

After the Army

“When I first got out of the Army, Don and I went to Rapid City to work in the gold mines, but they would not take Don because he only had one eye. So I said, ‘He was good enough to be in the service but you can’t give him a job, I don’t want to work for you either.’ Then we thought about working up in the mountains and cutting down trees for fence posts. We bought lunch boxes for a dollar and made arrangements with a restaurant to pack our lunches; they would do that for \$6.00 a week. But we got to talking with Jim Kennisen, we knew him from back home, and he was living in Rapid City. He said ‘You can’t make your salt working there’. So we returned our lunch boxes and meal tickets and caught the next bus headed for home. We went to Rapid City first, where Harold Fransen lived, he took us to Deadwood. He was a plasterer and they were building a lot of houses out there.”

We ended up going to Sioux Falls, building the new VA hospital. It started to storm and the supervisor offered us time and a half to keep working. When it came time to pick up our checks, the overtime wasn't on there. The said the supervisor didn't have the authority to offer them overtime, so we quit. They didn't know we would have kept working through the storm without them offering the overtime, but we didn't like it that they didn't keep their word. After that we worked at Morrell's until the spring. Don had to go see Sybil 1-3 times a week, especially if there was a dance in Summit!- and I needed to drive him. I didn't like not getting enough sleep. ”

“That spring I rented a quarter of land- it was behind the Bittersweet Lodge (used to be Redlin's). Dad had it all ready for me to plant. But after harvest, and all the work that I put into it, I only had \$2600 for the next year- and I still had bills to pay. I said ‘Forget farming’, and sent Western Union a wire to let them know I was available again. I went back to work for them in 1947, until they went on strike April 4th, 1952. Don and I checked out jobs in Rosemount, Minnesota, those jobs were being offered by the government, hiring people to work on the start of the Alaska pipeline. Freddy Wolfort and Ed Corr took jobs with them, but we decided it wasn't for us. So I started at the Milwaukee Railroad- I will always remember the date- 5-5-52. ”



Dad and Don