



TIME ON MY HANDS

By-
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Hello boys, I truly hope you are feeling up to par. When I write my articles, I always have a little lump in my throat, in spite of my frivolity, for after all - my interests, thoughts and best wishes, are with the armed forces. I have four brothers, and all those four boys are out there, helping Uncle Sam with his house cleaning. I often think of little incidents and kiddish pranks that we, you, and all normal youngsters took part in,

back when the world was peaceful and we had no more to worry our minds than being sure that we got our full share of the ice cream that was being made in the old "turn-it 'till-you're-blue-in-the-face" freezer. So, just for pastime and childhood's sake, lets go back and reminisce - a little.

Do you remember? - The little girl who sat in front of you at school and you trapped her pigtails in your ink well - or the little girl who pretended she was using snuff by "dipping" cocoa - the little boys who felt so very, very mature puffing away on rabbit tobacco or an elder stick - the "stick horses" that's been many a little fellow's pride and joy? I remember a fancy one I had that I called "Bob." 'member the old see-saw over the triangle chicken coop that kept the ground nearby bruised and weedless - of writing your sweetheart's name in the palm of your hand, forgetting about it and your big brother or sister seeing it and teasing you - or peeping through the key hole and watching big sister court - you never did see anything of much interest, but that old key hole was a regular magnet and you lived in hope and expectation - the old tin tub, that served on Saturday night for clean Sunday rituals - or the preacher that said, near the end of his sermon "and now in conclusion" and then concluded for for nearly an hour - it seemed you'd never get home to that fried chicken and chocolate cake - the couple' old men in the "Amen Corner" who settled down for a nice nod and snore - or the nice old ladies who chewed on cloves to cover up snuff halitosis - of pulling off your shoes and tramping down the newly filled straw bed ticks - the old surrey with fringe around the top - you really felt in fine style riding in one of those - of all the toe nails that got busted each summer - that first cud of tobacco that almost saved you from being in the army - That squeaky pair of shoes that caused people to turn and notice - that goose egg you got on History for saying Booker T. Washington, was the father of his country - that "why were you ever born" stare your mother gave you for snickering when the preacher "asked the blessing" - Pulling up Mother's pan of tomato plants, then feeling uneasy and resetting them. Of course the "wilt" struck them and they died, but your conscience was clear - the first fish you caught with a bent pin - A whopper, two or three inches long! - of the first time Dad let you ride old Dobbin by yourself. Paul Revere didn't make a better showing - of the time you slapped little sister and then gave her your bean gun or prettiest glass marble to keep her from crying and telling Mom - I accumulated quite a collection of just such wealth - of breaking the old settin' hen by dunking her in a tub of water and holding her too long - of burying a pet cat or dog and making a real funeral of it with flowers, obituary and everything - many a man has been called to preach by remembering his genius and eloquence on just such occasions - of the dish of company preserves that wasn't there when company came -

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