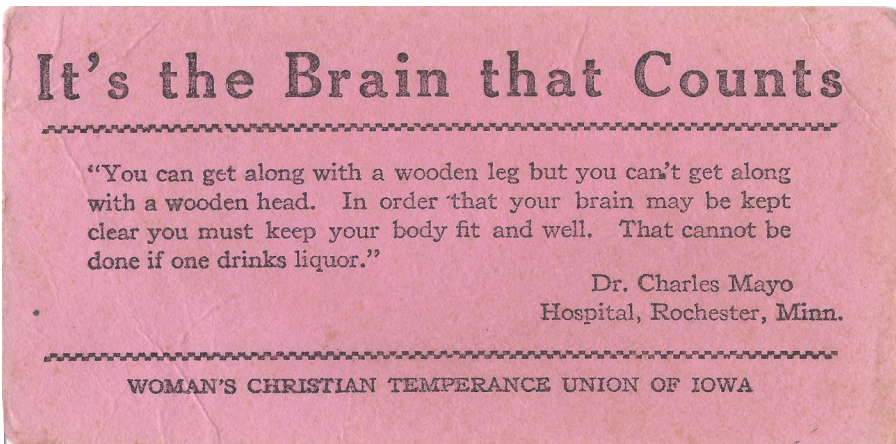


Custard puddings and meringue pies were frequent desserts. Grandpa often asked for an Angel Food cake which I liked to do because I loved whipping those egg whites, and it usually meant we were celebrating something special.

There were many shortages during the Depression. However on a farm, we had food. We kids knew that the work we did on the farm was really appreciated, especially feeding the chickens and gathering eggs each day.

PROHIBITION DAYS

Growing up during prohibition days, our parents and grandparents stood firmly with the ban on alcohol; they made it very clear to us kids that drinking was not acceptable. Our Mother and Grandma Adair belonged to "The Woman's Society of Christian Service (WSCS)" and "The Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU)," both dedicated to upholding prohibition. These organizations held events at schools and churches to speak about the evils of drinking. They distributed pamphlets, buttons, and ink blotters. We kids were influenced by a WCTU ink blotter with a quote of Dr. Charles Mayo:



We couldn't imagine someone with a wooden head, and hoped people wouldn't drink liquor. In the early 1900s, Carry Nation was noted as a dedicated fighter for prohibition. She went from one saloon to another with her hatchet, smashing liquor bottles while she gave the patrons a fiery lecture. Sometime before the 18th Amendment was passed, Ada Ullery invited Carry Nation to meet with the WCTU in our town of Redding, Iowa. She was met at the train depot by a group of admirers; this was a notable event.

Dad, a young boy at that time, was impressed by her talks. Grandpa Adair acquired one of Carry Nation's mother-of-pearl hatchet-shaped pins. As kids, we were awed by that story and admired that tiny pearl hatchet, vowing never to touch liquor.

In 1933, the states were given the choice of allowing liquor to be sold or not. Iowa chose to be a "dry" state and Missouri chose to be "wet." Our farm's southern boundary was on the Iowa/Missouri state line. Soon a beer shack was erected just over that line in Missouri. It became a focal point for thirsty Iowans. Judging by the license plates on cars passing by, some came from one hundred miles away. When cousin Maurice visited each summer, he remembers opening his bedroom windows for fresh air. He was surprised to hear country music blasting away throughout the night.

No streetlights guided travelers on the two-lane highway. It was inevitable that drivers unfamiliar with the curving road occasionally slid into a ditch. Some nights after midnight, Dad would be awakened by persistent knocking on our door with pleas for help. On those mud-slicked roads, he used his tractor or hitched a team of horses to extricate the car and send it on its way. Those late nights caused him to hate what liquor did to people.

Until this time, our folks did not have a concern about strangers, and usually didn't lock the house at night. However, the presence of the beer shack worried them. Dad began locking our doors, vowing never to patronize a place that served or sold liquor.

Years later on a family trip to Maine, Mom's relatives invited us to an elegant restaurant for dinner. When we arrived, Dad noted that drinks were offered. He didn't criticize us, but stuck to his vow and didn't go in. Instead he took his small grandson, Tommy, down the street to a Wimpy's for hamburgers.

Another time on a social visit, someone gave him a mug of beer. Not wanting to create an incident, he quietly poured it onto a potted fern. The host noticed his empty mug and promptly refilled it!

When liquor became available in Iowa, the beer shack was closed. It soon reopened to sell fireworks, something Missouri allowed and Iowa did not. From firewater to fireworks, the traffic flowed on.

About twenty years later in Germany:

During World War II my fiancé, Walter Gonick, was stationed in Germany. After the war ended he served in the Military Government. The U.S. Army Education Program formed, giving servicemen the opportunity to enroll in classes at certain schools. Walt was accepted at The Bavarian State Brewery of St. Stephan (Weihenstephan) A&T School, where he achieved his brewmeister certificate.

My folks may not have approved, but we weren't chastised for it. After his discharge from the Army, Walt returned to his pre-war occupation as a Soil Scientist with the U.S. Soil Service, which pleased the family for sure.