

John took the windmill down in 1951.

Pa had John drive the 8N Ford tractor home Uncle Louie's farm. The brothers pooled tractors, labor, and equipment to make hay. John was seven. Louie's place was eight miles away. Pa was following John in the 1950 Dodge. The trip home went as planned until John turned right onto our uphill driveway. After that John lost control and the tractor crossed the yard at full throttle in road gear. He may have hit a washout bump in the steep, gravel driveway. Courteau's who lived on a small farm near Doniphan, Missouri, were visiting us at the time. In the 1950's they drove up to spend a week with us each summer. Uncle Tuff worked in a Chicago can factory. Two kids were swinging from the big elm tree near the driveway. The tractor just barely cleared the swingers. Other kids were playing in the driveway. They scattered to safety. The runaway tractor stopped when it hit the NW leg of the windmill. The tractor engine shut down.

John ended up on the ground immediately in front of the rear tractor tire.

Virtually under the wheel as I recall.

I think John was knocked out or dazed for a short time, but John can speak to that.

The tractor bent the leg of the windmill severally.

The force of the impact caused entire structure to crumble toward the NE and the garden.

Directly away in this photo.

I was just coming out of the kitchen and off the porch on the east side of the house.

I heard a commotion, but I didn't have any idea what was happening.

I was on the far side of the house.

I heard creaking above me.

I looked up at the mesmerizing sight of the huge windmill fan coming closer to me.

My five-year-old brain could not make sense of why the windmill fan was getting closer.

I just stood still.

Aunt Irene grabbed me from behind and whipped me out of the way.

The fan and gear box smashed to the ground, right where I was standing.

Ever after, Irene said she saved my life.

I suppose she did.

No one was injured.

Not even John.

The tractor was unscathed.

The front pneumatic wheel knocked the windmill over.

The windmill had not been used since the farm got electricity in 1946.

Well, the structure was used in a way.

It held the TV antenna since we got TV in 1950.

We missed television until the antenna was mounted to the roof of the house.

We spent the rest of Courteau's vacation dismantling the windmill.

