

10 Step-grandfather and Grandmother Isaac seemed especially fond of Dad and bought him a small donkey of his own. Dad was delighted, as any six year old would be, but soon it was discovered the donkey was very stubborn and frequently could not be budged. In exasperation Grandpa John J. Friesen sold him for \$2.50. Dad still enjoyed going to visit his Grandmother Heidebrecht Isaac because she usually had mulberry jam to spread on bread and at home he often had just lard to spread on bread. The mulberry jam was a royal treat. Dad missed his Grandfather and Grandmother Isaac when they moved back to Jansen to make their home because they felt they liked Jansen better than Meade.

A very special gift from grandparents Peter P. Isaac that Dad treasured as a young boy was a necktie. Neck ties were frowned on as being unnecessary adornment but Dad proudly wore his necktie to church each Sunday until one day he leaned over to get a drink from a water faucet and inadvertently got his tie wet. It was ruined. Obviously no polyester blend in that tie!

Belts were also considered superfluous but Dad proudly wore his until one day his minister grandfather saw this and called this to Dad's father's attention. On Monday morning Dad was asked to stop wearing the belt.

In 1913, the John J. Friesen family moved from Meade to Jansen, Nebraska. Grandma was so lonely for her sisters in Nebraska that she just felt they had to move, especially when the crop in 1913 was such a failure.

Dad remembers some very special highlights of their return to Nebraska. In 1914 while in Nebraska, Grandpa bought Dad his first pair long pants and it was such a relief to be able to wear them instead of the usual knickerbockers! At age 12, he knew he was growing up and was glad his Dad also realized it!

One day when Dad and Uncle John A. were in the kitchen as Grandma removed the hot fragrant loaves of fresh bread from the oven, there was a knock on the door. Dad opened the door and gasped in fright as he faced a tall, real-life Indian and his squaw. Stories of the early days on the prairie raced through his mind as he stood there speechless. No one could understand what they were saying but Grandma quietly handed them a loaf of freshly baked bread which they promptly tore into pieces and ate. Then they left as quietly as they had come. Everyone sighed with relief.

Life in Nebraska had its frustrations and crop failures as well, so that in 1914, a year after they had moved back to Nebraska they made the decision to move back to Meade. Grandpa was glad he had not sold his farm in Kansas but had rented it to Jacob B. Regier for one year. Now they had a home waiting for them. This time Dad rode in the freight cars with Grandpa to help take care of the cattle and horses. It took two freight cars for their livestock and implements this time. John, age nine and Anna, age three, rode in the passenger car with Grandma. Once they arrived in Meade, the cattle had to walk the eleven miles to the farm so that moving them took a long time. Dad had become ill on the trip from Nebraska so he did not have to help with the final move of walking the cattle to the farm but his brother John was now old enough to do so. George J. Rempel, who was ten years old, helped in Dad's place and the boys bought some licorice to nibble on during the long walk. Dad was so disappointed to have missed this special treat.

It was a difficult year for the family. Crops were good in Kansas that year but their move had come too late to put out a crop so they had none. Grandma and the children went out to the wheat fields after the threshing crew had left and gleaned all the leftover wheat they could find and sorted the kernels out by hand. When they sold it they had enough money to buy a new bathtub.

Pleasant Hill School was located near their home and her Dad remembers Lena Gaddert as a teacher. Dad attended school rather sporadically because of the demands of farm work for him as the oldest son.

When Dad was in school he experienced some frustration with one of his classes in which the teacher would read a story and then expect each student to write down that story verbatim. This, of course, was in German. One particular day Dad was unable to complete that assignment satisfactorily and had to stay after school to try again. That was a real humiliation but his chagrin was soon overshadowed by what he was seeing out the window. John B. Bartel and Isaac W. Loewen were smearing horse manure on his buggy whip and harness. And Dad had to sit quietly at his seat and concentrate on writing a story he wasn't even interested in. Such mental anguish!

For days he kept on the alert for just the right time to retaliate and a few days later when John Bartel missed the story and had to stay after school, Dad smiled with satisfaction. Here was his chance. He carefully slipped over to the horse stable and took John's horse harness apart and smeared the manure thoroughly on everything. Then he waited around the corner for the expected results. He was not disappointed. But to this day he was never able to retaliate Isaac Loewen. The years slipped by and he always missed his chance.

Dad was in the seventh grade when he was no longer able to attend school because of the demands of farm work. But when in 1980, Dad resigned his position as insurance agent for Mennonite Aid Union in a territory that covered \$8-million in assets, no one thought about whether or not he had graduated from eighth grade. He had done his job well.

In 1917 Dad's father bought a 1917 Model T Ford at Wolfe Motor Company in Meade for \$299. What an exciting thrill to have a new car! Few of their relatives and friends owned cars at that time. Dad's uncle, Pete Heidebrecht, had purchased a car in 1913 or 1914 in Jansen that had a 2-cylinder brush engine with carbide lamps for headlights. They had to buy carbide to keep the headlights burning. Dad had enjoyed riding with his uncle during the year they had lived in Nebraska.

After Grandpa John J. Friesen had purchased his new Model T he took the family to Jansen, Nebraska to visit their relatives. Grandma's family had not moved to Kansas except for her mother and they had moved back to Nebraska. Bright and early at 4:30 a.m., Grandpa, Grandma, Dad, Uncle John A. and Aunt Anna, then age six, left for Jansen. They drove all the way to Salina, Kansas by 9 p.m. Here they spent the night. The next day they arrived in Jansen at 5 p.m. Later, on the way home they had to make many stops because the roads were muddy. Though the road was not paved, it was marked with a white ball painted on the telephone pole beside the road. The road was called the "Cannon Ball". These markings were clearly visible in the daytime but they were not made with luminous paint and after dark it was quite difficult to see them. The Model T Ford car came equipped with a fly wheel magnet which provided light only when the engine was running. (Imagine never running the battery down because you forgot to switch off the lights!) When the engine was idling the light was very dim but the faster you drove, the brighter the light. But even at that, the light was not as bright as modern cars have now. It was dark before they got to Salina, Kansas and everything was strange to them. The "Cannon Ball" on the telephone poles was not visible with the dim headlights so Grandpa would stop the car periodically and get out to check for the "cannon ball" to make certain they were still on the correct road. As he stopped the car the lights went dim. That made driving after dark much more time-consuming and difficult.

In 1919, Grandpa John J. Friesen purchased a half section of land 2½ miles east and 2 miles south of Meade. Grandpa had farmed this land before he had purchased it from a Mr. John K. Friesen. A few days later a tornado destroyed some of the buildings on the farm they had just moved from—the Henry R. Friesen farm as we knew it.

Grandpa grew the famous red wheat as did other people in the community. Later they grew a beardless red wheat which was in great demand for flour.