

1948 had a beautiful fall, Oct. was still nice and warm days, cool nights, snow started in Nov. by Thanksgiving time had quite a bit of snow on the ground, we worked for the Chicago and Northwestern R.R., and in Shickley, Ne. at the time, my Mother came for Thanksgiving, and the following Sun. we took her to Davenport, Ne. to take the U.P. train to Portland, Ore. it was a good time for her to leave the area. Home town was O'Neill, and plans were to be there for Christmas, we started out, and by the time of reaching highway 14, the snow was almost a blizzard, so turned back. We made the trip the last of Dec. and arrived South of O'Neill almost to the turn to Herb's folks where there was a sign on the side of the road, to come across the pasture. Herb's father, and brother, ~~had~~ used the team of horses and a sled to cut a trail for us to reach the house, since the road was impassible. Highway 281 at the time was all gravel and not oiled for several years later.

Our last trip from Shickley to O'Neill was up highway 81, we stopped for gas at a station on the corner of 81 and 275, they told us to get right back on the road, as the plows were only able to keep the highway open for a short time, and 275 was due to be closed there wasn't any place to put any more snow. We dodged drifts all the way to O'Neill and stayed there the rest of the winter. We would meet Herb's folks at the highway to take them to town for groceries, they used the horses and sled to meet us.

The planes went over O'Neill delivering hay to animals, and food supplies to stranded ranchers.

Streets of O'Neill were like snow tunnels.

A C.B. & Q. train was stuck in a snow drift outside of Page, Ne., a crew was sent to try and thaw the engine out. My uncle was one of the crew, as one of the pipes thawed out, it came loose and hit him in the leg, breaking the leg. He was transported to Sioux City. There is a book out about some of the Blizzard and there is a picture of that engine in the book.

The spring came and the snow melted quickly with lots of flooding in the area, pastures were lakes until late June.

It was a hard winter for Nebraskans and many suffered from the cold, loss of livestock, and lives were changed. Our middle son was born in March of '49, fortunately the doctor lived next door and he was born at home.

There was a lot of walking done in small towns, to hard to get cars out of the drifts, and fortunately some farmers still had horses to ride, and to use for the wagons.

All of Herb's family was home in June, and we were in the buckboard to go to the pasture further West of the home place, and water was hitting the bottom of the buckboard, quite a ride. Nebraskans learned a lot about themselves that winter, and all have experiences to share.

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