

This morning I awoke with tears in my eyes. They were not exactly tears of sadness, just remembering ~~days gone by~~. I had been dreaming I was observing my life in days gone by, somewhat in the way Emily had observed her family in Our Town, as a part of it but also detached from it - our house as it had been, our family when we had all been together. And when we had all been so much younger! I seemed to realize how fleeting time really is and how ^{the} little things remain in our memory throughout the passing years.

The thought came to me that, if there is to remain any memory of my life as it was being lived, it was up to me to put it down as memories occurred to me. It is not ^{so much} the big events that one remembers, but little fragments of things which occurred from day to day.

My earliest recollection is of a house in Aurora when I was five years old. My father was a bridge builder with the Burlington Railroad, and for several years he moved from town to town as he worked on building railroad bridges. It was in Plattsmouth, Nebraska, that he met and married my mother while he was working on the bridge across the Missouri River. They lived in rooming houses in several towns before they finally settled, more or less, in Galesburg, Illinois, as he worked on a large project - elevating the railroad tracks in the city of Galesburg. It was there that my brother Chet and I were both born. We moved to Aurora when I was three years old.

To get back to the house in Aurora; it was a large house (we lived in Aurora three years and rented a different house each year) with a big yard and a barn in the back. There was a neighbor who lived behind us, an old lady who took a liking to me and gave me a little old-fashioned dresser which had belonged to her daughter. Included with the dresser was a miniature china bowl and pitcher and chamber pot, all of which were used by everyone before the advent of indoor plumbing. I remember that our next door neighbor came over one day to show my mother her new bathing which she had just had made. This was in 1917 - the bathing suit was actually a

cover-up, I doubt if anyone went into the water in one. When my mother told my father when he returned home about Mrs. Kean's bathing suit, my father, the most upright man I have ever known, but also very fond of joking, expressed regret that he had not been there to see it. Of course I was all ears. Later on my mother was telling someone, I don't remember who, about Mrs. Kean's visit and I piped up "and Daddy wasn't home", much to my mother's chagrin.

This was during the war (World War I, although we didn't know it was World War I at the time). Alice Mulligan, a young lady who lived across the street, was active in the Red Cross as were all the young ladies at that time. They planned a benefit dance and asked for my help in handing out dance programs. I was dressed up in a white dress with the official Red Cross nurse's cap on my head and sat cross-legged on a table with the programs. I guess I was quite a hit.

Just one more incident remains in my memory, one which I probably shouldn't mention, because it doesn't reflect very well upon me, but I will anyway, just to keep the record straight. Remember, I was only five years old. My mother took me to a piano recital and I sat all evening and sniffed loudly. I have always had a problem with/^ahot, stuffy room. I must have been a great embarrassment to my mother for after we returned home she went out and sat on the porch alone and wouldn't speak to me. I was crushed.