

What Torpedoes?

Orville Dingler, Storyteller

Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society

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Orville Dingler was born on his mother's birthday, November 16 [1904] in Weiser, Idaho. This was a big deal for his older sister, Belle, who would later always say, "*What a great birthday present for Mom!*" He was the second oldest of four children born to Fred and Maude (Abernathy) Dingler both of whom had been born in Missouri. Maude was a little bitty girl when she traveled with her folks across the plains from Missouri to Montana.

Seven-year old Orville was a second grader at the Hugo School during the 1911 - 1912 school year. He had a new teacher, Miss Gertie Cahill. Miss Cahill had been a former student at Hugo as her family was local and had a big ranch by the McKys on Quartz Creek Road about a half mile from the school.

Orville got in trouble one time walking home from school. He and three Potter children were traveling home from school on the tracks to Tunnel No. 9 when they met a flag man. He told them to get off the tracks and out of harm's way of the men working there. His attitude made Orville mad, but he did what he was told. As the children continued walking home they found the flag man's speeder that he had left with a box of torpedoes on it. To the other children's dismay Orville grabbed about a dozen torpedoes and carried them away. Orville was still mad at the flag man and eventually he placed 10 torpedoes, one by one each about a foot apart from the others, on the tracks. All the kids were home at the tunnel when the train came through. His dad, Fred Dinger, came home that night and told Orville he wanted to talk to him. "*Where did you get the torpedoes?*" Orville responded, "*What torpedoes?*" But, he knew the game was up. His dad said, "*Cut it out; we both know what we are talking about.*" Orville "fessed -up" and said he did it because he was mad that the flag man got smart with him and the Potter kids, and told them they could not walk that way. Maybe he should not have done it, but he had.

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