Nicest Thing Anyone Has Done for Me

They Found Safe Haven

IN NOVEMBER 1950, my wife, two young children and I went to Illinois to visit family. On the return trip that Saturday, we had to get off the roads because of the snow.

We were able to get lodging at the tourist home of Dorothy and Harry Smith in Sullivan, Ohio, and stayed with them until about 10 a.m. Monday.

While we were there, we ate with them sometimes or walked to a small restaurant.

As I was loading our luggage into our car, Mrs. Smith came out and said, “I don’t know your financial situation and you don’t know what you may encounter before you get home. Keep the money you owe us for the room; then, when you get home, send what you thought it was worth.”

The trip home was a real adventure—lots of icy roads and places where there was only one lane of traffic, alternating eastbound and westbound. Many disabled buses and trucks were off to the side of the road.

We had enough food in the car for the family and needed to get home, so we stopped only to use restrooms or get gas. It took 15 hours to make the 285-mile drive back home.

When we arrived, we sent a $15 money order to the Smiths and a note of thanks for their great help in our time of need. We said we'd send more money after payday.

Soon after she got our money order, Mrs. Smith sent us a package of clothing for our children, saying we had sent them too much money.

Several times in the years that followed, we stopped at the Smiths' tourist home for lodging and a visit.

—Fred H., Ransomville, New York