

DID YOU KNOW.....

A look back at early area history as found in the archives of the Enderlin Historical Society and Museum by Susan Schlecht

*Death was very much an accepted part of everyday life in the early years, as is sometimes evident by the way it was reported as news. From the **May 12, 1904** edition of **The Ransom County Independent** published in Enderlin we find this story.*

JERRY MARTIN DEAD

This morning our people were inexpressibly shocked to learn that Mr. Jerry Martin had died during the night and was buried early this morning.

Deceased was taken sick with small pox three weeks ago, but it was not generally known that he was at all dangerously ill, the general opinion being that he had only such a light attack as has been experienced all over the state for the past two years.

When Dr. Gerrish was called he immediately quarantined the house and vaccinated all the inmates and every precaution has been taken to prevent the spread of the disease and the doctor thinks there will be no other cases, as there has been ample time since exposure for the other members of the family to have taken the disease and none of them have it.

The body was taken to the Catholic cemetery (at Sheldon) during the night and interred at once.

Sue's comments: How difficult that must have been for the family but the greater fear was an epidemic of the deadly black small pox in the community; therefore, the immediate burial. What many of you may not know is that Jerry Martin was the great-grandfather of current Enderlin area resident Mike Martin. For those of you who have the Enderlin, ND Diamond Jubilee Book 1893-1966, the family history of the Martin family on page 100 tells how Jerry contracted the disease by visiting a local character known as "Black George" Walker. Walker had been a former co-worker of Jerry Martin and had become ill and was quarantined in the city jail; however his disease had not been clearly diagnosed at that time. Jerry contracted the same disease and died; ironically, Walker recovered from the disease.
