

# *The Ol' Hoosier Farmer* — December 2, 1977

By Jim Jones

Th' Good Wife n' I took a walk t' other night an' ended up down at th' elevator. Always fascinated by elevators. Here was Lowell's big grain dryer an' all th' legs an' augurs runnin' by them selves, all automatically, crankin' out thousan's o' bushels o' dried corn without any body lifin' a finger. A fur piece frum th' days not so long ago when we used t' harvest corn in th' fall with an ol' 1 row Wood Bros. corn picker an' crib th' ear corn fer feedin' to hawgs.

Th' elevator is th' hub o' th' farm business here in our town. You kin buy jest about everthing there fer th' farm includin' feed, fertilizer, hardware an' good fellowship which is free most o' th' time. We has enjoyed wanderin' about th' ol' mill buildin' with its massive bins, mill machinery in th' basement an' th' smell o' grain an' feed. Takes a feller back to th' days at home on th' farm when we milled our own feed with an ol' hammermill, corn sheller an' vertical mixer. I guess this ol' machinery is still in th' barn, unused fer many years since th' folk quit feedin' stock.

We well recall th' sad day back in th' summer o' 1966 when th' elevator at Dayton, Indiana burned to th' ground. A typical small country elevator, it had served th' surroundin' countrysider fer many years. But a stray spark frum th' cob burner lit into some dry stuff at noon while everbody wuz at lunch an' that wuz it. Nothin' burns faster then an ol' mill full o' dust an' grain. In jest a few hours there wuz nothin' left but th' big steel grain tanks at th' east end. Th' owners didn't rebuild--jest cleaned up th' mess, pulled th ol' mill machinery out o' th' cellar an' sent it t' th' junk yard. Only thing left wuz th' grain tanks an' augars which wuz sold t' some local fellers fer storin' grain.

However, th' fire left homeless all th' field mice who had lived there and had free lunch. When winter came along, they moved in to th' houses o' their neighbors includin' us, since we lived only a half block frum th' elevator. That winter we had a fine time gettin' rid o' th' mice. They wasn't easy t' git rid of either. One feller somehow got up into th' ceilin' o' th' dinin' room, knawed a hole thru an' stuck his tail thru it. Quite a sight when th' preacher come to dine with a mouse tail wavin' over th' table.

We sees th' big cooperative elevators buildin' up across th' corn belt an' figgers they is most modern an efficient. But we hopes th' small town elevator will be with us fer a long time. They has been a midwest institution fer many a year an' are still doin' a fine job. It's a good place to visit, hear th' farm talk, see what th' price o' grain is doin' an' eat peanuts an' throw th' shells on th' floor.