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Your interest in dogs has made me wonder if I ever told you about the story that my Dad told me of what occurred at their farm home in Kansas when he was eleven or twelve years old. It was still in the early days when some of homesteaders lived in sod houses. It was before immunization of animals ~~for~~ to prevent rabies, so a "mad dog" was something serious.

They owned two dogs at that time. One day a stray came along the road and these two dogs ran out and fought with it. The stray was later killed and suspected of being rabid. My grandfather, being ~~Cautious~~ cautious, put their own two dogs into the corncrib and nailed the door shut. They were kept confined in the crib for twenty-one days, and showing no signs of becoming ill, were released on the twenty-second days.

In those days the wheat was threshed by a machine that blew the straw into a pile, more or less like a gopher mound, and it was a convenient and warm place for the dogs to ~~sleep and storm~~ sleep when running at large. The sides were sloping so there was no problem climbing the ~~straw~~ pile.

The dogs were very restless the night of the ~~22nd~~ days, many times running down from the straw stack and barking at something or other.

However, the family did not suspect anything serious until the next morning. Dad's oldest sister, my great-aunt Minnie, had gone out to the pump to get a bucket of water to prepare breakfast. She saw "Shep" (I never learned the other dog's name) as he came around the house, slavering and snapping his jaws to the left and right. She stepped back, closed the kitchen door and cried, "Shep's mad!" The dog came to the house and crawled under the back porch.

There was only one solution to the problem, the dog had to be destroyed. Taking a 12-gauge shot gun, Dad walked out into the yard and lay down on his stomach so that he could see under the porch. There lay Shep, snapping his jaws in a crazy sort of way. Dad fired the gun and Shep laid his head to one side and died.

The other dog was also destroyed, and they were uneasy about their horses and cattle but none were ever effected.

It was a story that made the chills run up my spine, and probably influenced my attitude toward stray dogs for the rest of my life.