

# KIDS' CURIOSITY

By Beverly C., Savannah, Tennessee

IT WAS an exciting day around our Decaturville, Tennessee home in 1957. Daddy, Grandfather and Uncle George were building a new barn behind our house.

I was around 8, my sister, Wanda, was 6 and my brother, Larry, was 5. When the men were finished for the day, we were allowed to explore the construction site on our own.

While playing, Larry spotted a cylindrical silver box, about an inch in diameter and 2-1/2 inches high. We spelled out the letters marked on its side: S-N-U-F-F.

We had seen older folks dip snuff. They'd place a pinch of it between their lower teeth and lip, making it look like they had a fat lip. Then they would spit a lot.

Gingerly, Larry tugged on the cover of the box and it came off, showing the box to be about half full.

## **Do We Dare?**

They say curiosity killed the cat. Well, kittens don't have any more curiosity than children.

Larry took out a pinch of snuff and placed it squarely on the middle of his tongue. Wanda and I watched as his face screwed up into an awful grimace.

"Yuk," Larry said as he spat and spluttered. I guess that explained why the old folks kept on spitting; you couldn't get the stuff out of your mouth.

Now more cautious, I decided to smell it before I tasted it. Placing the tin under my nose, I took a deep breath. Suddenly, I found myself on the ground, trying to breathe. My eyes and nose were burning. I coughed so hard that I almost lost my breath again.

Wanda wisely decided she didn't want any part of the snuff, period. We carefully placed the tin back on the ledge where we found it and sheepishly walked back to the house.

"Well, kids, did you see the barn?" our dad asked. "Yes, sir," Larry said. Wanda and I just mumbled "uh-huh" with our heads down.

Daddy gave us a penetrating, puzzled look, but before he could ask any questions, Mama called out, "Supper's ready." We dashed to the kitchen and scrambled into our chairs at the table—whew, that was close!

I don't think we had the courage to tell Daddy the whole story until we were all grown up.