

Pa plowed the gardens of Dayton

For some years, starting about 1950, Pa farmed all the fields of Slabtown.

Clarence McAlpine owned the biggest field.

That was an irregular shaped five-acre piece that bordered on the county road.

There were several small pieces of an acre or less that Pa cut for hay.

Pa plowed Clarence's field in 1950 with his new 8N Ford with a two-bottom 14-inch plow.

He plowed most of a day but did not quite finish before milking time.

He planned to finish quickly the next forenoon and took me along.

Everyone with enough space had a garden in those years.

Some of the town gardens were huge.

Families needed gardens to eat well during WWII, and this was just shortly thereafter.

It was a beautiful early spring day.

Everyone was thinking about starting their garden work.

I don't know how it started, but somebody asked Pa to plow their garden.

Pa crossed the bridge to Dayton, and then it just continued from there.

The little Ford tractor with mounted plow was simply perfect for plowing family size gardens.

The rig didn't even need space to turn.

Pa could just back the fence, make five or six passes and be done.

Dayton isn't that big. Maybe four blocks by ten.

Folks kept walking over to ask that he plow their garden, just one block away.

That kept up for hours.

Many, maybe all offered to pay to have their garden plowed.

But I didn't see much money change hands.

Pa desperately wanted to get to his own field work.

He shook his head, but never turned anyone down.

Years later my siblings may have heard Pa say, "That guy still owes me for plowing his garden."

I did.

