

Following Instructions:

When engines are roaring, mufflers smoking, valves grinding, wheels turning, and machinery is banging, somewhere in the conglomerated mess of smoke and noise there is a master. He is usually easy to identify, his face is red, and decorated with grease splotches, has frowning wrinkles and obvious strain around the vocal chord area; which would prove to be an extremely intelligent guess that “the master is speaking”. Now- what did he say? There amidst the rising fumes and powered machinery the mouth is opening and closing rapidly -SOMETHING IS BEING SAID! After dumbly sitting they’re trying to read lips the master drops down to a more basic form of communication – hand signals. I myself learned these much quicker than lip reading. They were all the basic commands; “come, go, backward, forward, left, right, and to hell with it.” (The last gesture usually follows some form of mouth movement.)

Then of course there is the following instructions when the voice can be heard, possibly not understood, but definitely heard!! As a beller shakes the serenity of the homestead someone would say,

“What did he say?”

“Who said?”

“Dad said!”

“Said what?”

“I don’t know”

“Well do something!”

(panic beginning)

“Do what?”

“What were you supposed to do?”

“Maybe chop or feed? I wonder if I put that bolt in right?”

(the booming voice shakes again, panic is growing)

“Run!”

“Which way?”

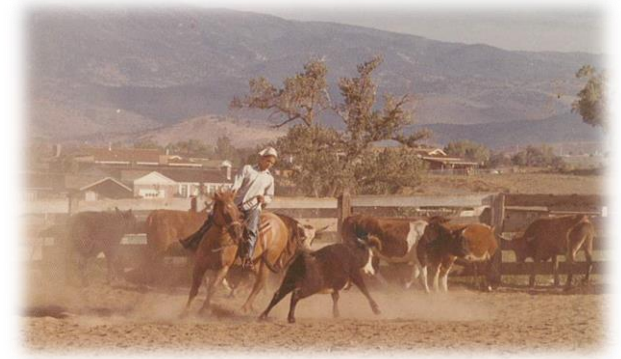
“Any way! Look like you’re doing something!”

“I’ll feed the calves, you feed the chickens. Just keep doing something until you hit the right one!”

(The voice explodes again as if a bomb has been dropped – panic is out of hand)

Grabbing coats, caps, one shoe on, one shoe off, everyone running in different directions and Norma very calmly but with concern saying, “Oh my goodness I think it’s a catastrophe!” Scattering like “pigs on ice”, the moment of truth arrives, and a culprit is singled out for some dastardly deed of incompetence. Somebody’s always done something, something’s always wrong, usually was, always is and forever will be.

Note: Someone once told me they could never live on a farm because there wasn’t enough excitement. I’d like to see that someone spend one month, one week, one day on “Uncle Donnie’s Farm” and forever hold his peace!



Love to all,

Pat

Donnie Reimann

1932- 2024

Through the years Donnie had many nephews and one niece who would come and help him on the farm, all from California and all grew up in the city. His niece, Pat Anderson, wrote him a letter describing this “city girl’s” perspective of farm life and working for Uncle Donnie.

The following is the end of that letter...