

## Uncle Sid Finds Ballgame Food Expensive



by  
Pettus Read

Read All About It

As I pulled into the long gravel driveway of Uncle Sid and Aunt Sadie's the other day, I was already looking forward to sitting down at their kitchen table for a time of down-home discussion. And, of course, the chance of getting some of Aunt Sadie's homemade tea cakes had also helped lure me to their white clapboard house out near the county line as well.

Winter was making its presence known on that cold January day as I hurriedly moved from my car to the wide back porch of their farm house. The north wind was kicking up the last of winter's leaves from the large maple trees that surrounded the farmstead and just seeing Aunt Sadie through the kitchen window standing at her white porcelain cookstove was enough to warm the coldest winter day.

Just as I had hoped for, she had baked her famous tea cakes that morning and the aroma of their goodness still filled the air in the couple's kitchen. They

were still warm and soft. She placed two on a china plate and handed them to me along with a cup of hot coffee from the percolator that had poured many cups of coffee for the couple. While trying to control my drooling, I took a place at the round kitchen table across from Uncle Sid who also was working on a cookie and a cup of coffee.

From across the room Aunt Sadie looked our way and made a suggestion to Uncle Sid. "Sid, won't you tell him about your trip to Nashville with cousin Hubert to see that college basketball game," she said. "Sid really had a rude awakening when it came to buying food at one of those big coliseums."

I could almost hear a chuckle in Aunt Sadie's voice and I knew that this conversation was going to be one of interest.

Uncle Sid quit dunking his tea cake and swallowed what he had in his mouth.

He kicked back in his wooden kitchen chair and with wide eyes started telling me about his trip to see the Vols play basketball in the Nashville arena.

Uncle Sid has always loved basketball and the trip to Nashville was the first time he had ever set foot in a large sporting arena.

"I still can't believe how big that place is," he began our discussion talking about the Nashville facility. "You sure could store a lot of hay in that place." Uncle Sid always compares building sizes to barn sizes and their capacity to hold farm products. He also compares the cost of merchandise purchases with what he gets for the sale of livestock at the local stock barn. It is all based in the perspective of how you look at things I guess and my uncle's perspective is seen in farm prices.

"How was the game?" I asked.

"It was good, but we sat up a good ways from the floor and it wasn't as hardly as enjoyable as it is over here in our high school gym," he answered while stirring his coffee.

"I like to be close enough to hear the action as well as see it. Plus, I got tired of those fellows walking around selling their wares. Seems just as a play was about to be made, some guy would come by trying to sell a slice of pizza. And, that stuff cost half of a beef?" See what I mean?

"Yeah. When we got

there we bought our supper," he went on to explain. "We got two little old hamburgers with nothing on them. You had to go over to a place among all the people to put salad dressing on them. Hubert got a paper cup of fried taters and we each got two bottles of water. All of that cost us \$25.00! If I could sell my beef for what they get for a hamburger, each cow on this place would have to be kept at the bank because they would be worth a fortune."

I could tell Uncle Sid was not impressed with the food at his sporting event. By his comments, the cost especially got his attention.

"Later that night, I had a hankering for something sweet and I really like to eat those M&M peanuts at ball games," he said. "I found a concession stand that had a pretty good size

box of my favorite candy for \$4.00. That seemed sort of high, but the box looked pretty big and knowing where I was at, figured it just might be a pretty good deal. I bought it and took it back to my seat. Boy, was I surprised."

From the cook stove I heard Aunt Sadie giggle. That was my cue to ask, "What happened?"

He put his thumbs in each of his overall galuses and said, "There was only 45 of those little candies in that great big old box. That made each one of them cost around nine cents each," he exclaimed. "So, not to be out done, I got even."

"And how did you do that?" I asked.

While getting up to get another tea cake, he answered me saying, "I made them last the entire ball game. I timed each

one by the half and minutes of the game.

By sucking the chocolate off the peanut very slowly and wallowing the peanut around for a while, that box of candy lasted me to the last second shot. It pays to be a farmer these days if you are going to sale wholesale and buy retail.

Only a farmer has enough patience to make a chocolate covered peanut last 40 seconds of game time per nut, plus timeouts and halftime."

Yeah. Only a farmer like Uncle Sid would even attempt it.

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