

LARRY POTTERFIELD

Autobiography -Chapter 1

– LARRY’S SHORT STORIES #122 –



First grade, 1955/56 school year.

There were no ‘silver spoons’ in the Potterfield family, when I came into this world, back in the winter of 1949; and there was no electricity in that small farm house in rural Marion County, Missouri. In those days only the first born was delivered at the hospital, the babies after that were normally born at home. Through the years, we became a family of eight – six kids plus mom and dad; five boys and one girl.

Mt. Vernon School house only had one room and ten or twelve students – grades one through eight. It was about a mile to the west – down the hill, across the See’s Creek Bridge, and up the other hill. The school is gone, but Mt. Vernon Church has been there since 1867. School

consolidation closed the school after my third grade and I was transferred to Ely School, another one roomer – a little farther away and to the south; if the weather was

nice we often walked. After fifth grade they closed down Ely and a bus took me to White Franklin School – it had two rooms. There was a sandlot ball field there and enough students in grades 5-8 to field a rotational, co-ed baseball team. Our teacher umpired from third and the bases were made of old disc blades. The back fence wasn’t far and I hit 59 home runs during 7th grade – 2nd place.

We were renters, of course, and moved four times after I was born – but never more than a mile or two. Dad and mom bought a TV about 1957, but we had no running water or flush toilets until 1965.

Every other Saturday or so, the entire family would load up and drive to Palmyra or Monroe City. My favorite places were the hardware stores that had tools, ammo and fishing gear, a soda bar that served milkshakes for ten cents -- and the sale barn. The Palmyra fall festival in September, with the carnival rides on Main Street, will be forever in my mind.

Now, growing up poor in the country wasn’t all that bad; the fact is: I never grew up. I’m still the same country kid that went barefoot and shirtless all summer. Brother Jerry and I were just two years apart; we hunted, fished, explored, picked blackberries and mushrooms and learned to swim in the farm ponds. What a great start in life!

"...we had no running water or flush toilets until 1965."



Mom and dad bought this house in Ely, Missouri in 1965 – for just over \$8,000; it was the only house they ever owned and first time we had running water and a flush toilet.



Larry Potterfield
MidwayUSA
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Brother Marion is on the left, holding brother Jerry; sister Jo Ann in the middle and I'm on the right. (Summer of 1953)