

## POST SCRIPT

### Chapter Four

When we were kids, there were lots of things we didn't have.

We didn't have television, or computers, or Atari.

We didn't have refrigerators, or freezers.

No microwaves, or washing machines or dryers.

I remember when my uncles in Iowa first got electricity, and the first thing they did was put it in the barn for helping with their chores.

Roads were two lanes wide, and a trip to New Hampton, Iowa took about ten hours. One time Dad couldn't get up the hill in Elgin, so he backed down and got a full tank of gas, which is what was needed because the engine got it's gas through gravity-feed.

Our telephones were party-lines. Our telephone number was Melrose Park 1778, and we lifted the receiver, and talked to the operator to call somebody.

We burned coal in the furnace. The furnace was a fire-pot in the center of the house, with the grating located on the floor, right between the front room and the kitchen. In winter, all four of us kids would stand on the grating to keep warm while we got dressed for school.

I remember one time when Lindberg landed his plane in one of the towns near us, when he was setting-up some kind of scheduled air line service, according to Ma, I think.

No space flights- no nuclear power- no calculators for doing homework problems.

Airplanes had propellers, and mostly two wings (bi-planes). Sometimes we saw planes with three wings (tri-planes) and sometimes we saw a gyro-copter, which would eventually evolve into the helicopter. And we could look out the back-door and see the airport beacon light in clear weather.

When we were growing up, we had a lot of things. The things we didn't have, we didn't know we didn't have, if those things hadn't been invented yet, and the things we knew we didn't have, like sometimes we didn't have turkey for Thanksgiving, or like when I got a wind-up train for Christmas instead of the electric train I really

wanted, those things are all part of growing up- and they all become part of a memory. But you really don't think of them as becoming part of a future memory, until you get to be old enough to be associated with the past. Like when your grandkids ask, "Did they have ice cream when you were a kid, Grandpa?" So, sometimes, when things go wrong - or when you don't have the things you always wanted- maybe that's the best time to sit down and write about when you were a kid. There's really so much, to think about and to tell, that it's probably getting boring. But it really puts things in perspective. And you start to realize how blessed you really are. I know I am. And again I say, "Thank you, Lord."

When I was growing up, when I was a freshman in high school, I ran across the smallest of poems which I've carried in my mind for my whole life, and I think it's good enough to share, even though I don't know the author. So I will:

"So do the best, as you can do it,  
And you'll never, ever rue it.  
After all, what is there to a  
decade from today."

It's a nice poem to think of, when you just made the biggest mistake of your life. It's also good for trying to anticipate a future date, one ten years hence, when you might look back to today.

When that poem comes to mind, I  
 sometimes divide my life into 10-year increments,  
 and think of the events in each of those  
 increments. Join me:

1984 ...  
 1974 ... *HAPPY BIRTHDAY!*  
 1964 ... *BOB!*  
 1954 ...  
 1944 ...  
 1934 ...  
 1924 ... *HAPPY BIRTHDAY!*  
                   *GRANDPA!*

And with that I take my leave for now.  
 Have a wonderful life.

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