Wish I Still Had It Today!

Dad Knew How to Cap Off a Great Day

By Mary Lee Warnock, Moorhead, Minnesota

In 1934, when I was 6 years old, I wanted nothing more in life than to grow up to be just like my father—in spite of my being a girl.

My dad, who had deep-blue eyes and black hair that included a widow's peak, was a small man in physical stature, at 5-foot-5. But in my eyes, he was gargantuan.

I don't ever recall Dad wearing a hat, though I'm sure he had one. Instead, I always saw him in a wool tweed cap with a button on the crown and a small bill. At his neck, he wore a bow tie, but nothing compared with that cap. When it wasn't on his head, it was on mine.

One bright day, Dad asked if I wanted to walk uptown with him. We had no car in those days, so we walked wherever we had to go in Jamestown, North Dakota. Any time I could go anywhere with my daddy, I was jubilant.

Our first stop was Beck's Clothing Store, the largest men's and boys' store in town. Protruding from one whole wall were wooden arms with round balls on the ends, each arm holding a cap.

Dad led me to the boys' section and, pointing at the wall, said, "I'm going to buy you a cap. Pick one out."

I was so excited, but there were so many to choose from! I finally picked a gray wool cap with a red tweed pattern.

Skipping down the street, I was on top of the world as I held Dad's hand with my new cap on my head. There was nothing that could

have given me more pleasure or made me feel more important.

The following year, my dad passed away and Mom had to give up our house. We moved to Montana, where my mother's family resided, and moved many times over the next few years. Somewhere, during our nomadic existence, my cap disappeared.

Though more than 70 years have passed, the memory of that joyous day when I first wore my cap is as fresh as if it happened yesterday, when a father took his little girl by the hand and made her feel special.