

Gramp's Ailments

by Willis 'Skip' Barshied

I just awoke to face another day. I needed no alarm clock or any prompting except the prompting of the Creator. It is strange what one remembers as they conjure up the happenings of long ago. I'd like the reader to meet my Great Grandfather. His name was David Hubbs, but I just called him Gramp. In the matter of relationship, he was my mother's mother's father. Gramp Hubbs made an impression on me but not quite the same as Grandpa Garlock, my mother's father who, since we lived in the same house along the creek at Marshville, I knew as well as my parents.

Gramp Hubbs came occasionally to stay a day or two. I recall a day when I was not quite six years old - at least, I hope I had not reached that age when I should have had reason enough not to do what I will now relate. Mother said, "It is lunch time. Go up and wake up Gramp Hubbs."

I climbed the stairs and went to the second door on the right. Well, there is Gramp peacefully sleeping. I gently spoke to him with no result. How will I accomplish my mission? I had carried along for some unknown reason a small wooden mallet from that child's toolbox I got for Christmas. You guessed it - I gave Gramp a slight tap on the cranium. I do not recall his reaction. Possibly he did not really know of my evil deed, but it did work.

The era I recall was about 1935, when I was five years old. Gramp Hubb had been born in 1859, even before the Civil War. All I knew was that I thought he was ancient. He survived up until my early teens.

Gramp's Illnesses



Opodeldoc Bottle - Picture by Emily Enger

Like most of humanity, Gramp complained of not feeling well at times. I'd ask him about what he thought was his problem. Often as a self-diagnosis he would say he had "the Belly Waggus" or "the Shi Buggary on the Ear." Now, I've never knowingly had these serious complaints or known anyone else that did either, except Gramps. One other serious disease Gramp might have had was "Epizootic." I then wondered where he came up with these strange ailments or, for that matter, some of his sure cures: "Opodeldoc," "Kickapoo Indian Medicine" and "Epizootic Cure."



Kickapoo Indian medicine label

As an avid collector, I found out many years later that these cures from yesterday did exist and at least one of them was a cure for animals. Here before me is a well-made wooden shipping box for Dr. A. C. Daniels Veterinarian medicine. Stenciled on its side is "Daniels Great Distemper and Epizootic - Pinkeye and Cough Drops." I have an old bottle with bold-raised letters in my hand. It reads, "Opadeldoc Liquid." The Kickapoo Indian Medicines were said to cure all sorts of ailments. They were to be found on druggist shelves when Gramp was young.



Wooden Shipping Box for Daniels Great Distemper and Epizootic - Pinkeye and Cough Drops.

Picture by Emily Enger

The moral of this story is that it is not always wise to doubt your elders, even when what they say is sort of farfetched.

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