

DUST PNEUMONIA excerpts taken from Kinsley Library Oral Histories

Jean Titus: Born 1922

I was probably about 11 or 12 years old when the dust storm really hit and it was terrible because we'd see a dark cloud coming up and instead of being rain it would be dust, and it would often fill up around all the machinery and stuff, and in the house, if the house had any open places kind where the partitions and the like were, the dust would even cover the linoleum that was on the floor in just one day. When we went to bed at night we'd cover our faces, our nose and mouth with damp cloths to keep from inhaling that dust so we wouldn't get dust pneumonia. One time I was at the Garfield School, which is closed, and they had a new addition built on, just had finished it, and we was having a 4-H club meeting there and the dust come in through that new building so bad you could hardly see across the room, and then we thought we would never get home because you couldn't see where you were driving, so it really was real bad.

Buford Brodbeck: Born 1925

I had a cousin that lived out in Manter, Kansas. She got dust pneumonia real bad and my dad and mother went out and got her and brought her back here to live for a while. I thought, holy heck, it's worse out there than here! When you got hit, you just get in the house and tried to keep from choking to death. You'd put sheets up in the windows to try to keep it out. Wet them a little, and the next day they'd be just as black as black.

Fern McBride: Born 1915

Fern: We were going through the Dirty Thirties in 1931 to about 1934, 5 or 6. We did not have any rain or any moisture enough to raise any crops. We had the dirt blowing. It was a might pathetic time for the farmers, the whole family. We would roll up towels and things to put in front of the doors to keep the cold out, the dirt out mainly, also the windows. When people would milk cows, the dirt that would come in from north up around Hays and Wakeeney, that dirt would roll in one big cloud. It would be so dense you couldn't see to be able to get to the barn or back to the house. But we had one friend that milked cows. He would get out to the barn, but he said he had such a time trying to find the house after that because he was carrying milk. So they would put a lamp in the window so that it would give him a little bit of a key to where to go. The dirt and wind blew so badly out west, I don't know exactly where that was, but it was past Sublette I know, rather west of there. The dirt had blown so much it would cover up their machinery from one season to the next. There was much sickness, much dust pneumonia. At that time nearly everybody had a cook stove. So if you had an old fashioned cook stove, of course you had warm water in the reservoir. The humidity from just a tea kettle on top of the stove, boiling, gave the people a little bit of moisture in the air which helped some in as far as cutting down on some of the diseases and things, especially pneumonia.

Kinsley Mercury March 28, 1935

PNEUMONIA CAUSES DEATH
Arthur, twenty-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Bernatzki, died Tuesday morning at St. Anthony's hospital in Dodge City, where he had been taken for treatment for pneumonia.
Funeral services are being held this afternoon at the Methodist church, beginning at 2:30.

Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Corrons drove to Coldwater Sunday. Mr. Corrons reports that there had been a good rain between Greensburg and Coldwater, and that water was standing in fields, ditches and other low places, and that the wheat looked fine.

Clinton Long, of St. John, district deputy Grand Master, made an official visit to the Kinsley Masonic lodge Tuesday night. After work in the first degree, lunch was served.