

## A Trip to the Hospital

It was the summer of my thirteenth year my widowed mother, two younger sisters, and I made the trip to visit my much older sister and her family.

They had recently moved from our native southern Minnesota to a new farm north of the Twin Cities.

We were excited, not only to see their new home, but were also anticipating participating in a housewarming their new neighbors were planning for them.

No sooner did we arrive at my sister's than I was invited to spend the night with her young sister-in-law, who was a couple years younger than me.

I don't remember what we did for excitement that night, but I do remember being served popcorn as an evening snack.

Sometime in the overnight, I began feeling unwell.

Many trips to the bathroom later, when, because of severe stomach pain, I couldn't bear to bend over to tie my shoe, my hostess's mother decided this was not your ordinary flu.

She wasted no time calling my sister to tell her of my condition.

This quickly brought my mother and brother-in-law to take me to the hospital.

The hospital for the small community was housed in a large old house.

As we arrived there, I was hit with another wave of nausea.

Anticipating what was coming next, my quick-thinking brother-in-law grabbed me, football-style, and ran me, down the hallway, to the nearby drinking fountain.

A few miserable hours later, I was in surgery for an appendectomy.

Coming out of anesthetic, I found I had a foot long incision in my abdomen closed by metal clamps. My middle was wrapped like a mummy in a thick, muslin binder.

I spent the next week recovering by walking the halls of the hospital, making acquaintance with the entire staff.

Thanks to my mother, who obtained an autograph book for me, I collected John Henrys of most of the same.

I was really bummed to have to miss the housewarming. All my sister's in-law's and Neighbors were going to be there. I was missing so much fun.

In another week or so, I was out of the hospital.

It was time to make the one hundred eighty-mile trip back home.

I know my mother was very concerned about me making the trip.

But, by packing me in pillows and careful driving by my brother-in-law, I made the trip just fine.