

DOUBLE TROUBLE BLACKBERRIES

by Beverly Smith



I still like to pick berries. The last couple of years a friend offered for me to pick blackberries from her patch. These bushes were in a row and they were thornless. This does not compute with the memories I have of picking berries as a child.

We lived in Milan, Illinois. Grandma Coyne lived down the road from us. She wasn't really our grandma but we claimed her just the same. She

met all the criteria. To go berry picking we had to walk through her pasture, climb a fence, cross another pasture and there on the edge of the woods were all the berries we could ever want.

One day Dad and Mom decided we needed to pick berries. Dad and my brother Gary went to one patch and

Mom and I went to the patch through the pastures. We picked until our buckets were full and started back to Grandma Coyne's house. About half way across the back pasture my mother realized we were being chased by a big black bull. My mother was only 5 ft tall, but she took me by the hand and started running. Remember, I said we had to climb a fence to get in the back pasture. Well, you have to climb it to get out too. The adrenalin must have been flowing because my 5 ft. tall mother, holding on to my hand took a flying leap with her skirt flying in the air and we landed on the other side. When we stopped to get our breath and give thanks we were surprised to find that most of our berries were still in the bucket. Our berry picking story created quite a stir.

The berries finally ended up at our house on the kitchen table waiting to be made into jam. The problem was it wouldn't be a sweet kind of jam.

My brother and I were taking a nap while Mom and Dad visited in the front yard with neighbors. People did that sort of thing back then. Well, we weren't really napping, we were resting and thinking about the berries. One of us, I am sure it was my younger brother, got the bright idea of snacking on a few of the berries. They ended up in the

middle of the bed with us and we were enjoying them until we looked at one another and saw the stained faces and hands with stains up to our elbows. We knew then that we were deep trouble.

Where to hide was the next question. We decided to sneak out the back door and we headed for the garden. It wasn't long until we heard our names being called, but we didn't answer. Soon the neighbors were looking for us as well. Quite a length of time went by and it finally was beginning to get dark. Being

afraid of the dark was more frightening than facing Mom and Dad, so we finally decided to come out of hiding.

When we appeared our search party took one look at us and started

laughing. They nearly hugged us to death. Mom lost a quilt and most of the blackberries but she gained a story that she told many times over.



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