

Dreaming Of Halley's Saw Mill

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Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society

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Saturday morning, February 22, 2014, I told my wife Janet that I had a dream about the Haleys and she was in it with me. In the dream the Haleys wrote me a letter about moving their Hugo sawmill. They wrote that I could go up and get the mill's two saw blades.

In real life the Halley's sawmill was built in Hugo around 1935 - 1936, just after Carrol Brown left for the Navy. It had a big 24 inch one-cylinder engine - the biggest cotton picking gas engine that most folks had ever seen. It was water cooled and a one-lunger. Its chunk, chunk, chunk would actually shake the ground. They would have the most difficult time getting it started by hand cranking. Many a time my Dad, Glen William McKy, started it with the belt pulley on his Fordson tractor. The Halleys had a couple of big horses which moved the logs around at the mill, which had operated in Hugo until the 1940s. One time my brother Blaine and I were at the mill and they put us on those horses. Wow, they were as big as a barn under us!

My Dad was a miner and farmer, and also raised cattle in Hugo, and he did a little logging. He loved gold mining and worked at it quite a bit, but he did not make much as he was always about 10 feet from the mother lode. If he could have just got another 10 feet he would have had it made, but he never made that ten feet.

He might have brought the first gas powered Fordson Tractor into Hugo in the 1920s. My Dad's Fordson was quite a tractor in its day and he did a lot of work with it. It does not compare to today's tractors, but it was way ahead of the horse and buggy and plowing with horses. And, it was cheaper to maintain than horses. I heard of a 1920s government test which concluded that farmers spent \$.95 per acre plowing with a Fordson compared to feeding eight horses for a year and paying two drivers, which cost \$1.46 per acre.

In my dream I did not worry that I was only 12 years old and not married yet - that I did not know who my wife, Janet, was yet. She was with me in my dream going to the Halleys, but I woke up before I remembered the problem, and I'm not sure I got those two saw blades.