

“Junk Piles”

By Lex Shuler

“The Marion County Observer” - March 15, 2012

Living in the country, no one had trash pickup so they would haul off their unburnables. Most people had burn barrels for paper trash and the like but every once and a while, people would haul their glass metal and junk to the closest junk pile and add it to whatever was there. They were everywhere in the country. Usually close to creeks and grown up areas that were sufficient to hide the piles. My grandpa, Lee, loved rummaging through these piles of history. He knew where all the good ones were and he checked them out if he was in the area digging roots or setting traps. A lot of times he would carry home what he had found and put the treasure in one of his sheds that he had designated for that purpose. But that’s another story. One day my cousin Eddie accompanied grandpa on one of these excursions and both he and grandpa were digging through the heap looking for something worthy of carrying home when grandpa pulled a pair of shoes. He went over to a log and sat down, pulled his old worn out shoes off and tried on his newfound footwear. They were just his size. He put the other shoe on, stood up and walked around a little to further check out his “new” shoes. He picked up his old pair of shoes, knowing that he had definitely made a good choice, and carefully placed them on top of the junk pile. Eddie asked, “Are you leaving your old shoes here?” Grandpa said, “Yes, someone may come along and maybe have worse shoes than them and they can trade their old ones for them.”

Eddie responded with a chuckle and they went on their way. I’ll bet grandpa knew in his heart that his grandson Eddie learned the lesson he was teaching him that day.