

Our father believed in diciplining, but not with a paddle. He had a way of clearing his throat and looking at you so you knew to get moving or what might happen.

Our only entertainment was a Victrola and our father's banjo playing. After supper, he would play the banjo and tell us stories about his childhood. When we saw him letting the strings down, we knew it was bedtime. He would say, "Well chaps, it's bedtime, you've got to get up early in the morning." Up the stairs we would go, one by one. The next morning, we were awakened by the music of the old banjo which we all loved. We would all rush down to the kitchen to a delicious breakfast of country ham, brown gravy, "red-headed" biscuits, and piping hot coffee prepared by Mama.

Oh yes, we had lots of disappointments and embarrassments. On one occasion, my little brother Edward was helping me carry the lunch to the field. He was carrying the bucket of beans when the handle came off and spilled the beans in the road. It was funny to him, but not to me. I had to think real fast because the beans were my main dish. We were near a little store, so I went in and told the clerk what had happened and that I needed some pork and beans. We went on our way and the family had a good lunch after all. On the way home, I not only had to think about supper, I had to think about paying for the pork and beans. The next day, I carried chickens to the store and paid for the beans.

Back then, people didn't have mattresses on their beds, they used straw ticks which they usually refilled in the spring and fall. One day, Mama and I were going to wash and refill the ticks when a big hole (too big to repair) bursted in one. We didn't have the money to buy material to make a new tick, so Mama told me I could carry some of Papa's seed peas to the store. Now the embarrassing time came. When I entered the store, one of the neighbor men was there and saw me selling peas. That afternoon, he came by our house and asked, "Mr. Joyce, how much are you getting for your peas?" Papa replied, "I don't know, I haven't sold any." I had to explain what I had done and why. Papa just smiled and said nothing.

Another occasion stands out in my memory. We lived in a log house in which the walls had to be whitewashed. One day, Mama and I were going to whitewash the kitchen, but first we killed a big chicken and set it aside for supper. We covered up everything to keep the whitewash off. Looking out, we saw a wagon load of company driving up so we had to uncover and fix lunch. After lunch, Mama entertained the company and I covered up again and finished whitewashing the kitchen. As I was finishing up, I looked out and the company was hooking the horses to the wagon to go home. Our chicken was gone and nothing was prepared for supper.

It wasn't all bad, we had lots of fun. On one occasion, I remember little brother Harvey built himself a bird nest. He came to the house and told Mama and Papa to come see a bird had laid eggs in his nest. To please him, they went to see the eggs. There in the nest were four of Papa's little pink Raymond Pills. Everybody had a good laugh at that.