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Tsyotná·kales.

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G-29

Oxen

Long ago my late father used to have these oxen and they used to escape. It was scary to chase them. They got away from him a lot and they were fast. They say he often tied a rope on the horns and pulled so he could stop the oxen. One time he had gone to sell lumber in DePere and he was going to buy some groceries. When he rode back somewhere along the road something scared the oxen and they took off. It was very cold and my father was walking behind. He tried to catch up to them but it wasn't possible for him to get back in, but he chased them for quite a ways. Things he had shopped for would be lying there and he just barely arrived with the various things he had gathered along the road.

They rode the team of oxen to go to church in the winter at night and they were hitched to a home-made sleigh. When they came out from church, they got back to where he had tied them and they were there chewing away and thinking peaceful thoughts with their horns there. He got them ready and they got in. They say there were also a few young men he gave a ride to. He was holding onto the rope he'd tied on the horns of one of the oxen, but right away the driver realized they wanted to take off. Just as they were coming down the hill by the cemetery, they jumped right up and took off. He pulled the rope but nothing helped. It was just going faster as they ran. The only thin he could think of he told them. He said, "I think these oxen are runaways. Drop yourselves off or jump off when we reach the turnoff."

And that's what they did. One after the other they snow flew as they got out. Then there was just his family left in it. They were almost back to where their house was. Then he realized that the runner on the sleigh was about to collapse, so he really tried to stop his animals. He pulled on the rope and it broke. He fell back to where my late mother was sitting and he landed there. He said, "We are going to die from this."

Then the runner did collapse on his sleigh it started to go zig-zag as they rode. My brother Moses was just little and my mother was holding him. My father said, "Just try for a place where the snow is deep and drop off the boy there."

So that is what happened. They really hit right into the snowbank. When he landed in the snow, the boy said, "Achoo!" but nothing happened to them. So then my father swore off having oxen. The first chance he got, he traded them and got a horse.