

## **Two Brothers, raised on a dairy farm in Minnesota, in the 1950s.**

My older brother John and I helped Pa with chores as soon as we could. We could only roll these heavy wire-tied bales.

I have always enjoyed physical labor and plenty of work to do.

Once during the summer between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades, my classmate Gene spent a day with me on our farm.

Gene was a town kid.

He rode from Dayton on his 20-inch bike, which I envied. We did not have bicycles yet, and we talked about things. He was a better talker than me.

I remember watching Gene pedaling homeward, on the gravel road between us and Corbin's, and being sad for him because he did not have meaningful work to do.

We did not have any other way to clear snow except shovels.

We shoveled narrow boot-paths connecting each building of the farm.

We had to reshovel those paths any time the wind blew, which seemed to do all day some days.

Every neighboring farm was in the same fix until the early-1950s.

Pa bought a used Farmall H with a snow bucket in 1956.

He could afford to delay. He had two strong boys.

I recall the snow-shoveling photo like it was yesterday.

The afternoon sun was warm on my face.

Ma scooted out of the house without a coat to take the photo.

I don't remember this photo to the right exactly; it is mingled in my memory with many similar photo shoots. These back steps were Mom's favorite place for dressed-up photos.

Those steps faced east, towards the morning sun, and Mom's flower garden.

It was Easter Sunday; I can tell by the angle of the sun.

Pa always wore a suit and tie for sacred occasions like weddings, funerals, and wakes.

I still do



**Tom and John on a load of wire tied hay bales, 1949**



**John and Tom shoveling the yard, 1953**



**Tom and John, Easter Sunday, 1956**

The picture on the right was taken in early June of 1961. We were adjusting the two-row cultivator on the H. Tom was 15, John was 16. We bought a 1953, grey Plymouth, from Greenburgs in Nowthen for \$200. We were both slated to be first-string guards of the football team come Fall. John and our buddy Richie were co-captains of the team. We bought the caps at the Salvation Army on Washington Avenue in Minneapolis. We were at the height of cool, at that time, and that summer.



**Tom, John and Farmall H, June 1961. Adjusting the cultivator.**

Tom, Pa, and John, chatting while eating cake and ice cream, in the kitchen of the Otsego farmhouse, circa early 1970s. Some family members will probably remember this get-together. The occasion is unusual for the multiple cakes on the table. Pa sure looks good in this picture. Pa died too young, of late-detected cancer in 1987.



**Tom, Ernie, and John in the kitchen on a winter evening.**

I collected over 60 old Farmall tractors for a book that I published in 2020. This nearly hundred year old F30 Farmall was not running when I found it in Iowa and hauled it home. With a tune-up, fresh gasolene, and magic tricks that old farm boys know, we got it running again. Goodbye. Tom



**Tom and John driving a 90-year-old, F30 Farmall, we had just reawakened. In 1939 model F30 was replaced by the Farmall M.**