

Salome, Our Pet Pig

My memoir honors Salome, a little pink piglet, introduced to my family on a cold, sunshiny spring day after my father's morning visit to the barn. Salome, who was named after the pig in the comic strip "Dogpatch" was the only pig born to a mother who did not want her, so we became her surrogate family.

My mother immediately took over the care of her by providing her a warm place behind a wood stove and prepared to feed her. Salome thrived in our household. She was as easily housebroken as our big white dog, Snowball. She had the run of the house. My brothers began to let her on the old green vinyl couch, when Mom wasn't looking. As she got older, she could do this herself. As time went on, it became obvious she had to go to the pig pen as she was becoming a very big pig! She did not like her new home and tried many times to come back and would get as far as the yard gate and would be betrayed by her old friend Snowball's barking.

One day she actually made it through the gate and crashed through our porch screen door and into the kitchen with the dog barking and nipping at her heels! She ran under our kitchen table that hadn't been cleared from lunch. She was so big she carried it on her back until she went through the doorway into another room where the table dropped to the floor with dishes noisily clattering. Mom was screaming directions, the dog was barking and the pig was squealing as we chased her. As this was happening, there was a stranger at the front door who had traveled down the 1/4 mile lane to our house for a reason we never learned! My brother answered the door as the noisy circus, comprised of a large squealing pig, a barking dog, my mom, yelling directions, and me, raced closely behind him. When the stranger heard the cacophony and saw us, all he said was "Never Mind" and promptly departed! We managed to

corral her and get her back to her pen. There were still other attempts after this, but the one that topped them all happened a year or so later. After coming home from church one warm spring morning, we found a guest lying on the old green vinyl couch. No, we didn't lock doors back then! There was Salome, at least 300 pounds by now, lying full length on that green couch and very pregnant! That sight is burned in my brain forever! Sadly we had to place her back in the pig pen where she gave birth to 13 piglets the next day!

Looking back I feel Salome was seeking the comfort of her early days and it actually makes me sad that it couldn't be! Salome sadly departed this world less than a year later from an unknown cause. I personally think she couldn't adapt to her world after life in the farm house with her friend, Snowball, and naps on the old green vinyl couch.