

These of these stories form tape #1 have been transcribed and translated by Edward Quinter and reviewed by Mark Loudon. We are grateful for their efforts in providing these materials. Each of the ten stories starts in a Deitsch transcription on a new page and is followed by an English translation.

Clarence Rahn transcription
01 Deitsch Humor Stories

1

Der Tommy waar net ganz nein Yaahr alt, awwer der waar net dumm. Wie en gleener Bu uff die Bauerei er hot viel abgsehne un er iss mitschprunge oftmols wann der Gnecht dadde hie iss. Un ee Mariye iss der Gnecht in der Busch fer'n *Load* Schtangeholz hole. Der Tommy iss mit. Der Gnecht hot die zwee Esel eigschpannt. Sie henn's Schtangeholz gelaade un henn bissel zu schwer gelaade ghatt fer der Weg, vunwege es waar Friehyaahr, so an deel Bletz sinn die Redder aardlich gut neigsunke. Un der Gnecht hot en arriger Zann ghatt. Un wann's bissel henke iss bliwwe un die Esel henn net graad gewellt, er hot Schrie-e glosse. Er iss aa ganz rot warre im Gsicht. Wie sie heem kumme sinn mit der *Load* Holz, un der Tommy iss in die Kich kumme zu seinre Memm: "O, Memm," hot er gsaat, "Der Gnecht waar awwer bees iwwer die Esel uff em Heemweg, un du hettscht yuscht heere solle die wieschde Wadde as er gsaat hot. O, der hot wieschde Wadde gsaat." "Well, was waare die Wadde as er gsaat [hot]?" "O, Memm, sie waare zu wiescht. Ich will sie net saage." "Well," saagt sei Memm, "Waare es Wadde as der Parre saage deet in die Karrich sunndaags?" "Well," secht der Tommy, un er hot bissel gschutzt, "Der Parre deet sie, denkich, saage, awwer sie missde annerschder uffgsetzt sei."

1. Tommy was almost nine years old, but he wasn't dumb. Like many a young boy growing up on a farm, he witnessed many things. He was often found with the hired man when he came to work. One morning the hired man went into the woods to get a load of post wood. Tommy went along. The farmhand harnessed the 2 mules. They loaded the wood on the wagon, but it was a bit too heavy for the road, for it was springtime and the wheels sank well into the ground at several places. The hired man had a bad temper. When the wagon would get a little stuck and the mules didn't want to go on, he screamed at them. He got red in the face. When they finally made it home with the load of wood, and Tommy entered the kitchen where his mother was, he said: "Oh, Mom, the hired man was so mad at the mules on the way home. You should have heard the terrible words he used. Oh, he said some bad words." "Well, what were some of these words?" "Oh, Mom, they were too horrible. I don't want to say them." His mother said: "Well, were they words the pastor says in church on Sundays?" Tommy hesitated,

then responded, "I think the pastor would say them, but they'd have to be put together differently."

Der Mike Schlabbich iss mol ee Daag schpootyaahrs an die *Fair*. Un's waar die *Zeit* wu die *Aeroplanes* noch net viel in der Gang kumme waare. Es waar ebbes Neies in die Gegend. Awwer es waar in der Daat an die *Fair* mit me *Aeroplane*. Un der hot als ebber nuff epaar Minudde fer en *Ride* fer drei Daaler. Well, der Mike hot ausgemacht. Well, paar Kalls henn en neigeblaudert, "Geh nuff, nau du waarscht selewes net datt drowwe." "Nee," saagt er, "Ich drau net. Ich farrich mich." "Ach, die annre, sehnscht, die annre Leit gehne nuff." Well, er hot sich verblaudere losse un er iss do nuff. Un des *Aeroplane* iss abgange un wie sie uff owwe, owwich em Fairgrund waare aardlich hoch, dann uff eemol hot der Fuhrmann die *Levers* gezoge, un des iss graad, schnurgraad nunner bis schier gaar uff die Leit im Fairgrund. Noh hot er die *Levers* widder gezoge unn des iss widder aagange nuffgeh. Noh dreht der Fuhrmann sich so zerick un lacht ebissel un saagt er zum Mike, "Ich deet druff wedde, die Helft vun de Leit dadrunne waare uff die Meening des waert es End vun uns." Noh secht der Mike, "Ich weess net vun de Leit datt drunne, awwer ich weess as die Helft vun de Leit dohowwe selli Meening ghadde henn."

2. Mike Schlabbich went to the fair one day in the fall. It was at a time when airplanes weren't yet so common. It was something new to the area. But there was indeed one at this fair. People would pay 3 dollars for a ride of a couple minutes. Well, Mike thought about it. A couple guys tried to persuade him: "Go up, you were never in one before." Mike said, "No, I don't dare. I'm afraid." "Look at the others. Other people go up." Well, after a bit he let himself be talked into it and went for a ride. The airplane took off and once they were high above the fairgrounds, the pilot suddenly pulled the levers and they shot straight down until they almost reached the fairgoers below. The pilot again yanked at the levers suddenly and they ascended again. He turned about and with a grin said to Mike: "I bet half the people down there thought it was the end of us. Mike responded: "I don't know about the folks down there, but I'm certain that half the people up here thought so."

3

Der Eli Kratzer waar Glarick fer Yaahre am Greizwegschtor. Der Charlie Bolich hot der Schtor ge'eegent. Well, der Eli iss als gescheint arrig gut aakumme. Daer hot Geld gschpendt, am Wattshaus hot er's uffgsetzt fer die Buwe. Er hot en Gaul un Boggi ghatt. Er hot sei eegne Heement kaaft. Sei Fraa, sei Kinner henn immer gude Gleeder gewaare un der Charlie hot aafange [zu] denke, wu in die Welt grigt der Eli des Geld haer. Was er do verdient bei mir kaaft net alles as er hot. Well, der Charlie hot mol bissel die Aage uffghalde unn bissel nohgerechelt, unn bei Tschupps, er hot ausfunne as der Eli fer Yaahre hehlingerweis Geld an sich selwer gezoge hot. In annre Wadde er hot gschtohle aus die Geldbox. Alsemol ebbes verkaaft, un hot's net iewens in die Box, es Geld. Wie der Charlie schuur waar, hot er gsaagt zum Eli mol ee Mariye: "Nau, Eli, ich hass der zu saage was ich der saage muss. Awwer unni vunwege ich gleich dich, ich gleich dei Fraa. Ich gleich dei Familie, un die Leit was do reikumme in der Schtor, die gleiche dich all. Awwer [ich] saag der, Eli, du bischt net ehrlich. Ich kann dir net draue un du hoscht schunnt eweil mei Geld hehlingerweis an dich selwer gezoge vun meim Geld un ich muss dich abschicke. Ich kann dich yuscht net do meh hawwe fer'n Glarick in mei Schtor un des duht mer Weh." Der Charlie secht der Eli, "S'iss waahr, ich hab alsemol lange Finger ghatt un ich hab in die Box gereecht alsemol, awwer [ich] saag der, Charlie, guck's mol denne Weg aa. Ich hab nau so baut was ich gaern hett im Lewe. Ich hab en Heement, hab en Gaul un Boggi, un es iss nix meh as ich gaern hett. Nau, wann du mich fattschickscht un dingscht en annrer Mann in meim Blatz, daer muss widder ganz vanne aafange.

3. Eli Kratzer was a clerk at the crossroad store for years. Charlie Bolich was the owner. Well, it seemed Eli did very well for himself. He spent his money generously. He would buy a round for his buddies at the tavern. He had a horse and buggy. He owned his own home. His wife and children always wore good clothes. Charlie began to think, where in the world does Eli get his money for these things. What he earns working for me wouldn't pay for all he has. Well, Charlie started keeping an eye out and did a little figuring, and by Jove, he found Eli had been secretly keeping money for himself. In other words, he was stealing from the till. Sometimes he'd sell something and not put anything at all into the register. When Charlie was sure about it, he said to Eli one morning: "Now Eli, I hate to say what I have to tell you. I like you. I like your wife, your family. And the folks who come into the store they all like you. But I have to say, you're not honest. I can't trust you. For some time now you've been secretly keeping some of my money for

yourself, so I have to fire you. I can't keep you as clerk in my store any longer. It hurts to say that." Eli responded: "It's true, sometimes I've had long fingers and skimmed some money on occasion. But Charlie, why not look at it this way. I now have just about everything I would want in life. I have a home, a horse and buggy. There's nothing more I desire. If you send me away and hire someone else in my place, then that fellow will have to start all this from scratch."

4

Die Mame Schneider waar en Gemeensglied an die glee weiss Karrich uffem Hiwwel owwichem Greizweg. Un sie hot aa alliebber wisse losse ass sie en Gemeensglied iss. Sie hot's zwaar immer ebbes letz. Sie waar immer grageelich. Scheint's sie waar immer bees iwwer ebber. Ebbes hot sie net gebasst. Mol ee Daag iss sie am Parre sei Haus kumme. Un sie waar iwwer en Schtunn datt un sie hot losgezogge un gemacht iwwer die Karricheleit. Der Vorsinger hot immer die letze Schticker genumme un der Choir waar *flat* die Helft Zeit. Eemol waar die Karrich zu kalt un noh zu heess. Noh waar's zu dreckich in die Karrich, alles waar schtaawich. Well, iwwer emol, endlich iss sie fatt. Awwer eb sie zu die Dier nausgange iss, hot sie sich gedreht, en bissel geschmunzelt, "Parre," secht sie, "Es dutt mer immer gut wann ich kumm un schwetz mit der. Demarye wie ich do kumme bin, hawwich Koppweh ghatt. Awwer do iwwer Blaudere, hawwich mei Koppweh verlore." Der Parre hot sie graad do in die Aage nei aageguckt, secht er, "Mame, sell Koppweh iss net verlore. Ich hab's."

4. Mame Schneider was a member of the congregation at the little white church on the hill above the crossroad. And she made sure everyone knew she was. She acted as if there was constantly something wrong. She was always troublesome. It seemed she was always upset about someone. Nothing ever quite suited her. One day she went to the pastor's house. She was there over an hour and let loose about all the others in church. The song leader always chose the wrong songs and the choir sang flat half the time. The church was either too cold or too hot to her liking. Then the church was too dirty, dust everywhere. Well, after a long while, she finally finished with her grumbling. Before she quite made it out the door, she turned, smiled a little and said: "Pastor, it always does me good when I can come and talk with you. This morning when I came over, I had a headache. But while we were talking, my headache went away." The pastor looked her straight in the eyes and said: "Mame, your headache didn't disappear, I have it now."

5. Die Kinner saage alsemol ebbes umschuldich as aardlich dief schneidt. Der Parre waar mol ee Daag uff Bsuch kumme. Un em gleene Billy sei Memm, die waar so freindlich un schmeechlich, un geblaudert un gschmunzelt un hot so schee geschwetzt. Un wie der Parre fatt iss, dann hot der Billy gsaagt zu seinre Memm, "Memm", saagt er, "Ich wott du deetscht immer schwetze zu mer wie du duhscht wann der Parre do iss."

5. Children sometimes say things innocently and cut deeply. The pastor happened to be out visiting one day. Little Billy's mother was so friendly and flattering. She chatted away and grinned and talked so enthusiastically. When the pastor left, Billy said to his mother: "Mom, I wish you would always talk to me that way, like you do when the pastor is here."

6. Der Jeremiah waar en leidlicher, yunger Tschaep, awwer die Yaahre sinn vergange un er hot sich nix bekimmert um die Meed. Er waar en *Baetschler*. Un nadierlich, er iss viel gezarrt warre. Sie henn als ihn gschtumbiert, weil er net sich en Meedel grigt, unn heiert. “Well,” secht er, “S’iss denner Weg. Ich wott die Meed lieber uff mei Gnie hawwe as wie uff die Hend.”

6. Jeremiah was a pleasant young chap. The years passed by and he showed little interest in the fairer sex. He was a bachelor. And naturally he was teased a lot. People heckled him about not getting himself a woman and marrying. His response: “Well, it’s like this. I prefer having a girl on my knee instead of on my hands.”

7. Der alt Joel waar yuscht ebatt dreiunsechsig Yaahr alt, awwer er waar in arrig gut *Shape* fer sei Elt. Er hot an die Miehlgschafft. Un wann ebber yingers alsemol gegrext hot, hot der Joel gsaagt, "Ach, heer, er macht mich grank. Er sei noch viel yinger wie ich. Ich bin nau schunn mehner wie sechsig Yaahr alt. Oh, un ich bin so gut as ich sei Lewes waar." Awwer mol ee Mariye iss er nooch die Arrewet kumme un er hot schrecklich ausgesehne. Er hot geguckt as wann er darrich en Gnarreloch gschluppt waer. Noh henn sie gsaat zum Joel, "Was der Schinner hot's gewwe mit dir?" "Well," secht er, "Ich hab ebbes gelannt die letscht Nacht. S'iss allrecht zu saage, du bischt so gut as [du] sei Lewes waarscht, awwer browier's net zu *prov-e*."

7. Old Joel was just about sixty-three years old, but he was in really good shape for his age. He worked at the mill. When one of the younger workers would complain about something, Joel would be heard saying: "Ah, he makes me sick. He's so much younger than I am. I'm over sixty and feel just as good as ever." One morning when he got to work, he looked terrible. He appeared as if he had been pulled through a knothole. Joel's co-workers asked him: "What the dickens happened to you?" "Well," Joel said, "I learned something last night. It's alright to say you are just as fit as ever, but just don't try to prove it."

8. Es waar emol notwennich fer die glee weiss Karrich ebissel uff-fixe *inside*. Un des hot gemeent, as die Gemee en annrer Blatz suche misst fer Karrich halde deweil es, des Ding am Geh waar. Well, der Sam Fenstermacher daer hot's Wattshaus ghadde, un er hot so en grossi Schtubb am Wattshaus ghatt wu sie als Danse ghadde henn. "Well", saagt er, "Ehr kennt Karrich halde im Wattshaus. S'iss gross genunk." Awwer die Gemeensglieder, es Karricheraad, die hot s'erscht gaar nix heere welle. Karrich halde im Wattshaus, des waert yo aus der Weis. Awwer es waar ken annrer Blatz as sinn gross genunk. Un der Watt hot gsaat, "Nau, des iss net so arrig wie des laut zu eich Leit. Samschdaag- oweds wann ich die Wattschaft zumach, dann duhnich alles zudecke as zu die Wattschaft Business gheert. Un sundaagmaryets kenne mir Karrich hawwe un des hinnert nix." Well, iwweremol sie henn ihn uffgnumme un er waar so gut as sei Watt. Samschdaagoweds wie er zugemacht hot, hot er alles eweg un was er net weg duh hot kenne, hot er zugedeckt. Ee Ding hot er vergesse, der Bobbegoi im Kaschde drowwe im Eck. Well, desundaagmaryets hot der Parre ausgemacht er geht wennich zeitlich hie, sehne as alles in Adder iss. Un wie der Parre reikumme iss, dann hot der alt Bobbegoi mol geguckt un bissel geblinselt, saagt er, "Huh! Neier Bartender." Noh iwwerdem kummt die Mabel, die Vorsinger, un sie hot gedenkt aa sie will zeitlich kumme un alles in *Shape* griege. Un wie sie reilaaft, dann hot der alt Bobbegoi widder geguckt un geblinselt, "Huh," saagt er, "Neie Maad." Awwer noh sinn die Gemeensglieder aafange beikumme eens nooch em annrer. Der alt Bobbegoi hot widder geblinselt, saagt der, "Huh, awwer die seem alde *Customers!*"

8. It was time for the little white church to do some renovation inside. That meant that the congregation had to find another place for services temporarily. Well, Sam Fenstermacher ran the local inn. In it was a large room where they would hold dances. Sam said: "You can hold church here in the inn. It's large enough." But the other parishioners and the church council, they wanted to hear nothing of it at first. Holding church at the inn, that's simply out of the question. But there was no other place large enough. The innkeeper told them: "Listen, it's not as terrible as it sounds. Saturday night when I close, I'll cover up everything that is part of the inn business. We can have church Sunday morning and that won't interrupt a thing." Soon enough they took him up on his offer and he was true to his word. Saturday night as he closed, he put everything away and whatever he couldn't put away, he covered up. But he forgot to cover one thing, the parrot in the cage in the corner. Well, Sunday morning the pastor decided

to show up a bit early to ensure everything was in order. When he entered, the old parrot looked and winked: “Hey, new bartender.” Next came Mabel, the lead singer, who also wanted to see that all things were ready. When she entered, the old parrot looked and winked and called: “Hey, new barmaid”. By now the churchgoers started to appear one after another. The old parrot winked again and said: “But the same old customers.”

9. Wie's aerscht in die *Faeschen* kumme iss, as die Leit net so fett sei sedde unn sedde Gwicht verliere, hot en Dokder vun die Schtadt en gleni Bauerei kaaft neegscht am Greizweg un als summers hot er Leit hiegrigt. In vier Woche hot er *geguaranteed* wann sie esse deede was er saage deet un *exercis-e* wie er aa saage deet, dann deede sie fer schurr Gwicht verliere. Well, mol ee Owed iss eener in der Greizwegschtor kumme vun die Schtadt, saagt der: "Ich bin do rauskumme fer Zeit schpende an daere Bauerei wu sie die fedde Leit dinn mache wedde, un gsunder. "Nau," secht er, "Do im Land uff so en Bauerei muss ich Iwwerhosse hawwe, sell weess ich, un ich hab kenni. Nau, ich deet gaern en paar Iwwerhosse kaafe." "Well," saagt der Schtorkieper, "Do sinn die Iwwerhose. Was *Size* witt de hawwe un was fer Aart? "Well," seecht er, "Nau denk ich yuscht draa. Wann ich do naus will fer Gwicht verliere un dinner warre, dann deedich ven elleicht Iwwerhosse kaafe as paar *Size-e* glenner sinn, as mich basse deede alleweil". Der Schtorkieper hot en mol aageguckt, secht er, "He," secht er, "Du, wann [de] kaafscht die Iwwerhosse, un wann du so schtarrick eigehscht as die Iwwerhose eigehn, dann duscht du allrecht."

9. When it first came into fashion for people to not be fat and to lose weight, a doctor from the city bought a small farm near the crossroad. People came there in summer. The doctor guaranteed people would lose weight in four weeks if they followed his diet plan and exercised according to his regimen. Well, one evening a person from the city came into the crossroad store. "I came out here to spend time on the farm, where overweight folk come to get thin and healthier. Out here in the country on such a farm, I know I have to wear overalls. Since I don't own any, I'd like to buy some." The storekeeper responded: "Right here they are. What size would you need, and what style?" The new customer: "I need to think about it. If I go out there to lose weight and get thinner, maybe I should get something to fit a couple sizes smaller." The storekeeper looked at him and said: "Hey, if you buy the overalls, and you shrink as fast as the overalls do, you'll be just fine."

10. Des sinn schun viel Bicher gedruckt warre, un viel hochgelannde Dokder henn *Ideas* wie der Mensch lenger lewe kann. Well, datt waar der Eli Holwig, daer hot [en] Halt grigt vun somme Buch, wie mer lenger lewe kann. Un uffkors die Nachbere henn gewisst as er des Buch grigt hot un as er's leest. Un noh mol ee Owed am Greizwegschor henn sie gsaagt zu'm, "Nau, Eli, du hoscht des Buch un du leescht drin wie muss mer nau aageh fer lenger lewe." "Well," saagt der Eli, "S'iss denner Weg. Der mehner as ich lees in dem Buch, de mehner iss ee Ding glaar. Mer kann lenger lewe, wammer alles uffgebt as mer lewe will defor."

10. There are certainly numerous books published, many written by well-educated doctors touting how to attain longer life. Well, there was this Eli Holwig who got a hold of a book like this on how to live longer. And of course, all the neighbors knew he got it and was reading it. One evening at the crossroad store someone said to him: "Say, Eli, you have that book, and in it tells what a person must do to live longer." "Well," Eli said "It's this way. The more I read in that book, the more one particular thing becomes clear. A person can surely live longer if one is willing to give up all those things one lives for."

11. Mol ee Schpootyaahr iss en yung Weibsmensch kumme fer Schulhalde am Greizweg. Die waar schee un die hot sich haendle kenne unnich die Leit. Sie waar freindlich un sie hot ihre Bisness gewisst. Sie hot schwetze kenne. Sie hot *geboard* beim Charlie Bolich. Un der Charlie hot die Buwe mol verzaehlt am Wattshaus ee Owed wie sie schwetze kennt. “Oh,” secht der Charlie, “Buwe, ehr, ich hab sei Lewes ken Weibsmensch aagedroffe as schwetze kann wie des yung Weibsmensch kann. Die hockt datt oweds un wei, die kann en ganzi Schtunn schwetze schier uff schier eensicher *Subject*.” Dann hot so en Alder datt am *Bar* gschtanne. Er waar bissel gedrunke. “Ah”, secht er, “Mei Aldi kann besser duh wie sell. Die kann en ganzer Owed schwetze un braucht ken *Subject*.”

11. One autumn a young lady arrived to teach school at the crossroad. She was pretty and could handle herself amongst the locals. She was friendly and knew her business. And oh my, could she talk. She was a boarder at Charlie Bolich’s. Charlie told the old gang at the inn one evening how she could talk. “Boys, I’ve never met a woman in my whole life who can talk like this young woman can. She sits there in the evenings and can talk an hour straight on just about any subject.” There happened to be an old-timer standing at the bar. He was a bit inebriated. “Oh, my wife can do better than that. She can talk the whole evening and doesn’t need a subject at all.”