

December 19, 1992

Dear Goodwin and Nancy,

WE very much enjoyed your Christmas card and news.

Last Saturday I talked with Sis and she told me that Goodie is preparing an archives program about the airport. I thought this anecdote might be interesting. Early in my teen years one July morning it was my job to mow the field west of the farm buildings. This normally took a full half day to accomplish. I hitched old Dick and Flossy, the grey mare, to the mower and began cutting. Even though Dick was years older than Flossy, he always did the most work. Each horse was hitched to a whippetree, which in turn was fastened to a device called an evener. The evener pivoted in the center and the driver could easily tell which horse was pulling the hardest. Dick's side of the evener was always thrust forward while Flossie's was always hanging backward. Suddenly, the sound of Wally Arenson's airplane filled the air and Flossie's ears perked up and the position of the evener was reversed. As Wally was selling barnstorming rides, using Charlie Schmidt's field where the bank is now located, he made repeated flights passing over our west field. I had to tighten down on the reins to keep Flossie at a slow trot. I finished the field shortly after 11 AM, returned the horses to the barn and fed them. When I entered the house Ma asked, "What happened? Did the mower break down?" I replied, "No, I finished mowing the field". She seriously doubted me until I said, "Ma, anytime you want to get real work out of old Flossie, just get an airplane overhead!"

Besides knowing how to avoid hard work, Flossie was smart in many other respects. She could open practically any gate on the farm until brother, Marvin, devised means of baffling her. When we bought a young team, old Dick was nearly 30 years old and had lost most of his teeth. Flossie, however, was sold to Harry Hansen, who was operating a dairy from the now Carroll Koyen farm. Two of Harry's boys began haying and put a massive amount on the wagon. Flossie tested the load by straining on her collar and decided this was not for her, so she balked. All the old remedies for curing a balking horse, such as a tight string around the ear and water poured into the ears, failed. Then one son got a bright idea to build a hay fire under her. This moved her just enough to put the fire under the hay load, which they had to beat out with their hands to save the load and wagon.

Bette and I have both had bad colds. Hers developed into bronchitis and the Dr. placed her on antibiotics and a potent cough medicine. She finally got the girls' and her mother's presents wrapped and I sent them via UPS earlier this week. This morning we woke to a dense, cold fog and recently the days have been in the high 50s. Although that may seem warm for the Island, it is not for here. This area is nearly 7" ahead on annual rainfall. We had two storms recently with over an inch each time.

We wish you a Happy New Year, as well as a very Merry Christmas.

Love,

Harmer & Bette