

CHAPTER TWELVE

JULIUS EWALD KARL

SHORT STORIES

as told by Julius

Potato Wagon

Julius laughingly told that he was born under a potato wagon—which, of course, as his mother declared, was false. It turns out, however, that when she was working in the fields harvesting the potatoes, she did indeed let him sleep under the potato wagon.

Skinny Dipping

He loved to tell about going skinny-dipping in the pond not far from his house. His mom actually forbade him to go into the pond at all, but this one summer day he couldn't resist. She was calling him, but his sisters had hid his clothes. He had to come running home—stark naked—and take the well-deserved spanking for disobeying.

No Shoes in the House

He also liked to tell about how his sisters would put his shoes outside because they didn't want him to wear them in the house. (Years later, when he was married, he wore his shoes in the house as if to get revenge?)

Buggy Heater

One of his favorite childhood memories was warming up the bricks to put near their feet when they rode in the horse-drawn buggy on cold, cold days.

Potato Peels

During hard times, food was scarce. If they had a few potatoes to cook, they ate them one day then fried the peels to eat the next day. Sometimes they had watery potato soup.

Sweets

Cakes, candies, and cookies were scarce and were usually available only for special holidays like Christmas.

Real Candles for Christmas

An especially vivid memory was that of decorating an outdoor tree with real candles and lighting them on Christmas Eve. Julius was so fond of that tradition that he and Yvonne put real candles on their Christmas tree at home and lit them on Christmas Eve. They usually had several visitors for the evening and would light the candles then read the Christmas story from the Bible and sing carols. His children will long remember how he got out the fire extinguisher and set it nearby “just in case” one of the candles sparked a tree fire. Of course they had fireproof fake trees. Several Christmases the tree at Church also had real candles to light for Christmas Eve service and/or a special Christmas program. (See pictures below.)

IN CANADA

VW vs BUS

After moving to Hamilton, Ontario, Julius was driving a Volkswagen Beetle when he collided head-on with a Greyhound bus. By God's grace, all escaped with little or no injury. Apparently he had numerous speeding tickets over the years, but only one after he was married—when he and Yvonne were on their way from Bloomington, Indiana to Wilmore, Kentucky to visit Jim and Carol Lynne Usher. It was a Sunday morning and he was in a hurry so as not to be late for church service. Of course, they missed it as he had to follow the Sheriff to town hall to pay the ticket before he could continue on his way.

IN PORTLAND, OREGON

Learning Colloquialisms

He was out to lunch with a gal at Warner Pacific College and telling her stories about his life when she said to him, "You're pulling my leg!" Quickly he answered "No, I'm not!" and pushed his chair back to look under the table to see how close he was to her leg. When she stopped laughing, she interpreted for him.

Also at WPC, in one of his classes they were discussing "trust busting." He checked his dictionary then raised his hand to ask a question. When called upon he told the professor: "I looked up "trust" and I looked up "bust" and I can't see how they are at all related!

(Hint: "trust busting" is a term that referred to President Theodore Roosevelt's policy of prosecuting monopolies, or "trusts," that violated federal antitrust law.)

IN MICHIGAN

At a pastors' get-together, they were discussing "networking." This was at the beginning of common computer use and the "information highway." He had no clue what they were talking about: net + work, so he asked the moderator to explain what he meant by "networking." Not understanding that Julius' still had some translation problems, he thought his intention was to derail the discussion and responded sarcastically still not explaining it. Everyone laughed. Unfortunately, they were laughing AT Julius, not WITH him... as he didn't know what "networking" meant until he came home and told his wife Yvonne and she explained.



Julius lighting candles on family tree in Mich 1988



Caroline & Robert admiring the candles 1984



Pastor Julius & Family on stage New Life Community Church Michigan 1983. Note candles lit.



Grandchildren enjoying the tree they decorated at Grandma's in Las Vegas 2014