

A Walk Through The Past

My Life Story



Frederick Laird

THE ADVENTURE OF LIFE

I haven't a dime to pay my way
As I walk down the pathways of life.
But I whistle and sing as I walk along
Free from all care and strife.

For life is a great adventure to me
That can't be enjoyed sitting still.
There are rivers to cross and roads to explore
And that lake at the top of the hill.

So follow the call of the open road
Or hike to the distant hills.
Fly to the moon, or sail the high seas
Whatever provides the right thrills.

Take the life that's been given to you
Face it with a song and a smile.
Reach out for the many joys to be had
And make the adventure worth while.

PROLOGUE

A life history is about people, places, and events. In writing this story of my life I have tried to weave all of these factors into the fabric. Also important, but more difficult to express are the feelings and emotions of the times. My memory has been faulty in trying to recall these feelings and to report them with any accuracy. Many of my memories were happy ones, some were sad or unhappy. The unhappy ones were extremely painful to put in writing, but the writing has helped put them in a different perspective.

This history was written primarily for my children and their children; others who are close to the family may also find it interesting. But as it was written for my children perhaps these memories as I have recalled them will give them a better picture of me as I was and as I see myself now, and will help them to understand themselves better. I hope also that they will recognize some of the stages I went through in transition from young child to rebellious youth to a conforming, but independent adult.

Fred Laird
October, 1988

GRANDPARENTS

This life history begins with a brief look at my grandparents. I have little recollection of my maternal grandparents and none whatsoever of the paternal side. My Dad's parents, Andrew and Williamina (Beattie) Laird, both died at a fairly young age, long before I was born. Mother's parents were Walter and Anna (Green) Gill. For a short time, in late 1932, when my mother had taken us to Scotland to live, we lived with them in Dundee. My only memories are of a cross, domineering grandmother who was not happy to have children around, and a grandfather who often came home with the smell of liquor on his breath, much to the chagrin of Grandmother. The only factual information I have is that Grandfather was a commercial artist whose work appeared on many calendars and posters.

PARENTS

My father, James Laird, was one of a set of twins; his twin brother, Robert, was killed in World War I. He also had three other brothers and at least one sister. Dad was born January 30, 1889 in Dundee, Scotland and apparently was a fun loving, mischievous type who, together with his twin, was constantly getting into trouble from some prank or other. I can see where I got my mischievous nature from. Dad also served in World War I, I have seen pictures of him in uniform of that era; in what capacity he served I have no knowledge. His education was limited, perhaps equivalent to our elementary school. One of the jobs he worked at as a young man was as a proofreader for a newspaper; later in life, in the United States, his jobs were unskilled in nature, (baker's helper, foundry worker).

Dad was quite small in stature, just under five feet tall, and was very conscious of it. I believe this self-consciousness was a part of the cause of disagreements with neighbors and contributed to our moving frequently, every year or two. Dad liked to read, and was very religious, consequently he was quite familiar with the Bible. He also liked to play games, cards and such, but hated to lose. Sports was another of Dad's interests; at one time he was the trainer for a local soccer team, and during the last years of his life became a staunch baseball fan. Dad was almost 86 when he died from emphysema on January 2, 1975.

Mother, Beatrice Maude (Gill) Laird, was born March 29, 1885 of English parents in Castlereagh, County Down, Ireland. She was the eldest of three girls and had four brothers. When she was very young her family moved to Bradford, England and lived there for a number of years before moving to Dundee. It was while living in Dundee that she met Dad, whom she married on October 2, 1916. According to my sister Lilian, Mom and Dad met at a church in Dundee where she was the organist and he sang in the choir. Mother was an accomplished pianist at an early age and at one time had hoped to teach piano. Her family didn't approve of this and, as eldest daughter, felt her place was at home with the housework. I believe she married to escape this drudgery as much as for any other reason.

I recall Mother, when I was a young child, as being high strung and tending toward the hysterical when trying to cope with the antics of three active children. Later in life, as we children matured, this high strung nature was not evident. I frequently had the impression that Mother led a life of quiet frustration. It was a long life; Mother passed away on January 13, 1984, two and one-half months before her 99th birthday.

MY PARENTS



About 1916



About 1916



About 1955



1972, 56th Anniversary

BIRTH AND EARLY YEARS

My parents were living in Ottawa, Canada at the time of my birth, January 16, 1923, the second of three children. My brother John (Jack to the family only), was then almost two; Lilian was born two and one-half years later. At the time my parents had a close friend in Ottawa whose name was Frederick James, hence my name. We moved to Massachusetts when I was a few months old and it was in the Worcester area that I was raised.

From recollections of things Mother said, I was a chubby baby and slept most of the time. I'm sure I made up for my quietude after I started walking as I don't remember ever being quiet as a young child. I was one of those hard-headed, boisterous individuals who was constantly into things. A good example of my hard-headedness is the time I bumped my head on the oven door (made of cast iron) and broke one of the hinges.

FIRST MEMORY

When I was about two and one-half years old we lived on a dairy farm owned by an elderly German couple; my parents rented an apartment that was in one wing of the farmhouse. It was in Leicester, a suburb of Worcester, and by chance is only a few miles from where Jim now makes his home. One incident which stands out is the time I got "lost." I wandered off with the farmer's daughter, or granddaughter, I can't remember which; my parents were frantic and had to contact the police and initiate a search. We were located several hours later a few miles from home, no worse for wear. This was the first of a number of such incidents in my life; I seem to have been bitten at an early age with wanderlust, an affliction from which I still suffer.

Neither Mother or Dad were what I would call disciplinarians; they seemed to be overwhelmed by it all, especially by me and my antics. I had a stubborn streak a mile wide; if there was something I wanted to do I did it, regardless of the consequences. Perhaps this uncertain discipline was the reason why I was such a strict disciplinarian later as a parent and teacher.

For a number of years church was a now and then affair for us. Dad was the most religious of my parents and attended religious services regularly. As with other aspects of his life he couldn't find a religious affiliation to remain with for any length of time until I was about ten or eleven when we became members of Pleasant Street Baptist Church in Worcester. This was the only serious church attendance I recall and lasted perhaps four to five years.

We had little money for frills so most of our toys were the small, inexpensive type; I recall a sand box, shovels, and such. We also had an assortment of toy cars and scraped out roads in the hard-packed dirt that was our yard. I also recall learning at an early age how to climb trees and giving Mother a fright by scrambling out to the furthest reaches. I don't remember being afraid of anything in those early years; consequently, I would try things that in later years would have frightened me.



LIFE IN THE TWENTIES

The first decade of my life, the Twenties, was called the Jazz Age. It was the time of prohibition and speakeasies, where liquor was illegal but obtainable if one had the price. Al Capone controlled the rackets in Chicago; women wore the latest fashions from Paris and were called "Flappers." Broadway musicals were flourishing, many of them by Jerome Kern, most notably "Show Boat." Lindbergh flew solo across the Atlantic; Babe Ruth hit 60 home runs; Model T Fords sold for \$290.

Living on the East coast, housing was much different from what we are familiar with in the West. Most people didn't own their own homes but usually rented an apartment (called a tenement) in a two or three story wooden frame structure. If ever there were fire traps they existed in the tenement districts of the East. Most of them didn't have adequate plumbing, usually a toilet but seldom a bath tub and almost never a shower. When bath time came on Saturday night we took turns in a metal tub in the kitchen; the water was usually heated in a boiler on top of the kitchen stove. Wood or coal were generally used for fuel; we converted to fuel oil in the thirties and at the same time had a coil installed to heat water.

Most homes had ice boxes, not refrigerators, this meant that someone had to remember to dump the ice pan so it wouldn't overflow and ruin the ceiling of the apartment downstairs. We did most of our shopping at the neighborhood grocer's, usually a family owned market about the size of a two car garage. Because of their limited size these markets didn't offer a large selection of goods, and the prices were high.

The ice man drove his horse drawn cart up the hill and stopped when he saw a card in a window; this card showed how much ice to deliver. I made a game of following the wagon and hopping on the back step, either for a free ride or to snatch a piece of ice. Milk was delivered to the door and if it stayed outdoors too long on a winter morning would freeze solid.

This was the time of silent movies, until "The Jazz Singer" made its appearance late in the decade. Radio was also in its infancy, nonetheless many homes had at least one radio. Only the more affluent had cars even though the price of a Model T was relatively low; if we needed to go from one part of town to another we either walked or took a streetcar.

The decade ended with one of the greatest financial disasters in history, the stock market collapse of 1929. This led to a much gloomier decade in the thirties, the great depression.



FAMILY PORTRAIT, June, 1926

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DAYS

School started for me in 1928, attending kindergarten at Dix Street School in Worcester. We were living at the time in a tenement on Home Street. I don't recall any specific incidents of those first years; I know I liked school and was an eager learner; at last I was going to learn to read, and learn I did. Reading, for as long as I can remember, has been one of my favorite pastimes. My only memory of Dix Street was having to accompany Lilian to kindergarten when she first started and staying with her until I was certain she would stay, otherwise she would skip out and go back home. On several occasions she did return home as soon as I left her. Lilian tells me she was bored, they didn't have any books for her to read.

I believe the next school I attended was Chandler Street School; the only recollection I have of this school is the time I broke one of Mother's antique goblets that I had taken to class to use in an art project. Next was Ward Street School; I was in the fourth grade there in 1932 when Mom took us children to Scotland to live. Apparently this was a trial separation for Mom and Dad. I remember a big sendoff by my teacher and her copying for me the poem "To A Daffodil" by William Wordsworth. It seems I was already into poetry at that age.

SCOTLAND

We sailed from New York in October of 1932 and arrived in Glasgow a week or so later. I have no recollection of the voyage, except apparently I was a good sailor, I didn't get seasick. From Glasgow we took a train to Dundee, which is on the East coast. For the first few months we lived with Grandma and Grandpa Gill in an apartment on Hawkhill, then moved to a furnished room a short distance away. While there I was enrolled at the Hawkhill Grammar School, which I attended for the duration of my stay in Scotland. School was much stricter than in Massachusetts and on several occasions I was sent by my teacher, Miss Bruce, to the Headmaster's office for disciplinary action; usually this was a switch across the palm of the hand but once or twice it was across the seat of my pants. It seems that, as a Yank, I was continually expected to prove to the young Scots that we Yanks were superior fighters; I certainly didn't fall into this category. This fighting, among other things, led to my office referrals.

Miss Bruce was an elderly lady at the time, or so it seemed to me, and had been my Uncle Harry's teacher at one time. Uncle Harry informed me that he and his classmates had a pet name for her, "Brucie the Horsekiller." Knowing this was too much of a temptation for me to resist so one afternoon after school when I observed Miss Bruce leaving school for the day I stood in the doorway of my apartment building and screeched at the top of my lungs, "BRUCIE THE HORSEKILLER." With my distinctive American accent she must have recognized my voice but never said a word, then or later. I believe from that time on I got along better in school. The curriculum, as I recall, was very heavy into the history of Scotland; I remember reading about Robert Bruce and William Wallace, two Scottish heroes from an earlier era.

While in Dundee I became acquainted with a number of relatives from both sides of the family. We visited two of Dad's brothers and a sister; one cousin on Dad's side, Rita, was about my age. One set of relatives we got to know well was Mother's sister, Lillian, and her two children, Raymond and Vera, who were in their late 'teens and early twenties at the time. Aunt Lillian died of tuberculosis while we were in Scotland. Raymond now lives in Australia. Vera lived for many years in Southern California where we became good friends; following the death of her husband she moved to Washington state to be near her eldest son.

As in Worcester we soon found our way around Dundee. Lilian had a tricycle with a step on the rear axle; the two of us explored Dundee on this tricycle, taking turns at the peddling. We lived in Dundee for about a year and then returned to Worcester where Mother and Dad resumed their marriage. The return voyage provided me with a few memories; as usual I was into everything, including a ship-board concert in which I sang "Springtime in the Rockies."



Me

Lilian

On board ship, 1932

LIFE IN THE THIRTIES

Meanwhile, life in the United States had undergone a great many changes; we had entered the Great Depression. Franklin Delano Roosevelt was president and had instituted a "New Deal" to pull us out of the doldrums. There were the National Recovery Administration (NRA), and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) among other government agencies. Many people were on welfare and depended on government handouts to keep body and soul together. Jobs were scarce and were quickly grabbed, even menial ones, by highly educated persons. It was the time of gangsters and gangbusters: John Dillinger, "Pretty Boy" Floyd, and "Ma" Barker and, on the other side of the fence, Elliott Ness. Lindbergh's baby was kidnapped, followed by the capture, subsequent conviction and execution of Bruno Richard Hauptman for the crime. It was also the time when Edward, King of England, abdicated his throne for the love of a woman.

In spite of the depression, more people had cars, more movies were made, including the memorables ones by Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, the sweethearts of the dance floor. Nelson Eddy and Jeannette McDonald were a musical duo in films based on operettas; it was also the time of the Saturday afternoon serials, I remember sitting through every episode of the Lone Ranger series.

This was the heyday of radio, with many comedies and early soap operas. Such radio personalities as Amos and Andy, Fibber McGee and Molly, George Burns (yes, the same one still making movies in the 1980s), Ed Wynn, and Eddie Cantor entered many homes by way of the radio. Walter Winchell had a weekly Sunday evening news program, while in the afternoon many listened to the controversial Father Coughlin.

We spent as much time listening to the radio as present generations do watching TV. Morning soap operas were big as were late afternoon children's programs such as "Little Orphan Annie" and "Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy." In the evening we listened to "Gangbusters" and "One Man's Family." Couples took part in dance marathons, the couple that outlasted all others won the prize money; except that in the one held at White City Park, outside Worcester, the producer ran off with the money.

Major league baseball had many stars, among them Lou Gehrig and Lefty Grove; Boston had two teams, the Red Sox and the Braves (for a time the Bees). My love for baseball developed during these years, I could name starting lineups for most teams, and batting or pitching records for many players. I even managed to attend a Red Sox game as a prize for selling magazine subscriptions. Unfortunately, my talents in this sport severely limited my playing time on any team I tried to join.

Benny Goodman was the "King of Swing" until later in the decade he was uncrowned by a new band leader with a new sound, Glenn Miller. Although swing bands got their start in the early thirties it wasn't until late in the decade that these bands became popular. Jack and I used to listen to a Boston radio station that played big band music all day, thus even in those days I was developing an interest in what was to become one of my major hobbies.

The end of the decade saw the beginning of World War II in Europe which brought more jobs and a return to prosperity in the United States.

Upon returning to Worcester from Scotland in 1933, we first lived in an apartment on Southbridge Street; while there I attended Lamartine Street School and had Miss Manning as my fifth grade teacher. She was a character; when instructing us how to do, or not to do, a particular task she would begin by saying, "Miss Manning says . . ." We all thought this was peculiar but apparently it was effective. Miss Manning took it upon herself to correct my poor posture; she did this by having me walk through doorways with my arms outstretched. I have no idea if it worked but it made me more conscious of my posture.

For Christmas we all got roller skates and used them as a means of transportation to explore the neighborhood. We discovered nearby a factory which manufactured roller skates and found, in their scrap pile, many usable parts as well as slugs which we could use in gumballs machines. What a find that was. We also had a dog that followed Dad home one day; "Prinnie" was a mixed Boston terrier and was our companion for many years.

While we were living on Southbridge Street there was a rash of fires in the neighborhood, all started by an arsonist. When the police caught this firebug weeks later he confessed to a number of fires he had set and also to one he had attempted but was not successful at. He had tried to start a fire on the top floor of an apartment building on Southbridge Street but had been frightened away by residents on a lower floor who had shouted at him. This had been Jack and me; we knew that the upstairs apartment was empty so when we heard someone ascending the stairs late at night we knew something was wrong. We made as much noise as we could until we roused Mom and Dad (and probably the entire neighborhood). In any event he didn't set our house on fire.

Lilian and I both contracted scarlet fever while here and were confined to the contagious ward at Belmont Hospital. I recovered fine but Lilian had complications, including mastoiditis, which affected her health for many years.

I also had my first camping experience during this time. Dad had made arrangements with a church camp for him and Jack to attend for a week but Jack got sick at the last minute and I replaced him. The camp was out in the country, I believe in Douglas, Massachusetts; we slept in tents and had all our meals in a large cook tent, and spent most of our time outdoors. It was a very enjoyable experience for me.



About 1934

Continuing our pattern of moving about once a year, (no wonder I didn't have any close friends), in sixth grade we moved to Seymour Street and I again attended Ward Street School. I entered the seventh grade in 1935 at Providence Street Junior High School but within a few months we moved again, this time to Dudley Place whereupon I was again enrolled at Chandler Street School. In the seventh grade at Chandler I had another character for a teacher, Miss Flynn. Her idiosyncracies were many; two I recall best were tossing pennies at us when we gave a correct answer and her daily proverbs which were written on the board for us to learn, first thing in the morning. One stands out in my mind, "Better late than never, but better never late." One of my favorite teachers was the one I had in eighth grade, Miss Coffey; she was firm and strictly business but well-liked. I remember doing a lot of singing in her class. I also remember some of my friends teaching me how to catch a large bee in my handkerchief so that I could take it to school and release it in the classroom.

I REMEMBER WORCESTER

"How dear to my heart are the scenes of my childhood when fond recollections present them to view."

So start the words to an old song, and as such are very appropriate when I recall my early childhood in Worcester. I lived there from the time I was three until I was sixteen. My pre-teens and early teens present many fond recollections.

Worcester, as cities go, is not an attractive place; it was even less so in those days. It was a city of about 200,000 inhabitants, with ugly tenement districts. Knitting mills, steel mills, polluted air, and dirty streets were all an accepted part of the environment. But broad avenues made it easy to find one's way around and there were parks and ponds, and even a river. On many occasions the Blackstone River was my destination, to fish or catch crawdads. Fortunately, in recent years it has been cleaned up; years ago it was a sewer, all the mills dumped their effluent into it. That didn't deter me or my friends, we didn't swim in it but we often got wet in search of the elusive water creatures.

For swimming we had to find other sources. One of these, Coes' Pond, was the most frequented, and probably the most polluted; nevertheless, this was where I learned to swim, and also fished some. We also went swimming on occasion at Green Hill Park and more frequently at Lake Quinsigamond. This lake was the largest, and the nicest, in the area. In addition to several fine swimming beaches it also had a wonderful amusement park, White City Park. Many happy times were spent here on the Dodgems, roller coaster, and merry-go-round. Unfortunately, as with many other relics of

the past, White City Park no longer exists; it is now a shopping center.

Present day Worcester, and its environs, has modern malls with all the latest shops; not so in the "old days." There were a few large markets where we could buy most of our groceries; there were also corner markets which carried the day to day staples we needed, and corner hardware and drug stores. For all other shopping, clothing, large appliances, etc., we had to go to downtown Worcester. Downtown, in those days, consisted of a three block section of Main Street in the vicinity of City Hall, and a short section of Front Street parallel to City Hall. In this small area were five or six large department stores, several large drug stores, a few restaurants, and several movie theaters; the post office was a few blocks south on Main Street. Also, on the other side of City Hall, were the offices of the local newspapers, the Telegram and the Gazette. For a short time there were two other papers, the Post and the Herald. I spent considerable time in my early teens downtown, as it was here where I sold newspapers. The Gazette sold for 3¢, my commission was 2/3¢. I also got my introduction to movies at the downtown theaters, admission varied from 10¢ at the Olympia to 35¢ at the Leow's Poli.

Worcester isn't often subjected to destructive storms but 1938 was an exception. A hurricane tore through the area toppling trees and billboards and creating other havoc in its wake. I was peddling papers at the time and remember trying to walk along Franklin Street and almost getting blown away.

As mentioned earlier, getting around in Worcester was easy. We usually walked, most places in the city were less than three miles from City Hall. It was also easy to get out of

the city and into the suburbs. Auburn, Leicester, Millbury, and Shrewsbury were all four to five miles out; we often walked both ways, occasionally we took the bus or streetcar one way, this cost us the grand sum of a nickel. Once we reached these surrounding towns we were in the country, everything was cleaner and greener, and less congested. On visiting this area in recent years I found they still look the same.

THE HOUSE ON DUDLEY PLACE

We moved to Dudley Place in 1935. This is the house I remember best of all the houses I lived in as a child; perhaps because we were there almost four years. It was in a predominantly Irish neighborhood where we, as Protestants, were considered inferior and were exposed to much bigotry. We lived on the third floor of another of the tenements of the era. The only way to reach the apartment was to enter the front door and climb two flights of stairs. We did have a back door but it led to a balcony (we called it our back porch). On this back porch was our clothes line where Mother hung the laundry to dry after washing it in the kitchen sink. There was also an ash shute, a carryover from the days of wood and coal burning stoves. The roof slanted down to the porch so that it was easy for us kids to climb up on the roof, something we did many times. Once the three of us were on the roof late at night, I think we were smoking; Mother locked the back door so that we had to spend the entire night out there. On the second floor lived a young Turkish couple named Savajejan who had a baby boy, Oshean. They had recently moved to America and didn't speak very good English. We thought it hilarious when we were noisy and Mrs. Savajejan yelled up the stairway, "Qviet pliz, the baby iss slipping."

There were many children in the neighborhood; most of them seemed to arrive in front of our house after supper so we always had a game going. Hide and seek, kick the can, scrub baseball, and touch football were our favorites. Kick the can was played somewhat like hide and seek, the one who was "It" had to find the other players and race back to touch a can we had placed in a circle before the others could kick it. Our football was usually a rolled up section of newspaper about six inches long by three inches in diameter tied with a string. We often went to a neighborhood park to play baseball. I loved the game, but as I have mentioned elsewhere, my talents didn't measure up to my love so I was usually the last one chosen and had to play right field and bat last.

Jack and I made a raft one summer; we pushed and carried it all the way to Coes' Pond, about two miles away. We were dismayed when we arrived there to discover that it wouldn't float, so we left it on an island until we found some barrels to float it on. When we returned we were heartbroken, it was gone.

Dad was out of work for much of the time we lived on Dudley Place. We were on welfare and received much of our food and clothing from nearby centers. One of the handouts was a suit which fit me well and had an acceptable cut to it; Jack wasn't as fortunate, he was given a light brown suit that looked ghastly; he refused to wear it.

Many of my most memorable (mis) adventures took place while we were living here. I had my first crush, on a girl named Margie who lived at the end of the street; she ignored me and had a crush on Jack who, in turn, ignored her. Since I wasn't able to make headway with Margie I turned my attentions Elsewhere, to a pretty Irish girl who was in my class

at school and lived around the corner on Jaques Avenue. Her name was Mary Ann Cronin; since she also liked me I guess I would have to think of her as my first girl friend.

While living here I got into the newspaper business. I had a friend who sold newspapers on the street, through him I was introduced to the business and became a street newsie. Most of my profits went for candy but I was able to save enough for Christmas gifts and to buy my first bicycle. I didn't have a paper route as such, I sold papers on a street corner. A few of my customers were regulars, either in stores or factories near my corner, or in nearby apartment buildings, but most of my business came from people passing by. The Worcester Gazette was the main paper I sold but I also did some business with a few Boston papers. In order to conduct this business I would go to the newspaper office after school, usually about 4 P.M., pick up my papers and then go out on the street. I would sell for about two hours, return to the office to settle my account (daily), then walk home. If business was good I would sell about 30 papers and make about 20¢. Many of the other newsboys were from the Italian part of town and were a tough bunch but I never had any problems with them; I found them warm and friendly and very easy-going. Later some of these same boys would become part of the local Mafia.

The misadventures I referred to earlier in this section were a series of incidents which were the beginning of a defiant behavior pattern that became more serious later. On several occasions I stayed out all night; I'm sure Mother was frantic. Another time, Mother had taken all my clothes away and hidden them so that I couldn't leave the house; this didn't faze me, I "borrowed" Jack's baseball uniform and shinnied down the ash shute. This ash shute played a part in another escapade;

one 4th of July I almost burned the house down. I had gone around the neighborhood collecting all the dud firecrackers; when I got home I split them open and dumped all the powder on top of the ash shute then, foolishly, lit the powder with a match. I had a fire I couldn't believe and sustained severe burns on my hands. Fortunately, the ash shute prevented the fire from spreading. I also ran away from home with two neighbor boys; we spent the night in the woods in Cherry Valley without a tent or extra clothing; the police picked us up the next morning and escorted us home. I don't believe that I really intended to run away but went along with the other boys for a lark.

Until now, school had been a joy to me; I did well, except in penmanship (try making ovals with a leaky pen, LEFT HANDED). I was particularly adept at arithmetic and spelling; if there had been spelling bees in those days I'm sure I would have been encouraged to enter. High school brought about a radical change.



Sweet Sixteen, 1939

HIGH SCHOOL

I entered the ninth grade at South High School in January, 1937, probably as eager as anybody in my class. From then on things went downhill. I began skipping school and cutting classes; perhaps some outside factors influenced me, I can't say. In any event my grades plummeted, even in Algebra, which was easy for me. The only enjoyable part of school at that time was Glee Club and the teacher, Bessie Rosenbaum. Miss Rosenbaum encouraged me in my singing; perhaps if she had known I was having other problems she could have turned me around. This situation wasn't helped when we moved again, this time to the north side of Worcester and I had to transfer to North High School.

It was while I was attending North High School that I decided I didn't want to go to school any more and quit. I didn't ask my parents, I told them. This was 1939 and jobs were not plentiful but I was determined; I finally obtained a job assisting a street photographer who worked in front of a jewelry store. He took pictures of people passing by and gave them an order blank with a number on it to identify their picture. My job was to pick up any order blanks that were thrown away. Things went well until one time I stayed out all night and slept on a spare bed in the photographer's hotel room.

This was the last straw as far as Dad was concerned; he called the police and as a result I spent the next two nights in jail. Following this I was required to appear in juvenile court where, fortunately, I was taken under the wing of a Worcester social agency, the Children's Friend Society. My counselor was Mr. Henry B. Brown, a fine person and the right one to get me headed in the right direction.

Mr. Brown, I assume with agreement from my parents, decided that temporary placement in a foster home was the best solution to my problems, on condition I return to school in the Fall. I didn't find any fault with this, it was better than juvenile hall. It was then late Spring and I was sent to a small farm in Tatnuck, outside Worcester. When summer began I was moved to a larger farm in Dudley. The farmer, whose name I don't recall, was a hard taskmaster and didn't provide the understanding or encouragement I needed.

In the Fall of 1939 I was finally placed in the right situation, with a family in Lancaster, about 25 miles north of Worcester. Jack and Georgia Foster were Down East Canadians with a son in his late teens. They were firm but loving, particularly Georgia, and seemed to understand my needs. I lived with them until after I graduated from high school, attending school and church regularly, performing chores to help pay for my keep. This did me the world of good; it set me back on an even keel and made me aware of who I was and where I fit. I returned home from there with a good attitude and a better perspective. There was another facet of living in Lancaster which had a profound influence on my life. During my senior year at Lancaster High School I took Chemistry as my science elective and had a young, beginning teacher named Lester Aldrich. Because of the example set by this young man I later chose teaching as my career.

While in Lancaster I had my first experience with the theater; during my senior year I was in the Senior play and also was in the chorus of a non-school musical affair. These whetted my appetite but I was not to return to theater work until my junior year in college, some eight years later.

Also, while in Lancaster, I obtained my first full-time job. I had worked part-time during my senior year at the Taylor Chair Company, a small factory half a mile from the Fosters' house. I was asked to work full time when I graduated. For the grand sum of 30¢ an hour I worked at most of the woodworking machines, usually as a helper, making parts for chairs and assisting in their assembly. While working at this job I came close to losing my hand in a belt operated planer. I had foolishly put my hand on one of the rollers at the exit end of the machine; immediately my hand got caught and would have been pulled in if the man feeding the machine had not acted quickly. He pushed the belt off and stopped the machine. I was extremely lucky he was so alert and quick-witted.

What may seem unusual to the present generation of young people is the fact that I finished high school without ever dating. I had girl friends and was with them on numerous occasions, mostly at school functions. In Lancaster I lived about three miles from school and had no transportation, nor was there any public transportation, which meant that the only way to get anyplace was to walk, or hitchhike. Several of the girls I knew lived between my house and school so frequently I called for one of them on the way to a dance or other event and then walked her home afterwards; this was the extent of my love life.

In the Fall of 1941 I returned home to live with my parents in Worcester. At that time they were living on Canterbury Street, over a liquor store. With help from Mr. Brown I obtained a job at Morgan Construction Company, working on the assembly floor. This company made parts for wire-drawing machinery and bearing housings; my job was to chip out, with hammer and chisel, slag left behind when the castings

were made. Not a very pretentious job. I continued on this job until I enlisted in the army, about thirteen months later.

MILITARY SERVICE

Life's greatest adventure to me was the time I spent in the military. I had, until then, led a life which had kept me fairly close to Worcester. I graduated from high school in 1941, the same year the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Prior to that time the draft had already been invoked and many young men and boys (I considered myself the latter) were already serving. This was a popular war compared to some other wars that followed, so following the bombing of Pearl Harbor I got the fever, as did many my age, and sought a way to join the service. My first preference was the navy but as I had been born in Canada and was not a citizen I couldn't enlist in a specific branch. My only option was to volunteer through the draft and take my chances on the branch to which I was assigned. Fortunately, I was assigned to the air force and not to the infantry or some other branch which would have put me in the trenches.

I was nineteen when I reported for duty on November 7, 1942 and was immediately bussed to Fort Devens, Massachusetts with other draftees. From there, a week or so later, I was sent to Atlantic City, New Jersey for basic training. I was assigned to a room in one of the luxury hotels in that resort city and stayed there about six weeks for this training. We marched and did close order drill and did exercises I never knew existed. One cold day my name was on a list to report to headquarters early the next morning. I reported, with a light weight field jacket, and discovered that I was being transported, along with some other men, in the back of an

open truck to Fort Dix; I almost froze, it was so cold. It turned out that we were all non-citizens who had been taken there to receive our citizenship. This was how I became a citizen.

After completing our training at Atlantic City, a troop train took a large contingency of us to North Carolina to attend a service school at Seymour Johnson Field, near Goldsboro. While en route there one of our group came down with spinal meningitis which resulted in everyone on the train being quarantined when we arrived at our destination.



1943

Following this quarantine, which lasted about a month, I attended airplane mechanic school for another three months and was then transferred to an advanced school at the Douglas Aircraft Plant in Santa Monica, California. This was my first exposure to California and the beginning of a long love affair with this beautiful state.

When this training was completed I was assigned to a training squadron at Pinecastle Air Force Base near Orlando, Florida; another cross-country jaunt. This assignment lasted through the winter of 1943-1944 at which time the bomber group I eventually went overseas with was formed.

The 494th Bomb Group was assembled in Florida and I was assigned as a mechanic to the 866th Squadron. Our first task was the training of air crews, together with the familiarization of ground crews with our new airplanes, B-24 Liberators. For this we were sent to Wendover, Utah and then, as a final training area before going overseas, to Mountain Home, Idaho.

Air crews and ground crews were sent separately to our next staging area, Hawaii. The air crews flew the airplanes and ground crews sailed on what we were told was an old banana boat called "The Mexico." We had heard so much of Japanese warships attacking shipping that we were horrified to discover we were traveling alone, no escort whatsoever. We arrived without incident, however, and continued our preparations at Barking Sands Air Base on the lovely island of Kauai. I indicated that we arrived without incident; this is somewhat of a misstatement. I will never forget an incident which happened to me on that trip. I was on guard duty on deck, it was a pitch black night, no lights were showing of course, and I couldn't see my hand in front of my face. I was patrolling my post when suddenly I stepped off into space and fell

part way down a ladder leading from my deck to the next one lower down. My foot got wedged between two steps on the ladder, otherwise I would have been catapulted overboard, unknown to anyone; I could actually see the phosphorescence of the ocean directly beneath me.

Somehow I survived this near disaster and spent a delightful two months on Kauai before my next move. On this occasion the ground crews were shipped on a troop transport that was part of a large convoy. I remember lazy days sunning on deck, playing cards, occasional emergency drills, crossing the equator and the accompanying ceremony where some of our officers were thrown into a small swimming pool, clothes and all. Also, I recall a stop at an island that was strictly for R & R (rest and recreation); everyone went wild for a day, drinking, fighting, and carousing. After 45 days aboard the transport we finally disembarked on the island of Angaur in the Palau group. We were now close to actual combat conditions; the island had been secured only two weeks previously and mop-up operations were still going on.

I didn't see any live Japanese while on this island but could hear occasional gunfire in other parts of the island. Upon first arriving at Angaur we slept in pup tents near the beach. On several occasions we found it necessary to pile out of the tents into foxholes to wait out an air raid; as it was the rainy season sometimes the foxholes were mudholes. Once, a large anti-aircraft gun we had not been aware of began firing from about 100 yards away, a very frightening experience.

About two weeks after landing we moved away from the beach and set up a permanent camp closer to our airstrip. We were now in larger, six man tents and had cots for sleeping instead of the ground. Our meals were cooked in a larger tent, we ate

outdoors near this tent. While serving on KP (kitchen police) I was often able to get extra helpings of milk and dessert and on several occasions extra portions of meat when a GI whose religion wouldn't allow him to take any passed it up.

While on Angaur our airplanes carried out many combat missions against the Japanese, who were still in control of the islands around us, the first combat experience for any of our air crews. One night our motor pool was infiltrated by a small force of Japanese who were searching for food. The guards on duty shot two of them, others escaped. This was as close as I ever got to an actual combat situation.

From Angaur the 494th next went to Okinawa where we remained for the duration of the war and our eventual return to the States. Our last assignment, after the war ended, was to transport former prisoners of war from Japan to a staging area from which they eventually were sent home. Many of these men, some British, some American, had been POWs for three to four years. On January 16, 1946, my 23rd birthday, I received my discharge and returned home. Altogether, I served for 3 years, 2 months, and 9 days.

This military experience had profound influence on me and made great changes in me as a person. I left home a boy, a very immature one at that, and returned a young man; I was beginning to grow up. There were other changes also; I had learned some of the social skills that had been lacking in my makeup prior to that time. I could now mingle with other people of both sexes and feel comfortable doing so. I had also developed confidence in myself as a person; I became aware that I had a better than average intelligence but at the same time could not see what direction my life would take in the post-war world. It was during those years that I sowed some of the wild oats that many young people feel the need to

sow. I learned to drink and soon found that my capacity for liquor was small; I also gained some knowledge about sex and women and had a few experiences I wouldn't care to brag about.

My first serious love interest occurred while I was stationed in California. I met a young woman at an amusement park in Santa Monica and corresponded with her for about two years; our correspondence ceased when she informed me she was getting married. It was also during my time in the military that one of my life's hobbies took shape. I had long been interested in big band music and had listened to many of these bands on radio broadcasts. I didn't develop a serious interest, however, until one of my service friends copied for me a list from a magazine of what he believed to be all the recordings Glenn Miller had ever made. This list whetted my appetite and led to my present record collection which now numbers several thousand.

Another aspect of my military service to consider is the stability it brought to my life. It may seem strange to think of the military life as a stable one but to me it was. When I was a child we had moved frequently, sometimes as often as once a year; as a result I wasn't able to develop any lasting friendships. It seems that as soon as we got established in a neighborhood where I could find some friends we moved again, usually to a different part of town and a different school where I didn't know anybody. This may well have been the cause of my rebellion in high school, that I'm not sure about. Lilian tells me that she and Jack resented the poverty in which we lived, we had few material things. I didn't pay much attention to that but I believe now that, although I may not have known it at the time, I resented our frequent moves. When I was in the service I was able to stay with the same group of people, in close contact, for a long period of time. In this way I developed friendships that are still important to me after all these years.

LIFE IN THE FORTIES

The first half of this decade was completely taken up by World War II. I was in the service most of that time and didn't experience the trials and tribulations going on at home. There were severe shortages of many commodities; gasoline, sugar, and rubber were needed for the war effort and could not be obtained in any quantities. Many items were rationed and couldn't be purchased unless one had ration coupons for those items. Cities had block wardens in case of an air raid or other enemy action; many homes had Red Cross centers in their basements. The extreme gas shortage curtailed most driving, pleasure driving was non-existent; many people car-pooled to work to make their meager gas allotments stretch.

Other than that it was a time of great prosperity; with the nation on a war footing there was little unemployment and wages were high, particularly in industries producing war materiel. On Broadway, two big hits opened in 1943, "Annie Get Your Gun" and "Oklahoma." Movies were in high gear and were war oriented.

In 1944, Franklin Roosevelt was elected for an unprecedented fourth term as president but didn't live to see the end of the war; he was succeeded upon his death in April, 1945 by his vice-president, Harry Truman. I was in the Palau Islands at the time of Roosevelt's death, it was a sad event for all. Mr. Truman saw us through the remainder of the war and had to make the awesome decision to drop the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan as a means of speeding up the end of the war.

War's end didn't bring about the end of shortages, I remember returning home and trying to buy new shirts and suits and having difficulty locating them. They were available on the black market, as were many items, if one was willing to pay the price. We were back on a peacetime footing at home, but elsewhere in the world the Berlin airlift was invoked when Russia stopped traffic into Berlin.

Harry Truman was still president during the last half of the decade, which saw us recognizing communism as a threat to our way of life. We were as concerned with the threat of Russia taking over the world as we had been with Hitler's Germany in the previous decade. At the end of the decade Communist North Korean forces attacked South Korea and United States forces were sent to assist the South Koreans. On the lighter side, the bright lights of Broadway shined on another spectacular, "South Pacific." Among the many baseball stars were "Joltin' Joe" Dimaggio and the "Splendid Splinter," Ted Williams.

COLLEGE AND EARLY YEARS OF MARRIAGE

After being discharged from the military I began to think seriously about where my future would lead. I had been giving some thought to going into teaching and knew that I would need a college education for that. Financing college wouldn't be a problem as Congress had passed a bill to help pay such expenses for veterans, the G.I. Bill. Whether I had sufficient credits to be admitted to college was another matter. Fortunately, during that spring and summer, Worcester State Teachers' College offered remedial courses designed specifically to help veterans prepare for college admission. I decided to take some of these classes rather than go back to my old job, and enrolled in two classes, English and Mathematics. The math instructor was excellent and helped me and other class members obtain information that made applying for college admission an easier task. He advised us that Massachusetts State College (later the University of Massachusetts) was planning to open an extension campus at Fort Devens, exclusively for veterans. With his advice and the help of the secretarial staff at the Teachers' College I was able to submit my application in time to be admitted for the Fall of 1946. At the same time I submitted an application for assistance through the G.I. Bill. Money granted through this bill paid for my entire college education, all five years; without it I probably would not have gone to college.

I began my college life that Fall, 1946 at Fort Devens. To start with, campus life was nothing like what it would be on a normal campus. It had a distinctive military atmosphere; we were several years older than the usual college freshmen, all veterans, and all men. We lived in dormitories, attended classes in old brick military buildings; the faculty lived in

former officers' quarters. Once classes got well established things became more like what we assumed a normal campus would be, with one notable exception, no girls.

Classes were traditional, the instructors were good, but not outstanding, and I soon settled into a routine. This routine included going home for weekends and returning to campus Monday morning. Home at that time was with my parents in Cherry Valley, outside Worcester. It was during one of those weekends that I met Terry. I had started going roller skating at a local rink shortly after leaving the service and before college began had been skating three or four nights a week. When school started I continued these skating sessions on weekends.

One Saturday night in October I saw this attractive girl at the rink; as soon as I could get past all the other males that surrounded her I asked her to skate with me. To my surprise she accepted. I tried, without success, to monopolize her for the rest of the evening; then when the session ended persuaded her to let me see her home. This took some persuasion, partly because her cousin, Doris, was with her and partly because I might have come on too strong. Little did either of us suspect that this was the beginning of what would be a beautiful marriage. In fact, although I was strongly attracted to her, I had not given any thought to marriage. I found Terry very attractive and easy to talk to about many different subjects.

That was the beginning; we agreed to meet at the rink the next Saturday, and soon became a twosome. We were together every weekend from then on and there was no question but that I was smitten. One evening in December, scarcely two months after we met, we were discussing how much we both enjoyed

skating when I asked her to marry me. As I recall, my exact words were, "Will you help me teach our grandchildren to skate?" It didn't dawn on Terry at first that I had proposed; when it did she was surprised, then thrilled, and said, "YES." As for me, when I realized I had actually proposed, I was scared to death; I'm sure I must have turned white.

Our engagement was announced at the skating rink at a New Year's Eve party. We were required to skate around the rink together and then stand in the center of a circle while congratulations were given.



We announce our engagement
December 31, 1946

It was a busy school year. The pressures of school combined with planning for a June wedding made things rather hectic but somehow we survived. To prepare for the wedding I took religious instructions from a priest for several weeks that Spring, this because Terry was a Catholic and I was not. We were married on June 14, 1947 (Flag Day) in the rectory of the Church of the Holy Name of Jesus. It was a small, private wedding; other than the wedding party the only guests were our parents. Emile Belair was my best man and Terry's cousin, Doris Parenteau, was the maid of honor. I showed my ignorance of wordly things when I forgot to order the tuxedos for the two men until the last minute and had to accept what was left at the rental place, so threadbare I was afraid moths were holding them together.



Wedding Day

Following the wedding Terry's family put on a reception at Artisans' Hall on Canterbury Street; this was well attended by friends and relatives, including the manager of the skating rink. Terry's brother, Bob, worked his tail off pushing his big, two-wheeled cart back and forth between the house and the hall to help set up the reception.

For our honeymoon we stayed a week at Rose Edward Cabins at Lake Winnepesaukee, New Hampshire, then returned to Worcester and set up housekeeping in a furnished room on Wellington Street. When it was time for me to return to school we obtained an apartment in a college housing project that had been created out of old hospital buildings at Fort Devens. We borrowed enough furniture to make do and moved there in September. Terry went to work in Leominster, about ten miles from Fort Devens, and commuted daily by bus all winter.

During the Fall we discovered that Terry was pregnant, an unexpected and unplanned for complication. It was one we would have to cope with and cope we did. We scrimped and saved while Terry was working, borrowed baby furniture, and made preparations for the arrival of our first born. Elaine arrived May 11, 1948 in Ayer, Massachusetts, a few miles from Fort Devens.

As Elaine was our first and we were completely unversed in the characteristics, and problems of, raising children we had no idea how to cope with a young child who would not eat. We went to doctor after doctor and read innumerable articles on the subject and became more confused by each. The consensus seemed to be, don't force her, when she is hungry enough she will eat. Not so, at least not with Elaine, after two months of this approach we were concerned that she would starve to death and force fed her.

The school year of 1947-48 completed my two years at the Fort Devens campus; for my junior year I had to transfer to the main campus in Amherst. Finding housing turned out to be a problem. We explored the area around Amherst with college friends trying to find a house which we could rent jointly; when we were not successful at this Terry and I decided to buy a small trailer which could be parked on the campus. This we did; somehow we got a bank to finance it and in September of 1948 set up our new home.

Amherst is a beautiful little town in west central Massachusetts, in a predominantly agricultural area northwest of Springfield. It was a very pleasant place to live and go to school. Our trailer was parked in the center of the campus next to an old brick building that housed the college store. One disadvantage to the location was that friendly students passing by fed candy to Elaine until we attached a sign to her saying, "Please don't feed me."

The last two years at Amherst were a mixture of the difficult and the easy. My college major was Chemistry and I discovered early in my junior year that I was in over my head. Rather than change majors, which would have been the best solution, I decided that since I was going into teaching and not into industry I would brave it out. This I did and at the same time took all the education courses I could, including "Practice Teaching" in my senior year. With this resolved I decided to once again get involved in theatricals and was able to obtain small parts in two college productions, "Girl Crazy" and "HMS Pinafore" and was also a member of the chorus in a production of "The Messiah."

We received \$120 a month from the government as a living allowance as part of the G.I. Bill, not enough to make ends meet. To supplement this, Terry got a job as a waitress at

a nearby restaurant and I went to work as a Saturday janitor at the Home Economics building on campus. Also, during the summer of 1949, preceding my senior year, I worked on a tobacco farm in Hadley. Somehow, during my senior year we managed to scrape together \$150 and bought our first car, a 1937 Chevy club coupe. It wasn't much but it ran, most of the time, and provided us with reliable transportation for the next two years.

During my senior year I also became interested in the idea of becoming a school guidance counselor and looked into colleges which offered graduate majors in this field. There were several good schools and one very close that offered all the courses I would need, Springfield College. I applied during the Spring and was accepted for admission that Fall.



Yearbook photo, 1950

I received my Bachelor of Science degree in June, 1950 and shortly after the graduation we moved the trailer to Springfield College to begin my graduate work. This campus was in a beautiful location at the head of a lake, I believe it was called Lake Massasoit; the college had a trailer park at the foot of the lake in a heavily wooded area that had been made into a bird sanctuary. We had to get rid of our beautiful three-colored cat, Debbie (short for Debutante), in order to stay at the trailer park. During that summer I took two classes that Springfield College deemed I needed

to better prepare for their graduate program. I also obtained a part-time job at a shoe store to help our skimpy budget along; I retained this job throughout the school year. Also, during the summer we discovered that Terry was pregnant again. The baby was due in February and of course Jim had to choose the worst week of the winter to make his appearance. I drove Terry to the hospital during a blizzard and Jim was born the next day, February 2, 1951 during another severe storm. Nevertheless, I managed to drive to and from the hospital each day in my trusty old '37 Chevy. If I had to drive in those conditions now I would be horrified.

The year at Springfield went well, the work was much easier than my undergraduate study in Chemistry. I also managed to get involved again in dramatics, this time assisting back stage. In June, 1951 I received my Master of Education in Guidance and Personnel Services and had almost straight A's on my report card each quarter.

We had one scare while at Springfield. Elaine found some moth balls and, from the smell of her breath, had eaten them. I was working at the shoe store so some neighbors took Terry and Elaine to a nearby hospital to have her stomach pumped out; then they called me at the store. Elaine (and Terry) survived this with no after effects.

During the Spring of 1951 I sent out letters to many school districts in the state and also a few to other New England states describing my qualifications. A few interviews followed, the main one in Williamstown, Massachusetts; when they offered me a teaching position I accepted with alacrity.

When the school year ended at Springfield College we sold our trailer and following a temporary summer job at a Monsanto Chemical plant in Springfield we moved to Williamstown. It was another beautiful college town located in the northwest corner of Massachusetts close to the New York and Vermont borders. We moved into an apartment on a large, former dairy farm south of town. The apartment was at the south end of a large house where the owner and his family lived. The apartment had been the milkhouse when the dairy was operating and was very cold and drafty. It took half of our salary to heat it during the winter months. As the apartment wasn't furnished we again had to scramble to obtain furniture and furnishings; many of these we borrowed or had given to us but some we had to buy. As we didn't have cash we bought things on the installment plan and immediately went into debt, a condition that existed for the next 15-20 years. Besides being located in a very scenic, if somewhat cold, area there was one other attribute to living where we did; across the street was a trout stream, I was in seventh heaven.

TEACHING -- MY CAREER

In September of 1951 began the career that I was to continue in until my retirement in June, 1981. It was an interesting and sometimes challenging career that had its start with one seventh grade and one eighth grade mathematics class, two ninth grade science classes and a seventh grade history class. My background in history was zilch but somehow I staggered through. As it was an election year I played tapes of presidential candidates which we discussed; I also went through the constitution with them, section by section, trying to simplify and clarify. The other classes were probably more of a learning experience for me than for my students; my

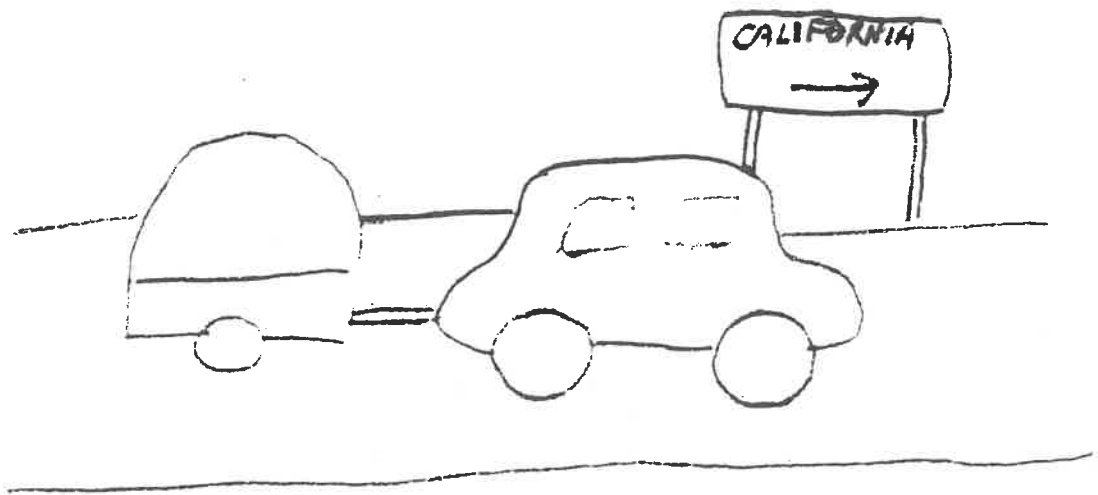
knowledge of science and mathematics was sufficient but knowing how to teach them was something else. One of my students was Susan Hoover, my landlord's daughter; apparently the preceding year she had been a holy terror in school but I had no problems with her, too close to home I guess.

In addition to teaching, I continued to be active in dramatics, this time directing. During my first year I directed the senior play, then the following year my school hosted a convention of one-act plays in which we had an entry. Terry and I also went to most of the other school activities, particularly the sports events and dances, and became active in game night at the local Grange. (A farmer's organization hall)

After two years at Williamstown we felt it was time to try other pastures. More letter writing and interviews followed and I accepted a position as Guidance Director for a small school district in Hudson, New Hampshire. We moved to Hudson in the summer of 1953 and rented a small cottage there. My job was to head up the guidance program, doing all the counseling and testing, spending four days a week at Alvirne High School in Hudson and the other day at a high school about ten miles away, in Merrimack. We stayed in Hudson for only one year and then decided we needed to get away from the severe winters in New England. After considering a number of alternatives, including the South, we decided to head west, to Arizona.

Once the decision was made we sold our furniture and packed our personal belongings in a utility trailer we could tow behind our 1942 Pontiac. Little did we know that to make the kind of trip we planned we needed a car in top shape and a trailer that should have been a thousand pounds lighter. It

was a learning experience; in spite of a constantly boiling radiator, several blowouts, and driving through mountain and desert terrain which we had not envisioned we arrived in Phoenix, Arizona in mid-July of 1954. We were not prepared for the heat, 120° in the shade and very little of that. I explored the area looking for a teaching position, concentrating on the smaller towns in the mountains around Phoenix. After three weeks of this, without success, and after Elaine developed a dry cough which she couldn't shake we decided enough was enough and headed for California.



CALIFORNIA -- FIRST TRY

At that time my cousin Vera, and her family, were living in Costa Mesa, in Orange County; this became our first destination. We stayed with Vera about a week while I visited school offices in the area without luck and then decided to explore other parts of the state. We headed north, through the Central Valley, as far north as Ukiah, checking frequently at school offices. After several weeks of this the beginning of the school year was approaching and I had still not obtained a position. Why this was so is still a mystery to me as California, at that time, was at the peak of its growth period and should have been desperate for teachers. As it turned out there was one district that was desperate, the Los Angeles Unified School District. An administrator with one of the other districts where I applied advised me that if I applied with Los Angeles I would be certain to get a position. We had not planned to settle in the Los Angeles area but a job was a job so we decided that I should apply for a position there and we would find a place in the suburbs to live, not in Los Angeles itself. This decided, I submitted my application and when accepted was assigned to South Gate Junior School as a mathematics teacher.

Looking back now I realize how fortunate I was to have been assigned to South Gate; I could have been assigned to a school in the inner city and probably would have ended my teaching career then and there. In fact, not too many years later the District began assigning all new teachers to the inner city. South Gate turned out to be a city of about 60,000 in which many of the children came from families employed at blue collar jobs, either at the local Firestone plant or at General Motors. Neither one of those plants is there now. The school had an enrollment of about

1400 and, while not attractive, was a pleasant place to teach, with a good administration and many experienced teachers. Mary O'Brien was the head of the math department and took me under her wing; I benefited greatly from her expertise and began to develop as a teacher.

In the meantime, on the homefront, we rented an apartment in East Los Angeles and enrolled Elaine in first grade at a school in Montebello. East Los Angeles was not a very desirable place to live but the rent was low, \$60 a month, and fit our budget. We had acquired a dog, Chippy, before we left the East, a beautiful, black dog that we had become quite attached to. He was a mixed breed and appeared to have some Lab and Setter in him. Unfortunately, Chippy had an aversion to meter men and as they wouldn't enter the yard with him present we had to get rid of him. To replace him we got another female cat. She liked to sleep on Jim's bed; in order to prevent this we put her in the kitchen at night and put a card table in the doorway to act as a barricade. This created another problem, she knocked it over on herself and broke her leg. After several weeks with her leg in a cast she was back to normal. She became pregnant a few months later; we used this as a learning experience for Elaine and Jim and got them out of bed to witness the wonders of birth.

We were constantly concerned as money was very tight for us; I can recall one instance of counting the potatoes to see if they would last until pay day. To supplement our income I obtained an evening and Saturday job at a shoe store. Our second year there our 1942 Pontiac gave up the ghost and we replaced it with what became our first RV, a 1946 Chevy sedan delivery. This was built along the lines of modern vans, except it had no side windows. We used it not only

as a family car but as a camping vehicle and slept in it on many camping trips. The kids at my school saw this vehicle from a different angle, they called it my hearse. One boy in my home room had a sense of humor as far out as mine, one morning when I walked into my classroom I saw written on the board, "Laird's Mortuary, You Stab 'em, We Slab 'em."

While here I again ventured into dramatics, with a small theater group in Montebello. One of the roles I enacted was that of Dr. Chumley in "Harvey." Then after two years of becoming a better teacher at South Gate we decided we weren't happy living in the Los Angeles area and needed to move elsewhere. The big question was, "Where to?" Following much soul-searching and lengthy discussion we decided, to Florida. We sold the clumsy, heavy trailer we had used on our trip west, replaced it with one lighter in weight and headed east in June, 1956.

FLORIDA

After arriving in Florida we again began a search for a teaching position in an area we liked. We settled for the central part of the state, in Eustis, where there was an opening for a science and math teacher at the high school. Eustis is about 25 miles northwest of Orlando in aptly named Lake County. There were so many lakes that it appeared I could fish forever and never run out of new places. The fishing for bass was excellent in many of the lakes and while there I caught many good-sized bass.

Also, while there, I was fortunate enough to become involved in an excellent dramatic group and appeared in "Mr. Roberts" as well as a number of other productions. I was disappointed with the teaching situation however; for one thing, the

school was old and didn't have adequate supplies. Also, the faculty and townspeople formed a tightly knit group and made me feel like an outsider. I didn't fit in and because of this I was unhappy for the two years we stayed. After two years we decided that since they didn't seem to want us we didn't want them either; upon making this decision we returned to California in June, 1958.

CALIFORNIA FOR GOOD

I was able to return to South Gate Junior High School and pick up the pieces again there. This time we were more choosy in finding a place to live and rented a house in Norwalk. Jim had started school in Florida and began second grade in Norwalk; Elaine was now in fifth grade and had a close friend, Vickie Telles, who lived across the street. We were living on Everest Street in Norwalk when Bill was born February 29, 1960, our Leap Year baby.

One of the happy memories Bill has of this time was our dog "Muggsy." He and Bill were inseparable; because of him Bill crawled for a longer than normal period. Why walk on two legs when he and Muggsy got around so well on four? Elaine and Jim found Muggsy somewhat of a problem; he was part poodle and it was their job to clip his hair when needed.

In September, 1960 we returned from a summer in northern California and moved to another rented house, this one in Long Beach at 5238 Sandwood Street. We were living here when Lynette was born July 25, 1961. In 1963 we decided that our wanderings, except for summers, were over and that it would be in our best interests to buy a house rather than continue to rent. With help from our good friend, Eddie Contreras, we located what we wanted in a good neighborhood

and moved to 4703 Briercrest Avenue, Lakewood on February 1, 1964, a day before Jim's 13th birthday. In the meantime, Elaine entered Bancroft Junior High School in 1960 and Jim in 1963. Our last blessed event, Barbara, arrived two months after we moved to Lakewood, March 30, 1964.

At last our family was complete. We now had five children of varying ages with a range of sixteen years between oldest and youngest. None were as difficult about eating as Elaine had been but they all had their problems. There were many similarities yet they were all unique. We had to make changes in our life style to adjust to all of them.

Living in a three bedroom house, as we were, there was no way we could all have private bedrooms. We solved this problem by building triple bunks for the three youngest and made a room in the garage for Jim. When Bill reached an age when he needed his own room Terry and I gave up our bed and slept on the living room couch. Fortunately, in a few years, Elaine moved out and we got our bedroom back.

We also had to make adjustments in our summer travels. Until 1967 all seven of us were crowded into our 15 foot trailer. With a special crib built in for Barbara at the foot of our bed, a sling bunk for Elaine, Bill and Lynette on the dinette, and Jim sleeping in the back of the Carryall, we managed. Elaine stopped coming with us in 1967, then in 1968 we bought a larger trailer so more room was available.

There was also a difference in my approach to discipline with the younger three. With Elaine and Jim, perhaps through lack of experience as a parent, I had been a strict disciplinarian, possibly too strict; with the younger brood I was more relaxed and laid back. At any rate, life seemed more relaxed with them.

During this time, my career was doing well. I had been going back to school during the summer and also had been active in both the state and the city mathematics teachers' groups, the California Mathematics Council and the Los Angeles City Teachers' Mathematics Association. When Mary O'Brien decided to step down as head of the math department in 1963, she recommended me as her replacement. I was thrilled to step in, and held this position until 1976; except for two years when I was temporarily away from South Gate, 1968-1970.

For the 1968-1969 school year I was asked to work in a downtown office as a consultant with the district, working with a number of inner city junior and senior high schools. My job involved visiting the schools, meeting with teachers and department heads, and setting up workshops to prepare materials for the slow learner and the disadvantaged. This was a very enjoyable year; unfortunately, the program was discontinued when the district ran out of funds. The following year, 1969-1970, I took a sabbatical leave and attended the University of Southern California in a federally funded program designed to prepare leaders for mathematics laboratories the district planned to set up. Again, due to lack of money, nothing came of this plan.

In the Fall of 1970 I returned to South Gate Junior High and resumed my position as head of the math department. By that time changes were taking place at the school; enrollment had increased from the 1400 when I first started teaching there to well over 2000 in 1970. Also, the student body was changing from blue collar families to lower class, underprivileged, predominantly Mexicans. Teaching had become more difficult; if I could have foreseen future changes at that time I might have changed schools.

While my career was blossoming our family had finally stopped expanding and we were establishing a routine of happy family life. Bill started first grade in 1966, the same year that Jim began high school and Elaine graduated from high school. Lynette followed Bill into first grade a year later but Barbara not until 1970; by that time Elaine had received her B.A. from Long Beach State University.

With a steady job, and cross-country moving behind us, our financial picture also became brighter. We were able to pay off debts that had accumulated and plan on summers which could be spent vacationing, except for a few when I returned to college. The last year in which I worked during the summer I believe was 1965, when I taught summer school. After that summers were free and clear. Many of these summers are described in the section of this history which I have titled "Summer Sojourns." I won't repeat any of that here.

We added a new member to the family on June 23, 1972 when Elaine married Walter Pacholka. They had met while both were attending Long Beach State and found in each other what was needed to make an excellent marriage. We were delighted to accept Wally into our family. The same year Terry and I celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary. Unknown to Terry I had put aside \$700 over a period of time and surprised her with a trip to Hawaii as a token of my love and for a beautiful 25 years together. This trip is also described in "Summer Sojourns."

We were very concerned when Jim went through the same kind of growing pains after high school as I had gone through during high school. Jim had graduated, without problems, in 1969 and both Terry and I assumed he would want to go on to college. We knew he had the brain for it, perhaps the best brain in the family; but after a year and a half at Long Beach City College Jim decided that was not for him. He and I had words at the time and also later when I wanted him to get a job to help pay for his keep. This led to Jim moving back East in 1971 and living with a friend's family in Taunton, Massachusetts. In a short time Jim moved to the Worcester area where he was welcomed with open arms by Terry's family. In 1973 he drove west with Pam Brodeur; the following year he and Pam were married. It was a beautiful ceremony, held at the Congregational Church in Oxford, Pam's home town. They set up housekeeping in Oxford before they bought the house on Rochdale Pond. Unfortunately, the marriage broke up shortly afterwards. On the plus side, Jim and I have patched up our differences and once more get along as father and son should.

In 1975, quite suddenly and unexpectedly, the bottom fell out of my life. We were vacationing on Vancouver Island in Canada when Terry became ill. She had complained about not feeling well and, following what must have been a very uncomfortable night for her, we decided to see a doctor in Parksville. Upon examining her the doctor immediately called for an ambulance to transport her to a hospital in Nanaimo, about 30 miles away. I followed with the truck and trailer and, after having her admitted through the emergency room, the doctors there advised me to leave, find a place to park the trailer, and return. When I returned later that afternoon and inquired as to Terry's condition

I was taken aside by a hospital chaplain who advised me that Terry had died that afternoon in surgery. I couldn't believe it, I asked the chaplain to recheck, to be certain that he was talking to the right person. But there was no mistake; I spoke to one of the attending doctors and was told that Terry had died of myocarditis, which was similar to a heart attack and believed to have been caused by a virus.

I was heartbroken, my whole life was suddenly shattered. Somehow, I was able to call both Elaine and Jim and inform them of the situation and then make my way back to camp to tell the other children. It was necessary for me to make arrangements with a funeral home in Nanaimo to have Terry's body cremated and the remains flown home. Elaine and Wally made arrangements for appropriate services at their church and I drove home with the kids.

The next few years were the lowest point in my life. I knew that I had loved Terry but was not aware how much a part of my life she had been. Life was empty; I dragged myself to school each morning and dragged myself home each night, but nothing had any meaning. The first Christmas without Terry was almost impossible for me to cope with. Fortunately, I had the children to come home to, they were my salvation. Life must have been difficult for them also and I'm sure I didn't make it easier; but without them I don't know what I would have done.

This condition lasted for about three years. I reverted to an earlier time and became a loner again, everything I did, every place I went was by myself. When I finally realized this was the case I decided I had to do something about it. My solution was to become a joiner; up to that time, except

for professional organizations, I had never joined anything. Terry and I had been content to do our own thing; if we had someone to do it with, fine; if not, we did it alone. Times had changed.

I first joined the American Sportsmans Club; this was an organization that owned parcels of land throughout the West where members could go to enjoy the sporting life. One trip to one of their properties made me realize this was not my type of organization, it was too commercial. I next met with a group of hikers who wanted to form a local hiking club. This led to the birth of the "Southern California Trail Ramblers" and the beginning of a rebirth for me. It was the kind of group and the kind of people I could identify with. I became active in this group and for a short time was corresponding secretary.

The group that did the most to set me back on track was a singles RV group. I was having some repair work done on the Dreamliner motorhome I had purchased when I struck up a conversation with a lady who was also at the service center having some work done. It turned out that she was the president of an RV club called "Single Mingles" which had monthly campouts for single RV owners, mostly in my age group. I attended their next campout and at last I had found something I could join and be a part of. They made me feel welcome immediately, and I soon became an active member of the group. It wasn't long before I was involved in the operation of the club and eventually, in 1982, became president. At about the same time I joined the Sierra Club and found this organization to be another that had many activities and groups I could enjoy.

Bill entered Lakewood High School in the Fall of 1975; while in his sophomore year one of the coaches took an interest in him and suggested he try out for the track team. This he did and became quite an asset to the team. He ran the mile and the two mile while in high school and then the 1500 meter when he went on to Long Beach City College. At one time Bill had his bedroom wall covered with the trophies, plaques, and certificates he had won. Where are they now?

January 13, 1977 brought another new member into the family with the birth of my first grandchild, Matthew Pacholka. Elaine had conceived twice before but each time it had ended in a miscarriage so her first child didn't appear on the scene until after Terry was gone. Terry had looked forward so much to having grandchildren and didn't live long enough to be able to enjoy them. Elaine presented me with my second grandchild on December 16, 1980 when Jennifer was born. Now two beautiful grandchildren; but what else could they be?

Meanwhile, back at school, many changes were taking place. From my return to the school in 1970, when there was an enrollment of over 2000, by the mid-seventies it had ballooned to over 3000; all of this in a school originally designed for 1200 to 1400. This caused excessive crowding, even when new "temporary" buildings were brought in to accomodate this population. With the crowding we also experienced gang and drug problems and had deteriorated to a low class school. The district's solution to this crowding was to put us on a year-round basis, with only 75% of the total enrollment in attendance at any one time. To most of us who had been teaching there for years, the needed solution was to build another junior high school close by and split the enrollment. Apparently, for budgeting and segregation

reasons, the district could not do this. My solution, as well as some other old timers, was to take an early retirement. This I did in June of 1981 after a total of 29 years on the job, 24 of them in California. The school faculty association, as is their custom, provided a year-end retirement banquet. I was pleased at the turnout, many teachers came whom I hadn't seen in years to give me a big sendoff.

A year after I retired we added still another member to the family when Lynette married David Szandzik on July 10, 1982. They have since added two more grandchildren to my growing brood; Jessica on December 22, 1982 and Eric on July 23, 1984.

Another change in my life had taken place in 1979. I was introduced to Betty Bauer by one of the members of the Southern California Trail Ramblers and my rebirth was complete. I fell in love and knew then that I had finally overcome my grief and had stopped feeling sorry for myself. Betty and I hit it off immediately; we found we had many interests in common and spent a great deal of time together. We talked of marriage but never reached a point where a firm decision was made. Betty was very religious and needed someone who shared her convictions; I was not the person to do that, this difference finally caused us to break up in early 1980. This interval with Betty opened my eyes; I knew that I needed a woman in my life and knew also that there were women out there who needed a man. Subsequently, I began dating other women and got to know quite a few of them. Then, on Thanksgiving weekend of 1982, I met the one I had been looking for.

Lilian and I went on a Sierra Club ski trip with a group from the Long Beach and Orange County area to the Clair Tappaan Sierra Club Ski Lodge near Donner Pass, in the Lake Tahoe area. On Thanksgiving day I was watching several people who were playing cards when they asked me if I would like to join them. I immediately accepted, particularly since one of the players was a beautiful blonde I just had to get to know. We each introduced ourselves; it turned out that the beautiful blonde was named Joan Reasoner and that she lived in Concord (wherever that was) and that she and her friends had driven up to the lodge for the weekend from the San Francisco area. She didn't tell me, but somehow I knew that she was also a teacher.

Quite by accident (or was it?), Joan was in front of me the next morning in the checkout line for ski equipment. She and her friends were going snowshoeing and, in spite of my cracking a corny joke ("What do you get when you cross an ape and a computer? Answer: You get a Hairy Reasoner."), Joan invited me to come with them instead of the cross-country skiing I had planned. That was all the invitation I needed, we spent the day together, had dinner together that evening, went snowshoeing again and, when the group from my bus went to Truckee for Saturday night dancing, Joan came along.

From then on I was putty in her hands. We exchanged addresses and phone numbers and I promised I would write to her. I also suggested that I could fly up to see her during her Christmas vacation. Of course, Joan didn't believe any of this, it was a weekend fling that would soon be forgotten. I lived 400 miles away and it was too much of a commute to carry on any kind of romance. Little did she know.

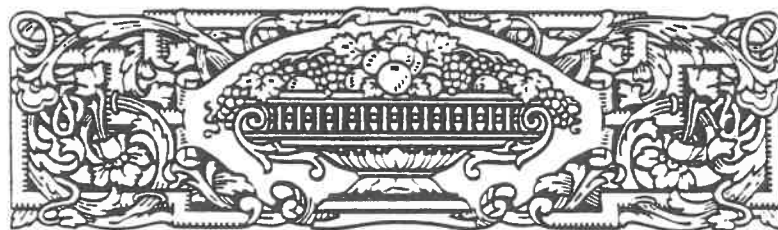
I wrote to Joan twice in the next week, including two poems I had written especially for her, and also spoke to her twice on the telephone. We finally worked out a time during Christmas vacation when I could visit so I made plane reservations and made arrangements for Joan to pick me up at the Oakland airport. She confessed later that she wondered if she would recognize me. We had a delightful three days together before I returned south to spend Christmas with my family. I was a teenager again, going through all the ecstasy of being in love. Bill picked me up at the Los Angeles airport and made a detour to Doctors' Hospital in Lakewood, presumably to see his fiancée, Kim. Much to my surprise he escorted me to the maternity ward where I discovered that Lynette had given birth to Jessica.

In January of 1983 I made a momentous decision; I decided to move to Concord to be near Joan. This meant leaving Bill and Barbara alone in the house in Lakewood where they would have to fend for themselves. But Bill was almost 23 and Barbara was almost 19, time for them to be on their own anyway. Before I left, Barbara informed me that I was going to be a grandfather again. I was stunned when she told me it was she who was pregnant. This called for a meeting with Elaine and Lynette to apprise them of the situation and to see what needed to be done to make sure Barbara would have help when she needed it. They both assured me that Barbara would be given plenty of help so I went ahead with my plans to move to Concord. Barbara gave birth on July 22 of that year to Teresa and was fortunate to have her two sisters help her during the first few months.

When I moved to Concord it was my intention to find a trailer park in the area and park the motorhome there but it didn't quite work out that way. Instead, I moved in with Joan

and we began our life together. During that spring I asked Joan to marry me and she accepted. We went through all the preliminaries, blood tests, marriage licenses, bought the rings, etc., before summer so that we would be ready when the opportunity presented itself. That time came on June 28; we had been camping in the mountains east of Sonora and decided to see if there was anyone in Sonora who could perform the ceremony. We checked in the county offices and found that the county clerk was available and would be happy to marry us that afternoon. We hurried back to camp to change clothes, get the rings and license, and rushed back to Sonora. Thus it was that at about 4 P.M. on June 28, 1983 our marriage began.

Since my marriage to Joan several additional changes have taken place in the family. In 1985 Bill received his bachelor's degree in engineering from the University of California at Long Beach and obtained a position as an engineer with a local firm. Then, on June 14, 1986 another member was added to the family when Bill married Kim Insley. Since then Bill has changed jobs, he and Kim now live in Rancho Cucamonga.



EPILOGUE

As we grow older life takes on a different meaning. We are able to focus more clearly on the events of our past and zero in on some of our triumphs and failures. Writing this journal has given me a clearer picture of where I came from and how I came to be my present self.

Most of this sentimental journey into the past was written during the Fall of 1987, as I was approaching my 65th birthday. There has been considerable modification and rewriting since that time in preparing this final edition.

The journal describes my life up to the time I met Joan and moved to Concord. It does not cover the period following that move except for changes in the family situation such as graduations, weddings, and births. My life since then has been full, with time to do so many things I like doing.

The move to Concord required a major adjustment; for the first time since I married Terry I am living a considerable distance from my children. It has been a reverse empty nest syndrome; even after five years I miss their companionship and being able to share my thoughts with them.

MILEPOSTS

January 16, 1923	My date of birth
February, 1928	Started school
October, 1932	Went to live in Scotland
November, 1933	Returned from Scotland
February, 1937	Started high school
June, 1941	Graduated from high school
November, 1942	Entered military service
January, 1946	Left military service
September, 1946	Started college
October, 1946	Met Terry
June 14, 1947	Married Terry
May 11, 1948	Elaine's birth date
June, 1950	Received Bachelor of Science degree from University of Massachusetts
February 2, 1951	Jim's date of birth
June, 1951	Received Master of Education degree from Springfield College
September, 1951	Started first teaching position at Williamstown, Massachusetts
September, 1953	Accepted counseling position at Hudson, New Hampshire
September, 1954	Moved to California, started teaching at South Gate Junior High School
September, 1956	Moved to Florida
September, 1958	Returned to California and South Gate Junior High School
February 29, 1960	Bill's birth date
July 25, 1961	Lynette's birth date
February 1, 1964	Moved into house on Briercrest
March 30, 1964	Barbara's birth date
June 14, 1972	Celebrated 25th wedding anniversary with Terry

June 23, 1972

July 27, 1974

January 2, 1975

July 22, 1975

January 13, 1977

December 16, 1980

June, 1981

July 10, 1982

November, 1982

December 22, 1982

June 28, 1983

July 22, 1983

January 13, 1984

July 23, 1984

June 14, 1986

Elaine's marriage to
Walter Pacholka

Jim's marriage to Pam Brodeur

Date of Dad Laird's death

Date of Terry's death

Matthew's birth date

Jennifer's birth date

Retired from teaching

Lynette's marriage to
David Szandzik

Met Joan

Jessica's birth date

Married Joan

Teresa's birth date

Date of Mother Laird's death

Eric's birth date

Bill's marriage to Kim Insley

FAMILY HEALTH HISTORY

We were a family that was disgustingly healthy. To the best of my knowledge there have been no hereditary illnesses in the family that might reoccur in later generations.

As noted earlier my paternal grandparents died at an early age; I have no information as to the cause of their deaths. My maternal grandparents both had long lives and apparently were illness free. Both of my parents also had long lives and had no illnesses other than those brought on by aging. The only illness I am aware of on my mother's side is Mother's sister, Lillian, who died of tuberculosis at about age 40.

Terry also had good health. Her early death was one of those freaks; even the doctors weren't certain why it happened. The diagnosis was myocarditis brought on by a virus. About a year prior to her death she had gone through a complete medical examination and there were no indications of heart problems, or any other problems. Terry's mother had polio as a young adult; other than that there were no medical problems on her side of the family that I am aware of.

My own health has also been good. I had the usual childhood diseases, with no complications: measles, chicken pox, scarlet fever. I also had pneumonia and a touch of rickets as a child, and mumps as a young adult. Other than that my life has been a healthy one.

EVENTS WHICH HELPED SHAPE MY LIFE

The historical event which had the most impact on my life was undoubtedly World War II. I had graduated from high school as a very immature 18 year old in 1941, the same year the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. As a consequence of this bombing I was outraged and ready immediately to strike back. I entered the service a year later and was immediately in a new world. Boys my age were thrown together with older, mature men from all walks of life; this hastened the maturation process for all of us. The war also gave me a feeling of belonging; we were all in this together and had a common goal, to defeat an enemy who had the audacity to attack us. Three other events, all tragic, also had a strong impact on my life, the assassinations of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, and then Robert Kennedy. Until these tragic occurrences I had not been a politically aware person, President Kennedy's death changed that. I was stunned and suddenly aware that a great leader had been taken from us, a leader who had only begun to make changes in the social conscience of people, myself included. The assassination of King and then Robert Kennedy a short time later helped to consolidate my political beliefs so that now I am a very staunch Democrat whereas earlier I had been an undeclared moderate.

IMPORTANT PEOPLE

This journal wouldn't be complete without giving credit to a number of people who had a tremendous impact on my life. They were all there to provide a helping hand at a time when I was much in need of one.

Georgia Foster, for one; during my last two years of high school I desperately needed someone to help me find myself. She was there to provide that help and was a very positive influence. At the same time my Chemistry teacher, Lester Aldrich, provided me with the inspiration to enter teaching; without him as a role model I doubt that teaching would have occurred to me. With the advent of World War II it would be ten years before this goal would be realized.

Another very important person in my life was Mary O'Brien. As my department chairperson when I first started teaching at South Gate Junior High School she was the first to recognize my potential as a teacher and to help me develop that potential. Her leadership helped me to become a leader also in the years that followed.

Last, but not least, my first wife, Terry, had a profound influence on me. She was so steady and so even-tempered that whenever my life needed an anchor she was there to help. With her by my side I had to succeed.

FAVORITE PEOPLE

An interesting character I recall from my childhood was a man named Dan Love. He was the night watchman at a knitting mill in Worcester where I had some of my paper customers. Dan was a jolly type of person, always good natured, always singing, mostly Gilbert and Sullivan, when he wasn't busy observing the comings and goings of the employees at the mill. At the time I knew him, 1935 or so, he was a man of about 70, robust but with a handicap, he had a stump where his right forearm should have been. Apparently this handicap didn't deter him, he also had a small dairy farm in Auburn and did all the work himself. One summer day I rode my bike out to visit him on this farm and was made to feel like a member of the family. Dan also introduced me to the music of Gilbert and Sullivan; he was in the chorus of a local light opera group and was able to wangle me a ticket to the dress rehearsal for "HMS Pinafore." This was my first exposure to musical theater, another life-long love affair.

ON BECOMING AN ADULT

One doesn't become an adult overnight. It is an on-going process that begins somewhere in childhood and progresses through a number of stages until adulthood is in full bloom. For some the transition is painless; such was not the case with me. To make this transition I needed to look beyond myself and the petty self-centered interests that consumed me in high school and become aware of the needs and feelings of others. This process began for me in high school but was not complete for several years after my marriage to Terry. She gave me a great deal of help with her patience and love and understanding.

At the same time that one is growing up there is the need to always retain part of the child. The ability to have fun is so important in keeping a proper perspective. This aspect of living I have tried to maintain through thick and thin throughout my life.

THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A PARENT

Now that my children are adults, I take a great deal of pleasure in knowing that they are decent, conscientious people. When they were young I didn't give much thought to what kind of adults they would become; I guess I took it for granted that they would grow up to be good. Now, in looking at the present generation of parents and the problems they have as parents, I'm grateful that my children were raised in another era. Although they are far from perfect, they didn't have the same temptations that the modern generation has. This undoubtedly made raising them a much simpler task than it would be now.

THE WORST THING ABOUT BEING A PARENT

My children may not believe this, but having to discipline them when they misbehaved was difficult for me. Their behavior, most of the time, was probably better than mine had been at the same age and they were punished for things that I probably wouldn't have been punished for. I think I was trying to create a better standard of behavior in them than had been my own situation. If they talked back, or didn't pick up after themselves, I came down on them hard, usually sending them to their room, occasionally a swat or two. I know they didn't appreciate it at the time, perhaps they do now. Whether or not they agree with me on the need for firm discipline, I still believe in it. If I were to do it all over again my approach might be different, psychologically, but the firmness would still be there.

ROADS NOT TAKEN

I have often thought about what life would have been like had I not had the opportunity to go to college. My childhood had been one in which we lived on the fringe of poverty; we always had clothes on our backs and food on the table but we had no frills. We didn't own a car or have parties or other lavish affairs. Going to college wasn't even discussed. I had no skills, was not very mechanical, even if I had been an airplane mechanic in the service; my only plus was my ability to absorb knowledge from books, if I was motivated.

On the other hand, as I look back now I can think of other things I might have enjoyed doing if I had prepared for something other than teaching in college. One of my life-long loves has been baseball, in spite of my lack of skills; I believe I would have enjoyed a career in which I was associated in some way with the sport. Umpiring is one possibility, I would have been as close as one can get to the sport and not need the physical skills; another possibility would have been as a sports broadcaster. Which brings up another alternative; another of my life-long loves has been big band music. In listening to programs which play this type of music I have often thought I would have enjoyed being a disc jockey on such a program.

Recently, as I look back on my teaching career and realize what my present interests and skills are, I feel that I should not have been teaching mathematics but instead should have been teaching English, literature and poetry in particular. This is where my present day skills and interests lie; apparently they have been latent and would have emerged sooner if I had been teaching them.

RANDOM MEMORIES

When we lived in Leicester, before I started school, my parents had friends, Joe and Dora Paul, who lived down the road from them in an early version of a mobile home. To me it looked like an old street car or a remodeled diner. On occasion, during the early thirties, we kids would stop in to see this couple if we happened to wander into the area and spend the day exploring the woods or ponds near their home. One time Jack and I camped in the woods behind them, my first backpacking type experience. Our tent was a piece of mattress ticking that Mother had provided. Needless to say, it wasn't waterproof, when it rained on us we got soaked and ended up spending the night at the Pauls'.

Further out in the woods behind the Pauls' was an old shack where a hermit lived. Shorty actually lived off the land. He trapped and skinned rabbits, woodchucks, and other small animals and caught huge snapping turtles from the ponds. On one occasion he had a turtle hanging from a tree to drain after he killed it; when we went close to examine the turtle Shorty cautioned us to keep our hand away from its jaw as it could still snap our hand off in reflex action. He demonstrated this by pushing a stick into the turtle's open mouth; as he had indicated the jaw snapped shut breaking the stick in two. I was fascinated by his cabin and had many future fantasies about living in the woods in a cabin of my own.

There were some incidents in my life that don't seem to have a logical place in the story but yet seem important enough to include. One such incident involved Lilian and a crib. Jack and I shared a bedroom, Lilian was in a separate room still in a crib. As boys will be boys, Jack and I started jumping up and down on our bed to see how high we could bounce. In the midst of this we heard a tremendous crash

from Lilian's room; apparently she wanted to get into the act and had started jumping up and down in her crib. Unfortunately, the crib wasn't built as sturdily as our bed and collapsed after several hard landings. I can't recall any punishment for this but I'm certain it brought on the razor strap.

Another incident involves a walk that Lilian and I took. This must have taken place after we returned from Scotland in 1933 as we had our dog, Prinnie, with us. One sunny summer morning we left home to take a walk and ended up in Leicester Center, about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from home. By the time we arrived there it was late afternoon; we were stopped by a local policeman who asked our names and where we lived. As he wasn't able to contact our parents the policeman decided that his best solution to get us back home was to put us on a bus at his own expense. We didn't object as we had begun to realize it was later than we thought. He loaded us into his car to take us to a bus stop and immediately Prinnie threw up, all over his upholstery. I'm sure he was convinced that it doesn't pay to be a nice guy.

Another experience I remember vividly is my venture into shoplifting, at age 11-12. Some of my "friends" had become quite adept at the art and took me under their wings to show me the ropes. I learned quickly and returned home at night with my pockets bulging with plunder from local five and dimes: rings and other jewelry, fishing tackle, and knives. I never saw the stuff again as each night Mother went through my pockets and removed the swag. What she did with it I don't know, years later she told me about it. I question why she didn't take me back to the stores to return the stolen items; this would have been a more satisfactory solution than just taking them away with no comment.

HALLOWEEN

When I was a child Halloween was a big event. No "Trick or Treat" for us; Halloween was "party time." As young children we would make the rounds of neighborhood parties, sometimes at a house nearby, other times at a church, wearing homemade costumes as witches or pirates or such. We would bob for apples, with coins in some of them, or try to eat an apple suspended on a string. Then there would be cider to drink and other goodies to eat.

When we became teenagers parties became kid stuff; unless we crashed a party we weren't invited to. It was more exciting going around the neighborhood creating other action such as stealing back door steps or tipping over outhouses, all in fun of course. Many times we lit bonfires with our collected swag and heckled the firemen when they came to put them out. On one occasion we started a fire at the bottom of a long hill and while the fire trucks were attacking that fire lit another at the top of the hill.

Somehow, things are saner now (and safer). Kids going around the neighborhood "trick or treating" stay out of trouble for the most part, except when some ghoul laces an apple with razor blades or some other harmful substance. For my own children and grandchildren I'm glad it's safer; but I can't help wondering "Are they having any fun?"

SATURDAYS

Saturday meant a day home from school; no work, no chores, all play. Many Saturdays were spent exploring Worcester and its surroundings. Either Jack and I or Lilian and I, and sometimes all three, would take off on a Saturday morning and wander, sometimes with a particular destination in mind, sometimes aimlessly. We knew most sections of Worcester by heart. Many times we didn't return home until late in the afternoon.

During the winter we would seek out the local park, usually Elm Park, to check out the ice skating conditions, or if there was snow, search for a hill with little traffic to go sledding. (We called it sliding.) If the weather was bad we played indoors. One house we lived in (Dudley Place) had an enormous closet. Lilian and I used it many times as a playhouse and played for hours at a time, either house or store, or pretending the closet was a car, using a wind-up gramophone (phonograph) as the car engine.

Until I was twelve I didn't attend movies, it was my Dad's belief that movies were sinful. He should see the current crop if he thought the old ones were bad. After I was 12 the objection must have been removed because I began to attend movies; many Saturday afternoons were spent in this fashion, usually watching two westerns and a serial.

SUMMERS

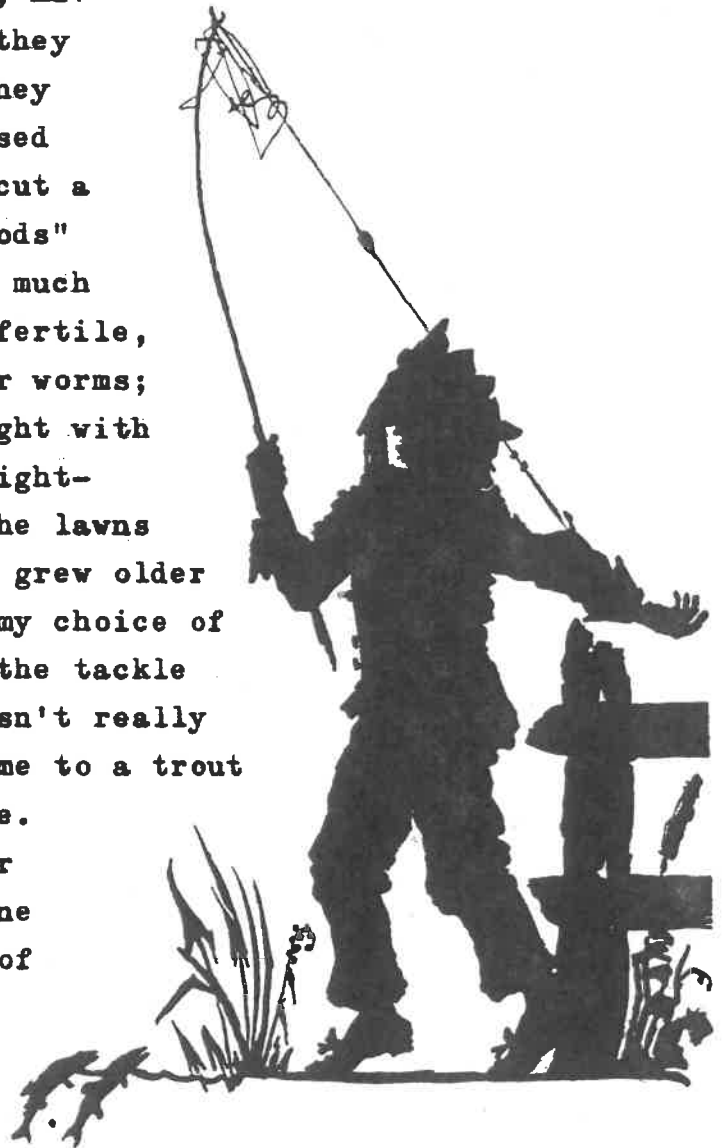
Summer time, when I was a boy, was like two months of Saturdays. All that time to play was incredible, and the weather was usually good. Some days were spent at Coes' Pond, swimming; on other days we might play baseball at the park or go to White City Park, if Mother had enough money to take us. We didn't go on vacation trips as a few of the other families in the neighborhood did but we didn't need to; as far as we were concerned we were already on vacation. We also hadn't experienced anything else. My only experience with "vacation trips" were the summers I lived with the Fosters in Lancaster. They rented a cottage at Salisbury Beach each summer so I was able to realize that type of vacation with them.

After Terry and I were married we took regular vacation trips during the summer. At first, most of them were a week or two in duration, generally camping trips. Later, as our financial picture became more settled we took longer trips, frequently for the entire summer. As were the earlier trips, they were mostly camping, or trailering, to scenic locations with good fishing.

In reflection, I am thankful for those summers. I was able to spend considerable time with my children, time that has formed a strong bond between us, much stronger than my bond to my parents. Spending summers with them was one of the joys of having children and also one of the perks of being a teacher. I often chided teacher friends who worked every summer; at the time they felt they needed additional income for some expense or other, I think now they might agree with me. They were halcyon days.

FISHING

I first started fishing as a young boy. Jack and I found many small lakes and ponds around Worcester; most of them contained fish. Generally, they were what we would now call pan fish, mostly blue gills, kivers, and yellow perch; if they were longer than our hand they were considered huge. We used a throw line, sometimes we cut a pole; more sophisticated "rods" and reels didn't come until much later. If we could find a fertile, loamy place we would dig for worms; sometimes we went out at night with flashlights and collected night-crawlers, frequently from the lawns around City Hospital. As I grew older I became more selective in my choice of the fish I caught and also the tackle used to catch them but I wasn't really hooked until a friend took me to a trout stream when I was in college. Since then I have fished for many species of fish but none has compared to the thrill of trout fishing on a mountain stream. I became, with practice, quite proficient at fly fishing and knowledgeable about the kind of water to fish. Through the years I have been moderately successful and to this day find any time spent on a stream seeking the elusive trout a most relaxing and enjoyable time for me.



BACKPACKING

Generally speaking, I like to be around people. There are times, however, when I want to get away and enjoy solitude. On these occasions, if I'm able, I make a pack mule out of myself and head into the wilderness. The first day or two, realizing that I'm not built like a pack mule, I question my sanity. Once I arrive in the wilderness I find that I'm at peace with myself and with the rest of the world; everything seems tranquil and serene, all problems except the day to day ones of coping with the environment are behind me.

At one time there had to be good fishing at the end of the trail; in recent years this has become secondary to the contented feeling of being able to commune with nature on her terms and to enjoy the sounds of silence.

I have been fortunate in having a family that also enjoyed the wilderness and has shared many of these excursions with me. These have been happy times. Backpacking sojourns are becoming shorter and less frequent as I grow older but it is still one of my favorite activities. I have even managed to get Joan into the act; she has accompanied me on several backpacks in the few years we have been married and seems to enjoy them.

My first backpacking experience was in 1962 with Jim and a scouting friend of his, Bobby Hobbs. We hiked to Blaney Meadows on the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River, above Florence Lake. Our equipment was very primitive; our backpacks were packboards which I had made from a pattern in a magazine. Our packs and sleeping bags were tied to this frame. We had no tent with us; fortunately, the weather was good; all our cooking was over an open fire, the food was the dried variety carried in the markets of that era.

This first backpack was followed in succeeding years with at least one per year, frequently more than one. The early trips were all in California, many of them in Sequoia National Park to one of our favorite areas, the Middle Fork of the Kaweah River. In time we modernized our equipment and were able to plan better and longer trips. We also extended our horizons to other states: Oregon, Nevada, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming.

The most ambitious trip I have taken was the one with Bill, Lynette, and Barbara in 1976 into the Bob Marshall Wilderness in Montana. We covered a total of 39 miles in rugged country and had stormy weather for a good part of it. Since then, I have taken a trip that was longer, but not as difficult; in 1981 I hiked from west to east across the Sierra with a Sierra Club group, a total of 56 miles.

I can recall only two backpacks in which Elaine took part. The first one was in Yosemite where we hiked from Tuolumne Meadows to a lake several ridges away. I think this was also Barbara's first, and if memory serves me correctly she was six at the time, which would set the year at 1970. Barbara struggled up to the first pass and then almost ran down the other side. I'm sure Elaine remembers the bear that came into camp our first night and her praying to God, "Lord, if You're going to take me, take me now."

Elaine's other backpack trip was after she and Wally were married. We hiked out from Mineral King on a Labor Day weekend and had to leave after one night when it began to snow.

Barbara's last backpack with me was in Wyoming; we packed in from Elkhart Park to Pole Creek Crossing. There were many mosquitoes the first night but from then on we had no problems. This was Ebony's first backpack, she was eight months old at the time.

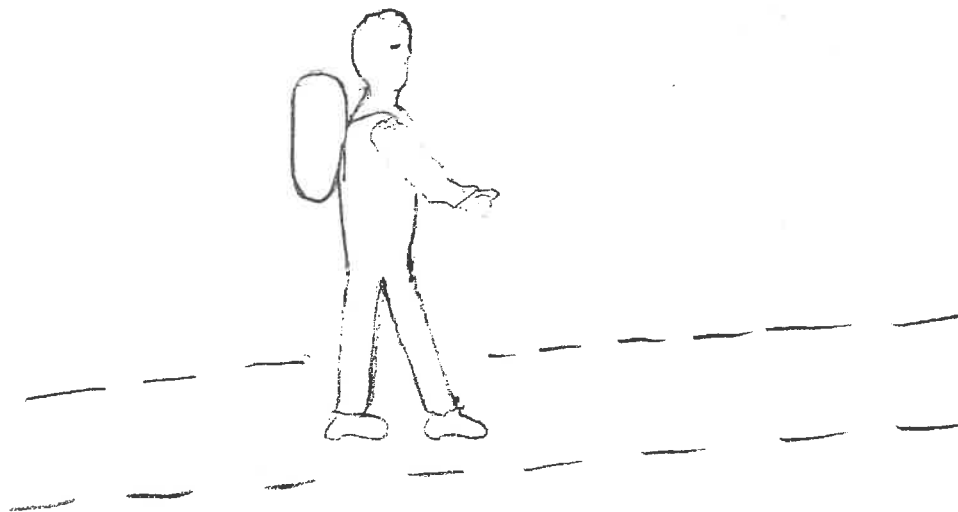
FREDDIE THE WANDERER

All my life I've been a wanderer. From the time I wandered off with the neighbor girl in Leicester when I was a toddler, to chasing fire engines as a five year old, and on through childhood I was ready to go anywhere, anytime.

Jack, or Lilian, and I walked all over Worcester and its surrounding towns long before we were teenagers; it seemed we could walk for miles and never get tired. As mentioned elsewhere it was about three miles from the center of Worcester to the outskirts in each direction and at one time or another we explored all of them, on foot. Later, I did the same on a bicycle, extending my horizons even further.

I bought my first bike when I was about 12, from a boy I knew in school; it cost me \$4, which was a lot of money in those days. As I recall, it was a piece of junk; everything on it was loose and rattled, the gears skipped, the brakes didn't work, the tires leaked. None of this deterred me from riding it all over town. My second bike, a new one, cost \$18; I paid for it on the installment plan. The first trip on this bike was a dandy; I rode from Worcester to Webster and back, 36 miles round trip. That's one time I remember having sore muscles, and a sore rump. Another bike trip I recall was with friends, to go berrying in Leicester. There were long hills to climb, all on one speed bikes, and then those same hills to negotiate on our return. On one of the hills the chain on my bike came off, which left me with no brakes (remember the older bicycles had coaster brakes, not hand brakes). I had no choice but to zoom down the hill at top speed and continue up the other side until I slowed enough to stop myself. What excitement!

Things didn't change once I owned an automobile; I had even more horizens to explore. A back road always seems to beckon, although I admit to some timidity when the road looks rough or sandy. It seems as if there is always a new frontier for me, some road that leads to the end of a rainbow. I am still ready to go at the drop of a hat.



Have Pack, Will Travel

ON RETIREMENT

When I retired in 1981 at age 58 I was ready for retirement. I had lost the desire to teach, and found that going to school each morning was getting to be more and more of a drag. This affected my temperament and, consequently, my teaching. I was irritable and hard to get along with both in school and at home. I found myself completing a week on Friday exhausted, coming home to rest up over the weekend so that I could repeat the process the following week. This, coupled with the fact that the school itself had undergone many changes during the past few years, and was a more difficult place to teach, made retirement sound inviting. I discussed this with the family during the Fall of 1980 and when I mentioned that I was considering retirement the next June they encouraged me to go for it. I have never regretted it.

The transition from working to retirement was an easy one, perhaps because I was due to start summer vacation anyway and the only change would be that I would continue my vacation in the Fall. I don't have a large income but I have a feeling of freedom which I have never before had in my life. I can go where I want when I want, with due consideration of the effect this will have on others. If I choose to stay in bed in the morning, which I rarely do, I can do just that; I find that since marrying Joan my arising time has gradually become later so that now I generally arise between 7:30 and 8 A.M. instead of 6:30 to 7.

Would I recommend early retirement to others? The only way to answer this question is to suggest that each person has to look inside himself and decide if he can be content doing so. I have been extremely content, particularly since I married Joan and her subsequent retirement at age 55. But I am a person who can keep busy, I'm a doer; possibly this is the answer.

THOUGHTS ON AGING AND DYING

Mourning is for people who have reached an age when they can no longer do the things they have always wanted to do and haven't done them. Unfortunately, there are many people who fit this mold; fortunately, I'm not one of them. My life has been full, I have had the opportunity to do many things and have made the best of those opportunities. Although I expect to do many more things in my lifetime, I look forward to the rest of my life as a gradual slowing down and will have few regrets about what might have been. My only regret now is that I didn't have a longer time to spend with Terry, but then I never would have met Joan.

In spite of the positive attitude expressed above I do have several concerns about aging. One of these concerns is the realization that, unless I go suddenly, I will reach a stage where my faculties have declined to such an extent that I will be too feeble to cope for myself and will need to depend almost entirely on others to take care of my basic needs.

The other major concern is the cost of all this care and whether I will have the finances at the time to pay for it. As Joan and I have gone through the process of finding care for her mother we have been appalled at the costs of these services and the rate at which these costs have been rising. Our income, even now, is far from adequate to pay these costs.

At present I have a philosophical attitude toward dying; I have already lived a full life, any more is a bonus. Perhaps, as I get older, this attitude will change and I will develop some fears; as of now I don't have them.

MARCHING TO A DIFFERENT DRUMMER

In many ways I have been out of step with the ordinary all my life. As a boy I had poor coordination, was small for my age, and was not good at athletics. I was also a bookworm and, until high school, a good student. I had a tendency to be somewhat arrogant towards other boys who were not as smart as I, and constantly irked them when I corrected their mistakes. (This latter trait followed me through high school and into the military, and was frequently a cause for displeasure among my peers.)

Because of these quirks in my personality I didn't get along well with other boys; most of them were interested in sports and little else, books and other such foolishness were way down on their list. They thought I was a sissy and constantly tried to provoke me into a fight which they knew I couldn't win. My big mouth and quick temper also caused this problem from time to time. In high school I tried to compensate for some of my physical shortcomings by trying to be the class clown. This led to my having problems with my studies and eventually to my quitting school at 16.

These childhood experiences have had a lasting effect on my approach to life. For one thing, I had to recognize my failings and take steps to correct them. I couldn't overcome my athletic deficiencies but I eventually did become better coordinated and was able to compete to my own satisfaction. My bookishness I have been able to turn into an asset, but along with it I have had to learn to curb my tendency to correct others, and to accept people for what they are. As an adult there are still men I don't get along with, men who look at me as a skinny old geezer whose opinion they don't want to hear. Most of these men fall into one of two classifications to me: macho super jocks and/or rednecks. I have

little use for them either; perhaps their arrogance turns me off. Most people I get along well with don't fall into either of these categories.

One other thing I have discovered about myself is that I'm a person who always needs a close relationship with someone and know that I'm loved. This is why much of my early life, and also the years after Terry died, were so empty emotionally; I had noone to be close to. I never felt I had strong emotional ties with anyone until I married Terry, and then later, Joan. My kids were great following Terry's death, and I think understanding, but with the exception of Lynette I didn't feel that I was receiving any emotional support from them.

THE OUTDOOR ETHIC

Living with and enjoying the outdoors has been a big part of my life. Tenting, trailering, and now motorhoming, as well as backpacking have been a means of living as close to the outdoors as possible. With this enjoyment has emerged a philosophy that goes far beyond mere enjoyment; this philosophy includes an awareness of and an obligation toward all aspects of the environment. I have come to realize that wilderness is not something we can take for granted. There are many forces in this nation who see other uses for the land and will wish to develop it without any thought of the despoilation they will create. I consider myself a temporary steward of the land I use; proper application of this stewardship involves my commitment to ensure that future generations will also be able to enjoy this important part of our national heritage.

It is my hope that my children and other descendants will also develop a strong awareness of the vulnerability of the earth to the impact of mankind. Some of them do not, at present, have this awareness; unless they can develop it, and prevail on friends to join with them, Mother Earth will in time become barren; there won't be any wildness to enjoy. They will need to take a strong stand and be ready to do battle when commercial or other development tries to encroach on this wild land we love.

PHILOSOPHICAL RAMBLINGS

I have strong convictions which are at variance with some of my friends and family, convictions which are difficult to express but nevertheless are deeply felt. Most of these convictions concern social issues and the way in which people respond to them. To me it's a matter of establishing priorities and having the determination to execute them.

For the past several decades this country has been on a course which seems hell-bent toward destruction. This course has seen us pouring billions into a military establishment which is obsolescent as soon as the money is spent, and by so doing sacrificing other aspects of our lives which are at least as important as the military. I'm not opposed to a strong defense, nor am I opposed to war, when it's justified but I cry out for more of a balance than we presently have.

Two aspects which have recently been grossly neglected are: first, the great social programs which were begun in the sixties; and second, the programs which were started to protect our environment. I can see a strong reason why these two have been neglected, neither will bring a profit into the hands of big business. If nothing else, our conscience should tell us there is more to the quality of life than a profit.

A bumper sticker I saw recently asked the question, "How can you prepare for war and peace at the same time?" Is there an answer to the question? Take away the profit factor from the permanent business and how many manufacturers would stay in the business, even in war time? We have prepared for war a thousand-fold, let's now prepare for peace. To do so means a complete revamping of the philosophy of our leaders; let them listen to others besides the power brokers.

There will also need to be much restructuring of the thinking employed by our middle income group, as this is the group that is the largest voting bloc in the country. I am concerned that many in this group have forgotten their humble origins and now seem to have only one interest: the accumulation of wealth and material possessions. Everyone who has worked hard has earned the right to accumulate some material wealth but again there has to be a proper balance between what's good for the individual and what's good for society.

SUMMER SOJOURNS

During the period from 1959 through 1980 we took many long summer trips. Some of these were cross-country, others were mainly in the West. The following pages are a synopsis of logs describing these trips. Some years are missing as we apparently didn't keep a record every year.

1959: Terry, Fred, Elaine - 11, Jim - 8

I worked most of this summer at a Johns-Manville roofing factory in South Gate. Then in late summer we took a trip to Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks in Utah. Shortly after we arrived at Zion Jim fell off a log and broke his right arm; as there were no medical facilities in the park we had to retrace our steps to St. George, Utah to find a hospital which could x-ray his arm and put it in a cast. This didn't phase Jim, he learned to fish left-handed. In between our stops at Zion and Bryce Canyon we camped at Panguitch Lake, which at that time had superb trout fishing. On our way home we stopped for a few days at Round Valley Lake, near Greenville, California to try the bass fishing. Fishing was poor. From Round Valley we returned home by way of Lake Tahoe, the June Lake loop, and highway 395.

1960: Terry, Fred, Elaine - 12, Jim - 9, Bill - 6 months
No records were kept but this year I went to summer school at San Jose State College. While in San Jose we lived in an old fraternity house that was scheduled for demolition. Both San Jose and the college were in the midst of redevelopment and expansion so Elaine and Jim had a ball exploring the derelict buildings around us that were destined for destruction. They found many items of interest that someone had left behind, including an old bicycle. Following the session at school we toured the northern part of California, including Lassen National Park.

1963: Terry, Fred, Elaine - 15, Jim - 12, Bill - 3
Lynette - 2

Again, no records but this summer I attended Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey. We rented a campsite at a resort on Panther Lake in Andover, about 50 miles from the campus. I spent the week in a dormitory on campus and joined the family on weekends. Meanwhile, the family enjoyed the sun and swimming at the lake. This was our first summer with a trailer, a 15 foot Aljoa.

1965: Terry, Fred, Elaine - 17, Jim - 14, Bill - 5,
Lynette - 4, Barbara - 1½

Beginning with this summer an adequate log was kept each year. This log showed that we took several trips during the summer. We started out in June traveling to Arizona and then intended to go north following the Continental Divide. This didn't work out as planned; we explored the south rim of the Grand Canyon for several days and then headed north through Indian country. We soon realized that our old car wasn't up to making the trip we had planned so we returned home. Upon reaching home we ordered a new car, our first new vehicle, a 1965 Chevrolet Carryall. (This same vehicle is now called a Suburban.) While waiting for it to arrive we spent two weeks at Cedar Grove in Kings Canyon National Park. This led to the discovery by us of the Middle Fork of the Kaweah River and its excellent fishing. We have returned to this river many times for early summer backpacks.

After the arrival of our new toy we took a 3½ week trip to Oregon and Washington. We spent part of the time at Wallowa State Park and the Imnaha River, both in Oregon, then went on to Mount Rainier National Park in Washington where it was so cloudy we never did see the mountain. From there we

made our way south, mostly along the coast, with a stop at San Francisco for a few days before heading home.

1966: Terry, Fred, Elaine - 18, Jim - 15, Bill - 6,
Lynette - 5, Barbara - 2½

Another summer with me going back to school brought us to Chicago where I attended Illinois Institute of Technology. On the way to Illinois we visited the Air Force Academy and the Royal Gorge, and drove the "Million Dollar" highway, all in Colorado.

We set up camp at Lake Eliza Resort near Valparaiso, Indiana, about 50 miles from Chicago. It was a very untidy, disorganized campground with poor facilities but we made ourselves comfortable. We put out the awning and side room that up to now we had not made full use of, bought a small refrigerator and installed it in this side room. As in the summer in New Jersey I lived in a dormitory during the week and joined the family on weekends. Our stay in this area was for eight weeks, during which time Elaine got a job in the snack bar and Jim had a short-lived job tending the paddle boats. The others enjoyed the beach and water as well as the small zoo and a tree house.

One of the strange experiences the family enjoyed was watching a large sand truck roll down the beach into the water. All that could be seen was the top of the cab. Apparently, the driver had come to dump the sand on the beach and had left the truck to get a cup of coffee, forgetting to set the hand brake. After leaving Lake Eliza we toured the Black Hills and Mount Rushmore areas and then drove through Rocky Mountain National Park on our way home. This was the last summer that Elaine was to accompany us.

1967: Terry, Fred, Jim - 16, Bill - 7, Lynette - 6,
Barbara - 3

We spent the first month of the summer on a trip to Colorado. Our travels took us through Albuquerque, New Mexico then north to the Conejos River near Antonito, Colorado. We camped at Elk Creek campground for a week of fishing and hummingbird watching before moving on to the Rio Grande River where we fished and camped on both the main river and the South Fork for another week. Before returning home we explored Mesa Verde National Park in southwestern Colorado and then the Glen Canyon Dam in northern Arizona. At Mesa Verde three year old Barbara climbed all the ladders with ease to the astonishment of many adults. After ten days at home we enjoyed a week at Cedar Grove in Kings Canyon National Park, then in mid-August took a short trip to Baja which we didn't enjoy.

1968: Terry, Fred, Jim - 17, Bill - 8, Lynette - 7,
Barbara - 4

During the Spring we bought a larger trailer, a 19 foot Aristocrat Landliner, completely self-contained; this made our summer travels much more comfortable. This summer saw us take another cross-country trip. We traveled straight through to Arkansas where we spent a few days in Cotter City so that Jim and I could fish the White River. Although this river had been highly acclaimed we were not very successful. Following this stop we moved on to Kentucky where we toured Mammoth Caves National Park which included a four mile hike through the caves in which Barbara found a light switch and plunged everyone into darkness. Fortunately, the ranger located the switch quickly and restored the lights. Heading north from Kentucky we explored Harper's Ferry in Virginia then visited friends in Baltimore, Maryland before continuing on to Worcester.

After a three week stay in Worcester visiting the Blanchards and the Brooks we headed west. First, a visit with my brother, Jack, and his family in Rochester, New York and then a quick look at Niagara Falls before continuing on. Following a stop at Wind Caves National Park in Hot Springs, South Dakota we moved on to Yellowstone National Park for several days of camping and fishing at Fishing Bridge Campground. During the next few weeks we headed into Montana and discovered an area that became one of our favorites, the Missouri Headwaters State Monument near Three Forks. This is in an area where three rivers, the Gallatin, the Madison, and the Jefferson merge to form the Missouri. We were fortunate enough to meet another fisherman who took pride in showing me his favorite fishing holes; Jim and I took advantage of this situation and caught many nice trout. We also became acquainted with the caretaker, Buel Reed, and saw him often on subsequent trips. From here we headed home by way of Idaho, Nevada, and Highway 395 in California.

1969: Terry, Fred, Bill - 9, Lynette - 8, Barbara - 5
Penny, our beagle

This summer started with a ten day stay at Trinity Lake in northern California which included a nine mile round trip backpack up the Stuart Fork in the Salmon-Trinity Alps Wilderness. Following our stay at Trinity Lake we headed further north to explore the area around Mount Hood in Oregon. Here we took our second backpack of the summer, to mosquito infested Serene Lake, six miles round trip. It was a beautiful lake, the kids caught many salamanders, but the mosquitoes drove us out after two nights. We then continued north into Washington and, following a short visit with the Rorks in Long Beach, went on to Olympic National Park for a short stay. We hiked and explored this area, especially Hurricane Ridge, finding it very wet. We then

continued north into Canada for a glorious tour of the Canadian Rockies.

This section of Canada is one of the most beautiful areas I have ever seen. Loaded with national parks (Mount Revelstoke, Glacier, Yoho, Banff, Jasper), the scenery is spectacular and the weather that year was sparkling. We explored Lake Louise, took a snowmobile ride on the Columbia Ice Field, took a side trip to see the highest peak in Canada, Mount Robson, and saw Moraine Lake with its Valley of the Ten Peaks immediately after a snow storm.

We completed the summer with a return trip to Three Forks, Montana and Missouri Headwaters State Monument. After two weeks in this area we headed home through Idaho, with a stop at Craters of the Moon National Monument, a weirdly beautiful place. After one more stop, in California, at Milsap Bar on the Middle Fork of the Feather River we completed a marvelous summer. Jim didn't accompany us this summer, our first trip without him.

1970: Terry, Fred, Bill - 10, Lynette - 9, Barbara - 6
Penny

We returned to the Conejos River in Colorado and again camped at Elk Creek Campground. On our way Barbara came down with the mumps; a doctor in Albuquerque advised us to do nothing except keep her in bed. After a week of excellent fishing and some enjoyable experiences watching the hummingbirds at Elk Creek we moved on to more good fishing on the Rio Grande and then headed north to Aspen. We camped at Silver Bells Campground near the Maroon Bells and took several short hikes before moving on to Bogan Flats Campground on the Crystal River. Fishing in the river was slow but several of the small ponds nearby proved productive; we also explored the town of Marble which was the source of much of

the marble used in buildings in Washington, D.C., including the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. After a few days we moved further north to the White River and then to Dinosaur National Monument. In the meantime, Bill had come down with the mumps and had to remain in camp while we explored.

From here we moved north into Wyoming through Flaming Gorge Recreation Area and to Pinedale where we camped and fished the New Fork River. This was a very scenic area, with a beautiful campground and good fishing in the river. After several days on the New Fork we headed to Grand Teton National Park for a short time and then continued north into Montana for another stay at Missouri Headwaters. Jim was working on a ranch in the area and joined us frequently for meals and fishing, and to take our money playing cards. We stayed almost two weeks at Missouri Headwaters before moving on, first to Flathead Lake and then into Idaho and the Moyie River near Bonner's Ferry. We had several days of good fishing in this very scenic area before continuing our travels.

Our next stop was at Priest Lake where we camped at Reeder Bay Campground. It is a beautiful area with a good swimming beach; fishing in the lake was poor but we found good fishing nearby in Granite Creek. I had to rescue Penny from this creek; she had tried to cross in an area that was too swift for her and was swept under a fallen tree. While here we had a pleasant side trip by boat to the upper lake where we boat camped for several days. Fishing wasn't good but we had more than our share of blackberries. Also, Bill and Lynette had a try at water skiing with some boaters who stopped at our campsite on the upper lake. A week later we headed south to sample the good fishing at Boulder Creek and the swimming at Ponderosa State Park on Payette Lake. We then headed home by way of Twin Lakes and Bishop.

1971: Terry, Fred, Jim - 20, Bill - 11, Lynette - 10,
Barbara - 7, Penny & Candy (our two beagles)

We started out in June for a trip to revisit Florida before heading to Worcester. Jim joined us for this summer, his last before leaving the nest. Our first stop along the way was at Carlsbad Cavern in New Mexico, where we took an interesting three mile, three hour cave tour; we managed this without Barbara turning out any lights. In the evening we returned to see the bats emerge for their evening insect hunt. After leaving Carlsbad we continued on through Texas and Louisiana, stopped briefly in New Orleans then went on to Florida.

Our first Florida stop was at Everglades National Park where we camped for several days exploring the area, observing many birds and alligators; the mosquitoes were the worst we had ever experienced. From the Everglades we moved on to the Keys where we enjoyed the beach and fishing for a few days. Jim and I went on a fishing boat out of Key West and caught many red snapper, delicious eating. We next visited the Palmers in Eau Gallie (Mary Palmer had been Jim's kindergarten teacher), with a stop enroute at the Kennedy Space Center. Our main reason for coming to Florida was to visit friends in Eustis, where we had lived from 1956 to 1958. We stayed in Eustis for five days, during our stay both Bill and Lynette learned to water ski. Upon leaving Eustis we headed north, toured Saint Augustine, the oldest city in the United States, and then continued on to North Carolina.

In North Carolina we took a ferry to Cape Hatteras and stayed several days on Ocracoke and Hatteras Islands. We had intended to stay longer but the weather was bad. Before leaving Cape Hatteras we visited the Wright Brothers Memorial at Kitty Hawk and saw the hill from which they made their first flight. We left North Carolina and continued

north into Virginia where we toured some of the Civil War battlefields near Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. Our next stop was Washington, D.C. where we visited many of the historical sites: Arlington National Cemetery, Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument, Jefferson Monument, the Capitol Building, the Smithsonian Museum, and George Washington's home at Mount Vernon.

Following a two week stay in Worcester we headed west. We made a brief stop in Rochester, New York to visit Jack and Grace then continued on through Niagara and into Canada where we picked up the Trans-Canada Highway. We traversed the very scenic north shore of Lake Superior, through thick pine forests and past rushing streams and reentered the United States in Minnesota. We reached Montana a few days later and returned to our favorite place, Missouri Headwaters. After two weeks in this area, with some superb fishing and a side trip to Yellowstone, we left for home by way of Salt Lake City and Las Vegas. This was a very long trip, circling the United States as we did, and covered 10,520 miles.

1972: Terry, Fred, Bill - 12, Lynette - 11, Barbara - 8
Penny & Candy

We began the summer with Elaine's wedding to Wally Pacholka on June 23. Wally and Elaine did all the planning for their wedding and for the reception that followed and did a beautiful job.

The day after the wedding Terry and I took off for a week in Hawaii. I had carefully skimped and saved for six months, unknown to Terry, and presented her with this trip at a party celebrating our 25th wedding anniversary. It was a marvelous week, we stayed at the Outrigger East Hotel at Waikiki for four nights and followed this with two nights at the Islander Inn on the Kona Coast on Hawaii and a final night at the Hilo Travelodge.

We enjoyed the usual tourist bit on Oahu. We took the Punch-bowl tour which included a visit to Ernie Pyle's grave and Robert Louis Stevenson's grass hut, went to the Polynesian Cultural Center, which has six villages that comprise the various cultures of Polynesia, and the Kodak Hula Show in Waikiki Shell at Princess Kapualani Park. We also toured Pearl Harbor and the Arizona Memorial which is in memory of American lives lost during the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941. Also, while at Waikiki, we were able to enjoy the fabulous beach on several occasions and to take in a number of Hawaiian shows at night clubs.

One of the days at Kona Coast we went on a glass bottom boat to Kealahou Bay and visited Captain Cook's grave. We were transported to Hilo on a bus by way of Hawaii National Park and its still active Kilauea Crater. When we arrived home from our Hawaiian trip we discovered that the kids had papered our house to welcome us back. Thanks a lot, kids.

Following our return from this second honeymoon we began our annual summer sojourn. I had a three week session at the University of Nebraska to attend; we took two weeks to get there by way of the Conejos River in Colorado where again the fishing was good in spite of being hampered by rainy weather. In Nebraska we set up camp at Two Rivers Campground near Venice for my stay at the university; a very nice camp with both swimming and fishing for the kids to enjoy. Terry's mother passed away on July 19th and while Terry flew to Worcester for the services the kids stayed with me and other students at the dormitory in Lincoln.

Upon completion of my session at the university we headed west and spent a few days at Fishing Bridge Campground in Yellowstone before going to Bear Traps Canyon and then Gray Cliffs on the Madison River. We again spent several days at

the Missouri River Headwaters before heading home. On our way home we stopped for a few days at Wrights Lake, close to Lake Tahoe. We had planned to do some backpacking in this area but that was aborted when first Barbara then Terry came down with the stomach flu.

1973: Terry, Fred, Bill - 13, Lynette - 12, Barbara - 9
Penny & Candy

The first part of this summer was devoted mostly to backpacking. We began with a trip to Huntington Lake where we put our trailer in storage and took off over Kaiser Pass to Bear Creek. We backpacked up Bear Creek two miles past the dam and camped near the wilderness boundary sign. Following this backpack we camped at Rancheria Campground on Huntington Lake for several days then, putting our trailer in storage again, recrossed Kaiser Pass and hiked up Mono Creek from Edison Lake. About three miles up the creek, crossing the North Fork, Terry fell in, then I fell in trying to rescue her. The bad part was that Terry had her pack on so that everything in the pack got soaked; she also lost her hiking boots which she had been carrying around her neck. We stayed an unscheduled night at the North Fork then continued on to Fish Camp with Terry wearing Bill's sneakers. After completing this backpack we returned to Rancheria Campground for a few more days before moving to a different area for our next backpack.

From Rancheria we drove to South Fork and parked the trailer at a mobile home park on Whiskey Creek. While here we were able to enjoy a swim in the park owner's private swimmin' hole on Whiskey Creek. Our next trailhead was at Norris Creek; from there we hiked the Lillian Lake Loop trail, with Stanford Lakes as our destination. This was a series of

small lakes near the south boundary of Yosemite National Park.

Following this third backpack we decided to move on to Montana and spend some time there. We detoured by way of Pinecrest Lake, backtracked to Highway 4 and continued east over Ebbetts Pass, then through Nevada and Idaho into Montana. Here we stopped for several rainy days at the mouth of Bear Traps Canyon before heading up the Gallatin River and into Yellowstone National Park through West Yellowstone. We stayed in the park only a few days then headed north to float the Yellowstone River outside the park.

We next toured parts of Montana north of Livingston, a new region for us; this area had many small streams, good fishing, also wild raspberries. This tour took us through Great Falls and back along the Missouri River to Helena before we returned for another visit to the Missouri Headwaters. After a week here we again went to Bear Traps before heading west through Missoula into Idaho.

In Idaho we explored and fished the Lochsa and Selway Rivers then moved on to northern California, to Fowler Camp on the McCloud River. After several days on the McCloud we drove to Sims Camp on the Sacramento River for more fishing and good blackberrying. We took one more backpack before heading home, on the Swift Creek Trail in the Trinity Alps. We decided on this backpack that these mountains in northern California, although beautiful and less crowded, were not as scenic as the mountains in central California. It was during our last day of this trip, while we were hiking out, that our two beagles, Penny and Candy, took off after a deer; we didn't see them again for several hours. When they did

rejoin us their tongues were hanging out from their unsuccessful chase. Heading south we returned home on Highway 1, along the coast.

This summer was completed with one last backpack. We returned to the Norris Creek trailhead for Labor Day weekend and hiked in to Madera Creek crossing. The water was low and the fishing not as good as on our previous trip to this area.

1974: Terry, Fred, Bill - 14, Lynette - 13, Barbara - 10
Penny & Candy

We headed east again this summer with two weddings to attend. On the way we had planned to do some backpacking into the White River in Arizona. Upon arriving in the area we discovered that, because of high fire danger, all the forests were closed. This brought about a change in plans which had us move on to Colorado for more touring and fishing in that scenic state. Our first stop was the Piedra River in the southern part of Colorado; this had fair fishing but not what we had hoped for so we crossed Wolf Creek Pass and spent a few days fishing the Rio Grande. We had excellent luck here before moving on to the Conejos River where fishing was not as good as on the Rio Grande.

Following this fishing stop we continued east without any further extended stops until we reached Hartford, Connecticut. Here we visited college friends Orwell and Zama Touseley, and spent a night with them before continuing on to Massachusetts. Jim had made reservations for us at a private campground near him, at Sutton Falls; we proceeded there and set up for an extended stay.

The two weddings we came east to attend were Jim's on July 27th to Pam Brodeur and Ruth Brooks' on August 3rd to Mike

McCumber. Both ceremonies were lovely; unfortunately, Jim's didn't take, he and Pam were divorced a few years later.

Two and a half weeks after arriving in the Worcester area we headed west, stopping to visit Jack and Grace and their families in Rochester, New York on the way. Our next lengthy stay was at the Bear Traps area and Missouri Headwaters in Montana, then the Madison River above Ennis. Fishing had slowed down in this area; it was not as good as it had been in previous years.

On the way home from Montana we stopped in Nevada and took a three day backpack to Liberty Lake in the Ruby Mountains. This was beautiful country, the lake was at 10,000 feet, and the weather was gorgeous. From here we headed home by way of Tonopah and Las Vegas. When we arrived home we discovered that during our absence the house had been burglarized. We assumed it was kids who forced a window at the back of the house; the main items stolen were coin collections and clock radios.

1975: Terry, Fred, Bill - 15, Lynette - 14, Barbara - 11
Penny & Candy

This summer started out with a fishing trip to the Shaver Lake, Huntington Lake area, east of Fresno. The first few days were spent at Courtright Reservoir, at the end of a long, winding road that heads south from Shaver Lake. We camped at Deer Creek, near Buck Meadow, and at Courtright before retracing our steps to Shaver Lake and then continuing east to Rancheria Campground on Huntington Lake. We had a pleasant stay at Huntington Lake, fished all the local streams, took one trip to Edison Lake where we put the boat in the water and another trip driving the Kaiser Ridge Loop Road. This was a good logging road that gave us magnificent

views of Eagle Beaks, Mammoth Pool, Mount Ritter and the Minarets; it contours around Kaiser Peak before passing through Sample Meadows and exiting near Kaiser Pass.

At Rancheria everyone was fascinated observing a robin's nest which had been built into the eaves inside the ladies' restroom. Lynette managed to climb up and take a flash picture of the nest and the newly hatched young.

Following our stay at Huntington Lake we returned to the Fresno area and headed north, with a stop at Pollard's Flat Campground on the Sacramento River. We then followed the Trinity River to the coast at Arcata. From here we continued north through Oregon and Washington to our main destination, Vancouver Island in British Columbia.

On Sunday, July 6, we lined up in Anacortes, Washington for the ferry that would take us through the San Juan Islands to Sydney, on Vancouver Island. After an uneventful trip on the ferry, Kaleetan, we disembarked at Sydney. We set up camp at one of the provincial parks outside Victoria and used this as a base while we toured the city of Victoria and Butchart Gardens, a few miles outside Victoria. We were very impressed with these beautiful gardens, the landscaping was fabulous as were the many floral displays.

We got a sampling of some of the other provincial parks in the next two weeks, all scenic and well maintained, big wooded sites with water and free firewood, and clean. One day we put the boat in the Georgia Straits and went salmon fishing; Lynette caught the only one, a 26 inch, eight pounder. Further boat trips proved unsuccessful. One beautiful area where we camped was Upper Campbell Lake. We also made an attempt to drive to the west coast of Vancouver

Island but were prevented from doing so by the local Indian tribe. They had set up a blockade as a protest of some sort. Another great area we stayed at was a free provincial park on the Stamp River; here Bill caught a beautiful 24 inch, four and a half pound rainbow trout, his biggest up to that time.

A few days later, disaster struck. On July 22 Terry became ill; she passed away very suddenly at the hospital in Nanaimo. We returned home immediately to be with the rest of the family.

We made another attempt in August to continue our summer touring by going to Montana. After a week of exploring the area around Hungry Horse Dam and then the Yellowstone River we decided we weren't enjoying it and returned home.

1976: Fred, Bill - 16, Lynette - 15, Barbara - 12
Penny & Candy

During the spring of this year I purchased a new motorhome, selling the trailer and pickup. This made traveling easier in the summertime, even towing a boat. We started out with a visit to two properties owned by the American Sportsmans Club, Sly Creek Reservoir in the Marysville area and Carpenter Valley, near Truckee. Both were disappointments to us, particularly Sly Creek; we had expected good camping and good fishing but neither measured up to expectations.

Following this debacle we headed east and then north through Nevada and Idaho, into Montana. Our first stop here was a short backpack into the East Fork of the Bitterroot River. We got snowed out of this and drove north to the West Fork of the same river. Conditions were more to our liking here so we camped and fished in two areas, first at Boulder Creek and then at Blue Joint Creek. Both were beautiful areas with

good fishing and good camping. We next headed up the Black-foot River, exploring several creeks in the area before going to Choteau for a 4th of July rodeo. We all enjoyed our stay here, including a buffalo barbecue.

Our next stop was one of the highlights of the summer, although the girls didn't think so at the time. We put our rafts in the Dearborn River anticipating an eight hour float to the Missouri, about twelve miles downstream. The eight hours became almost twelve and found us still on the water after dark, in the rain. It was a great float, through beautiful country, uninhabited except for the last two miles, with excellent fishing. Several years later I returned here to repeat our adventure only to find that the launch area was posted.

Another adventure we undertook was a backpack into the Bob Marshall Wilderness. We drove up a forest service road from Augusta, stopping on the way to see one of Bill's track coaches, Dan Ryan, who was a counselor at a girl scout camp in the area. From the trailhead at Benchmark, our backpack covered a total of 39 miles through some of the wildest, most remote country I have ever seen. Danaher Basin, about 20 miles from the trailhead, was especially beautiful and had excellent fishing. We had to curtail the hike when the weather turned bad; our last day we hiked 13 miles, slogging through mud and snow over a steep trail, not arriving back at the trailhead until 9 P.M.

From here we drove to the Bear Traps area on the Madison River, with a stop enroute to see the Charles Russell Gallery and Museum in Helena. After several days fishing the Madison we moved on to Yellowstone National Park for a few days before undertaking more backpacking.

Our next three backpacks were in the Beartooth Primitive Area outside the northeast entrance to Yellowstone. The first was into a beautiful area on Russell Creek; it was while on this hike that I dropped Lynette's camera into the creek and watched it wash away. Next we hiked in to Kayser Brown Lake and last to Silver Lakes on the north side of the primitive area. We had good fishing and unexpectedly good weather on all of these trips.

Following these backpacks we made another brief stop at Missouri Headwaters before heading home. Our homeward trek took us through Idaho where Lynette was stung by a bee while we were picking blackberries, then west and south through California with a short stop on the Sacramento River.

1977: Fred, Bill - 17, Lynette - 16, Barbara - 13
Penny & Candy

This summer we again drove east to visit relatives in Massachusetts. We stopped on the way to visit the Broomes in Virginia and while there toured the Space Museum in Washington, D.C. From there we drove to Jim's place in Oxford, Massachusetts. While there, Jim, Bill, and I went pike fishing in Otter Creek near Rutland, Vermont and caught several large pike. After a long visit in which we saw the Taatjes, Belairs, and Savinskys, as well as all the relatives, we headed west. We stopped for another try at Otter Creek then crossed into New York state by ferry across Lake Champlain. Following a short visit with Jack and Grace we toured Niagara Falls and drove across southern Ontario, reentering the States in Michigan.

Our next stop was again in our favorite state, Montana, where we revisited the Madison and Gallatin Rivers. We then drove to the North Fork of the Blackfoot River and went on a four day backpack into the back country here. It was very

scenic country with good fishing, but there were too many people. After a return visit to Blue Joint Creek, where the fishing was excellent, we headed for home. We made one more stop on the way, to fish the West Fork of the Carson River in California. This was the last summer to have Bill and Lynette with me.

1978: Fred, Barbara - 14, Penny & Candy

We left in June to explore the Mogollon Rim country in Arizona. Upon arriving in that area we learned that the western half of the Rim was closed because of high fire hazard. We were able to get to the eastern half by driving to Payson. We drove on the Rim road to Woods Canyon Lake, which was quite beautiful, then after a night in the area went to check out both the East and West Forks of the Black River. Fishing was only fair.

Next we headed into New Mexico where we explored fishing possibilities on both the Rio Grande and the Cimarron River. Neither one looked exciting so we trekked north to fish the Conejos River and the Rio Grande in Colorado. After a few days here of only fair fishing we tried the Piedra River with similar results. We returned home by way of the North Rim of the Grand Canyon.

After a few days at home Barbara and I decided on a backpack. The area we chose was near Piute Pass above North Lake, in the mountains west of Bishop. The creeks were still high and there was considerable snow at this late date (mid-July). A few days in the snow was enough; we stayed a few additional days to fish Rock Creek, then went home.

The following week we took a longer backpack accompanied by two South Gate teachers, Nancy Atkinson and Bob Marsh, and Bob's two children. Our trailhead for this hike was Wishon

Reservoir, east of Fresno. We hiked, in two days, into Crown Creek; the trail was good with a few steep pitches, the fishing was also good. One afternoon the creek near our camp rose $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet as a result of a storm upstream; by nightfall it had returned to normal.

One more trip completed our summer. We first camped for several days in Hermit Valley along Highway 4, and fished the North Fork of the Mokelumne River. Our next stop was in the Carson Pass area; we camped in both Hope and Faith Valleys, fished both the East and West Forks of the Carson River and explored Blue Lakes. One side trip in this area was a trail bike trip from Lower Blue Lake down a jeep road to Deer Creek and back, 5.7 miles of a rough, rocky road. From the Carson River we drove north along the west shore of Lake Tahoe to Highway 49 and the Yuba River. After a few days in this area we continued on to Highway 80 and the Truckee River. From here we headed toward home, down Highway 395, with a return to the Carson River and additional stops at Green Creek, Leevining Creek, and Rush Creek. While at Leevining Creek we almost lost the two beagles; they took off to chase an animal when I was on a morning hike and didn't return until mid-afternoon. By that time I had returned to the motorhome and Barbara and I had started a second search for them. After two days of fishing Rush Creek, on the June Lake Loop, we returned home to conclude the summer.

1979: Fred, Barbara - 15, Candy, Ebony

We drove to Wyoming in late June and spent most of July in this state, starting with the Grey's River and Little Grey's River where we had good, but not spectacular fishing. After leaving Grey's River we drove to Elkhart Park and backpacked in to Pole Creek Crossing, a good but not easy hike, about

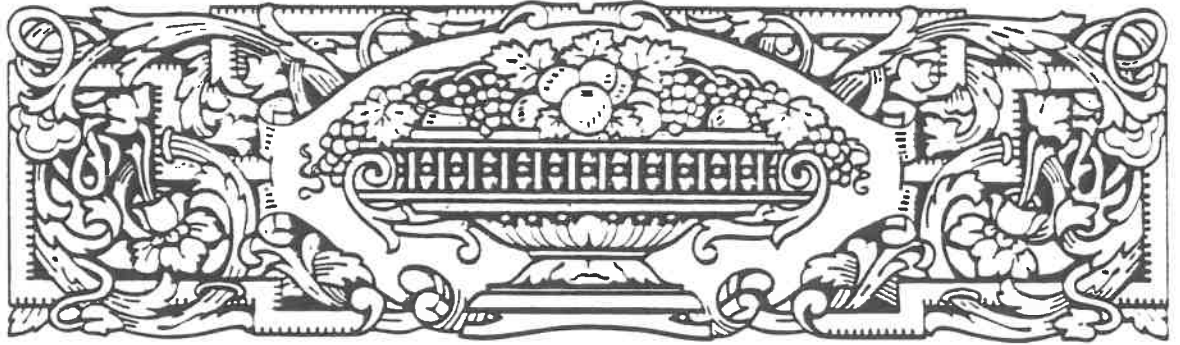
twenty miles round trip. The fishing was superb, particularly in Island Lake, about a mile from camp. We next drove to several trailheads and streams around the perimeter of the Wind River Range and enjoyed more good fishing. Two areas that appealed to us the most were Boulder Creek and Big Sandy Openings where a moose came into camp one evening. We also took another backpack, this one on the Middle Fork of the Popo Agie River. On this hike Barbara rode the trail bike from the motorhome to the trailhead and started back for me but ran out of gas. We hiked an extra two miles and then pushed the bike back to the motorhome at the end of the hike.

Following a few more days of fishing in Wyoming we returned to California to fish the Yuba River and both forks of the Carson. We then returned home in early August, with stops on the way at Green Creek and Rock Creek.

1980: Fred, Jim -29, Bill - 20, Ebony

During this summer Jim and Bill flew to Bozeman, Montana; Jim from Massachusetts and Bill from California. I picked them up at the airport and we proceeded to several of our favorite areas on the Madison River for floating and fishing. The only fish of any consequence was a 24½ inch, 5¼ pound brown trout that Bill caught below the highway bridge near Bear Traps Canyon. We also floated the Jefferson, the Gallatin, and the Yellowstone but didn't have the luck we had on the Madison. After one week of this Jim and Bill had to return to their homes.

My Poems



IN THE BEGINNING

We wandered through the snowy fields
Then crossed the railroad tracks
Along the road to Soda Springs
Before we ambled back.

We played a game of cards or two
And whiled away the hours
Then strolled around through Truckee town
As if the world was ours.

That day was there for us to share
Our passions were aflame
We wanted love but bridled it
To us it was no game.

Now we're apart, I've lost my heart
To a woman I desire
We must see one another again
So that we can rekindle the fire.

November, 1982

MY LOVE

I lost my heart a week ago
It doesn't seem quite right
That I should fall in love with you
And you're so far from sight.

I scheme of ways that we can be
Together now and then
A meeting here, a love nest there
With you in my arms again.

But all of these mere fantasies
Are a strain on the emotion
Until I show you at first hand
The depth of my devotion.

December, 1982

IN A CONTEMPLATIVE MOOD

I often like to sit and dream
Of pond and lake, of brook and stream.
Of sitting on a shady knoll
And listening to the breeze enthrall
The branches with her sweet caress
Of peace and joy and happiness.

At times I gaze into the sky
To watch the clouds as they drift by.
Or see at night a field of stars
And even Mercury or Mars.
Or watch the sun as it sinks low
And shares the splendor of afterglow.

When such I dream I'm quite content
My idle hours in rapture spent.
The greatest riches you can find
Come with good health and peace of mind
And time to enjoy the wondrous story
Of the earth and sky and all their glory.

December, 1982

MY LOVE

My love is such a tender love
Like the softly falling rain.
As gentle as the notes you hear
In a songbird's sweet refrain.

My love has all the warmth of spring
With all the plants in bloom
And tender buds are reaching out
To find themselves more room.

My love is as hot as a summer day
So great is my desire
Each time you hold me in your arms
You set my heart on fire.

January, 1983

LOVE IS THE ANSWER

Love is the answer my darling
When the cares of the day have you down.
When clouds hide the sun
And the work is not done
And your smile has turned into a frown.

So come into my arms my darling
At the end of a dreary day.
And the love in my heart
Will provide a new start
And chase all the dark clouds away.

For love is the answer to many a care
In my arms you must linger a while.
The sun then will shine
The day will be fine
And your heart will respond with a smile.

April, 1983

THE HILLS OF HOME

I wander each day in the hills near home
To capture the rebirth of spring.
The grass is green, the flowers in bloom
And the lark is on the wing.

The brook is full from the winter rains
The air is crisp and clear.
The white, fluffy clouds scud across the sky
And the faraway hills seem near.

A sweet, gentle breeze again fills the air
With a scent that has long been away.
The soft, spring earth helps cushion our step
And we know spring is here to stay.

With the sun shining brightly, the bluest of skies
And the song of a bird in the air.
Come join me now as I walk in the hills
For a lifetime of rapture is there.

May, 1983

THE HOUSE AT THE END OF THE LANE

There's a little house that we call home
At the end of a country lane.
It's not a house to catch the eye
Most folks would think it plain.

The fence is down, the grass is brown
The roof could use some care.
But there's beauty there for one to see
If only he was aware.

There's love and laughter in that house
And music to fill the air.
And happiness seems to fill each room
For it's the house my love and I share.

So when you see the house that we call home
Don't think of it as plain.
There's a beauty there that's easy to see
In the house at the end of the lane.

June, 1983

THE HOUSE IN THE MEADOW

There's a beautiful view my love and I share
When we climb to the top of a hill.
It's a view we have shared many times before
And continually gives us a thrill.

There's a little house that captures the heart
In a meadow that's crisp and green.
And a gnarled old oak overlooks the house
And a brook that's crystal clean.

We find great peace and serenity there
And to view it we plan and scheme.
For as many times as we've shared the view
It is only part of a dream.

But we'll find that house by the gnarled old oak
And we'll treat it with loving care.
We'll search till we find that house of our dreams
And spend the rest of our lifetime there.

September, 1983

THE LIFE OF THE OPEN ROAD

Come meet with us by the side of the road
Where good friends often meet.
And share the joys of the life we live
In a style that's hard to beat.

For we live the life of the open road
Where each day brims with pleasure.
Each turn in the road brings sweeping views
And friendships beyond measure.

Where the path we're on is the one we chose
And one which has no peer.
And home is where we wish it to be
For a day, a week, or a year.

So when you see us there by the side of the road
Please stop and say hello.
And you'll soon be a friend to share
Our life style on the go.

January, 1984

MY OLD DOG

My old dog is a grand old dog
A great companion is she.
She stays with me every place I go
'Cause she likes to be with me.

She follows me hiking in the hills
Or wading mountain streams.
And when I sit to contemplate
She lies at my feet and dreams.

We're not as young as we once were
Both my old dog and me.
But we're both happy when we can share
Each other's company.

So we make sure we spend some time
Doing things we like to do.
And find that we are both content
When the end of a day is due.

February, 1984

A VIEW FROM THE HILLS

We look down from the hills at the valley
At the hustle, bustle, and strife.
And thank the Lord we have chosen to move
At a slower pace through life.

For life in the hills is a happy one
One that is calm and serene.
With a stream rushing by, a bright blue sky
And air so fresh and clean.

For we lived a while in the valley
With its frantic and hectic pace.
And decided we needed to slow life down
To remove ourselves from the chase.

So now we live in the clean, green hills
Where gentle breezes blow.
And live a life where we're quite content
As we gaze on the scene below.

March, 1984

THE ADVENTURE OF LIFE

I haven't a dime to pay my way
As I walk down the pathways of life.
But I whistle and sing as I walk along
Free from all care and strife.

For life is a great adventure to me
That can't be enjoyed sitting still.
There are rivers to cross and roads to explore
And that lake at the top of the hill.

So follow the call of the open road
Or hike to the distant hills.
Fly to the moon, or sail the high seas
Whatever provides the right thrills.

Take the life that's been given to you
Face it with a song and a smile.
Reach out for the many joys to be had
And make the adventure worth while.

May, 1984

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING DISEARNEST

All you working folks out there
It's now time for me to share
The good things that retirement can bring.

You'll be kinda short of money
But the days will all be sunny
And you'll live a life that's fashioned for a king.

If you feel inclined to putter
You can lie down in the gutter
And tinker with your infernal combustion machine.

Or if the travel bug bites ya
You can go someplace that delights ya
Or read about it in a magazine.

So all you folks who want to retire
And to a quieter life aspire
Don't be afraid people will think you're lazy.

Think of all the joys of life
Away from all the bustle and strife
Much better than six feet under a daisy.

October, 1984

NOW THAT WINTER'S GONE

We hike through the hills on a sunny day
The breeze has driven the clouds away
Now that winter's gone.

We ask our friends to come along
Our hearts burst forth with a favorite song
Now that winter's gone.

The hills are still barren, the grass not yet green
As spring has not yet arrived on the scene.
The trees are beginning to take on some shape
As slowly from their long hibernation they wake.
The birds are returning to where they belong
And soon will be building nests for their young
Now that winter's gone.

Gone is the grayness of winter's cold song
Here to stay is a warmth all day long
Now that winter's gone
Now that winter's gone.

December, 1984

THOUGHTS OF YOUTH

I think of days that used to be
When I was young and fancy free.
When I would wallow with the frogs
Or bring home cats and old stray dogs.
And often bring on Mother's ire
By chasing engines to a fire.
And tease the girls with wriggly worms
To see if I could make them squirm.

Now that I'm old and past my prime
I do the same things all the time.
Except that now with you as friends
I'll do them all until the end.

October, 1985

THE CALL OF THE HIGH COUNTRY

I must return to the high country
To the land of the open sky.
For a lonely cloud is beckoning me
To let the rest of the world go by.

It's a wild land, yet a peaceful land
With beautiful things to see.
Not a worry to cross my path
And there I can wander free.

Where the gentle flow of a mountain stream
And the trill of a nesting bird,
Or the quiet whisper of wind through the pines
Are the only sounds to be heard.

The scenes that pass before my eyes
As I walk on a mountain track,
Are views that many an artist would paint
And cause him to hurry back.

I shall return to the high country
No matter how far I may roam.
For the call from this wild and peaceful land
Tells me I'm returning home.

December, 1985

RAINBOW'S END

I have found the end of my rainbow
Walking through life with you.
The end of this rainbow has no pot of gold
But a love that endures as we both grow old.
With a love such as ours we will happily wend
Down the long road of life to the journey's end.

June, 1986

ODE TO THE SOUTHWEST

I was walkin' along the First Water trail
When I heard the scurry of a covey o' quail.
They were flappin' their wings and doin' their best
To lure me away from their young and their nest.
If you wander very far in this grand country
A covey o' quail is only one sight you'll see.
For the country I'm describin' is the great Southwest
Where scenes and sightin's are among the best.
You might see a cowboy on his old cayuse
Or the steer he's herdin' tryin' to break itself loose.
Or a lonesome coyote in search of prey
More likely at night than durin' the day.
You'll see a saguaro reachin' up to the sky
As if it was askin' some rain to come by.
A look at the desert right after a rain
Will show a carpet o' flowers o'er the whole terrain.
And a look at the sky as the sun's goin' down
Will show you a sunset that's second to none.
So travel the world o'er and observe all the scenes
Before returnin' to a land that's serene.
And find that what you've been seekin' durin' your quest
Is the beautiful country of the great Southwest.

November, 1986

TO RAINBOW'S END

There's a great place in Texas down Livingston way
With a warmth that stays with you all through the day.
It's a place where Escapees can park their RVs
And stay 'til their wanderlust they must appease.
Where you're greeted each day with a hug and a smile
From a person you've known for only a while.
So all you Escapees who are now on the road
And need a great place to park your abode,
Or happen to feel you're in need of a friend
You'll find all that waiting at Rainbow's End.

November, 1986

RAIN

When you're out in the rain
And you want to complain
But know it won't do any good.
Then let your feet stray
From the place where you stay
To where weather will be as it should.
Go to the Southwest
Where the weather's the best
Of any you'll find here and there.
If some rain does come in
Pass it off with a grin
It won't last long enough to despair.

November, 1986

I'M BLESSED

I'm blessed that I have many friends
Whom I can turn to when I'm feeling sad.
I'm blessed that they can be with me
To help me face a time that could be bad.

I'm blessed that I have many friends
Who show in many ways how much they care.
Whenever anything goes wrong
They're by my side their cherished love to share.

But best of all are all the times
When I am feeling happy and carefree.
For then I'm blessed to have so many friends
To share in all those joyful times with me.

January, 1987

SING ME A SONG OF THE PRAIRIE

Oh, sing me a song of the western plains
Oh, sing me a song of the prairie.
And the song that you sing, each day when you start
Must come from within, come straight from the heart.
And a feeling for beauty that song must impart.
Oh, sing me a song of the prairie.

Oh, sing me a song of the western plains
Oh, sing me a song of the prairie.
Of the sun and the wind and the western sky
And the song of a bird as it hurries on by.
Of the coyote that's singing its sorrowful cry.
Oh, sing me a song of the prairie.

Oh, sing me a song of the western plains
Oh, sing me a song of the prairie.
Where the sun in the sky is of burnished gold
Where the landscape is stark and austere and cold.
And the song is a tune that will never grow old.
Oh, sing me a song of the prairie.

Come sing me a song, let the world hum along
Of a land that is wild and a land that is free.
Of a land that will always have beauty to see
Of a land that has beckoned quite often to me.
Oh, sing me a song of the prairie.

February, 1987

LET ME TOUCH YOU

Let me touch you
Let me show that I'm aware.
Let me hold you
Let me show how much I care.
It's the little things in life
That make love more enduring.
The gentle touch, the loving smile
That is so reassuring.
So let me touch you, let me hold you
My love for you enfold you.
Let me touch you.

March, 1987

WHERE DID ALL THE TIME GO?

Where did all the time go
We thought we had when we retired?
What happened to the many hours
And projects to which we had aspired?
What happened to yesterday
And the day before and the week we just went through?
It seemed like we had just begun
And then the time took wings and flew.
I know I got things done
But if you were to ask me what I did
My answer would most likely be
I haven't done a thing, time just went away and hid.

April, 1987

BY MULE TO SOUTH FORK MEADOWS

We hiked the trail and ate some dust
For someone said this trail's a must
To take us where we want to go.
We climbed real high and breathed a sigh
When we reached the spot where cool,
clear waters flow.

So here we are in camp at last
Heart beat strong, breathing fast.
We came to play, 'twas more like work
To find our way to the old South Fork.

July, 1987

SUMMER'S END

When we reach the end of summer
And the nights start turning cold
Then the aspen on the hillside
Take on many shades of gold.

And the spruces that surround them
With their tips of greenish blue
Help provide a striking contrast
To the panoramic view.

For the hills are all around us
With their mix of green and gold
And the lake that lies below us
Is a pleasure to behold.

But we've reached the end of summer
And it's time to leave the scene
And turn to other pastures
Where the grasses are still green.

August, 1987

RUBY MOUNTAIN RHAPSODY

We saw the beauty of the Ruby Mountains
On a hike we took one day.
With their lofty peaks and jagged cliffs
And vistas of far away.

There's a bubbling brook running through our camp
With trout darting to and fro.
And a gentle breeze in the aspen trees
Gives the leaves a golden glow.

Off in the distance we can see
A lake glistening in the sun.
A picture in perfect harmony
In a setting second to none.

We are off in the Ruby Mountains
A perfect place to be.
A place where we can all enjoy
A mountain rhapsody.

September, 1987

LOVING YOU

Loving you has been my inspiration
To find a way to express my exultation.
To sit by your side as the tide comes in
To hold you close through thick and thin
To not love you would be a sin
For you are my life's ultimate consummation.

Caring for you is my one occupation
One which I fill with considerable elation.
To spend the rest of my days with you
Is a pleasurable task I intend to pursue
Until my time on earth is through
A time that's spent in constant jubilation.

April, 1988

CHILDREN

Think of all the joys we had
When we were young
And our children were young too.

How we hugged and caressed them
And were glad heaven blessed them
With talents we hoped they'd pursue.

How we would play and pray with them
And hoped our lessons would stay with them
As our lifelines we slowly withdrew.

For children are our reason for life
For our days of toil and days of strife
The reflected glory of husband and wife
When their parenting days are through.

April, 1988

SAYING NO

How often did I say no to you
When perhaps I could have said yes?
I was the very strict father
More strict than needed I guess.

But I'm thankful now for the way you are
For what you have turned out to be
Perhaps saying no was a good thing at that
Though I'm certain you still disagree.

April, 1988

TO THE 494th

We gathered in old Reno town
Old friends from out the past
To relive days when we were young
And into war were cast.

Our memories were mostly good
But there were sad ones too
As we recalled our many friends
And the loss of some we knew.

We had manned our Liberators
In the air and on the ground
For we were Kelley's Kobras
And no better could be found.

But now it's only memories
As those days have long been gone
But in those golden memories
The 494th lives on.

June, 1988

FIND YOURSELF A RAINBOW

When a storm is rising
On a distant hill
Look and find a rainbow
And enjoy a thrill.

Find yourself a rainbow
If there is a storm
You will be contented
And you'll soon be warm.

If the storm should linger
More than a moment or two
Seek that same old rainbow
It will be there still.

Find yourself a rainbow
With someone you love
And you'll be enraptured
With that sky above.

If it should linger longer
And banish a dream or two
Find another rainbow
To repeat that thrill.

June, 1988

THE POWER WITHIN

Within you lies the power to make changes in your life
To fulfill your dreams completely, to overcome all strife.
Were you to wish for changes they never would begin
For all the changes to be made must take place from within.

So use the power that's in you and change the things you need
To help control adversity, to enjoy the life you lead.
The strength that lies within you should be put on display
To help yourself and others who do not know the way.

So be a friend, reach out a hand, take strength from what's
inside,
Use the strength inside of you to be a welcome guide.
Your life will be a helping one to family and friends
As long as the strength within you is given without end.

July, 1988

THE FORK IN THE ROAD

When you come to a fork in the open road
You have to decide then and there
Whether it's to the left you should go
Or to the right you should bear.

The road to the left looks wide and free
With nary a sign of a bend
The one to the right is winding and rough
But Utopia may be at its end.

So take the one that seems the best
To fulfill your most urgent desires
Decide that you'll take the road most direct
Or the one curiosity inspires.

Whichever road you finally choose
You'll often ponder that choice
But don't look back, take life as it is
Accept what you have and rejoice.

July, 1988

ODE TO A MOUNTAIN STREAM

If you capture all the beauty of a sparkling mountain stream
You'll think you've been transported to the rapture of a dream.
To see the way it dances and prances through the hills
Is to see a bit of paradise to banish all your ills.
It twists and turns and bends its way through many a mossy glade
And rushes down a rocky shoot in sunlight and in shade.
There are cataracts and rock filled pools and many a trout
filled run
And grassy swards and tree lined banks glistening in the sun.
To see the stream at daybreak when a browsing deer you'll find
Is a sight to top all others in the gallery of your mind.
Except for that one picture at the ending of a day
When the sparkling waters capture the sun's last rays.

August, 1988

IN MEDITATION

I like to sit in silent contemplation
And watch the sun as it fades in the west.
I use this time of quiet meditation
And find that it's the time I like the best.

I think of things that could have happened to me
Or think of things the way they used to be
Or things that I have not as yet found time for
In the time that is still left on earth to me.

What might have been has long since been forgotten
And is not ever subject to reprise.
What used to be is also gone forever
Except for what lives on in memories.

But things that I have yet to find the time for
Are in my present plans of what to do
And need more thought than all the past events do
Then I'll pursue them ere my life is through.

August, 1988

EPITAPH FOR A COWBOY

When your ridin' days are over
And you no longer hit the trail.
When your friends are all up yonder
And your cheeks are turnin' pale.
May the good Lord be kind to you
As you take your one last ride.
May you find your friends and kinfolk
Waitin' on the other side.

For you've been on many roundups
And you've skinned your share of mules.
And shaken hands with better men
And broken your shares of rules.
But you'll leave the world a better place
Most people will agree.
For you've done some things to be proud of
In some high class company.

So take that ride with dignity
With head and shoulders high.
As you face that one last roundup
In that big ranch in the sky.

August, 1988

LOVE IS FOR ETERNITY

Love is not for a little while
It's for eternity.
I turn and see your loving smile
And then my heart soars free.

You hold my hand, you kiss my brow
You treat me tenderly.
Our love is for always, not just now
It's for eternity.

August, 1988

LIFE IS A SONG WORTH SINGING

Life is a song worth singing
So open your heart to the song.
The bells all around will be ringing
And nothing in life can go wrong.

Life is a song worth singing
So teach your heart how to sing.
To the beauties around you'll be clinging
With a joy only rapture can bring.

Life is a song worth singing
The song can have ecstatic blends.
Find out all the joys you'll bringing
To all your loved ones and friends.

The song will bring constant fulfillment
To a life that can capture the tune.
So give it its full orchestration
And life will be beautiful soon.

September, 1988

LOVER'S LAMENT

Alas, sweetheart, our paths must part
Our loving vows must sever.
We thought we had the perfect love
And it would last forever.
But you have found another love
And given him your heart.
So break that vow and leave me now
And go to your new flame.
While I must mend a broken heart
And will never be the same.

September, 1988

MY FAVORITE THINGS

I think of the joys of seeing a cactus plant in bloom
Or the pleasure I get from reading a book in the quiet of my room
The memory of the song of a bird as it sings its sweet refrain
Or the beautiful sight of a rainbow following some rain
The many thrills of fishing for trout in a wild mountain stream
While off in the distance or around a bend a picturesque waterfall
gleams
The spectacular beauty of a desert sky as the sun is going down
Or the sight in the distance of a graceful tree and the shape of
its stately crown
The sweet, sweet sound that the wind can make soughing through the
trees
And the fragrance of an orange blossom wafted in the breeze
Watching a pair of kittens with gay abandon play
Or a couple of frisky puppies frolicking in the hay.

All of these and many more are things that gave me pleasure
As I wandered down the road of life in search of other treasure
But now that I'm no longer young I think of what gave me joy
Of the many simple delights I've had ever since I was a boy
All of these are much, much more than any treasures to me
And are more important than silver or gold in my book of memory.

September, 1988

HOME AGAIN

Home again, from our travels in the West.
Home again, to our cozy little nest.
When we see the golden colors of the hills outside
our home
It sometimes makes us wonder why we ever need to roam.
We have roamed this wondrous land of ours and seen
so many faces
And learned the names and habitats in many far-off
places.
All of them are beautiful and all of them serene
And all of them have a magic that is almost like a
dream.
But in spite of all this magic that we witness as we
roam
None of them is yet the place that we call home.

September, 1988

LAST REQUEST

When I'm dead don't cry for me
But cast my ashes on the mountain wind
Then you can be certain I'm content
For I will forever be in contact with
the great outdoors.

