

October 24, 1986 Friday

THE ABSENT MINDED PROFESSOR

An incident happened this morning (about noon, actually) which I thought ~~bears~~ ^{shows} out the idea of the "absent minded Professor."

Of course, the episode was not entirely Tracy's fault, but could be attributed to an failing of my own--not listening carefully.

I remember Tracy talking about Leo Merrill, who is now working for Eastmond-Christensen, ^{bringing down} ~~bringing down~~ a Chinese gentleman to meet him. The Chinese gentlemen heard that Leo knew Tracy and desired to meet him. This gentleman was apparently responsible for developing G.E.'s Saw-grade diamond, and had since been hired away by Christensen.

David came over last night and Tracy was talking about Leo bringing this gentleman down--but I didn't pay attention to when they were coming. (As a matter of fact it may not have been mentioned.) Whatever.

This morning I had been involved in getting football tickets for Allan, our Nephew, who is the manager of Ballet-West. David had mentioned that Allen was coming down, and I somehow got the impression (from not listening carefully, again) that it was today. By noon this impression was cleared up as I found the game was Saturday.

I have not been feeling to well, and so have put off cleaning and waxing the kitchen floor because it is the most wearing job (almost) that I have to do around the house. I had decided it could go no longer, however, and so had finished cleaning it, and had the kitchen chairs in the LR out of my way so I could mop and polish the floor. When I got through moping the floor I was tired so decided to lay down and browse through my Genealogy-course manual while it (the floor) dried.

I was not exactly the most glamorous sight at this stage, but I guess it could have been much worse. Anyway, I answered the door--in my stocking feet. There was Leo Merrill with two Chinese men, one young and one older. Grunk! Of course I realized immediately that Tracy, who was down ^{and completely} engrossed in his new music computer program, had forgotten either the time or the place where he was supposed to meet Leo. I invited them in--embarrassed, of course, because before they could sit down in the LR, I had to move the kitchen chairs back to the kitchen before they could sit down. Leo helped me. I then went down and gave Tracy the good news. He was more flustered than I had been. He had completely forgotten the time.

He hurried into his bedroom, shaved, dressed, and then took his visitors down to see his computer. They then left to go to dinner.

lunch

After they left, I removed the chairs back to the LR and polished the floor. I had better get back to it now and get the chairs out of the LR before they return.

Now it looks all right in case he should bring his visitors back to the house.

This reminds me of another time when he forgot he was having a visitor.

I don't remember the year, but it was before our mission Tracy was working on the shed, and he had a day off from school as it was a state holiday. Either the 4th or the 24th of July. I had no idea that he was supposed to have a visitor so when our phone rang, I was surprised to find that a visitor from India was waiting at the Royal Inn for Tracy. I told him to wait and I would call him when I could reach Tracy.

I finally located Tracy--and he was very distressed to find that not only had he forgotten that he had this visitor coming, but also he was distressed that he had to take time off to show him around. Tracy did a lot of "showing around" in the days when he was director of Research for the University. Most of the visitors who came to the Y to see what was going on in Tracy's laboratory. High pressure research really came from the Y--not from G.E.

Anyway, I finally convinced him that he could not very well leave this guy cooling his heels, and so guess what he did? He picked up this Indian Dr. in his old blue chevrolet truck, took him out to the only lumber place which was open on this holiday, and got him to help him load and unload plywood at the shed. Then he took him up to the Y and showed him around his lab and made diamonds for him.

The next working day he looked him up on his callendar and found that he was a big-wig from the National Science Institute or something like that.

Later, after visiting Indian himself, Tracy realized just how much he must have insulted this gentle-man. Instead of rolling the royal carpet for his visitor, he had had him unloading plywood at Tracy's shed.

I ought to have Tracy write the above anecdote, as he probably remembers the visitor's name.

Dr. B. S. Agarwala of Nat'l physical
Laboratory, India

We made India trip in fall 18 1975

He was
hurling an
bathroom
edition to
the shed.

closed gate
outside
a running
gate
he checked
gate & found it
was open on the
door. He
man didn't want
to help but
Tracy talked
him into it