

Things in Motion

All things are in motion and nothing is at rest. You cannot go into the same (river) twice.

--Heraclitus (540? – 480?) B.C.



The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

--Robert Frost

This photo was taken by J. Hill Hamon and it shows part of his property in the wilds of Kentucky; a scene that beautifully illustrates the typical American Winter as envisioned by those who attach a certain romantic mysticism to the changing seasons. My thanks to J. Hill and also to Robert Frost whose poem *Stopping by woods on a snowy evening* describes so elegantly the sentiments aroused by such scenes of nature.

During my early winters, certain details stand out, such as the time when a hard freeze left our 2000-gallon water tank (which stood atop a ten-foot high platform) with a huge expanse of ice hanging down one side. That same freeze left our automatic watering troughs frozen solid, so the morning after saw a flurry of activity to melt the ice and restore flowing water.

In and around the several fenced lots and pens adjacent to the barns, every puddle was frozen, and in places the ground itself had frozen, leaving spewed ice which was great fun to walk on—sort of like popping the plastic bubble wrap of today.

For those who had work to do regardless of the weather, each workday began at the woodpile, where a small fire was lit—and served not to actually keep anyone warm, but to provide a focal point for workers to gather around before beginning work. One of my favorite farm workers played the harmonica, and it was not unusual to hear a rousing series of tunes before sunup—it always drew me to that fire where I could stomp my feet, clap my hands, and keep time as well as anyone there.

Now, seventy-plus years later, I look back on those days and wonder how we all survived the harsh working conditions, no air-conditioning, no electricity, where the prime method of transportation was to ride Shank's Mare (that's to walk, for those who don't know of Shank's Mare). It strikes me that the will to survive has been alive and among us for a very long time; I have no doubt it will last as long as a kid is fascinated by frozen puddles and large chunks of ice hanging on water tanks.

Number 66, Autumn 2009
Published for AAPA by Hugh Singleton
at 102 Azalea Trail, Leesburg, FL 34748