some of the Purdy’s in Montana came to visit and when they saw he had an M Farmall, they said, we use those to do our chores. They used really big tractors in Montana! A three-bottom plow, that was pretty good for South Dakota. It had three lays; you could have two, three, or four. The more you had, the more power you had. We had a 1-bottom plow when I was a kid, you needed 3 horses to pull it, and it went into the ground 8-10 inches. A 2 bottom took 5 horses. If you hit a rock, the plow would fly and you’d go right along with it. The lighter you were, the further you flew.

We had a special evener, so we had 2 horses in the front, and three in the back. The evener hooked up to equalize the 2 horses against the 3. When you seeded grain, you needed 4 horses, usually all in a line.





## *Thrashing*

*Norm* "First, the grain has to be cut with a binder, then put into bundles, eight or nine in a circle, to form the shock. This has to be done before it is too dry, or the grain falls off. It was dry enough so that they got so much mowed and they could put a couple of guys raking and then they started stacking for the next day. Lyman Owens and Jim Kennison, our neighbors, helped. Once the shocks are made, then they are left to cure. If it rained, they would have to go and turn the shocks over, so the sun would dry them. When the shocks were cured, the neighbors would form "threshing runs". Six or seven neighbors would get together with the threshing machine and spend two days at each place, threshing. If they did not finish, they would come back once the others had all had two days, hoping to get everyone done before it rained. They would throw the shocks into the thresher, which shook the grain off, then shoot the remaining straw into a huge straw pile.

"One man, O.R. Olson would go to Watertown and hire men to come out to thresh around the clock. They would light the straw on fire so they were able to see throughout the night".

*Norm and Marion:* "Threshing was the time the girls would bring out lunch, and look over the threshers, and likewise. There were usually barn dances around that time- it was a fun time".

*Iva* " When I was growing up and even when we were first married, we didn't have combines but had threshing machines to harvest the grain! About seven or eight neighbors would join together and go from one farm to another harvesting until it was all done. The women always furnished morning lunch, sandwiches, cake or cookies and plenty of coffee. Fresh pies, bread and fresh churned butter. Then came dinner for the whole crew, which was always something special. And then lunch again in the afternoon. It was strenuous work, gathering the shocked grain onto the hayrack and the pitching them into the thresher all day. When the harvest was finished they would gather at one of the farms to settle up and would end with an ice cream social furnished by the owner of the thresher! Everyone looked forward to this fun time at the end of a busy harvest! "

*Max* "When we had threshers, Mom would have us go out and dig up carrots- we hated to do that. Then we would clean them and cut them in half, and she would cook them, and add some onions that had been fried. That was one of the meals she would make for threshers.







Imagine how the women had to make breakfast, lunches, dinner and supper for that crowd of men- five meals.

The threshing crew would stay over night, and sleep in the barn".

*Norm* " Bundle haulers were the guys who would take the bundles away by wagon and horses. Sometimes they would stay in the hay mow as they could be 6-7 miles from home, so they stayed where the rig was. That's why Grandpa Pugh was at Krause's for breakfast.

*Barb* " I remember Mom preparing food for the threshers. I can still remember the smell of coffee. She would pour the coffee in a large jar and wrap it in a gunnysack. That would keep it warm. It worked to keep food cold, also.

*Norm* "Walter Bard had a threshing machine, the neighborhood formed a threshing run, Walter did the threshing. He lived below the Marvin hill, in the flats. He would have two runs. The grain ripened quicker down in the flats, so they would finish up there, and then come up into the hills. When it was all over, he would figure out what each farm owed him, I'm not sure if they figured by the bushel or the hour. When he settled up the run, he would stop in town and bring out a big insulated carrier with about 3 gallons of ice cream. He was a religious man and he wouldn't think about having beer. A lot of them had big parties when they settled up. The threshing included Mr. Bliss (wife was Irene), Uncle Ray, Dad, Kennison, Woolsey- and after he left it was Uncle Frank."

"After Walter Bard we had another guy with a threshing machine, related to Steinochers, and after that George Wohlleber. That was a big run, with Chris Fransen, Hugo Becker and his Dad and Jim Kinneson, George Leinen, Dad, Uncle Ray and Ed Fransen. George also would do a couple of runs down on the flats before coming to the hills- better money. They threshed by the bushel and there was more yield in the flats.

"The Fiebelkorns and the Nelsons had two big silos. They'd put a jug in the bottom of the silo, and the drippings from the silo would go into the jug. That was 100 % corn alcohol. They had to dilute it with water and probably add some sugar, too. When they had their thrashers meeting, they'd bring out the jug".





## Fun on the Farm

### *Boy Scouts*

*Norm* "When I was in the Boy Scouts we hiked from Summit to Marvin with our piece of beefsteak. We didn't have hamburger in those days. We had to start our fire by cracking rocks together to make a spark. We dug a pit, and then we got little rocks to line it so the heat of the rocks would cook the potatoes. We put in the potatoes and then cooked the meat- we had well done potatoes and raw meat. Then we hiked back up the hill to Summit".

### *4 H*

" We grew sorghum for a 4 h project, must have showed it at the club when they had it, sugarcane too, fed mostly to the cattle, and took that to county fair for 4 H showing. One year we had 20 acres of sugar cane, did we ever get the feed, the cattle went wild for it".

### *Hunting*

*Norm* "We would go pheasant hunting, you didn't need a license on your own land. Dad and Don used to catch them by hand; the pheasants would be in an old abandoned barn. They would roost there at night. In those days farmers would always take their shotgun when they went out to the field, in case they would see a pheasant or rabbit. I had a gun that Dad bought me for \$5.00. It fell down through a crack and busted the magazine. After it was soldered it shot, but not straight. I always said I could shoot around corners with it".

"After a while you could figure out how to shoot it, you'd have to waste shells to practice and in those days, shells were not cheap, you didn't want to waste any. I can remember shooting rabbits with Joe. You would get 35 cents a piece for them. At that time, shooting rabbits was a part of Joe and Marge's income. One night we went out with a pick-up and shot a spot light on the jackrabbits. They would sit right up and stare into the light- we got 35 that night. It was good money- enough to buy groceries and a little more". That was before 22's were banned for rabbits".





## *Other Entertainment*

### *Cards*

*Norm:* I remember a story about Francis playing cards at Erwin Woolsey's- pinochle was big back then. Mr. Woolsey was partners with the hired man, Frances and Mrs. Woolsey were partners. The hired man made a mistake and Mr. Woolsey got mad and hit the hired man, they had a brawl. Frances was ready to get out of there, and Mrs. Woolsey said "No you're not going- we are going to clean up this place and finish the game".

*Norm* "There used to be Golden Glove boxing tournaments all over. Donnie was a Golden Glove. Oney, DeEll, and Manley did some boxing, too. The fights were promoted by Sherm Orten".

*Norm:* We also enjoyed outdoor movies.

We went to town on Wed and Sat nights We had a theatre in Summit that cost 25 cents. Most of it was westerns, like Roy Rogers, also Tom Mix (Dad said they called him "Tom Mix in cement" ), Judy Garland, and Shirley Temple. The projector was mounted in a house in the back of a truck. Comics (Cartoons?) first and then news reels. I remember one time George Leinen had on a pair of heavy wool pants, so he unzipped them and forgot about it until he had to get up to let a lady through. He quickly zipped up his pants but accidentally got the ladies dress caught in his zipper!

### *Liquor*

*Norm* "When Dad was a boy, he would tell how all the saloons in Iowa closed at 6 Pm on a Saturday night. Most people worked on Saturday, and they didn't want people drinking up all of their money!"

### *Stills*

*Norm* "There was probably bootlegging going on during Prohibition. I remember one family's house burned down, and a steel tank tumbled out of the rubble. Apparently there was an explosion and it burned their house down".

### *Cigarettes/Snus*

*Norm* "When DeEll was a baby, we used to all sit around the table, Dad, then DeEll on the left, then Ma, the three girls, then Don and me; I sat on the right side of Dad. Dad used to tell the story about when he asked me to roll him a cigarette, and I said, "Why don't you ask Don, he can do a better job!" I was 7 or 8 then, Don was about 12, he must have been practicing rolling his own, and I spilled the beans!"

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*Iva* "Dad and Ray used to roll their own cigarettes, Uncle John smoked packaged cigarettes. One time when they were visiting, we climbed into the bedroom window where they were staying and took a package of his cigarettes. We were really taking chances. Then we took them over to Rays and smoked them, and we came back too sick for supper. Uncle John noticed that a pack of cigarettes were gone, and he said, " I think I know why they are sick".

*Norm* "Uncle John and Aunt Kate always stayed with Mom and Dad. I guess they had a bigger place than Ray and Blanche. I remember Dad telling about his son Johnny, the one that lived in Florida. He came to stay when he was young- Dad taught him how to drive the old model T. I guess he smoked, rolled his own. Dad probably didn't feel like he could say anything. Anyway, one time the horses got wild, they didn't want to go in to the barn, he was supposed to head them off. They'd have gone in if he had just done something, but he had to stop and roll a cigarette first".

*Dad* "Elmer Wohlleber, Harold Krause, Clyde Leinen and Howard Fransen and I would pool our money for 15 cent package of "Wing" cigarettes. There were 20 cigarettes, that would give us each four for the night".

*Dad*" I can remember when I was threshing with Leo LeBarr, he cut off a chew of tobacco for me. We had to ride clear to the end of the field and by the time I got there I had that long bumpy ride and I had swallowed quite a bit of tobacco juice. I was so dizzy I could hardly work.

### *Barn Dances/House Dances/Music In the Country*

*Norm* "Chris Fransen played the violin, he would have house dances. Carl Krause would also have dances. Earlings had barn dances- I remember going with the folks to South Shore to get groceries; Ma and Dad would stop in at Earlings and dance a few dances, then come out and take us home. Art Reynolds had barn dances in his barn for years, he lived 1 ½ miles south of Albert's, he had dances with Lawrence Welk".

*Marian* "Lawrence Welk was also on WNAX in Yankton, on the air. Leo Fortin would play with Lawrence Welk; he played with Francis Hess and the Mess, too. Harry Britzman used to play his accordion at the Sunnyside. Redlin's lived by Strouston- they had barn dances too.





*Norm* " They had barn dances at Strouston in Mom and Dad's time. Strouston used to be on "Old 81". Old 81 went west at Arnolds Store (the road that St John's of Mazepa is on). I don't know where it went from there. The next 81 was probably built before WW 2, because the pilots getting training in Watertown would follow it up to Sisseton where they practice dropping bombs. There were a lot of planes flying over our farm back then. They built an air base in Watertown for flight operations. After the war they gave it to the city for public use.

The "new 81" went north to Brook's Corner (on Hiway 12) and then went 2 miles before turning left to go to Sisseton. The current 81 goes north of Watertown and turns east at exit 180 and becomes concurrent with Interstate 29 all the way to Manvel ND. (The rest of the road is Hiway 20 to South Shore and it is now marked as 455th Avenue.)

Highway 12 used to be on the south side of the RR track and it went through Summit, Ortley and Waubay. They built the new Highway 12 north of the RR track. It started as the Yellowstone Trail, it left Milbank and went through Twin Brooks and Marvin and came into Summit along the cemetery road. The Yellowstone Trail website notes they tried to eliminate rail road crossings which were often unmarked and lethal. <http://www.yellowstonetrail.org>

*Norm* "We always wore our best suits to the dances, and our polished new shoes. The dances were usually at Twin Brooks, Ortley or Summit. Once me and two other guys went to Wilmot; a couple of guys took some hats and we had a hard time getting out of town. We didn't go up to Waubay, that was mostly Polish; Marvin was mostly Danes. "

*Norm* "I remember this one lady, she used to say her boys never drank when they went to dances. She could always tell because they were so thirsty the next day!"

*Bernard Schliesman* "My grandfather John Schliesman, lived seven miles north of Milbank. One summer Lawrence Welk played in his barn several times. I learned a lot about Lawrence Welk trying to figure out when it was. Lawrence Welk stayed home on the farm in Strasburg until he was twenty-one. He then went to Aberdeen and lived with his sister. He worked some there and when a traveling act came thru town he joined that as an accordion player. In 1923 -24-25 he traveled with this guy. In 1927 he got a job at WNAX radio in Yankton. After this he would travel out to these dances. Play all night for the dance then they would sleep in the car and go back to Yankton in time for the next show. He only played barn dances in 1927-28-and 29. By now he had formed his bands and left Yankton.





Played up and down the east coast then to Chicago for several years. He didn't go to California until the forties.

### *Memories from Albert Richter*

*Albert* "Lawrence Welk came from Strasbourg N.D. He had heard of the Barn dances in Blooming Valley Township. He stopped at the Art Reynolds farm in the spring of 1924 and asked for a job to play for his dances. After they did their chores at 10 PM, he serenaded them while they ate supper.

Art gave him a job for the first Friday night in May and he played there for five years in the summer time. He had a four-piece band and he played a Sears-Roebuck accordion. This is where his career started. He died in 1992. He played in South Dakota until he went to California in 1933".

### *Happy Bills Three Act Vaudeville and Dance Show*

*Norm* " I was about 12 or 13 and Happy Bills was in town. It was "Ten Nights in a Bar Room", or one of those shows. I remember the older ones were getting ready to go, Marge, Max, Don and Iva- I don't think Marge was married at the time. So I thought, well, I'm going to get ready too. I brushed my teeth with baking soda and slicked my hair down.

I guess Ma said something to Dad, so he came in and said, "What do you think you are doing?" I said I was going to the dance and he said, "No, you are not". I went to bed and I was mad. About one o'clock I was woke up by a funny noise. The kids were coming home and they were driving on the rim, on the gravel road, which was snow and ice. We had a 30 Chevy but that didn't mean much. I remember laying in my nice warm bed and thinking that was a good decision my Dad made".

*Norm* "They probably didn't have money for me to go- I think it was 50 cents a person, and in those days, 50 cents was a lot. Kids probably shouldn't have seen it anyway-Ten Nights in a Bar Room took place in the bar, and they acted drunk and threw furniture around. But they could act, those people. That must have been around 38 or 39. We didn't know there was a war going on in Europe- we probably never read the newspaper and if we listened to the radio, it was to a nightly show, like Gangbusters, or Lux Radio Theatre by Cecil B. Demille, or Fibber McGee and Molly. Johnson Wax was the sponsor for Fibber McGee and Molly".

"Milton Slathaug started a little store, he had a radio for sale, that is when we got one. You could connect it to the battery in the car. Gangbusters was exciting to listen to. I remember when we went to George Leinen's to listen to Joe Lewis box; we were running around smoking cigarettes; that was before 36 or 37.





### *Styles*

*Norm* "The women used to wear their anklets rolled down with high heels- I hated that. It made them look flossy, especially if they had on short pants and smoked a cigarette".

### *Memories of Summit*

*Norm* "Ole Moe had the Hardware Store. Helen Thompson had the cafe, her husband Glen was the town cop, and they farmed. Gloria Bogenrief was Helen Thompson's daughter".

"The Bergquist women were mother and daughter, they used to dress exactly alike and walk past Grandpa Pugh's. They came from the Ortley, the daughter went to high school on Summit; , she was bright at first. The father was the town cop and he ran off".

"Gilbert Slauthaug had the store, he let the farmers put stuff on the books, and let them pay after they sold their livestock or grain. Maybe they didn't even pay it all, just so he got a little. He was almost like a pastor, very concerned and compassionate. He had a cot where he could lay down and he could see the front door and the till. While he was resting he'd lie their cracking nuts, he always had to be doing something".

"Dad rode with Mr. Arff to Milbank, they were suppose to do jury duty and they wanted to get out of it. The judge asked Dad what his excuse was, "Well, we just had a small baby, I figured I should be home to help out". The judge said, "Sounds like a good reason". Then he said to Mr. Arff "Next. What's your name?" "Arf" replied Mr. Arff. The judge said, "What did you say?". Mr. Arff said "Arf, Arf".

*Deb* "I remember Grandpa telling me that story; he thought Arff was a worse name to have than Pugh!"

*Norm* " Freddy Wohlfort was a good friend of the family. His wife was married to a Grabow first and was a sister of Gydia Wohlleber, maiden name Hansen. She had 5-6 kids. Freddy lived with his mother for years, and took care of her. He had a sister confirmed at Mazeppa. He moved to Summit, probably still lives in the same house. He lived in Watertown in the winter". *Passed away June 2009*

"People would ride their horses into town, and leave them at the livery barn. There were two in town. The guy in the livery barn would take care of your horses and feed them fresh hay, and they would be ready for the trip home when you were done shopping.

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In the wintertime, when we came into town on Saturday afternoon, we used to like to play in the hay mow in the livery barns-till we got kicked out!"

"Summit had three hotels. One of the hotels was the Tilly Eilers, named for Tilly Eilers, the first white baby born in Summit. Across the street was the Frank and Martha Riley hotel. There was also a Briggs Hotel, on the south end of Main Street, south of where Allie Stoddard used to live. Traveling salesman would come by train, and then rent a horse and buggy from the livery and do their rounds. They would stay in the hotels". (Tilly Eilers husband Harry was a carpenter, he helped us remodel the old barn about three years before it blew down)".

"A man named Larson had the meat market. There was a really nice lady named Dottie Dunn- she had the hat shop. Pat and Clara Premrick were there for while and then they moved into Dottie Dunn's Hat shop, across the street from Dad's station. Gabe Nelson had the restaurant there for years. His sisters were good friends of Ma's. One of Gabe Nelson's sisters was Helen Thompson. The other sister was married to Lowden Sommers, neighbors of Pugh's.

She died after having two children, June and Billie. They had a fire, and she either died in the fire or as a result of the fire. Her younger sister was helping out and then Lowden married her".

"Mrs. Alma Barrett was also a good friend of Ma's, she was also sister to Gabe Nelson. I think Nelson's were originally from South Shore. Orpha Lau was also a friend of Ma's."

"Emil Running had the barbershop. They called him the "Running Barber". He might be half way through a haircut, but if it was time for his coffee, he would leave the customer sitting there until he came back from having coffee at the café. He was Norwegian, and he had to have his coffee. He could drink it right out of the pot. All he needed was his cup of coffee, and then he would come back and finish the haircut.

"I bought a Model T from Emil when I was seventeen. It was a little coupe, but it didn't go far. The tires looked good, but they were rotten. I gave it some speed and the tires blew out. We really went through the cars.

When I came back from the Army the car I left behind had become a trailer; Don went through a lot of cars too. At one time they had two barbershops in Summit. Harvey Olson used to get his hair cut every Saturday night".







*Norm's Memories of Friends and Neighbors.*

*Norm* " A family named the Shirholz lived across from us after Ray and Blanche moved. Grandma always had a feeling they went through the house when they were gone - in those days you never locked your doors. In 1949, after Ma and Dad had their sale, everyone went to town, except Donnie and Manley- they stayed back. Sure enough, pretty soon Mrs. Shirholz and her two sons came in. They heard her say, "You go over here, and I'll go over there" .....and then Donnie and Manley caught them- they were sure embarrassed. You couldn't even get near their house. They had a dog tied up to a ten foot chain".

*Norm* "Ed Johnsonbaugh would help with thrashing. They had three boys about the same age as Gene and DeEll. Mrs. Johnsonbaugh was real friendly; I remember a pheasant supper she made. She was in the Pinochle club with Ma; they lived where the Kennisons lived".

"Kennison's were friends with Ma and Dad, too. They went to town together once. Jim got drunk and that was the last trip with them. Kenison's moved to Rapid City, she was sister to Driesen's. They ended up coming back to Summit. They needed someone to manage the liquor store, he was happy as can be doing that, until he got killed by a drunk Indian".

"Bruce Liking was the father of Mrs. Sam (Lavern) Estep; she was a friend of Ma's. Harold and Mary Butler were good friends of Ma and Dad. They lived west of the folks, north of Marge and Joe, and went to the same church. Harold was a pallbearer for Ma. Other pallbearers were Paul Schliesman, Marlowe Sharf, Alvin Fransen, Joe Scherber, Joe McGlaughlin and Pete Schetter . The last three men went to church in Waubay. Orville Melby was the post-master in Summit. He and his wife Rachel were good friends with Ma and Dad too; they would have card parties. Their daughter Maxine was a friend of Gene and Bev's".

"Other neighborhood friends of Ma and Dad were Lawrence and Hazel Houck (she was a Brennan girl). Art Reynolds was a friend; they had barn dances.

*Norm* "Ma and Dad used to go to Popp's after church for coffee. Mary Ellen was about Iva's and my age, they had another girl, kind of crippled".

"There were a lot of bad accidents that I remember-most of them involved drinking. Fred Abraham was sitting on a bench against the storefront; the sidewalk was about 5-6 feet out.





Mrs. Fenner was parked along the store front, she thought she had the car in reverse, but she had it in drive. The car jumped over the curb and killed him. Her husband was a banker, he was kicked out of the bank in Summit for drinking. He had an accident at the liquor store in Wilmot. There were two doors side by side. One was a bathroom and one was a staircase. He thought he was going into the bathroom and fell down the stairs and broke his neck.

"There was a guy named Cub [Albert] Kallberg- he had a gas explosion in their house. It blew all the walls down except the front one. They were not harmed; they opened the front door and walked out".

"Mitchell's were a nice family- they had ten kids. Their dad was Shorty Mitchell; he had the pool hall. He had a tall wife. All of the girls married Akers. I can remember Phyllis and Lois, *(and there was Lola, Evelyn and Pauline? Caroline? on the 1930 census)*. Stanley married Helen Bakken and Paul married a Letze girl. And there was Jimmy, too. Max was friends with the sisters".

*Norm:* "We used to call Edward Redlin "Piccolo Pete with the Big Feet"- that was a tune that Lawrence Welk played".

Howard Pemrick was Clara's son from the first marriage, he was from around Wilmot. He was drafted when I was drafted.

Gundert Gunderson was Woolsey's hired man. I remember they wouldn't let him buy the school teachers basket, they outbid him for the box lunches. Someone had just butchered, and they cleaned the tail of a pig, that is what he got in his sack lunch. It was good clean fun; they lived across the road from the school house. Gundert lived with Woolsey's and left with Woolsey's to Northern Minnesota, that is how Francis Pugh got up there- then he got a job on the railroad.

*Norm:* "Max went with one of Lyman's boys before she started going with Manly- his cousin Neil. Lyman had two boys, Neil and Sonny and a girl whose name was Tootie- she was about Max's age but she never went to high school in Summit, she went to Waubay. Lyman's moved from the Waubay area and she probably lived with someone there until she finished school. She married a guy and they were playing cards. He cut the cheese and then he said to his wife "Trump it Tootie" at least that was the family story.

Dad said his school was known for its rowdy kids. There was Dorothy and Florence Pugh, and Fiebelkorns, Lutzie and Beans, and Ardyth Collins, they lived east of Dumanns.





### **Fiebelkorns'**

"The Fiebelkorn's were friends of ours, Marian's family too. They had a big family. Mrs. Fiebelkorn liked to have a thimbleful of liquor with nutmeg. We used to joke that her sons were always thinking of their mother, they kept plenty of liquor around! Marian Fiebelkorn kept house for her brothers. She ended up living with Skippy [Clarence] Kasperson. Lutzie married Beans Bradbury, his real name was Earl. Lizzie and Elfie Fiebelkorn married brothers, Otto and John Nelson. Ella married Ed Kettelhut, they lived in Rapid City. Bill married Alice Amdahl. Lawrence was married to Joe's cousin, Shirley Amdahl. They divorced and he remarried; now he lives in a new house on the west side of Watertown. Junior [Max] married Vi, from south of Watertown, she taught and played the accordion.

Johnny Frankenoff married Hilda Fiebelkorn, he came home drunk one night, and crawled over the fence. He got stuck, and they found him hanging there the next morning; he died of exposure. Ernie and Reuben never married. Reuben was a POW in WWII for quite a few years". They used to say "Gus Gus, with the Studebacher bus- that was about their uncle, brother to their Dad, Max".

Marian (Mom) was friends with Marian Fiebelkorn and I was friends with Jr. and Ernie. They didn't have much but they always had food. They slept on feather ticks and covered with them, top and bottom. Sometimes I would stay with them, and we would sleep 3 to a bed- I always had to sleep in the middle and it was hot! We would go to dances together, at Ortlely or Twin Brooks.

"Jr. went with me the first time I joined the Western Union. We saw an ad in Watertown, and we both signed up. They sent a wire to Chicago and a day later we were on the train. We were only 17. Ma and Dad were not too happy. We went to Yorkville, Ohio. We stayed in hotels and ate in restaurants. At the end of the week the foreman picked up the bill- he would always look it over to see what we ate and drank. Jr. would always have chocolate milk. The foreman started to call Jr. the Chocolate Milk kid. Jr. had a bad stuttering problem. He could only say a few words without stuttering. He said. "He can't call me that". He wanted to quit".

"The Western Union had a hard time keeping help, they wanted him to stick around. That foreman wasn't so bad. He never minded if we had a steak, but he didn't like it if we covered it with steak sauce or catsup!"





"Jr. went into the Army at the same time as I did, too. We took the same troop train to Jefferson Barracks, Missouri. He wanted to go over the hill as soon as we got there. His family got him out of the service; they said they needed him on the farm. He ended up going to California with Elmer Wohlleber."

" Jr. was friends with Oney, too. He and Oney and Harvey Boxseth sold accordions. Harvey didn't like his name, so he changed it to Harvey Lane. He ended up with several music stores- he is now in Fargo. Jr.'s wife taught accordion. They started schools, and students would start on the small accordions, as they got better they traded their old ones for a bigger one. Jr. would shine up the small one and re-sell it. They made good money-they sold accordions all over Iowa. I can remember Jr. had 4-5 new cars in one year. He ended up dying of cirrhosis of the liver".

### **People that lived on Old 81**

- Porky Hauck- that was his nick-name - he lived across from the 3- cornered house
- Zirbels, lived west of Dad's place on the west side of 81

### **Memories of Ortley**

*Deb* "Brad always called Ortley Bagley because that was what it said on the grain elevator. "

*Norm:* They had a dance hall and I bet it's still there. It's kind of dug in the ground - they built a basement and put a roof on it. You had to walk down the steps to get down into the dance floor. Oscar Van Horn's brother Lynn was the department agent in Ortley. He started the VFW in Ortley. When I got out of the service that's where I joined the VFW. He went to Montevideo -that's how the Rudebush's knew them. They had a son who was good friends with Larry Rudebush and he was from Ortley. Lynn had a daughter and three boys.  
*Deb:* I think Sandy liked one of the boys-we were all driving around Montevideo and we went to see them- I never got the connection until now, 50 years later I.  
*Norm:* Lynn was a friendly person just like Oscar.  
*Deb:* Did he look like Oscar  
*Norm:* Yes, very much. They started up around Morris, Minnesota.





### *The Richest Man West End of the County*

" O.R. Olson was probably the richest man west end of the county, he always wore over-alls- sometimes 2-3 depending on the weather. Sometimes he wouldn't have all the suspenders hooked up, he may have 1 or 2 hanging down. People would see him in town and say "You got your over-alls on?" and he would say, "Yeah, everybody knows me, it doesn't matter..." Sometimes people would see him in a different town, dressed the same way. He'd respond, "It's OK, no one here knows me..."

### *The Town Pasture*

*Norm* "Back in that time, each house in town had a little barn. Dad and Uncle Ray would haul hay into the barn for cattle there. See, in those days people in town had no income. There was no money to buy anything so they had cattle. They had to milk the cows for milk and butter. They had a fence to keep chickens. If people in town needed milk they would sell to them.

" I use to go down to the city pasture, we kept milk cows down there in the summer time, in the winter we kept them in the barn. Dad and Uncle Ray would have to go up with the manure spreader. They threw it out in the winter. I remember going to the city pasture with Grandma Stoddard. The cows would come walking up to her, she didn't have to tie them up or anything".

### *Going to Town:*

*Norm* "A nickel was a lot of money in those days. On Wednesday nights we would get five cents and on Saturdays we would get ten cents. It used to be 25 cents to go to a movie. Merchants would shoot the pictures onto the side of a big building; that was free. That would get people to come to town".

*Norm* " Towns were like gangs, certain towns didn't like people from other towns. We didn't like people from Wilmot, Peever or Corona. We liked Twin Brooks. I never liked the sign at Milbank "You like Milbank likes you".

*Norm* "Everyone had to stay in town if they went to high school. Max probably made beds for her room and board. I stayed at the Riley Hotel when I worked for Sharfs, that summer I was home. He had a pickup truck on the back of it, like a camper, but they did not know what a camper was in those days. It had slats to sit on and a Kerosene burner.





When we took our hour break they would light the fire on the kerosene stove and we would heat up our sandwiches, I imagine they were froze. The hotel would give us all our meals, and room and board for one dollar a day. She would pack a lunch for us, usually it was leftovers from the night before.

*Max* "I stayed at the Martha Riley Hotel when I was going to high school-Don and I both worked there. Tillie Eihers had the other hotel. They would watch each other to see who ate or stayed at the other hotel."

Norm " I remember going to the trial of the guy that killed a sheriff. His name was Melbourne Lewis, his brother was "Toughy Lewis". I was about 12, we all went to the courthouse. His murderer died of old age- he was the oldest in the prison. His mother finished the Sheriffs term then worked for the Clerk of Courts.

*Sheriff Lewis was shot and killed while responding to reports that a man was walking in the streets of Millbank with a .22 caliber rifle. The suspect hid in a shed and opened fire on the sheriff as the sheriff searched for him. The suspect was sentenced to death but the sentence was commuted to life in prison on December 7, 1943. Read more:*

<http://www.odmp.org/officer/8106-sheriff-melbourne-lewis#ixzz20evTNqh7>

#### ***Prairie Fires:***

*Iva* "Years ago, there was not fire department. If a fire broke out, there was a telephone bee set up. All the neighbors for miles around would come and help fight the fire. They brought their horses on the plows and would try to circle the fire with furrows to help contain it. They'd try to get between the farm buildings with the plows.They also brought cream cans full of water, and gunnysacks. They would pour water on the sack and pound at the fire. Sometimes it would take many hours to get the fire out, and if there was a wind, it was made much more difficult. This was during the dirty thirties, as they were called; because of so little rain, there were many areas destroyed. It was always a frightening thing to everyone when a fire broke out, but the people at that time really depended on one another and they'd always get the fire out".

#### ***The Fire of 1907.***

*Norm* "They say the fire started at Swen Overland's-he was probably burning something off and it got away from him. That happened with Dad one time too, he was plowing under and there was a low spot that was pretty thick, so he thought he would burn it off-then a spark got away from him."





*August 27, 1907 Twin Brooks Newspaper*

*J. Pugh of Atlantic Iowa arrived here last Friday. He has rented the old Raymond farm.*

*October 23, 1907 Twin Brooks Newspaper*

*The fire that passed through the hills last Wednesday was the worst and did more damage than any fire in the past ten years. It burned all the haystacks from South Shore to Twin Brooks that were not protected with at least twenty rods of firebreak. Chas. Phifer lost eleven stacks of wheat and Loren Jones six stacks of barley and fours stacks of flax and Henry Busta lost his granary with about 600 bushels of grain.*

*Manley "Trains were always starting fires on the hills up around Blue Cloud".*

*Norm "The trains had to work hard going up those hills and they would throw sparks. The diesel trains shouldn't throw sparks, but the old steam engines would. The coal trains would go so slow through Marvin, that people would get on the train and pitch off the coal as fast as they could. Then they would jump off the train and pick up their coal after the train went through'.*

*Max: "I remember Dad telling us about the time he took off his pants and soaked them to beat out the fire- he had to hurry up and get his pants on when the people started coming!"*

### ***Tumbleweeds***

*Norm " During the dry years, the tumbleweeds were all that would come up. They would really blow, not good for anything unless you mowed them when they were green, then you could get some feed out of them. They blew along the fence and would get caught there, and then the wind would blow the dirt up over them, covering the fences and the ditches. The ditches would be filled up with dirt, it would be so fine, you would step on it and it would be over your shoes".*

### ***Grasshoppers***

*"We would take a manure spreader to spread the grasshopper poison. It didn't save the crops, but it killed a lot of grasshoppers. They would get into the fields and there would be nothing left. They would chew away on the stem and then the plant would die. That had to be in 1934 or 1935- I was just old enough to drive a team of horses. On the back of the spreader there were beaters, we would put a piece of tin on it to spread the grasshopper poison. I would drive the horses and Uncle Ray would dump sacks into the tin- and it would fly. Stinky stuff, the government put it out".*





*Norm* "We would take a yardstick and measure how many dead grasshoppers in a 3 feet square to measure how effective it was. Uncle Ray had something to do with the county- he had to report the results to them. The grasshopper poison was made from sawdust; there must have been something in it that the grasshoppers liked because it drew the grasshoppers to it. I don't think it had DDT, but maybe. At that time the government thought it was the best thing to do."

### ***Killing Gophers***

*Norm* "The gophers were so bad in those day, farmers would shoot them, and cut off the tail; they would get paid a bounty for each tail. In the morning, when we went to the pasture to get the milk cows, Old Grandpa Riley would be down there shooting gophers [they lived in the quarter north of us]. They got to where they were putting poison oats out to kill the gophers".

"One day, Fern Leinen saw her geese flying off, there was three of them and they hardly ever flew. As they went up, they suddenly dropped, she thought they hit her clothesline and killed themselves. So she thought she'd better clean them and have them for supper, and she cut off their heads. They had a beautiful collie, he came over and snatched up one of the goose heads, and took off with it in his mouth, and then he fell over dead, too. Then she saw where the geese had gotten into the pump house, and eaten the poisoned oats. That dog probably saved their lives".

### ***Flicker Tailed Gophers***

*Norm* "In the spring we used to pour water in the gopher hole, they'd come out and then we would snare them. We let the gophers out in the school house- I don't think we did it more than once, because it would get back to the folks. We probably did that when we had a woman teacher. Harriet Herreid was there before Olga Olson, maybe she couldn't take it. Our school was known as a tough school way before my time- Ardith Collins, the Fiebelkorn girls, even some of the Pugh girls, Florence and Dorothy were known to give the teachers a hard time.

### ***Poor Times in the 1930's***

*Norm* "Albert Richter left for California, during the dirty thirties. He had a brand new car, a 1935 Ford. Dora had her nurse's license. Albert said she always hated to see a nurse with dirty shoes. A friend of Marge and Joe's named Herried sold their farm for \$10,000; that was before the crash in 1929. They received the payment before the crash and never saw the people again".







### *Riding the Rails*

*Norm* "The "railroad dicks" they called them, would kick people off the freight cars and make them pay if they had hopped on. That is how Dad got to Fargo you know, he left in the fall of the year and got on a train to Fargo. Don was about one ½ or two. He heard from this other guy that there was work in Fargo, so they both went. There was a big sewer project, digging ditches by hand. When they got there, the other guy heard there was a strike at the Great Northern; they were hiring scabs, so he said, "I'm going to make some good money". A few days later, Dad's buddy came back all beat up. Dad was gone so long, Don didn't recognize him. He wouldn't sit on his lap, he'd only go to Uncle Ray".

*Deb* "I remember Grandpa saying that he took a five dollar bill when he left, and came back with that same five dollar bill".

"There used to be 2 sections in Summit, 1 east and 1 west. Two to three men kept the track up, cleared the snow, put on new ties and oiled the switches, so train men could throw the switch easily."

### *Mail Cars*

*Norm:* The passenger trains had a mail car. Each town had a mail hook along the railroad that held the mail bag and an arm would shoot out of the mail train and collect it. It would also kick the outgoing mail out. It was fast-you could sent a letter from Summit to Ortlely the same day. They sorted the mail on the train and dispatched it along the route. They had slots for all the mail. Some of the containers that I keep my bolts and nails in our basement are from the Depot".

### *CC Camp and WPA*

*Norm* "They had those programs to help us out. WPA was public work to help the poor people. They didn't just write a check in those days, they found them work. That was different than the CC camps. In the late 30's, young men seventeen and older could sign up. They would get their room and board, and thirty dollars a month. They could keep six dollars, which was all they needed, and twenty-four dollars would go to their folks. They would work on all kinds of projects. Don was at Deadwood, and Oney was at Hill City, working on national parks, building bridges, fences, shelters. They would have instructors; it was kind of like an Army. A lot of them did go into the Army in 1941".

*Norm* " Dad worked for the WPA during the hard times. He left home in the dark, so he would be there by 7 am. He would always milk the young heifers before he left, as they were kickers, then we would milk the rest.

July 17, 2016





Some people didn't have horses, but we had four horses, and if you had 4 horses you would make more money. He worked with the horses, making driveways, putting in culverts, digging and hauling dirt to make an approach over the culvert. One day he had a Fresno loaded on the wagon. A Fresno was like a dump truck, only with horses. One horse got carried away, and she balked and tipped the Fresno off the wagon. Uncle Ray and all us kids had to help to put it back on.

Ray also worked for the county, he measured up for the soil bank. He would check to make sure they had listed the idle acres accurately".

### *Relief Clothes and Food*

*Norm* "Ma had ordered a shirt for me from the catalog, I always thought I got the shirt from the mailman, Percy Poor, because he delivered it. It was ordered from Sears and Roebuck or Montgomery Wards, probably; I'm not sure. We didn't have too many shirts in those days, when you got a shirt you remembered it. That was before DeEll and Gene's time because there were even leaner days after they were born. I got a shirt from relief and it was the only one I had. I was embarrassed because the relief shirts didn't have any pockets. I had to take it off as soon as I got home from school and change into my old clothes. On Saturday, Ma would wash it so it would be ready for the next week".

"There were a lot of families that were so poor that they had to eat lard sandwiches. Those sandwiches really smelled. I never thought of mutton before going into the Army, then I had some there, and couldn't stand the smell". We never ate those-syrup and peanut butter mixed together, that was our sandwich. We would get ½ gallon pail of peanut butter from relief. Peanut butter was not like it is now, the oil would all come to the top, we would have to tip it over so the oil would go back into the peanut butter, otherwise it would be so hard you couldn't get it out of the pail.

### *Hobos*

*Norm* "Hobo's would come through and ask for food. If there was good food, they had a way of twisting the corn to let the other hobo's know. One time Ma was baking bread and all she had was fruit and a hobo came up. She said, "We don't have much, just some fruit." The hobo said "No, thanks. It's kind of cold for fruit". Another time, Dad said "Well, we have some chores in the barn that need to be done, then we can go in and have some dinner. That hobo didn't stick around either. It's funny; we never locked the houses or anything. We weren't afraid of the hobos, they just wanted food. The gypsies were different. If they came to the door, Ma would have someone go to the back to watch the door. They were known for that".





*Bev* "I remember the hobos that used to be around the railroad track when I was growing up in South Shore. They would come into town and ask for lard and potatoes".

*Norm* "They would get a pail of water and boil that all up. They called the places along the track "Hobo jungles". A lot of times the police would scatter them and they would get out of town on the first freight.

*Norm* "We came down to the courthouse in Milbank to the murder trial for Sheriff Lewis. I think he was killed by a transient, it was big excitement".

### **The War**

*Norm* "There were rumors of war before 1941, no one thought it would happen. We heard about Hitler. I think that started in about 1939, he was taking over little countries, but we never expected Japan to get in on things, everyone was looking at Germany. Germany declared war on France, England and us, we were all fighting together, but when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, we had to fight by ourselves. That was a different kind of war, no letting up. They played by different rules. They didn't let us go in and get our wounded. They let their own people die; they didn't believe in patching them up".

*Norm* "When I came back from the Army, the folks had bought a 42 Ford, an Army surplus car. It was kind of camouflaged on the inside and outside, it had a special thing for lights to dim, they had all those air raids, the lights dimmed so they were almost driving in the dark. They were ready for air raids here too.

*Barb* remembers during WWII, they even had blackouts in South Dakota. Also, she remembered the old telephones, and 'rubber-necking'. That was when you listened in on your neighbor's line. You knew it was for you by the number and types of rings, for example, two shorts and a long. Several people could talk at once, and during the war, everyone picked up to see if there was bad news.

### **WW2**

*Norm* "Tires, gas, sugar were rationed. People in the home territory didn't travel far without a tire pump. You carried a tire pump and every thing you needed to make repairs right on the road. You had to get the patches out, pump up the tube, find out where the hole was, and put another patch on the tire. You had to have a special glue, it had a really strong smell. Tires were not like they are today, they would cut easier, like with a sharp rock on a gravel road."





### *Taxes*

*Gene* "When we lived in town, Dad was the assessor for Summit, he was responsible to write down all of the townspeople's personal property; that's what they paid taxes on. Sometimes people would try to hide things. At night, he'd have to figure it out, Mom would help him, she had an old fashioned adding machine. I can remember the sound of her pulling the handle down. They had a round wheel that they used to figure out acreage. They would mark it and watch how many times it went around in order to figure how much land the person had. They subtracted swamps and low land that could not be farmed."

*Dad* "We never heard of income tax in those days. I know it started earlier, but people didn't have much of an income until after WWII. That was a really big thing in those days. They took it very seriously. Ma and Dad would sit and figure and worry that they would forget something. People worried when the federal government got involved".

### *Pie Stories*

*Norm* " I remember one year, Don wanted a chocolate pie for his birthday-his birthday was in July. So Mom made him his own little pie, and she made a bigger one for the rest of the family. She had it in the pantry to cool. He went to the pantry to get the pie and he came in holding the pie over his head on his hand and he said "Hey, look what I have" - and then he dropped it!".

*Max* "I remember the first time Marge and Joe went to see Mary in South Carolina. Mary made a pumpkin pie. She didn't add anything to the pumpkin, she just put it in straight from the can".

*Norm* " Once when Fern Leinen was baking for the threshers she accidentally put salt in her apple pie. That was at Moms.

*Max* "Grandma Pugh used to say "Apple pie without cheese is like a kiss without a squeeze".

### *Fly Pie*

*Deb* : One time we decided to have the Pugh Reunion at Lake Kampeska. We had a good time, but had trouble keeping flies off the food. DeEll thought one of the pies was a raisin pie, but it was just that the pie was covered with flies.....that was the last time we had a reunion at a lake!

