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All Holes Lead to China

Beverly Sellers

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**ALL HOLES
LEAD TO CHINA**

Beverly Sellers

As a child
I was fascinated
with the idea
if I dug a hole
straight down
A N Y W H E R E
and kept on digging
it would come out
in China.
I took this
as a literal
statement of fact.

So I borrowed
Daddy's shovel
which stood taller
than me and
started digging in
the sandy loam
out there in the pasture
in back of our house.

I dug and dug
for days on end-----
then plum tuckered out
I concluded
the Chinaman in China
could wait to meet me
and I to meet him
until maybe next year
when with luck
I'd grow taller than
Daddy's shovel.

Five or six homemade rockers were lined up along the cedar wall. At the far end of the porch was a handmade table covered in a checkered oilcloth. Benches for ten or twelve adults framed the table. An embroidered dishtowel covered salt, pepper, sugar and syrup in the middle of the table.

Behind the rockers was a pine doorway that led to a large family room. Every piece of homemade wooden furniture faced the ceiling-to-floor rock fireplace. Two doors led from the back of the large room to four bedrooms; across the back of the last two bedrooms was a screened-in sleeping porch. All the beds had goose down pillows and feather mattresses and were covered with homemade quilts. The only picture I remember was "End of the Trail"- at sunset, an old Indian sat on a horse; both with bent heads. The warrior had a club head or spear in his right hand.

To the right of the front room was a large kitchen with a wood-burning cook stove and a corner icebox. The icebox held a large block of ice that stood in a tin pan in the bottom half of the box. The wooden box was lined with tin to hold in the cold air. The top half of the box stored the milk. I do not ever remember opening either the top or bottom half of the icebox. It was forbidden. A cupboard stocked with jars of canned meats, carrots, peas, beans, pickled peaches, and beets stood on the south side. A door to the right led to the before mentioned front porch. Off to the left side of the kitchen was the back screened porch that housed a daisy church, a separator, large crocks that held milk clabber, a drinking water bucket, a dipper, and a tin pan for the men to wash their hands. A wall with an open door on the back section of this porch led to Granddad and Grandmother's sleeping porch.

They slept out there the year around. In the winter and during rainstorms, canvas was unrolled to keep them out of the direct weather. I never remember them sleeping anywhere else. I don't think I ever went into that room, but I looked through the doorless frame every time I went out on the milk porch.

On the right side of the exit screen door from the milk porch was a rain barrel. The rainwater was used on Saturday nights to wash the girls' hair. Up a path, about one hundred yards through bushes and vine, sat the outhouse. Sears Roebuck catalogues served us well. Sometimes corncobs were available.

Straight out the back door was the chicken yard. I always wanted to collect the eggs from the hen house. I was glad I had remembered to put my shoes on as I passed through the chicken wire gate into the inane world of the chickens. They did not seem to like me very much. When I spread corn feed over the pen, they seemed happy enough, but