

MY NEW SHOES!!

"Hurry, hurry," my mother said to us for about the millionth time, it seemed. I helped Anna Jean with her shoes and tried to comb Robert's hair, but he ducked out the door. It was a beautiful spring morning and we were going to town!

I looked out and saw Dad hitching Snip and Doll to the democrat. These horses were my dad's 'road team', almost perfectly matched, dark bay in color. Snip had a white star on her forehead, and Doll had a white blaze on her face. They were a high stepping team, and we all loved them.

I must tell you what a democrat was. It was today's pick-up. There was a spring seat for the driver and a passenger and quite a sizable box on the back with some clean straw for cargo or extra riders. (At least, my dad called it a democrat. What the official name for it would be, I have no idea.)

Dad finally got the cream and eggs loaded, and we three kids were lifted into the back, too. Anna Jean sat between us, and we were told to "hang on to her!" Dad and Mom climbed into the front, and we were off!

Dad let us off in front of Uncle Joe's store (now Ladd's) and drove the team around to the side to unload the eggs and then took the cream down to Weaver's (same building). There were hitching rails along the street to tie the horses.

A can of cream brought between six and seven dollars depending on the test, and eggs sold for twelve to fifteen cents a dozen.

As we walked into the store, I saw them! Right in front of the door there was a big table with the latest style shoes. MY shoes, the only ones I could see, were right in front. Black oxfords with just a hint of a heel, they were stitched in red and to make them just perfect, a little red heart cut-out on each side had red leather underlay. And to add the fatal touch, red and black plaid shoestrings—oh my!! (I always have been a pushover for anything red.) I really wanted some new shoes. We had half-soled mine, and I hated them (another story).

I stood and admired the shoes for a long time. Mom was busy with the family shopping, but when she finished, I made sure she got a good look at them. She gave me sort of a sad smile and said, "Yes, they are very nice."

I didn't get the shoes that day. Probably the cream and egg money didn't stretch that far.

Not long after this, my dad made a trip to town on horseback. He took a gunny sack (burlap) to bring home his purchases. And do you know, from the bottom of that sack, he drew out a parcel and handed it to me. You can guess, THE SHOES, red hearts and all! I think they were the most beautiful shoes I have ever owned!

by Betty Doubet

