My Remembers
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Domestic Animals

Horses, mule, cows, hog, goats, sheep, chicken, turkey, duck, goose, pigeon. There may be many other, but these are the animals I myself is most familiar with. Each animal has a distinction of its own.

Cow can be about as wild as any animal I know if a man or some one is not around them all the time. All cow can become a milk cow after their first calf but you have to train them, and even the best train milk cow will some time kick you and your milk over while you have them in a stall. To prevent this you put leg hobble on. Also each cow no their own stall where they eat and be milk. Cow are very good mother and very protective of the herd they with. During the day or night when the calf are fed, the cows will bed down their babies and at least one mother cow will stay there with them.

A cow have a steady feeding habit. The only time they are not eating is when they are lying down or some thing unusual enter the field where they are, such as dog, deer, hogs, a strange person, even rabbits. They will stand still in their track and watch what ever it is until it out of site or come too close to their position, and if this happen they have a certain bellow and all take up a defense position, putting all the young in the middle or between them and the danger.

You halter them, learn them to be led, pet them, groom and keep them at a balance diet. You learn them not to be frighten of any thing. Once you train them as a pet and show calf you can’t let them back out in their pasture with the other stock. They become easy prey to predators or their own will fight and kill them. From the show they are usually taken to a slaughter house and kill for market purpose.

Sheep were a very special animal. It was use for several purpose and easy prey to dogs and wolf. So every night they
had to be fasten up in a barn lot and fed oats. What I remember about sheep is during lamb season and shearing the wool. During lamb birth there were all way some young ewes that probly would need help having the lamb. You had to be careful because the mother may reject the lamb. Whin this happen you fasten them both up in a tight pen and some time you had to hold the mother sheep to let the baby suck until she get use to it.

Sheep shearing was all way profible for me. Whin the sheep shearer would come I would go out where a sheep had died, gather the wool remaining and sell it to the buyer. Some time the shearmen would buy the remain. If not we could take it to the cotton gin in Kamy or Plano and sell the wool. Wool would sell like cotton. If the market was good, you sell. If the market was bad you wait for the price go up.

Between a hog and chicken you would have to flip a coin to see which one the nastiest. My dad and I have raise hog as long as I can remember. If you are raising hogs for the market, in six month from birth they should weigh from 190–230 pound. If you are raising them for meat hogs for your famley, you may keep them until they get 300–500 pound. Out of a 500 pound you will probly get five to ten gallon of lard.

Hog killing was very special, and we would all way kill hog twice during winter, before Christmas and in February. There were all way two or three family kill hog together. The men would start the fire, get the vat or barrel ready for scalding, sharpen knifes. The women would be sewing sausage sacks. The kids were able bring up fire wood but usually stack it close to the pot. If you were old enough to put wood on the fire, some one would tell you whin and what side to put it on. There were all way other kid around and a close eye were on them at all time.

From the time the hog was gutted open, the liver and

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tenderloin were strip out and some of the women would start frying some meat. Some women and me would start cleaning the guts for chittlings. The most remember thing I like about the hog killing was the lard cook out. Once the lard was cook out, we kids could dig in the cracklings and eat. During hog killing time there were all way plenty of help. Work in the field were lay by for winter. Hog killing is a very remember thing to me as a kid. It was fun. It was exciting the way they shot the hog between the eyes and then cut the throte and stab the heart to bleed. The hot water had to be a certain tempature and the ashes from the fire was used to help cut the hair while scraping the hide. After scraping, they would split the hind foot, pull out the strong leaders, and hook the trace hook in leader and hoist the hog up on a frame. A frame is three poles stood up, tied at the top, then spread open in tryangle. Once the hog is strung up, it is wash down and finish draining, then gutted open and then block out in four pieces and then trim out. While one or two men block and trim out, the other men will be cutting up lard and sausage meat. If you have ever did any hog killing I guess one never forget. This is February 1991 and I just kill two hogs. It brought back many remember.

I suppose one of the most remarkable animal this country ever seen, had, or use is the mule. It is sad to no that the very thing God put on this earth for man to make a living and build this country with were brutely used up and threwed away and made dog food, while in some country it is call a delicacy food. Whin modern equipment began to roll onto the farm field, those team of mule would began to disappear until finally there were no mule to be seen in this part of the state. I would be willing to bet that kids from thirty or thirty-five years old down, to this day and time have never seen a mule unless maby at a movie or maby a horse show or fair.

But I remember from the time I was able to crawl into a
wagon with my dad or uncle and hold the line of a team of mule. I was taught to respect a mule because they had as much sense as you did and you had to all way let them no who were the boss and in control. Other wise there were two thing they would do: run away once they was hook up to a wagon or plow, or balk and not even move whin you try to make them go. It would be like a see saw with each other and not going any where. Once a team get this stubborn mood it nothing you can do but take a brake until they are ready to move. This would only happen if the team of mule no that you were not in control.

I remember the first time my dad and uncle ask if I want a team of mule. I didn’t no they were for real. But whin they ask me if I can catch and harness the team they point out to me, my face lite up like a Christmas tree. I suppose my dad no or had confidence that I could. But little did he or the rest no that I probly had more control of the mule than they did. Remember I feed them every day, I petted them daily, they ate out of my hand, I would catch them out in the middle of the paster and ride them bare back some time. I had to lead them in a ditch to get on ther back. I had a lot of practice unhooking the team and taking off the harness.

So I caught the two they point out. They were the biggest in the lot I thought. At least they were older and tamer. The only problum I had was throwing the harness over ther back and fit it over the collar, but I lead them up to the feed trough and harness them up and hook them to a bull rake to rake cotton stalks into a winrow. Even after school I would go catch, harness up, hook up, and go up to the field and work until dark.

I’m sure people think all horses and mule are broke like the cowboy broke riding horses. No, you are wrong. Working horses and mule are broke with one or two other trained horses or
A large horse or mule owner would probly have ten or fifteen working teams, and diffrent team for diffrent work.

mule. Whin you have got them tame down or what you call barn or pen broke and able to catch, you begin to put harness on them day by day for a while. Then you begin to leave the harness on half or all day. Then you hook the horse or mule between another trained pair and lead them around, then hook them to a wagon or plow and work them until they are ready for field work. A large horse and mule owner would probly have ten or fifteen working team and diffrent team for diffrent work—some to plant, some to plow, row crop like cotton and corn, and the big and strong teams for braking ground.

It a beautiful site whin you look out in a field and see ten team of mules working, like looking at a pitcher. People traveling along Preston Road would stop and look and take a pitcher of a man and his team plowing. I can tell you this, the same big machines in the farm field producing the food that
you eat every day is the same food that build America, only it was horse and mule that began to bring us where we are now. In recent years historian society have tryed to preserve the mule and jack ass and donkeys.

On this subject you will have to use your imagination because there are two aspect to look at. The first is modern equipment. If you line up ten tractor with the attached equipment in a hundred acre field, it would only take about a hour to clean the hundred acre farm field. Now let us use our imagination using this same hundred acre field. And line up ten team of horses and mule with that equipment and start out the same time. In about one hour you would hardly have made a round or went from one end and back where you started. But like any thing some team are faster than the other. In two hour all ten team with attached plow would be scattered up and down the hundred acre. It may take a week or more to finish this field with a team instead of one hour with a tractor.

But I can remember how beautiful it looks whin you stop along the highway, as many traveler did to just sit and look and take pitcher day in and day out. What make this pitcher so beautiful is to see how graceful those team pull the plows and how those men would handle the team with experience, working ability and the control they had over the team.

I can remember well as those team of horses and mule scatter about in this field with the change of a light colored field turning into a black field as those teams plow and roll over the dirt. The pitcher is so beautiful. No wonder peoples traveling down 289 (Preston Road) would stop day in and day out to take pitcher of ten team turning a old field into a new one.