

## THE FAMILY

They had 12 children  
Two had died  
Ten survived  
But she, the last one, was nearly the death of her mom.

So, with regret, they stopped.  
They wanted more,  
Many more,  
But mom was a ticking bomb,  
So said the doc,  
Unless her child-bearing days were over.

They lived down a gravel road  
Surrounded by Amish  
100 families or so.  
Had one son in college  
A girl off in school, too.  
Engineers one day, they hoped.  
A 20-year-old still at home  
Lots of teens and little ones  
And the newborn, sweet Abigail Ruth, of course.

They milked the cows  
Tended the chickens and horses  
Home schooled, all  
Save a few infrequent classes  
Taken in the local Amish school.

They sang in the Primitive Baptist church near their home.  
But they weren't primitive ... or Baptist  
Just a place, shared by many, Moved there, Near the old cemetery, In 1869.  
No water or light - one door for the men, one for the women  
Not uncommon in those days, they explained.

They almost apologized when they invited us out  
Oh, no AC - And an outhouse  
But big windows - And fans  
And the boys would bring the carriage around - We could see the farm  
And ... And ...  
Maybe just some coffee and dessert - Afterwards ... you know - After singing  
And ... Would you come?

We were thrilled – no, honored.  
There are certain realities worth knowing – this was one.