



Everett, Gary, Mom about 1943 (Apple Pie School in the background)

During World War II there was a shortage of everything. New bikes were not available at any price. I got my first full size bike from the Monkey Ward (Montgomery Ward) catalog in 1946 after the war. Dad managed to locate a small bike somewhere that had tires of 2 different sizes. The front tire was somewhat larger.

One Sunday, we had friends over for bike rides, but the back tire was flat. No problem, we would hike over to Clinton and put a hot patch on it and be set. A hot patch was a small pan with a rubber patch on the bottom and some combustible material in the pan which got hot enough to vulcanize the rubber patch to the tire tube. The Lone Star store had a hot patch device, but they weren't open on Sunday.

I was about 7 years old and Gary was about 3. So, we emptied our piggy banks of about \$2.00, loaded Gary and the tire into the Radio Flyer wagon and started our adventure. **It never occurred to us that our parents should be advised of our plans.** None of our roads were graveled at the time. Our route to Clinton was on a poorly maintained and little traveled road, through the woods, up and down

some steep hills and across the bridge over Rock Creek. I think it was about 3 ½ miles each way. We made it to Clinton, but for some reason we couldn't fix the tire. So, we spent our money on candy and headed for home.

Meanwhile, our parents missed us and panic set in. They made a general ring on the party line (This was a special ring where everyone was supposed to get on the line.). Dad was in the car running the roads looking for any sign. Someone had spotted us at Clinton, so he went there and started toward home on that old road. We were not quite halfway home when he found us. I can only guess what he was thinking at the time, but I think he was so relieved to see us that he couldn't be as mad as he should have been.

We were the talk of the neighborhood for several weeks and dad fixed the tire so we had a bike again.

Written by Clarence Everett Goff.