

preface by the writer of this story -

I am nearly eighty-five years old and during my lifetime many great events have happened which have changed the way of life of millions of people. It is perhaps strange that one episode seems to stand out in my memory. It is principally about my father who passed away over fifty years ago. My mother who lived to be eighty-seven was called upon when she was in her teens to assume a great responsibility. Her home was near Cayuga, Ontario, and her maiden name was Mary Adeline McClung. Her older sister who was married to my father's older brother Robert Glenny, died and left a family of five small children, three girls and two boys. The youngest boy was just an infant and my mother was called upon to nurse and raise this young family. My Uncle Robert owned two farms near the Grand River. Under these farms was a strata of gypsum rock of about seven to eight feet thick. He undertook to mine this bed of gypsum because it was valuable as a fertilizer. My father, Thomas Glenny, who had learned his trade as a blacksmith, went to Cayuga to sharpen the tools for the miners. He stayed there for nine years and it was during that time that my mother was caring for and raising Uncle Robert's family.

Near the latter part of that period, in 1879, my father and mother were married. My father had already purchased a farm of seventy-five acres in Bertie Township about two miles east of Stevensville, a small crossroads village. My father's own home had been near the village of Chippawa which is not far from Niagara Falls. It was in 1883 when I was one year old that we moved to this new home in Bertie and my father proceeded to build a new brick house. He had already built a blacksmith shop and barn. My father's forebears came to Canada from the north of Ireland, and on that account he had a certain amount of Irish wit.

While my father was working with his brother as a blacksmith they built a shop some two hundred yards along the road from the house. My mother was always busy in the morning getting the children up and dressed, my father had formed the habit, particularly in summer, of getting up early and going down to the shop to work for an hour or two, and then returning to the house for breakfast. Blacksmithing being a hot and not too clean job he usually wore a minimum of clothes which often prompted my mother to remark that he looked just like a hobo.

On this particular morning, he was coming back to the house for breakfast when he met a real hobo. The latter stopped my father, saying:

"Well, pardner, how is it going with you?" Father drew a long face and complained,

"Oh, not too good. I manage to get a few hand-outs here and there, but rarely a square meal."

"Too bad," sympathized the transient. "Here, take this. It may help you along the way," and he pulled out a fifty-cent piece and handed it to my father. My father thanked him gravely and pocketed the money. Reaching the house he found my mother just beginning to get breakfast ready.

"Sit down a minute," she said. "What a morning! And to cap it all a hobo came to the door wanting something to eat. I told him I just didn't have time to get him breakfast so I gave him fifty cents to buy it somewhere else."

Now as this story concerns my father mostly, I should tell you something about him. As people in those days had to depend so much on themselves, they had to be much more self-reliant than they are today, when our whole life seems to depend so much upon others. My father did not care very much for farming as his inclination was toward mechanical work. As he began to do work for the people in the vicinity the demand for various kinds of work grew until he soon did not have any time for

18, so he let the farm out on shares.

As the blacksmithing for the farmers was mostly in the summer seasons he had time to think of something to do during the winter. As many farmers did not have their land fully cleared of trees and bush, much of their work was taken up in that way during the winter season. My father used to tell me about the black walnut trees being cut down and the logs piled up as high as they could be, and burned. To us in this age this seems to be a terrible waste, but to the farmer there was no value in walnut compared to the value of the cleared land. Of course, cleared land needed fences and one of the problems for the farmer was to bore holes for posts in the clay soil. When you got more than a few inches of soil on the auger, it was next to impossible to lift the dirt out on account of the suction. Hence my father set his mind to work and discovered a solution. He invented an auger with a hollow handle and stem which would allow the suction to escape. And of course it had to be reasonable in price. He had this auger patented and during the next few years he turned out several hundreds of them mostly during the winter months.

His ingenuity extended along other lines as well. In the blacksmith shop, he made a pair of forceps for pulling teeth and as there was no dentist within miles, he became an amateur dentist. It was very common for many people, especially young people, to get severe toothaches and it became quite common for them to come to my father to have their teeth extracted. We used to have an old rocking chair on the back porch into which he would put the patient and give him or her a small amount of whiskey, which helped to ease the pain.

My father was a large man of six feet so for him, pulling teeth was child's play.

In those days diphtheria, mumps and many other children's ailments were quite common, and I remember one day a neighbor come to see if my

er could come back with him to see if he could help his teenage daughter who was very sick with diphtheria or quinsy and her throat was swelling shut. He was afraid she might die before the Doctor could get there, as he lived in Port Erie which was some seven miles away and the roads were very bad. So of course he went with the girl's father and looking into the girl's throat, he realized that something had to be done at once, because her throat was practically closed and she could scarcely breathe. His pocket knife had a small narrow blade which he sterilized by holding it in a flame until it was hot, then he lanced both sides of the throat which gave her instant relief. After washing out the throat, he came back home quite satisfied she would be all right until the doctor arrived. When the doctor arrived, he said there was no doubt that the operation had saved the girl's life. This was one of the many cases where my father had tried to help his neighbors.

In the blacksmith shop, it developed that everybody in the neighborhood brought their horses to be shod. In this kind of work he became acquainted with the various temperaments and ailments of horses.

He also developed a reputation as a horse trader, for I think he had a liking to experiment with different types of horses. In so doing he learned to doctor up many of the ailments he found in the horses he acquired. The story I am about to relate illustrates his ingenuity along this line.

As I mentioned before, my father let a neighbor work the farm on shares, and when the threshing was over in late summer he found he had a surplus of about fifty bushels beyond his own needs for food and seed. As had been his custom in previous years he decided to take this wheat to the mill at Niagara Falls and sell it. I shall now tell about one such trip in my father's own words. The title of this story will be "The Horse Trade".

I told my neighbor, Mr. William Brown, that I was going to the Falls the next day and asked him if he would like to go along. He agreed and the next day we hitched the two horses "Jess and Maude" to the wagon and set out. About noon we arrived at Chippawa where we decided to stop and feed the horses and get some dinner for ourselves. When we unhitched our team and put them in the stable, I noticed some younger men standing around, looking us over, and especially the sorrel mare I was driving, which was quite a fine looking animal. As Mr. Brown and I went in through the bar to the dining room, a number of these younger men were seated at a large table. A sudden hush fell on the conversation and I had a feeling that we had been the subject of the conversation. However they continued their conversation in a subdued manner. My hearing was pretty keen, and I caught a word now and then, such as "hayseed" and "farmer". From the furtive glances that were cast our way, I felt that we were going to get some kind of a proposition soon. Before long one of this group sauntered over to our table saying.

"You are Thomas Glenny?"

"Yes", I replied, "what can I do for you?"

"I have taken a fancy for that sorrel mare you have in the stable", he continued "would you be interested in a trade?"

I told him that I was quite satisfied with what I had. However, he insisted and offered to make me a good deal. I told him it would have to be very good, upon which he went back to talk with his brother. As I watched them it seemed to me that they were all brothers. Finally he came back and said that I should look at his horse and that if I was satisfied, he would give his horse and its colt and twenty-five dollars for my sorrel mare. I went out after dinner and after looking his horse over, I told them I would call it a deal. We then exchanged horses. I took the sorrel into the stable and brought the mare and her colt out. While I was putting the harness on Daisy I made a discovery but did not

anything about it, because I did not want them to think I was a
richer. However, I began to feel a little worried. As if by magic
the crowd around the stable yard began to grow. I did not like the
looks of expectation on most of the faces. When I was able to get Mr.
Brown off to one side, I told him in a low voice that I had just dis-
covered that we had taken a chronic balky horse to our bosom.

"This horse has a very determined look on her face," I said
apprehensively. Mr. Brown looked somewhat concerned.

"What are we going to do? We're a long ways from home"

"Well, anyway, the walking is good," I told him, with show of as-
surance I certainly did not feel.

Just then one of the older men whom I happened to know came along,
saying,

"I'm sorry, Tom, but I am afraid you have been taken. You have
the worst balky horse in the county."

"Thanks" I replied dryly. "I have just discovered that."

By this time Mr. Brown was getting real nervous.

"Well," I whispered to him, "these boys are expecting to see a
good show, so we must not disappoint them. Afterwards I am going to
give this mare a chance to give in gracefully without losing face. I
see you took some lumps of sugar off the dining room table when we had
dinner. Here's what I want you to do. After we have tried to get her
to go, you get down off the wagon, and drive the colt down the road past
those bushes and as soon as the colt is out of sight give it some of the
sugar so as to keep it there for a while. Then we will come along and
pick you up."

"You are mighty sure of yourself, Tom, but I will play along."
When I said "get app" and slapped the lines on her back, Daisy refused
to budge. This was the signal for a huge Ha - Ha from the crowd.

"How is the walking going to be Tom?"

This was the signal for Mr. Brown to do his act. The mare did not know what to make of this performance. When the colt disappeared behind the bushes she pricked up her ears and watched the spot getting more and more disturbed as time went on. Then I thought it was about time for the second act, so I slapped the two horses gently with the lines and said "get app" and away we went. I took time enough to look around at the crowd who were standing with an awed look on their faces, because they had just witnessed a miracle. So we went along and picked up Mr. Brown. The mare Daisy gave all the signs of joy at seeing her colt again and we all went on our way rejoicing. Incidentally Daisy never balked again. She had been able to respond to kindness without losing face."

This was my father's story of their day. Then I had my turn to ask my father how he knew that Daisy was a balky horse. He said that when he felt the welts on Daisy's back and rump, he knew that there was only one reason for this abuse. Well this is nearly the end of the story except.....

Two or three days afterward I looked out of our window and saw a couple of men driving into our lane, leading a sorrel horse behind the buggy. My father went out and asked them what he could do for them. They were very angry and wanted to know why he had not told them the sorrel horse had the heaves so badly that it could hardly get up in the stall. My father said if they had asked him he would have told them but they had been so busy planning how to put it over him with a confirmed balky horse that they forgot everything except the good looks of the horse they were getting. He told them when he saw how the mare had been abused, he lost any respect he had for them. Besides, it would not be any use getting the horse back, because she would never forgive them for the welts she had on her back.

"When you get back," he told them "see a good veterinary and he
will tell you how to partially cure the sorrel so that she can do light
work or make a good buggy horse. You know she is very good looking.
Good bye."

Submitted by.

Charles N. Glenney

218 Phipps St.

Hart Erie, Ont.