

BLIZZARD MEMORIES OF 1948 AND 1949 IN ANTELOPE COUNTY, NEBRASKA.

I was born in 1931 halfway between Ewing and Orchard and lived there until I married Rev. Verl Gunter in the summer of 1949, and he lived just outside of Ewing. What a winter that was with tons of snow.

In November our cousins ask us for Thanksgiving dinner one and a half miles away so we went in a wagon with horses to the feast. Then on New Years Eve we had church at midnite at our United Presbyterian Church and my single brother took us to town and when we went home we left Verl off at their farm. It was a bright moonlight night and we sang as we went across the prairie on the snow with our horses and sled.

In January my grandpa, at age 187, passed away in Norfolk, and we went down from Ewing on the bus. When we came back Mom went into Gambles in Ewing and bought a platform rocker to ride home and put it in the sled and sat in it for the 5 mile journey home.

On Valentines Day Verl walked two miles up from the farm he was taking care of while two couples were in California and he brought me a box of candy. When he left my brother took him as far as he could the first mile for his trip home, on our tractor.

Then one weekend when I couldn't get home for 5 weeks from my job in Neligh working as secretary to the county extension agent, Verl came to the Ewing bus depot and we walked out about a mile and a half to his home part of it across the snow along the Elkhorn river to make it shorter. His mother put me on the dining room couch or daybed as they called it just not far from the heating stove but it was chilly. His folks had the downstairs bedroom and he and his brothers slept upstairs.

In Neligh the army came out to help and they used a weasel on the sidewalks right there at the courthouse to clear the snow off of them.

Our parents had a radio and we could play cards Muggins, Rummy and Old Maid as the men played Pinochle. We did read and play other games like Dominoes and Chinese Checkers.

The snow was up to the top of our yard fence and even higher behind the house where you had to go to take care of the chickens.

The men and neighbors went to town about once a week to get the mail and to take any eggs or cream we had to trade for groceries. We didn't say then we were going shopping but we said we would go into town and do the trading.

The 1888 blizzard was awful but was about 3 days and my dad was living then but the 1948 and 1949 blizzard was an ongoing winter, weather from November to February being the worst of it.

I am a widow now after 50 years of marriage and live back here just 5 miles from my birthplace which has been in the Shrader name well over 100 years and our address was Ewing and we graduated there and I am now in Orchard.

Betty Jean Shrader Gunter

Orchard, Nebraska