

At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends
by Dwight D. Eisenhower

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“Physical work was done by almost every male. The capitalists of town were no less immune than the poorest. They spent hours each week in currying horses or greasing the axles of a buggy, in managing a base-burner and sifting unburned coal from its ashes. In fact, the last named task was the mark of the man who knew the value of money. ‘Waste not, want not’ and ‘A penny saved is a penny earned’ were the rule of life.

Because everyone had to put his shoulder to it, there was little social stratification because of a man’s job. Bank clerks and others who dealt with paper and pen, professional men, perhaps, may have enjoyed a certain distinction. If so, there were not many of them in a town like mine in the early part of the century. One of our barbers was the social lion of the town. Another man, a telegrapher, because he was in touch with distant places, enjoyed unique esteem. He was the radio and television of our day.”