

Dynamite

JAY'S DYNAMITE POND

Not long after this Father told us that the place we called the dry lake was filling up with the spring run-off. Soon there would be enough water in the depression for us to go swimming. So we wanted to try it out on our own.

First Ralph and Jay snitched some more dynamite and stashed it in the bib of their overalls. What they had planned no one knew for sure. On the way they set off one charge in a deep pool of clear water. It about blew out the whole creek, scattering rocks and fish all along the bank. Some fish turned belly-up, and floated down the stream. Some the boys retrieved saying, "We'll take them with us for dinner and cook them in mud." And we did too, up beside the dry lake, so called because it filled a depression in spring but dried up during summer.

Jay and Ralph fixed together the rest of the dynamite and caps and fuse and pitched it far out into the lake as they could. When it exploded the water spouted far up into the sky. We were sure the folks would never find out about this little episode, but, that was on Friday or Saturday and on Sunday when we coaxed Father to let us go swimming in Dry Lake he said, "You can if Len will go with you and not let anyone drown". Brother Forres could no go swimming because of his rheumatism, so off we went.

Ella and I (Ruth) used the boys bib overalls with a shirt for bathing suits. Leave it to me, says Ruth, the first thing I did when I got into the water was walk into the deep hole made by the dynamite. If Len hadn't been watching me I would probably still be there stuck in the mud. Len came to my rescue and was unaware of the hole. He stepped right into it. Of course, we had a lot of explaining to do when we arrived home. We were forbidden again to ever touch the dynamite. For some reason it was securely locked up after that. Guess they didn't trust us.

Wonder Why?

RALPH AND JAY'S SNAKE PIT

Sister Ruth tells of some of the younger ones including Jay who was scouting around the hills in Mink Creek near where the Father and older boys were mining some coal. They found a large hollow rock with a sort of flat rock on top of it. Jay slid the flat rock to one side so they could take a look inside to see what the strange bussing noise was. "

Jay got closest and peered in. Suddenly he sprang back saying, "Good Hell, the hole is full of rattlesnakes." He quickly slid the rock back over the hole. They, he and Ralph, high-tailed it down to the mine and snitched two sticks of dynamite: caps and fuses.

When it was ready they lowered it into the hole in the rock. The rest of us kids had taken cover in a large cedar tree. After lighting the fuse Ralph and Jay hid behind a big rock. What an explosion, 'bout knocked us kids out of the tree. Father was gone, but Mother came running out. She thought the mine had blown up. Anyway, they got rid of those snakes and received a good talking to from Mother with a warning never to touch dynamite again.