

Uncle Kenneth Wyborny's Memories

Brother of my Father, Herbert Wyborny.

In thinking back over my boyhood the first thing I remember is Papa buying Herbert and I a pony. It was a Shetland pony named Dimple. It was black with some white. She was a very tempermental pony. Some of the time she was ready to go before we were. Sometimes she would buck us off and go home leaving us to come following. Our cousin Bob Butts (he was my age) and his Mother from South Dakota would visit us every summer. One day Bob decided to ride the pony. He got about a quarter of a mile from home and Dimple decided to go back home. She bucked Bob off into the ditch and left him. Our neighbor found Bob lying in the ditch crying and brought him home.

When about six or eight years old I did something I wasn't supposed to do, I don't remember what it was. Mama was going to give me a whipping and I ran and climbed the haystack. She couldn't climb the haystack after me, but she waited. Finally, I couldn't stay up there all night, I came down and then I got a good whipping.

We had neighbors who lived across the field from us about a mile, the Bistlines. Paul and Wilmer used to come over and we played together. We were together almost every Sunday. In the winter time we skated on the ice in a pond in the pasture just across the road from our house.

Both of us boys walked in our sleep, but Herbert was terrible, much much worse than I. He would get up and go out doors and sometimes we would have to go clear to the barn and get him. In a room upstairs next to our room Mama kept an egg incubator. One night we heard him and found him trying to climb into the incubator. He was on top of it crawling all over it.

Aunt Mary and Uncle Tillman Helm lived a quarter of mile west of us. We used to ^{go} there a lot. She had a cookie jar filled with cookies she had baked. It was always full and I would head for the cookie jar the minute I would step in the door. I believe that was why we liked to go there so much. She always let us have them.

We used to play in the grove around our house so much of the time. We had farms and we boys made our wagons and other machinery out of tin. The wheels were round sticks that we found. We planted our crops and harvested them. We would play for hours.

Every year there was always a Fourth of July celebrations in Plymouth, a small town four miles west of us. We would all go to the celebration and we kids were given a dollar to spend. We always came

home with fifty cents. And we had a good time on the fifty cents we spent.

We used to take eggs to town to buy groceries. Herbert and I would drive Dimple into town hitched to a small wagon some one had made us. Mama gave us the list of groceries we were to get and told us we could buy cookies with what was left after the groceries were paid for. Sometimes we would have a big sack of cookies to bring home.

One time Russell Eldridge and Delmar Mugi came to our place (Russell was courting Zella). They were in Russell's car. Herbert and I shoved a dry corn cob into the tail pipe of the car. When they drove out of the driveway the cob didn't come out and the car stopped on them.

I remember when Papa bought our first car. I was about six years old. The car was called a King. We had the King a good many years. I don't believe Papa drove it very much, but Zella did.

There was a rag peddler who used to stop at our place and buy rags that we would gather together and stuff into a gunny sack. We boys would see the old rag peddler coming from our neighbors (the Wherrys) east of us. He came from Osage. He hauled the rags in an old wagon pulled by a team. When he got to our place we boys would pull a few sacks off his wagon and take them back to Wherry's, so next time around they could be sold again. Sometimes we would put rocks in the sacks with the rags. The old peddler knew when he picked up the sack that it was too heavy, so he would dump rags and all out on the ground and pick out the rocks and throw them away. He would say to us "You boys ought not to do that".

About Christmas time Papa would always buy a hundred pounds of peanuts from an Equity Co. he had a share in. It was something like a Co-op. Mama always hid the peanuts so there would be some left for Christmas. Papa and I guess us kids, would hunt for them and he could never find them. She would hang the sack of them on a nail and hang a coat of hers over them. She was a large woman and her coat was large, so it covered them good, and he never thought to look in such a place. I don't know how many years she was able to keep that hiding place a secret.

Herbert and I and the Bistline boys, Paul and Wilmer, would drive to Rock Falls on Saturday evenings. We went to play pool, but we weren't old enough to be allowed into the pool hall to play. So we would watch and when Rufus Wilkinson, who was Mayor, would go home we

would go in and play until the place closed.

One year the road that went past our place was rebuilt. It was graded and graveled. The outfit that did the job camped in our pasture. I don't know if they rented the pasture or what the deal was, but they drilled a well in the pasture for their water. They had mules that pulled and pushed the graders. Twelve that pulled and eight that pushed. Besides there were mules that pulled all the dump wagons and other machinery. There was more than one grader. There were from sixty to seventy mules. A big tent was put up for the mules barn. Several large tents for the men's living and sleeping quarters. There were about fifty men besides the cooks and kitchen help. There was one man that all he did was buy and haul supplies. When it came quitting time in the evening those mules would start braying and they would almost drive one crazy. We always knew when six o'clock came. Everyday the cook bought eggs and milk from us, many times he brought us a great large chocolate cake. It was so large I suppose it was baked in one of their large pans.

One year when I was older I stocked fodder for Papa. He pitched the bundles to me. I'm sure he knew I had chewing tobacco in my mouth for he never took his eyes off of me. Of course, I didn't dare spit, so I swallowed the tobacco, And then I paid for it for I was so terribly sick. I lay in the cow manger on the hay.

Another thing I took part in when I was old enough to know better, Herbert and I were to Butch and Verna's place. We went with Butch to Rock Falls. Along the road we saw a lamb that was outside the pasture fence. We saw the lamb's tail wasn't cut off so we stopped, I caught the lamb and Butch cut the tail off.

Well enough is enough.

Uncle Kenneth Wyborny
Age 70

Written in 1978