

April 1, 2003

Dear Troy,

Thank you for asking me share some of my child hood memories. I had a wonderful childhood. Time to play, family outings (fishing) and an opportunity to learn how to work.

I had a stick horse named "Gownster". I rode him everywhere I went on the farm. Later I was "big enough" to ride our real horse "Ole Fudge." I spent many hours playing on the wheat binder. It was a perfect place to play. The wheat binder set behind my grandma's shanty and was shaded most summer afternoons. I had a doll named "Gi Gi" that went everywhere I went.

I learned to ride a bike on our gravel road. I always rode near the edge of the road where it was smooth. A gravel road is not easy to peddle a bike on. My dad fixed an old bike that my brothers had used and painted it red just for me. Troy if you were to see my bike you would laugh. Two wheels, handle bars, metal seat and the frame was very, very simple. My friends Karlene and Vicky had new bikes that had amazing fenders that kept the mud from spattering you face when you rode on the wet road. No fenders on my bike.

One of my first memories was being in the hospital. The hospital was located next to the Eccles Hotel in Blackfoot. I had an infection between the layers of my skin on my stomach. A new drug Penicillin had been invented and I received a shot of this wonder drug in my rear every two hours for several days. (After giving you a shot the nurse would paint Iodine on the spot where she had given the shot.) Needles were huge and really hurt. I remember crying every time I saw the nurse Josephine come into my room. Penicillin was invented and used for World War 11. I was sick in 1945 in the spring before the war ended.

Living on the farm I always had jobs to do. Weeding the garden, picking raspberries, gather and wash the eggs, feed the chickens. "Old setting hens" love to peck your hand when you try to take their eggs. I always took a stick with me into the chicken coop to hold their beak away from my hand so I could gather the eggs.

During the summer, I would drive the tractor, cultivating spuds, raking hay, "Scatter Sunshine" (Manure) and drive derrick tractor during haying season.

I not only did this on our farm but also drove for Malms, Bithells, and Merrills. My dad was the Hay "stacker" (A very needed talent in those days.) and I would work wherever he was asked to "Stack " the hay. I started working those nine-hour days when I was nine. When I was twelve both of my older brother s had left for school so I inherited a few more farm chores. During the winter my dad worked for the Feed Store in Blackfoot. The workweek was 8AM to 6PM and until 1:00PM on Saturday. After school I would tend the chickens, feed the beef, get the cows and start the milking. Troy it is a real experience to be a little girl and try to hobble cows for milking. Cows can be very obstinate. When you try to walk between then to lock the stanchion they always move together so you can't walk back out. Some of the cows were taller then me and it was a challenge to move them apart.

I belonged to a 4-H group. Our name was the "Ten Little Hot Pots." I guess you can tell we learned cooking. My mom always entered her baking creations in the State Fair. One year after baking bread for 4-H mom had me enter my bread. Mom won first place, I won second and my Grandma Allen won third.

The Wapello 4-H groups formed a square dance group. My dad was the "Caller." We danced all over South East Idaho. Our group was invited to dance in Chicago BUT no one had any money to travel that distance. Dad and mom were the ward dance directors. For a few years my mom's legs hurt too much to go to the Stake meeting to learn the new dances. I would go with dad and learn them and then we would go to mutual and teach the "Kids" the new dances. (I was nine, ten and eleven years old then.)

We would go swimming in the irrigation canals and fishing in Wolverine. We would also gather watercress in Wolverine in the spring. My dad had a rule the first one to catch a fish did not have to clean any fish. I would have my hook baited and ready to jump out of the car first so I would not end up cleaning everyone's fish.

I attended Wapello Grade School. There were three girls in my class. Bonnie Poulson, Patty Akers and me. The three boys were, Bud Malm, Parley Butt and Johnny Neff. There were two grades in each room. From first thru sixth grade I had three teachers.

Jane Marlow 1-2, Mary Williams 3-4 Mae Walker 5-6. During the second grade the school district moved grades 7-8 to Blackfoot and built a lunchroom for us to use. Before the lunchroom opened our teacher, Mrs. Marlow had us bring potatoes from home and we made potato soup. How fun not to eat our wax paper wrapped cheese sandwich. (Plastic Baggies not invented back then)

Each Friday school was let out early so we could run over to the church house and go to Primary. After Primary we would run back to the school and ride the bus home. The girl classes were named Lark, Bluebird, and Seagull.

Priesthood meeting started at 9 AM. Sunday School 10:30 AM-12PM
Sacrament meeting was 7:30 PM in the Evening. Sacrament meeting was held for two hours. We did not "set together" as families but each of us would set by our friends. Later President McKay asked for families to be together during church.

Well, Troy I was going to type you a page and I have just rambled on. I hope these pages will meet your requirements for your "Duty To God." I am happy you are working to achieve this award.

Thank you for letting me be your grandma. You teach me the meaning of "Joy in your posterity."

Hugs and Love you,

D. Baird
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