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Don't Touch That Dial!

Carl Stanislaus

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Don't Touch that Dial

-By Carl Stanislaus

Vicinity

Sounds from another time, another place,
Voices from our youth and wonder,
Wireless messages fed through space:
Old radio programs in ceaseless number.
Jack Benny, Bob Hope, Fred Allen; others,
Fibber McGee's closet, before and after,
Edgar Bergen and Charlie, closer than brothers,
Tempered our love and lives with laughter.
Young Widder Brown, Ma Perkins sponsored by soap,
Young Doctor Malone and Stella Dallas made us cry.
THE GUIDING LIGHT, back then, gave us hope;
LIFE CAN BE BEAUTIFUL, and was, as time went by!
Don McNeill's Breakfast Club and Major Bowes' Original Amateur Hour, and its merciless gong;
"Around she goes and where she stops nobody knows."
Even **THE ED SULLIVAN SHOW** couldn't go wrong!
"What evil lurks in the hearts of men?"
Ask The Whistler, but "Only The Shadow knows!"
The Lone Ranger and Jack Armstrong you knew would win,
While Captain Midnight always vanquished his foes.
"I have a lady in the balcony, Doctor!" "Good

for you, Mr. Anthony" was the response of Dr. I. Q.
It Pays To Be Ignorant. Oh, if it really would,
But the Quiz Kids were too smart, too.
Amos and Andy were black-faced comedians;
Lum and Abner in their 'Jot 'em Down Store'—
Arthur Godfrey dared to cross the medium,
And the Grand Old Opry had talent galore.
If you drank Ovaltine and used Pepsodent,
Ate your Wheaties and used the sponsor's things,
You would "wonder where the yellow went"
And save box tops for decoder rings.
Don Dumphy sportscasting a

Louis heavyweight fight, Bill Stern and Red Grange and "The Galloping Ghost,"
H. V. Kaltenborn's voice heard every night;
Of all the newscasters, we miss Morrow the most.
On our crystal radio or Atwater-Kent, Philco or Crosley or RCA Victor,
On Sunday night we heard "As the twig is bent,"
And Rinso and Oxydol got it cleaner quicker!
The sound of the groaning, squeaking door,
Ushered you into the Inner Sanctum.
"Speedy" Riggs and Lucky Strike had gone to war,
"Sold American," so we gladly thank them.
Gone are **YOUR HIT PARADE** with Snooky Lansen
And all the old songs once in style.
But we'll remember Sinatra as young and handsome
And the Golden Age of Radio that made us smile.

(Serving as "memory joggers" for this poem were John Danning's **TUNE IN YESTERDAY** (Prentice Hall, 1976), Frank Buxton and Bill Owen's **THE BIG BROADCAST** (Viking Press, 1972), and Fred J. MacDonald's **DON'T TOUCH THAT DIAL** (Nelson-Hall, 1979.) *

Design by Marc Williams

