Marjorie Remembers

Marjorie Van Evera Lovelace

Marjorie admires the splendor of Yosemite.

Edited by
Jean Lovelace Stinchcombe

Marjorie and Eldridge on the terrace at 5 Brookside, where they lived between 1956-1999.

CREDITS

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Over her lifetime Marjorie Lovelace often shared her writings with her family, especially her daughter. She strongly believed in preserving family letters, journals, diaries, and other documents. She appreciated looking back on observations written in a previous time. Although she did not imagine these vignettes being compiled as a book, her family decided to preserve this collection as a view of Marjorie Lovelace's life and times. These papers do not take the form of autobiography or family history but, rather, present comments on important experiences, sights, and reflections, indirectly revealing deeply held feelings.

The varied bits and pieces, written over many years, were typed by Frances Bockus, Syracuse, New York. Her contribution is greatly appreciated. The book itself is produced by Syracuse University Electronic Publishing Center. Jill A. Long, senior graphic artist for Printing Services at Syracuse University Electronic Publishing Center, provided invaluable assistance with all aspects of the design, format, pictures, and cover.

This book has been produced for the family, friends, and associates of Marjorie Lovelace. Photographs in the book are from the collections of Eldridge Lovelace, Richard Lovelace, Charlie H. Lovelace, and Jean Lovelace Stinchcombe. Richard Lovelace made a major contribution in the selection and enhancement of pictures.

- Jean Lovelace Stinchcombe
Syracuse, New York 2007

This picture was used on the invitation to Marjorie and Eldridge's 50th anniversary party. In the picture, they wear their "going away" outfits from their wedding on May 15, 1937. The car in the background was a wedding present from Marjorie's parents.

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PREFACE

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When Marjorie died on May 19, 2005, we had been married 68 years (and four days). She was 92, the oldest age ever reached by anyone in her family. We were more than a happy, married couple; we were a team. We had met when we were very young. Our families were of similar backgrounds and lived in the same neighborhood. Our parents were friends; our mothers played bridge together, and the couples went to the same parties. When I would talk of, or date, other girls, my mother would be quick to point out Marjorie's superior virtues. Even so love was a long time coming. But it came. And when it came it lasted a long, long, long time.

I was a partner in a firm of civil engineers, city planners and landscape architects. We had a number of offices, including one in Hawaii, and worked all over this country and, occasionally, abroad. We did a wide variety of work. It was fascinating, challenging, and constantly changing. I traveled a lot. Marge was very bright, very competent. She took care of our home and financial affairs and heavily involved herself in our children's lives and education. Without her, I simply would not have had time to transform a professional practice into a distinguished career. There was far more than love; there was deep mutual respect.

Marjorie had a great interest in the English language. She loved to write. She was an expert in spelling and grammar. She studied usage and punctuation in the St. Louis ***Post Dispatch*** and other publications. The Writers' Group of the Wednesday Club of Saint Louis made a group ideally suited for her. Marjorie also wrote vignettes and essays for programs at meetings of Chapter GE of PEO. She wrote up our travels, and she composed poems to honor birthdays and special occasions. Marge could frequently be found at her typewriter, always kept nearby on her desk, under a maroon velvet cover.

Our daughter, Jean Stinchcombe, has assembled a representative group of these writings into this book as a tribute to the memory of her mother and my wife, Marjorie Van Evera Lovelace.

- Eldridge Lovelace
St. Louis, Missouri
2006

Marjorie in our garden at 909 Trinity, University City, 1950.

BIOGRAPHY OF MARJORIE VAN EVERA LOVELACE

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Marjorie Van Evera was born in Kansas City, Missouri, on March 22, 1913, to Susan (Hartman) and John J. Van Evera. Her arrival followed that of a sister, Jean Elizabeth, born on August 12, 1910. Marjorie grew up in Kansas City, a city that she loved and admired all her life. Marjorie's early school years were at Bryant School, after which she enrolled at Southwest High School, a school that to her set a standard for secondary education. The beautiful treed neighborhoods of Kansas City, early road trips across the country, and summers in the northwoods at Sayner, Wisconsin, made for an idyllic childhood.

For college Marjorie went first to Sweet Briar College, outside Lynchburg, Virginia, whose campus nestled against the Blue Ridge Mountains she loved to visit. Her two years at Sweet Briar (1930-32) created close relationships with faculty and lifelong friendships. Marjorie often recalled teas in the gracious homes on Sweet Briar's Faculty Row. Although she hated to leave the intimate surroundings of Sweet Briar, Marjorie followed the family plan that she return from the East after two years. She transferred to Northwestern University, where she joined her sister in Kappa Alpha Theta. At Northwestern, her field of concentration in English civilization included both history

and literature. From her high school and college background, Marjorie was well versed in all the periods and figures of British political and literary history and never failed to thrill to a visit to the Tower of London or the Poets' Corner at Westminster Abbey. In 1934, Marjorie received her bachelor's degree with honors from Northwestern.

Returning to Kansas City after the excitement of working at the Kraft Exhibit at the World's Fair in Chicago, she held several jobs. It was during this time that she renewed acquaintances with Eldridge Lovelace, son of Eva (Hirst) and Charlie W. Lovelace, whom she had known since early days at Bryant School. A graduate of the University of Illinois, Eldridge was at that time a new employee of Harland Bartholomew and Associates, a St. Louis firm of city planners, landscape architects, and civil engineers. The couple became engaged on Halloween, 1936, and they were married on May 15, 1937, in Kansas City, Missouri.

Marjorie and Eldridge were first based in Michigan and Iowa, but their daughter was born in Kansas City, May 27, 1939, and named Jean Elizabeth Lovelace for her aunt. After several moves, they found University Heights, St. Louis, an ideal neighborhood for their growing family, which as of October 16, 1941, included Richard Van Evera Lovelace. Their home at 909 Trinity became the center of family activities and close relationships with neighbors during the decade 1945-1955. In 1955 they moved to 5 Brookside, in Ladue, a cherished home for the next 44 years.

While her children Jean and Richard were growing up, Marjorie took an active part in her neighborhood and community. Education was a particular interest as Jeanie and Dick went through school. Her parents having been graduates of Grinnell College (classes of 1905 and 1907), Marjorie believed strongly in the ideal of the liberal arts education. She hoped that children could be nurtured at home and encouraged at school yet have sufficient freedom in which to develop individual talents. Later, at the college level, Marjorie did not think of vocational training but of an understanding of different disciplines and experiences, leading to the sensibility of an educated person, a person who could appreciate and contribute more fully to life.

Brought up as a Christian Scientist, Marjorie did not think of that or any other religion as providing a set answer to questions of

meaning. After visiting a number of churches, Marjorie and Eldridge decided to become members of the First Unitarian Church in 1947, an association of great importance to her. She did not think it was as important to agree or subscribe to creeds as it was to ask significant questions; she felt that time spent in this pursuit held value for the individual, the family, and the community.

Like her mother, Marjorie was a member of PEO, active in Chapter GE of the PEO Sisterhood up until the last years of her life. PEO provided a network that lasted through the decades. She was also for many years active in the Wednesday Club, both in its old and its new locations, and she especially appreciated its interesting programs, speakers, and writers' group. An early environmentalist, Marjorie was conservation chair of the Delmar Garden Club, and she was the first member of the Sierra Club in Missouri. She was also a member of the St. Louis chapter of the DAR, in which she continued her interest in family, local, and national history. Throughout her life, Marjorie carefully maintained copies of family correspondence and records dating to the early years of the United States, related family experiences to national events, and encouraged her children and grandchildren to continue the practice of correspondence.

Marjorie's volunteer activities included work at the Shriners' Hospital, International Institute, tutoring the foreign born in English, Manor Grove Retirement House board, Planned Parenthood board, literacy programs under the Missouri Probationary Office, Kinder Cottage Head Start, and Foreign Doctors' Program under United Church Women – the source of lasting friendships.

Throughout her marriage of 68 years, Marjorie enjoyed entertaining, bringing family and friends together for personal conversation in a beautiful indoor or outdoor setting, according to the season. She loved being at home but also loved to travel, repeatedly visiting every state in the Union. She particularly enjoyed showing her children and later her grandchildren the National Parks, taking pictures of her grandchildren at the same place at Hermits Rest, Grand Canyon, where she and her sister had been photographed. In addition to their frequent trips across the United States, Marjorie and Eldridge traveled throughout the world in ventures of which Marjorie kept a meticulous record. She studied, learned, and wrote descriptions of

their worldwide destinations.

Marjorie Van Evera Lovelace died on May 19, 2005, at home in St. Louis, 8600 Delmar Boulevard, The Brentmoor. Her survivors included her husband Eldridge, her daughter, Dr. Jean Lovelace Stinchcombe (Mrs. William) of Syracuse, her son, Dr. Richard Lovelace, of Ithaca, New York, her son-in-law, Dr. William Stinchcombe of Syracuse, and her daughter-in-law, Dr. Marina Romanova of Ithaca. Her grandchildren are Thomas E. Stinchcombe, M.D., of Chapel Hill; Marjorie Stinchcombe, of Burlington, Vermont; Dr. John R. Stinchcombe of Toronto; Jennifer B. Lovelace of Ithaca; and Evera U. Lovelace of Vancouver. Her granddaughters-in-law are Kristi L. Dry and Kristen Reichold Stinchcombe. There are, in addition, four great-grandchildren, three boys and one girl.

- Jean Lovelace Stinchcombe, 2006

Christmas 1937 at the C.W. Lovelace home at 435 West 59th Street, Kansas City, Missouri. L. to R., C.W. Lovelace; Jean Van Evera; Charlie H. Lovelace; Eva H. Lovelace; Susan H. Van Evera; Marjorie Van Evera Lovelace; Eldridge H. Lovelace; and John J. Van Evera/ Photo from the collection of Charlie H. Lovelace.

My Mother

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Monday, May 23, 2005, delivered at the celebration of the life of Marjorie Van Evera Lovelace, Memorial Service, First Unitarian Church of St. Louis:

I've had a long time to consider these words, because as my mother remarked the other day, "You have had your mom around a lot longer than most people do." That was true, but until the event, this past Thursday, I could not think of her in the past tense.

My mother as I remember her was not the frail, helpless patient attended to by doctors and nurses in these recent weeks and months. She was a vigorous, vivacious, disciplined, and energetic person who sought to enjoy life and liked having fun. She had many interests and strong opinions. She liked conversations, and she was a straight shooter in giving her views.

My mother lived a very long, full, and constructive life, and since it was so long, I hope that you will give me a few minutes to talk about it. My parents celebrated their 68th wedding anniversary the other day, and they fulfilled in their partnership everything that a couple can do or seek. They went from Kansas City to St. Louis and all over this country and around the world to different civilizations and cultures. My father was a planner by profession, and my mother a planner in her daily life. They shared and shaped a reality together, step by step. Their home at 5 Brookside remains my aesthetic ideal of harmony in the indoor and outdoor worlds. They did many good things here and elsewhere.

But now I want just to talk about Mom. As a person and as a mother, Mom came from very solid foundations. The world of Kansas City was very cohesive, and a good and solid one but less inclusive than what we have and seek today. But there were strong values of work and commitment to education and leading a good life. My four grandparents were friends. My mother met my father in 1921 or 1922, when she saw two blond boys coming down the street and learned that they were Eldridge and Charlie Lovelace.

Mom grew up with a very strong sense of place, family, and history. She had a sense of her forebears, who they were and what they did. Mom told us in our childhood of her family's role in our national past. Van Everas fought in the Revolution in the Battle of Oriskany, and we studied their names on the monument there. Mom's grandfather participated in the Battle of Gettysburg by hiding in the basement. When Mom told this in school, she forgot to say that he was 11 years old. Grandma passed along the bullets from Gettysburg for John to take to show and tell, and I have them in our living room breakfront. I look at them often.

My mother grew up with a sense of the importance of this country, our self-government and our search for a good society. In some of her last words, she said, "Oh dear, I wonder if our better days are over." She wasn't talking about **us**, our family, but about our country.

We grew up with a special sense of our lives as Americans and what we can do in this world. My mother supported civic activity and she had many commitments in the St. Louis community. She believed in doing your part to correct wrongs. That was the very message that she gave to me. My mother didn't accept statements just because they came from authority above – and that applied to headmasters, school superintendents, and doctors.

Mom was interested in a religious dimension to life, and somehow she and my father found this church, the First Unitarian. That was in 1947. My mother wanted to consider the place of the individual in the larger scheme of things, including the larger purpose in life. She liked the idea in this church of developing your own creed and world view. My mother saved a clipping from one of Earl Holt's sermons. It said: "The task of religion as I see it is to open the heart

to the things invisible to the eye." Earl said, "We are saved by hope that may sometimes grow into faith, through love. This is the source of the courage which will be required of us."

My mother thought about issues, and she expressed them – personally, on the phone, and in writing. When we first went on a family trip in 1949, Mom had me keep a journal in which I recorded observations. She had done the same when the Van Everas launched their journey to California in 1923. My mother believed in seeing and recording observations about the great natural beauties of our country, from sea to shining sea.

Mom was a conservationist long before environmentalism came into vogue or we had Earth Day. She was a vigorous outdoorswoman, and she loved the woods, streams, and fields. Many of her feelings dated to those years in the 1920's in northern Wisconsin, "canoeing in the evening in a little blue canoe out on Plum Lake's waters." She conveyed to us her love of animals from our family pets to our later expeditions to see the prairie chickens in their mating ritual, which they chose not to perform when we came.

Sharing and writing about events were very important in our family. Mom and I liked the idea that an experience is not complete until it is written – an observation by Anne Morrow Lindbergh, one of our favorite writers. I was brought up with the idea of writing thank you letters and responding to and acknowledging all the things that were done for you. Yes, and it was ***very*** important to use correct grammar! Mom developed a library of works on grammar and usage, and had books such as ***Woe is I***, guides of punctuation, and a recent book that I gave her on the apostrophe error.

There was a definite sense of right and wrong in her make-up. No getting around it, and no qualifications. Likewise, she backed us unreservedly. One clipping that my mother saved was this quotation from ***A Princess Remembers***: "But the thing I remember best of all was what a precious and reassuring feeling it is to know that somebody is always on your side, no matter what." The author is Gayatri Divi.

In every situation, we had a mother who took great interest in our experiences, our trials and tribulations, whatever they might be. She was ***always*** interested, always on our side. If a problem came

up, she wanted to tackle and solve it. She thought constantly of new and different ways to expand our horizons. I was interested in politics, and she got me started on my political button collection. I wanted to meet Adlai Stevenson, and she drove me to Springfield to do it. Richard preferred trash day to Christmas, because it occurs more frequently, and Mom took interest in his treasures and ***bachines***, as he called them. When Richard did not like reading in grade school when everyone had to do Dick and Jane and Spot, he was shifted to Rossman's School. When the principal and superintendent of University City suggested that Richard might not have an academic future, Mom took note of their names and sent them articles about Richard's scientific achievements and awards until she was notified that both men were deceased. Richard had one afternoon off every week, and Mom took him to Walter Ash hardware to develop his interest in equipment such as radios and doorbells. I was shy and thus sent to Junior Theater. I also went to Charm School, which I did not like, and at the end of seventh grade, I went to typing lessons at Miss Hickey's, which I did like. I was much younger than the other girls, but I enjoyed hearing each day, "Girls, begin the morning drill!" Richard liked animals, and he got to work with pigs at Farm Camp. We went to Plum Lake to love nature, and to schools that emphasized thinking and learning to develop your mind and ideas for a fulfilling life.

Jean Lovelace Stinchcombe learned to type early and loved it. Picture from 1955.

We had an advocate and a defender, and my mother and I often discussed the plight of children who come home to empty houses – and not to someone who wants to know how everything went with ***you***. As a young adult, however, you start to feel that you know everything, and you don't

very much need that person in your corner. But then when your children are born, you find yourself looking back at what went into your own upbringing, and you realize how much there is to learn about bringing up a child. This is the experience that has been referred to in this church as the generation turning back to meet the previous one in the interest of the next. From the responsive reading ***From Generation to Generation***, comes the quote: "Love, like a carefully loaded ship crosses the gulf between the generations." (Antoine de St. Exupery)

My mother had the idea of having my three children and Richard's two come to St. Louis to visit their grandparents – without the buffer of their parents. They first came on an initial trip, just to see how things would go. They were taken all around St. Louis, to parks, museums, the zoo, to tours and visits with friends and neighbors. When they passed this test, then the next years they came by two to make expeditions to the great National Parks – to the Grand Canyon,

Tommy and Margie Stinchcombe visit Tower Grove Park on their "shakedown" visit to St. Louis, 1978. The success of this visit with Grandma and Grandpa led to two western trips in the coming summers.

to Yellowstone, to Mesa Verde, to Rocky Mountain, to Carlsbad Caverns, to Sequoia, and to Yosemite. They took a raft trip on the Green River, and Tommy wrote that he fell out!

Yes, Grandma had them write letters and cards about their experiences. These are their first written expressions. They are among my treasured possessions for their entertaining comments. In all the experiences of their growing up, Grandma was close by, thinking

of constructive ideas, offering support and solutions, and friendship between generations. Trying to smooth the way, to make for a better outcome. Being always in their corner. Thinking of how they would love the experience of going to camp and benefit from independent school.

I have no doubt that my mother's insights about childhood, school, camping, reading, learning and writing had a major part in making them who they are today. She followed everything through all their graduations, and she tried always to understand the new worlds of medicine, law, and biology that they were entering into.

This is a presence that lasts and will always last. I feel grateful to have had a moral framework of commitment, loyalty, and devotion. It is good to try to be all that you can be. I am glad to have had clear opinions, judgments, and a sense of right and wrong. My mother was a standard setter. She will always be in my mind and hopes as part of how I view myself and the world, and in my hopes for my family and country. It is comforting to be in this church, and to look at the mural of trees gives a feeling of peace.

To conclude, I will quote from one of Mom's favorites, Helen Hunt Jackson: ***"Write of her, NOT died in bitter pain but emigrated to another star."***

- Jean Lovelace Stinchcombe

Marjorie at her desk at 5 Brookside. Her family always referred to her desk as the "control tower."

Spring 1967. Picture of Marge by Stuart Mertz.

Marjorie Remembers

Part 1. Memories and Influences

Marjorie Lovelace on the breezeway at 5 Brookside, 1974.

Marjorie Remembers

Part 1. Memories and Influences

Introduction:

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All her life, my mother enjoyed reminiscing. When conversation turned to past times, she never failed to respond eagerly to the words Kansas City, Southwest High School, and Plum Lake. She actively sought to depict the environment in which she grew up. Not content to describe only her own experiences, my mother attempted to present her life and times as a child and later as an adult.

To grow up in Kansas City, Missouri, in the early decades of the twentieth century seemed just about perfect. Despite the flaws in those "dear dead days," they held memories of a well-ordered society and its simple pleasures. Fundamental to this picture was the sense of security. To come home to a mother who quickly attended to a chipped tooth or rose to defend her daughter against an unfair charge of cheating on a typing exam meant a wonderful start to life. The father who came home at night sang songs, wrote poems and letters, and taught his younger daughter to drive at the tender age of 12. School days offered excitement of studies, activities, and events, particularly the Christmas pageant at the Bryant School. Come summer, the family sat on the porch, that now forgotten element of American architecture. It was very, very hot in the pre-air conditioned Kansas City of those days, but heat was expected. For relief, enormous trunks were packed for a six-week stay in the cool north-

ern forests of far-away Wisconsin. As the year drew to an end, then came the high point, Christmas, a day of intense excitement. The pleasures of Christmas were offset only by the realization that when it ended, it would be another whole year before it came again.

Kansas City of my mother's youth represented an enduring ideal, a standard of architectural and planning achievement, the houses sound, spacious, and well conceived, the neighborhoods light and

My mother wanted her children and grandchildren to appreciate Kansas City. In this picture grandchildren John Stinchcombe and Jennifer Lovelace visit a fountain in the Country Club Plaza, Kansas City, 1982.

airy but well treed. Parks and fountains enhanced the living space, while the nearby Country Club Plaza represented the latest for shopping and Christmas decorating. The city had a real downtown where men went to work and where offices and department stores stood tall and imposing. Other cities, including St. Louis, were compared to Kansas City and found wanting. Other neighborhoods did not equal the Country Club district; nor did the schools measure up to Bryant and Southwest.

Growing up in Kansas City meant being an American, in the heartland of what was unquestionably the greatest country in the

world. And this country was one to be studied, visited, and cherished. Thus began my mother's love affair with trains and, much later, her desire to take her grandchildren on trains. In 1914, when my mother was one year old, my grandfather sold the equity in his bungalow to acquire a Hupmobile. Thus my mother grew up with what has been termed the "most intensive motoring culture" in world history, and she relished it. From the Sunday picnics in a farmer's field to the goal of visiting every state in the Union, the family tackled dirt roads, flat tires, breakdowns, making an exploration of every area of the country. By taking her grandchildren out West, my mother shared with them the excitement of seeing the Purple Mountain Majesties.

So strongly did my mother define the experiences of her childhood that I, too, developed a sense of Kansas City as a foundation of American civilization. Later, in summer 2005, soon after my mother's death, I spent time reading some journals that my maternal grandmother had written. Even at my not-tender age of 66, I found myself startled to read passages and comments indicating anything less than perfect. I had accepted my mother's idea that life in Kansas City was idyllic.

- Jean Lovelace Stinchcombe

1232 West 58th Street, Kansas City, "brand-new house of seven gables," much loved by my mother in high school years.

I. A Reflection: Writers and Friends

"A story, whether the history of a ship, the course of a battle, a life, or a fable, whether told over or repeated over generations is always told by an individual. The same story in the mind or head of each person is different."

I have taken this quotation from the preface of a story of Charles Darwin's ship, ***HMS Beagle***. I like this statement; it reminds me of what I want to say about Katch Wells's writers' workshop.

In May 1987, Katch wrote each of us, saying to this effect: "Perhaps when a group of people who have a compulsion to write become a cluster of friends ***because*** of the writing, we all have a closer insight into one another than an ordinary group could have."

I have been attending for much longer than these nine years, and in my life, as in yours, many things have happened – some joyful, some sad. When we get together, we talk of current matters; we enjoy our coffee, cake, tea, and coffee – and our writing. We discuss serious issues, but we go from there to dogs and light-hearted subjects. We have fulfilled Katch's purpose of friendship through writing.

What fun to learn of the life of Mae Duggan, our newest member, or become acquainted with Nita Browning, a trained journalist, as is our long-time writing member Peg Bosse, who writes on a variety of topics, serious and comical. Our group included accomplished and gifted descriptive writers, such as Louree Clem. We miss our illustrious imaginative writer, Connie Crossen.

In our group we have the energetic Chiquita Rogers and her talented daughter-in-law, Josie. We have longtime member Helen Kelley and Dorothea Maxwell, who often write touchingly of their daughters. Lucie Palmer is a splendid presence in this group and much cherished, and we admire Nancy Hardgrove, whose writings move us deeply. We miss Eleanor DeWoskin, Winnie Thompson, and Janet Neilson, whose story of the piano-playing dog still causes me to chuckle. Please come when you can, Georgia and Kay. I must also note Barbara Peper, Pat Neilson, and newcomer Magdalen, who has brought new ideas to our group. The writings of all have caused us to ponder and think. All of our members have enriched our lives and given us insight into their own.

We are grateful to Katch Wells for her faithful commitment to this monthly self-assignment, both in good times and in bad.

II: Childhood Recollections, written 1970

My childhood in Kansas City, Missouri in the twenties was idyllic. I can't be sure that it was typical – perhaps yes, perhaps no. I do know that those were simpler days, less complex for everyone. There was no drug problem among the children, let alone teenage pregnancies. Teachers were respected and they ruled supreme in the classroom. They told us that the United States was the best country in the world and we knew it to be true.

Parents located near the school they wished their children to attend, and the children got there by walking or bicycling. It was a good system – no costly buses to maintain; money went to the teachers.

Of course we knew nothing of segregation or desegregation. Perhaps this was bad. It is true that people thought the colored (as we called them and never "niggers" in my family) were all right "in their place."

A great treat on Friday nights or Saturday afternoons was to go to the movies, and of course there was no concern among mothers about the appropriateness of the productions! In fact entire families went together quite happily. Old and young were unsophisticated back then. There was no sound except for that produced by the piano players up front. She (this was a job that women usually held in my community) decided what sort of music the action of the picture show called for.

Life in western Missouri was provincial. I knew of only one or two people who had been to Europe. To go east on a long train ride and then cross the ocean on an eight to ten day sea voyage was more than anyone even thought of. We knew vaguely what was going on in Europe and other far away places because we had newspapers, of course. Television was a long way in the future and communication was a far cry from what it is today. As for entertainment – well, the children did a lot more reading than they do now; they created their own amusements. One waited to see what the weather was going to be, and what it was 500 miles away made no difference.

Mail deliveries were twice a day and no one found fault with the system; it seemed perfect in every way and we took it for granted

including the penny postcard.

Of course there were automobiles; my parents drove a Hupmobile – in fact they traded in the equity on their house to buy it – they were actually pioneers; they knew the automobile was here to stay. Soon they bought a Hudson Super Six but the idea that there would ever be two, three or more in a family! – what an outlandish thought! (More than one bathroom per house would have seemed a totally unnecessary luxury – the outhouse was not too far in the past.)

Sunday was a day for quiet activities – no rowdy children's games, no picture shows – a ride in the country after church was acceptable. This often included a picnic in a school yard or even a farmhouse front yard (the farmer always granted permission!). Little girls could play jacks but running games were strictly forbidden.

Such were the dear dead days beyond recall.

The Hupmobile, 1914.

III. Poem written by Marjorie Van Evera, 1929, age 16

(Inspired by Matthew Arnold's Dover Beach, 1867)

1
Life seems a hopeless mystery,
I often wonder why the earth
Revolves around the sun and moon,
And why the ocean ebbs and flows,
And why the sky above is blue.
What makes the pine trees grow so tall,
The flowers to bloom and birds to sing?
Is there a power behind it all?

2
I see the beauty of this earth
And almost comprehend the Power
Th' infinity of His creation:
The endless chances offered all.
Not on a "darling plain" am I
"Where ignorant armies clash" but as
The perfect man in harmony.
My right: to live, to learn, to love.

3
This mortal world may contradict,
But I, by grasping the true Life
Shall overcome material faults:
And striving-waiting, see the fruits
Of honest labor, all the glorious
Satisfaction that abounds from
Gray and cheerful work. Then who
Will say that Life is not worthwhile?

4
Is it to live and then to die,
To know the joys of this world only
Without a taste of bliss eternal?
To me it seems that all was planned
By God's own hand, that we should live
A useful, kind and sincere life,
Embracing immortality
With vision clear and steadfast.

5
Now death can hold no fear for me;
I know the origin of all.
Did God in his own image
Mold the man that he should sink
Into eternal chaos? No,
His life is endless as the tide
For as the sun so are the sunbeams,
And as the Father so the children.

Dover Beach

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another: for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams.
So various, so beautiful, so new
Hath really neither joy, nor love nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And here we are as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight
Where ignorant armies clash by night

Benet's Readers' Encyclopedia:

"Matthew Arnold expressing his pessimism with regard to the future of the modern world and advocating personal fidelity and love as the rather desperate substitute for the ebbing 'sea of faith.'"

IV. My Love Affair with Trains (1980)

I belong to the age of trains and now they are almost a thing of the past, at least in this country; but I still love them. Perhaps this love is inherited. My father grew up a farm boy in Iowa near Grinnell, which later became his alma mater. He told me many times of his running out to wave at the engineer as his train passed through those Iowa cornfields. I grew up hearing him say "All aboard."

Before the advent of the automobile (and only the adventurous used this mode of cross-country transportation in the twenties) everyone knew trains to be reliable; they took you to your destination, perhaps all of 250 miles away, and maybe only an hour and a half late! The prospect of putting on chains and coping with the mud, at least in the Midwest, was just too gruesome.

A great train experience looms up in my mind, an adventure I have never forgotten. This is probably because of the diary I kept; my mother insisted on this. My father's Iowa relatives, including his mother, had all migrated to California during the twenties: San Francisco, Los Angeles, Long Beach and San Diego. They were intent on escaping the Midwest heat and thunderstorms; they knew of earthquakes but did not consider them a major threat.

I was ten years old when my family boarded the westward-bound train for its 3 - day trip to San Francisco. We had a stateroom which would accommodate our family of four in moderate comfort. What excitement for a ten year old! Yes, it had its own bathroom; I will never forget what I knew well at the time: "Passengers will please refrain from flushing toilets on the train while standing in the station." No, I won't finish this.

My diary says that it was July 12, 1923, when we went to the station to board the Burlington only to find that this line had had a track washout. However, we were able to board a Union Pacific leaving ten minutes later. (In today's world one could never be so fortunate.)

This first day we went through Kansas, sitting on the observation platform; and dull and drab as this was we enjoyed every minute of it.

Sleeping on the train was a novelty. We were in Denver, the

mile-high city, the next morning. The ride through the Royal Gorge was an indescribable pleasure – a thrilling recollection to this day. There are references in my diary to the stop in Salt Lake City which included our visit to the capitol, Brigham Young's home, the Temple, and other Mormon sights. I wrote that he had 19 wives and a good many millions of dollars. Whether this was accurate then or now is unknown.

We departed by train at 11 a.m. and spent the day crossing Nevada. I wrote, "Not much to see here, just sand, sand, and sand. We saw a mirage, which is a lake you think you see but you don't," in my words.

My diary covers all activities from July 12 to August 30 including a visit to San Quentin Prison. (I still remember peering into the prisoners' cells. I doubt that this is still a travel activity.) Hollywood was a place of excitement in those days; Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford and the sets for Robin Hood and The Thief of Baghdad enchanted us. Then there was the night of August 2 in the Hollywood Bowl when the show closed because President Harding had just died. I wrote that "This is too bad; he was a good president and so good looking." The judgment of history does not confirm the former.

There was a boat trip to Catalina Island, an excursion to Tijuana, south of the border, Fort McArthur, Balboa Park, not to mention many beach excursions.

At last we were ready to go eastward and our first stop on a special shuttle from the main line, still operating as before in 1995, as I recently saw, was to be the Grand Canyon. But before this and that higher altitude, we rode through hot desert country. No one thought of complaining very much about an uncooled train with outside temperature near 100. But it so happened that I had brought a star fish from the ocean, my treasure of this entire trip. This enchanting creature produced an unholy smell which had the passengers in their berths in revolt. I didn't know about this at the time but learned the next morning that my starfish had been dispatched at Needles, California – temperature 105.

At the Grand Canyon we spent time at overlooks and in the El Tovar, still serving its visitors as before (1995). I envied the riders on mules returning from their trip to the bottom; I resolved that some-

day I would do this; my mother was not sympathetic. Another 35 years passed before I accomplished this.

What strikes me now (an attitude of the nineties) is bewilderment over how our family of four had the audacity to sojourn in California for six weeks and be a burden on friends and family. I'm sure they didn't freeload but they surely must have been a responsibility. Did a sigh of relief go up when they left; or perhaps this was something they all loved in those simpler days?

There have been other great train trips in my past but this is the one that lingers most fondly in my memory.

Tommy and Margie Stinchcombe ride the narrow gauge railroad between Durango and Silverton with their grandparents, July 1980.

Grandchildren Jennifer Lovelace and John Stinchcombe on a train trip from Kansas City to Los Angeles, July 1983.

Jennifer Lovelace and Grandma are possibly sleeping in their berths.

V. Animals I have Known and Loved (1988)

I grew up in a family that loved animals. My mother was an immaculate housekeeper but she decided that high standards would have to be abandoned after it was discovered that my desire for a pet was so great that at age 5 I was pulling an earthworm by a string along the sidewalk. After that we had a succession of animals – rabbits, guinea pigs, dogs and cats. Actually there was only one cat; he was named Black Arrow. Robert Louis Stevenson had written the book, Black Arrow in 1888 – an engrossing spy story. Treasure Island surpassed this in popularity although written before and Black Arrow is hardly known today. I loved this tale and it seemed appropriate to give this black cat that name as soon as he wandered onto our premises. He was dear to our hearts – my sister's and mine, that is …and apparently well-behaved until a certain time.

I came home from school one day and my cat was not to be found – totally uncharacteristic! In fact he never did appear. It was a very long time before I learned the truth. On this certain day my mother had prepared lunch for her bridge foursome, chicken salad being her specialty. I like to think that her own special recipe traveled around the country many times by way of her college friends with whom she kept in close touch; but on October 20, 1923, fate was unkind to her. The salad was ready and on the kitchen table but scheduled to rest temporarily in the ice box – then so-called – guests to arrive in 20 minutes when in a moment of her inattention, apparently, Black Arrow stealthily leapt onto the table and in scarcely any time devoured the entire bowl of chicken salad. Alas, I hope those moments of pure feline joy made up for his loss of a happy home. I finally ferreted out the truth after many days. Yes, Black Arrow went for a ride. I know this does not reflect credit on my dear mother; in fact this sort of thing is considered despicable, but in her irritation I do understand. She had only a few minutes after the kitty's joy ride to open a can of tuna and make the best of this situation.

In another time and in another household I am reminded of our long-haired dachshund, Mitzi, who was purchased from a reputable dealer with all credentials intact, and with the advantage of being housetrained because she was a little older. Mitzi was highly intelli-

gent and she had formed some unusual habits. At first I didn't fathom these but after while I did discover that these happenings became evident after a conversation on the telephone. Mitzi had seen that I was immobile and helpless at that time; she seized this opportunity to tiptoe by me and to climb into a bed, carefully making certain to crawl between the sheets, head resting on pillow. There were five beds in our house at the time and if there were several calls or an especially long one was going on, she had the time to take her pick of beds, often digging into two or three. I was bewildered and dismayed at first, but then it became necessary to keep bedroom doors closed.

It seemed to us at the time that Mitzi's brain power should be perpetuated and the children's education enlarged, so it was arranged that she be mated with the only other long-haired dachshund in town, Hansel. (If there was a Grettl in this scenario I have forgotten.) The union was a success and at the proper time Mitzi produced six male puppies. As fate would have it, people wanted only short-haired female dachshunds for the Christmas that was coming soon. It seemed that no one wanted these dogs for sale or for free. One was with us a very long time. We did finally learn of a couple that

Richard with our dog Mitzi's pups, 1955.

wanted a mother dog and son, but not before Mitzi had had a chance to teach Ludwig her into-bed trick.

She did develop a bad temper before she left us – motherhood had been too hard. She refused to come when called and she hid under beds, no longer in them. Furthermore an attempt to pull her

Heidi, summer 1962.

Susie Stinchcombe visits The Brentmoor, August 2004.

out was accompanied by a bite on the fingers. The only solution to this was the ringing of the doorbell. She was a fierce watch dog and ready to attack anyone coming near our house. One neighbor threatened to sue and the head of our firm did not escape. We breathed easier when Mitzi went to her new home.

In still another household and another generation, there were more pets – mostly the smaller variety – a guinea pig that knew the sound of the school bus and squeaked loudly at that time, awaiting a certain arrival. Alas, Silky had to leave because he was responsible for some terrible allergies but he was replaced by a white rabbit with downward-hanging ears – named Christopher Marlowe by a certain high school student. He was kept in a cage because if released for even a brief time he gnawed electrical light cords. This was too bad because he had been toilet-trained and this made up for many deficiencies. Christopher Marlowe demanded Bibb lettuce and rejected carrots but oddly enough he triggered no allergies.

I have not mentioned Southpaw, our most favorite of all pets. She produced three litters, none of them planned. The children of the neighborhood loved these kittens but mothers were less than enthusiastic. Southpaw did not bother birds, although she took pleasure in climbing trees! She followed our children in their roamings – a cat for all seasons.

I will not leave out Pete, Dukey, or Itsy – they all had their special personalities, but I will end this by comments about Malcolm X. He is the companion of a friend of mine. It is said, and confirmed, that pets provide great companionship for the elderly. He is 18 years old, totally black of course. This age approximates 125 years in humans. He can sit up and roll over; he walks out with his 81 year old mistress to get the paper every morning. (No, he does not bring it in.) Malcolm X loves the neighborhood children and tolerates tail-pulling and other annoyances.

The Lovelaces no longer have pets or contemplate having them. Departing town was too much of a problem after our favorite kennel went out of business. We were among the first patrons of Rex Kennels and it was a particular pleasure to drive into those premises and deliver our pet to Mr. and Mrs. Rudy. There were no forms to fill out, no documentation as to the next of kin. And so it went.

VI. Nostalgia for the Beautiful Northwoods (undated)

My friends tell me that bouts of insomnia are pretty common after a certain age. I can remember my mother complaining about wakefulness in the middle of the night but I never thought I would get old enough for this to happen to me. However, in a way I have found these wakeful periods somewhat satisfying. I am able to day-dream during the night of some wonderful long ago days in the pine forests of northern Wisconsin.

It took three days to drive up there from our home in Kansas City. Gravel roads made slow going. An average of 40 miles per hour was considered very good but finally we did arrive at Plum Lake – so called, we thought, because its sunsets over the lake were plum-colored; it certainly wasn't shaped like a plum.

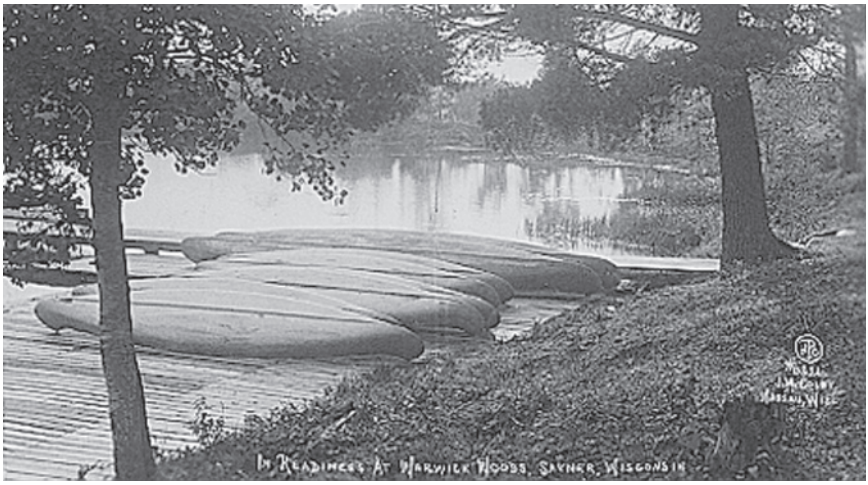
On the lake was an old resort dating back to the 1890's and two camps not so old, of course – one for boys and one for girls at opposite ends. Going to this camp in 1926 was my greatest joy. Girls weren't too sophisticated in those days – wearing a little lipstick by age 13 was pretty daring and smoking a cigarette – well, this could have meant expulsion! But the fact is that defying authority was practically unknown – teenage rebellion had not come of age.

I remember the loons on the lake in little family groups; the whippoorwills in the night singing their mournful call; the daddy long-legs that we loved after we found out they weren't spiders at all. I liked the sound of the chipmunks running over the tops of the tents. Yes, we slept in tents and each night after dinner we put up our mosquito nets. It was wise to have a bottle of citronella inside and a flashlight in case the mosquitoes had outwitted you. Once in awhile I am aware of a citronella smell in some product and it takes me back some 60 years or more.

At my camp, called Warwick Woods – the founders named it after Warwick Castle in England – there was nothing so crass as bell ringing – we had bugle calls. It was the desire of every girl to qualify as a bugler. This took considerable practice and dedication. Taps was by far the easiest. For my 16th birthday I wanted a bugle. It is shiny as can be after all these years. I find I am no longer "in voice" even for the Fourth of July or New Year's Eve. I am saddened that none of my

Marjorie as a Warwick Woods camper visits the Sayner Lodge for dinner, 1926.

The Bung at Warwick Woods.



Canoes at Warwick Woods, 1920's.

five grandchildren has shown any inclination toward bugle blowing. Actually it is the first step toward playing a cornet, also a member of the trumpet family.

A conversation with some contemporaries recently revealed that camp was almost a form of punishment to them – to be avoided at almost any cost. The group singing had no appeal. Imagine no goose pimples when Warwick Woods Splendid was sung to the tune of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture!; no shiver of pleasure when coming out of the lake and finding graham crackers and milk on the porch of the Bung; no sense of adventure when paddling up Rice Creek after dinner as far as the third beaver dam; no exciting secret excursions to the Sweet Shop for a 5 cent Hershey bar; and I found it exhilarating that my bucket of water was partially frozen on mornings in late August.

And I still think the creed is good enough for anyone's life style:

To start the day with a merry heart
Patient, reposed to be –
To seek the high and the noble
And to love sincerity –
To be simple, true and honest
Awake to another's need
And to be myself contented
This is the Warwick creed.

I went to Warwick in the 20's, and my daughter in the 50's; alas, it is no longer in existence, so my granddaughters can't go in the 80's. It belongs to Wisconsin's Nature Conservancy and I love to go back to visit and reminisce.

Marjorie and John Stinchcombe visit Warwick Woods with their grandparents, 1987.

You can never return to Plum Lake too many times, August 2004.

VII. That New Invention – The Telephone

I remember back when the telephone was young – not brand new but relatively so, and something to marvel at and respect. We had no idea of what a magnificent future it had. There was Central who said to you: Number please, and then you gave it to a real live person: Hyde Park 2810 and later Hiland 1150. Telephone numbers of old stick in my mind.

Then we had Parkview 7522 followed by Wydown 1-5124. The phone numbers had personalities because they had first names. Then these had to give way to an all number strategy. The reason for this was explained and naturally we had to accept this.

It has been a long time since Alexander Graham Bell invented the phone – exactly 122 years on March 10, but new things are happening; it is no longer an adolescent. It has become possible for a voice – yours or someone else's – to answer the phone when you aren't home. There is a message and only the very backward people do not choose to have this service. It does call for a return call if you are going to be polite, and this isn't always convenient.

Then there is the portable cordless phone, owned by 70% of the people I am told, to be carried around. It has to be put to bed at night to recover its energy. Also, there are phones one can take in the car to be able to transact business while driving; the latter no longer demands total attention, it seems.

I marvel at the device which reveals the identity of the caller after the number is dialed – called Caller ID. This can eliminate crank and anonymous calls. Good! No more hecklers. Said to be owned by 45% of customers. I wonder about this! More than 20% have internet access or pagers or both. Can this be?

Then there is the revolutionary service: If you are dialing a certain number you are apt to hear: Thank you for calling the Repertory. If you want to purchase or exchange tickets, press 1; if you want information on current productions, press 2; if you want information on future theatre productions, press 3; if you want information on shows through 1998 and 1999, press 4; if you want directions to the theatre, press 5; if you want ticket prices for Imaginary Theatre, press 6; if you want box office ticket prices, please press 7; if you want

box office hours, press 8. Now you hope what will come next: if you have a rotary phone please wait for the next available representative. But no – you are cut off and you must start over!

It's obvious that the telephone is just getting a good start. Right now there are advertised digital spread spectrum cordless phones, 2-keypad cordless speakerphones, cordless phones with 2-way intercoms, 2-line speaker phones with 32-number memory, 25 channel speakerphones with digital answering system – to name just a few.

But I have just read in the paper that the cell phone has been cloned. (However, it says you can be prosecuted, only if you are caught in the act!) That process has evidently now moved from sheep to phones. I call our telephone "Dolly."

Early telephones were solid and substantial.

VIII. Thanksgiving Traditions
Written by Susan Hartman Van Evera, 1945*

*Susan Hartman Van Evera prepared this report to give to her PEO chapter, and Marjorie presented it to her own PEO chapter.

I have been somewhat stymied by this subject. It sounds easy enough but stop and think. Just what are the traditions connected with this festival day? Family gatherings with feasts of turkey and the trimmings, a church service, or for those more worldly inclined, a football game.

Thanksgiving itself is practically the oldest tradition in American life, and this is how come.

However, the idea of a special day of thanks and feasting by no means belongs to America. Like many another good idea back of our national holidays, the germ of this one is found in olden times. When the children of Israel were in the land of the Canaanites we read in the Book of Judges that the Canaanites "went out into the fields and gathered their vineyards, and took the grapes and held festivals and went into the house of their God and did eat and drink."

This custom of making thanksgiving after harvest became the principal festival of the Jewish year. The Greeks had a harvest festival called Thesmophoria. The Romans worshipped a goddess of the harvest under the name of Ceres. In early England they celebrated Harvest Home and it was said to be dated back to the time of the Saxons.

In Europe the Netherlands were very faithful in their celebrations of the thanksgiving festival, in prose, poetry and song as well as in feats of skill and entertainment of all kinds.

As we all know, our Pilgrim Fathers, at the time called Separatists, objecting to the laws and customs and religious beliefs of the Conformists in England, left their native shores and migrated to Holland in 1606 but after about a dozen years in that country, seeing their children absorbing Dutch manners, customs and ideas did not suit them either so they decided to go in a company to the new country beyond the sea. They had such a hard time getting started. They left Holland after several attempts, on the Speedwell went back

to England and eventually 102 brave souls boarded the Mayflower on August 5, 1620 for the new world. That was a very long and most arduous trip. Things did not go as they had planned. They expected to land at the mouth of the Hudson but wintry winds landed them further north on the shores of Cape Cod, in December 1620. Longfellow did not miss it when he called it the bleak New England shore.

First they stopped at Provincetown, at the end of the peninsula. That was utterly impossible and so they pushed on up the arm to what is now Plymouth – then just a little bay with some protection from the high dashing waves. Winter was at hand – there they were with no shelter of any sort against the storms coming on. Can you picture souls as brave today? While the children and women remained on ship board, and were they sick of the little, dirty, smelling ship after 3½ months, the men built a community house. During that first hard heroic winter, living in a wilderness full of Indians and wild beasts, their foothold in the new world was indeed precarious. Nearly half the little company perished before spring. But when spring finally came, the rest set themselves resolutely to work, to clear the lands and make friends with the Indians. The Indians taught them how to plant corn and use fish to fertilize the soil. They also planted barley and peas, and found an abundance of wild fruit and berries. When the next autumn drew near, rounding out their first year of life in the new world, they were in far better circumstances.

They had gathered their harvests, built substantial houses and most important, had learned to adapt themselves to the new manner of living. The future took on a brighter hue. A spirit of gratitude took hold of their hearts and they resolved to prepare for a Thanksgiving feast and invite their Indian friends who had made these things possible. They sent four men out fowling and they came back with enough wild turkeys to serve the company most of a week. We all know the story of Massasoit, the great Indian leader who came with 90 of his braves to help the Pilgrims celebrate. There were Governor Bradford and John Carver, John Alden, Captain Standish and many others. Back and forth went Priscilla and the other girls trying to keep the plates filled. Never such a feast in the New World! Wild turkey, geese and ducks, besides clams, cod and oysters. Massasoit, fearing they would run short, sent some of his braves out and they

came back with five deer to be barbecued.

Between eats they held games and contests between the Indians and colonists. It was a never to be forgotten time in their history. Of course all years were not like that – they had heart breaking times and serious encounters with Indians and provisions ran short so that the people had no heart for a festival. However we read that in 1631 a Thanksgiving was held in Boston over the arrival of a much needed ship with provisions. The next year the governor of Massachusetts appointed a day of thanks and asked the head of the Plymouth colony to join in its observance. After that from time to time local celebrations were held. From this very humble beginning the season of Thanksgiving gradually became observed regularly in the New England colonies, and especially was regarded as a family festival day, similar to the family festivals observed in England at Christmas time.

During the Revolutionary War when the issues of the colonists were being fought out with the mother country we find many of the New England leaders members of the Continental Congresses. How natural for these leaders to influence the congresses to issue proclamations of Thanksgiving which they did 7 times between 1777 and 1783. It is interesting to note the day set aside was practically always on a Thursday though not always the same month of the year.

When Washington became president, he issued the first proclamation setting aside the day but still its observation was limited to the northern states. In the south it was almost unknown as late as 1855 at which time the governor of Virginia sent a message to the legislature urging recognition of the holiday. Much opposition was raised, the people arguing it was a relic of Puritan bigotry. The first presidential proclamation never reached the State Department and was lost as a public record for 122 years. When lo – in 1921 it appeared for sale at an auction held in New York City by the American Art Galleries. It was bought by the United States Government for $420 and now is on file in the Library of Congress.

Washington's second proclamation set forth Thursday, February 19 as the day of Thanksgiving. Then there was a lapse until 1798 when John Adams on his own instance set aside May 9 as a day of prayer and festival.

With Jefferson came a lapse of eight years as he did not believe in the custom and would issue no proclamation. However, when Madison came in, the custom was revived – one was in July 1812, another September 1813, and another January 1815. With Madison leaving the White House we hear no more about presidential proclamations for nearly 50 years. Then it was that Lincoln issued his first proclamation for National Thanksgiving to be held April 13, 1862.

While presidents of the United States were silent on the subject, the New England states, considering the observation of Thanksgiving sacred, had continued the custom. During this period there was one individual so interested in the subject, who so keenly felt the presidential indifference that she set about in her firm New England way to do something about it. This was Sara Josepha Hale, leading literary woman of her day. She was born in 1788 and died in 1879, a span of ninety years. Her husband died in 1822 leaving her with 5 small children to rear and be supported by literary effort. Eventually she became editor of *"The Ladies Magazine"* which later consolidated with Godey's Lady Book which post she held nearly 40 years, resigning just 2 years before her death.

She proceeded to use the editorial pages of her magazine to further her pet project. Year after year she never gave up. She consistently followed her cause until in 1863 she succeeded in influencing Lincoln to issue a proclamation appointing the last Thursday in November as a national holiday and season of thanksgiving. To this woman we owe our Thanksgiving as we know it. Thus the tradition was established.

The date has varied but twice until the time of F.D.R. Johnson designated December 7 one year and Grant, November 18. In 1939 F.D.R. who never minded, in fact enjoyed cracking a precedent, did just this when he proclaimed the third Thursday in November 1939 as the national holiday.

Thanksgiving is not a national legal holiday and has no national legislative authority. It is but a recommendation that by usage and custom has become an unwritten law, but it is the oldest tradition of the American people. It is however a legal state holiday in every state but Utah.

Roosevelt's decision was followed by a reaction of protest all

over the United States. New England was solid against the change and ignored his proclamation, celebrating their usual Thanksgiving date. Twenty three states observed the one the president designated because they had no choice, as their state legislatures made it obligatory for the governor to designate the day the president proclaims.

Today we celebrate the day much as the Pilgrims did. Church services for those who wish to keep in touch with the religious spirit of the day but with the majority it is a home festival with the turkey as of yore, though not as wild and with shorter legs and fuller breasts. We must remember our early Fathers had their games also, the same as we have our football today – either by radio or a cool seat in a university stadium. We do not eat from trenchers, long wooden bowls carved out of a block of wood that served husband and wife, or brother and sister nicely. They did have their napkins, knives and spoons in the long ago and they got along nicely without forks, or at least they thought they did. The gobblers were just as good, the pumpkins were just as yellow, and the cider and rum sparkled just as warmly as if two forks lay at each plate.

So hats off to Sara Josepha Hale who succeeded in convincing President Lincoln that in this broad ever prosperous land of ours we should regularly bring our families together, feast our bodies and our souls, never forgetting the early Pilgrim Fathers who struggled so desperately to make the first one possible.

And this for a little Thanksgiving poem:

> For the hay and the corn and wheat that is reaped –
> For the labor well done and the barns that are heaped –
> For the sun and the dew and the sweet honey comb –
> For the rose and the song and the harvest brought home –
> Thanksgiving
> For the homes that with purest affection are blest –
> For the season of plenty and well deserved rest –
> For our country extending from sea until sea –
> The land that is known as the “Land of the Free”
> Thanksgiving

IX. My Christmas Recollections

As the Christmas season approaches, I recall those days of long ago when I was a kid and life was uncomplicated – it really was! What stands out most in my mind are the preparations for the grade school annual pageant. This was the creation of Mrs. Albert Beach, wife of the mayor of Kansas City. It started with Father Time coming down the aisle leading to the stage of the William Cullen Bryant School. He had a beard, of course, and carried a crook; and he moved slowly to the cadences of Offenbach's Tales of Hoffmann's Barcarole. I'm not sure how appropriate this was, but to this day I never hear this barcarole without a vision of a grade school Father Time rising in my mind's eye.

Each grade had its own performance on stage to the tune of a particular Christmas carol. I always thought the fifth grade was the highlight of the pageant. These kids performed a sort of maypole dance to the carol, Joy to the World, which became my all time favorite.

I don't recall any crèche scene or baby Jesus, Joseph or Mary and this wasn't even controversial then. The newspapers carried no complaints of disgruntled Christians or Jews. Discrimination was either unknown or unrecognized.

The Country Club Plaza, first shopping center in the country, began decorating its buildings with hundreds of lights about 1930 before decorating became popular around the country. Residences were festooned so that families made it a point to drive through the area many times to "ooh" and "ah" at the elaborate displays.

A Christmas that I remember distinctly is the one when my sister received the bicycle she had coveted. But my grief was assuaged when I discovered behind it a three-wheeled vehicle with a sort of pumping treadle to propel it forward. I knew this would be the envy of the neighborhood. However this joy was surpassed by a later Christmas when I came downstairs and discovered a tiny Pekingese puppy emerging from a red stocking; my earnest plea had been granted, probably because my parents happened to be crazy about Pekingese dogs – strangely enough.

These are some of the memories of the Christmas season in my

young years. The traditions of my own family belong to a later period and are remembered no less sentimentally.

It was a memorable season when Santa Claus brought two little kittens to our household. The children were enchanted and they came up with the not so original names of Puff and Muff. They were frisky and playful and captivated everyone who came to see us. However they became less than popular with Mother when it was evident that as house pets they were a disaster – at least during the holiday season. They leapt and climbed in the Christmas tree; ornaments fell; the kitties clawed at the tinsel, they raced each other from top to bottom – it was chaotic. Confinement in the basement was required until January.

What I remember especially occurred after Christmas when the festivities were drawing to an end. My children derived great pleasure from collecting the discarded Christmas trees which were deposited at curbside. Their neighborhood friends joined in this enterprise and everyone, young and old, looked forward to January 6, Twelfth Night, when there would be a huge bonfire in our adjoining lot. Such a thing would never be permitted nowadays – too great a hazard. But in the 40's the nearby fire station cooperated and even sent some of its captains down to oversee and supervise and enjoy!

While this was going on, the parents and other neighbors celebrated by drinking mulled wine in honor of the coming of the Magi! Everyone looked forward to Epiphany.

I also am reminded of the Christmas when we were trying to dispose of six long-haired dachshund puppies. Our beloved Mitzi had given birth (or is the proper word whelped?) in late August to six male puppies – their blood-line top-notch. This would seem to be the answer to shoppers interested in a Christmas gift dog. Alas, that was the year that everyone wanted short-haired females. It was Christmas Eve when an office employee was pleased to relieve us of our last pup – a free gift!

I must certainly mention the John Burroughs School pageant. This was a cherished event, loved by students and parents. My children had the distinction and pleasure of being Book Girl and Book Boy (turning the pages of the Christmas story) in different years. What a surprise and delight when my son was chosen to be Joseph

and when my daughter won the prize for the painting which would be the model for the Nativity scene.

Jeanie and Dick collecting Christmas trees for 12th Night Burning, 1950.

Marjorie received a Pekingese pup for Christmas one year.

The 1960's and 1970's brought new family members. Bill Stinchcombe visits Brookside, Christmas 1964.

Reading the Night Before Christmas to grandchildren, 1978.

X. An Ode to the Automobile

I grew up in an age when automobiles were not taken for granted; not every family owned one. How could we have known in the twenties that some 70 years or more later no less a person than the vice-president would be accusing it of defiling the environment, and demanding a change? The internal combustion engine was a miracle but its image has been shattered.

But to go back to those early days – my father sold the equity in his bungalow in 1914 to generate the $1250 needed to buy the coveted Hupmobile. After this he paid $25 a month to rent the same house. In his memoirs he relates this as a significant event and indeed it was.

Our car was a joy. It was used for Sunday picnics. A lunch was packed which always included potato salad, thermos bottles, shiny, silvery things filled with lemonade and let me say here that roasting, grilling or cooking had not been thought of. To the country we went – not too distant back then – and sought a grassy school yard or church yard, and occasionally even a farmer's yard, permission for which was granted willingly. As a variation, an expedition was mounted sometimes solely for the purpose of digging up violets in the woods. My mother loved these plants with their pretty blue flowers, and they transplanted easily.

For protection from the weather, if a sudden shower came up, there were rolled up isinglass covers to protect the occupants of the car. I had supposed this material was a precursor of our ever-present plastic, but, no, I have learned that it is a gelatin obtained from the bladders of certain fish. I have not encountered that word in many a day.

Of course there was no such thing as a heater; in cold weather you stayed home or else you used blankets and quilts retired from the family closet solely for this purpose – lap rugs we called them.

In case of rain there was a device on the driver's side of the windshield that was hand-operated. It had a knob and required constant movement back and forth to clear the glass – faster and faster if the rain required it.

It was an enterprising person who ventured out of the city with

its paved streets. Being mired in mud was not an unusual happening. Of course there were chains to be put on if such a thing occurred – not too easy a task. Also, a flat tire was not exactly uncommon – or even a blow out! Has anyone had one of these in recent times?

Missouri was a backward state. Hard-surfaced roads were unknown there and to drive eastward from western Missouri to reach advanced states like Illinois and Indiana took real determination. Those states had gravel roads but in Ohio there was honest-to-goodness pavement. In 1924, Highway 50 was under construction, the intended link road between Kansas City and St. Louis. Sedalia was the mid-point and stopping there was a must; and yes, there was a hotel there – certainly the towns which were on the train routes had them. These were a far-cry from the Holiday and Ramada Inns of today. My mother, not the least bit acrobatic, did not appreciate the room with a coiled rope which was to be the escape route to the ground in case of fire.

I remember one occasion when a wire wastebasket was upended to house a pet rabbit for the night. We were a little late arriving in Bethany, Missouri, on our way to Grandma's in Iowa, and were pleased that the management would prepare a meal of milk toast for us, not the rabbit.

The Midwest population in the twenties was unsophisticated but some of the folks did welcome the chance to explore the United States, the eastern part at least, by motor car. The age of the jet and 747 was far in the future; even the Packard and Pierce Arrow, luxurious cars coveted by the upwardly mobile in the twenties, were comparatively rare. However, the Ford car was acquiring its own cherished reputation and I refer specifically to the Model T, or even its predecessor, the Tin Lizzie.

As for running boards – does anyone know why they were called that? Certainly no one ever did any running on them. I do recall that for long distance travel suitcases were strapped on them and passengers had to emerge from the opposite side. Trunks were not very large and were intended mainly to hold spare tires.

My father was a born traveler – not that overseas travel, the Grand Tour, occurred to him. But equipped with his road maps with his family settled in his Hudson Super Six, he was "rarin' to go" as

the old-fashioned expression went. His trip planning took him and his family all over the east from Maine to Virginia, stopping along the way over a period of six weeks to view historic sights, natural wonders, and college campuses. We stayed almost entirely in tourist homes – these were numerous and much less expensive. My father sent my mother in to check these out. Perhaps they were not unlike today's bed and breakfast establishments. I can still remember the shock of encountering a hotel in Lake Placid, New York that wanted $25 for the four of us!

On this trip we young ones in the back seat played games and the favorite was to name all of the states and their capitals – and not just the ones we had visited.

Some of these sights left an indelible impression on me – Ticonderoga, Lexington and Concord, Valley Forge for example. I learned from my parents "By the rude bridge that arched the flood" and "Ay, tear her tattered ensign down! Long has it waved on high" and alas, blank verse has never caught my fancy.

I still love my car. Will the electric car make a comeback? I rode in my Aunt Jo's once but it didn't have much get-up-and go! If a pollution-free car appears on the market, I will certainly try it if I still have a driving license then.

XI. Portrait of a Teacher

She was small, with hair straight back from her forehead. She had a quiet air of authority and yet of rare warmth. She always wore black, and she seemed very old and fragile. Her name was Sara Van Meter, and she was my teacher of English literature in high school. Her course was for seniors only, and as far as I can tell, no one who took this course has ever forgotten her. At reunions she has been the one remembered and discussed. Several contributors to the *New Yorker*, Scott Corbett and Berton Roueche, have praised her because of her influence on their careers.

When we seniors started our year with Miss Van Metre, we knew from past reports that an experience was in store for us. It would be work, but it would be an adventure. We were told immediately that we would be called Miss or Mr. to prepare us for college classes that lay ahead. This was innovative back in 1929: what goes on now I have no idea! Furthermore, this class met in Room 104, the choicest room in the building. We most certainly would not be expected to climb to the second or third floor. This was a status symbol.

At the start of the school year, Miss Van Metre wrote on the blackboard three separate columns of generally acknowledged great works of prose, poetry, and drama. The first and longest was the required reading for everyone. The second was for those who were more ambitious. I remember that among other things, this list called for a personal diary modeled on *Pepy's Diary*, and this was a Christmas vacation assignment. The third column was for the students who were truly intent on a stellar performance in the class. It contained such works as Richard Sheridan's *The School for Scandal* with the requirement that character sketches be written of the scandal-mongers, Benjamin Backbite and Lady Sneerwell.

Miss Van Metre was a strong believer in memorizing as a tool of appreciation. I think this practice went out of style years ago, but she thought it worthwhile to know "by heart," as we used to say, some sonnets by Shakespeare. Was she sending a message when she chose for us the one that reads, "Let me not to marriage of true minds admit impediments. Love is not love which alters when it alteration finds, or bends with the remover to remove."

But, of course, her assignments went far afield of Shakespeare. She loved Robert Burns: "Wee, sleekit, cow'rin, tim'rous beastie – O what a panic's in thy breastie!" This provided comic relief from more serious writings, but she was probably not challenging her students' maturity with Thomas Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* with its easily memorized verses. We were allowed to pick two verses that had individual appeal. A number of us selected "The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power, and all the beauty, all that wealth e'er gave, Await alike the inevitable hour: The paths of glory lead but to the grave." But when we were 17, the ideas embodied here did not seem relevant at all, so perhaps it *was* a challenge to our maturity.

Miss Van Metre thought her students should appreciate John Keats's *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer,* because she herself was a lover of classics. She had traveled before the days of jet airplanes, and she expected us to cover the world one way or another. She thought "Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold, And many goodly states and kingdoms seen" worthy of appreciation. She talked of the Grecian isles, and we were intrigued.

The girls in that unsophisticated age liked William Wordsworth, although they often thought him prolific and dull. But they warmed up to "She was a phantom of delight," which includes the words "A perfect woman, nobly plann'd, To want to comfort and command."

I always remembered Lord Byron's *On the Castle of Chillon*. It read "Chillon! Thy prison is a holy place," and I recalled these lines when I visited this castle in 1980: "Eternal Spirit of the Chainless Mind."

Our teacher never dreamed that we could not appreciate the depth of Wordsworth's prophetic lines which say, "Milton! Thou shouldst be living at this hour; England hath need of thee; she is a fen of stagnant waters." Miss Van Metre was often serious and gloomy, but she knew that poets often spoke the mood of the country.

I honestly do not know to this day why our teacher especially favored Keats's *The Mermaid Tavern,* but I do know that 40 years later my husband and I on visiting it in Rye, England, were happy to recite "Souls of Poets dead and gone, What Elysium have ye known, Happy field or mossy cavern, Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern." Yes, Eldridge was in this class, too. She told him on the first day of

class that Sir Richard Lovelace (properly pronounced like Wallace, Horace, necklace) was her favorite Cavalier poet, and we have always cherished the lines "I could not love thee dear so much, Loved I not honor more" and "Stone walls do not a prison make, Nor iron bars a cage." So it stands to reason that our only son is named Richard.

Wordsworth's "The world is too much with us; late and soon, getting and spending, We lay waste our powers – Little we see in Nature that is ours; We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!" expressed Miss Van Metre's more than slightly gloomy personality. I think these thoughts are appropriate for the dedicated conservationist that I have become.

I have never returned to this country after foreign travel that the words of Sir Walter Scott do not come to my mind: "Breathes there the man with so soul so dead Who never to himself hath said, 'This is my own, my native land' Whose heart both ne'er with him burned As home his footsteps hath turned, From wandering on a foreign stand?" In those days, long before feminism and the changing of words in hymns, I did not worry about this reference to "man" in the generic sense; I felt included.

Sir Philip Sidney's poem, "Come sleep; O Sleep! the certain knot of peace, The baiting place of wit, the balm of woe, The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release, Th' indifferent judge between the high and low" had a lovesick message, which our teacher pointed out to us. The poet saw Stella, who had rejected him, in his dreams.

Our literary studies also included Alexander Pope. We students liked his heroic couplets; we could memorize them easily: "Hope springs eternal in the human breast – Man never is but always to be blest." I detected a suggestion of a leer on Miss Van Metre's face when she talked about Pope's *Rape of the Lock*. We had scarcely heard that word; it never appeared in our daily newspapers. William Rockhill Nelson, editor of the Kansas City *Star,* would not tolerate it. Miss Van Metre certainly did not want to introduce us to any unpleasant facts. We were not exposed to anything racier than *The Rape of the Lock,* and she certainly had a rather guilty look when she read "What dire offence from amorous causes springs! What mighty contests rise from trivial things," lest she be provoking a curiosity

better left unsparked!

Miss Van Metre examined both the content *and* the grammar of our essays, and grammar is a subject for yet another essay. I hope this review of literature gives more than a slight impression of one teacher's impact on one of her students.

Sara Van Metre, teacher of English literature at Southwest High School, 1925-1943, gave Marjorie a lifelong appreciation of literature and language.

On May 14, 1937, the day before their wedding, Miss Van Metre wrote to "dearest Marjorie" to say that in the next day "you will become a Lovelace— and bear the name of my favorite Cavalier poet." She added, "And your Eldridge, of course, has the same courtly chivalry and knightly honor of the immortal Richard!" She signed her note, "So my best love and heartiest good wishes attend you both forever and forever."

XII. A Sad Story: The Rise and Fall of Southwest High School

Outside of family matters, which are always of interest, we have learned of a bewildering event recently – the closing, in 1998, of our wonderful high school in Kansas City. Perhaps that seems strange and unworthy of more than passing notice. This provoked a book entitled *The Rise and Fall of Excellence: The Story of Southwest High School* by Edward T. Matheny, Jr. The first chapter tells of the years 1925 to 1935, calling this period Commitment to Excellence.

We received this book in July and read it with dismay. Even though our association with this school was long ago, in 1930, I related to what one former student wrote in the prologue – "If I could make my life retroactive, I would be 16 and reading *The Canterbury Tales* with you, Miss Van Metre; thanks to you, I still love them."

The high school building is shut and empty now. The rooms are still there where dedicated teachers once presided over attentive classes. But school pride lives on there in memory, ever young and strong. Halls are no longer noisy, but silent. Southwest High School is closed. The author of the book and the graduates say Rest in Peace.

Southwest was built on 15 acres of farm land, a former corn field. This tract of land cost $75,000. The name finally chosen was not only because of its location in the city but because it lay on the Santa Fe Trail, along which had traveled prairie schooners, Indian tribes and herds of cattle.

Construction began in November 1924; this site was in J.C. Nichols's new Country Club Club district. The school opened in the fall of 1925 without blackboards. The students named the school newspaper *The Trail*. A future Rhodes Scholar was the first editor-in-chief of the yearbook called *The Sachem,* which meant a Native American Indian chieftain. A future Chicago University professor and chief administrator for the atom bomb was a reporter.

There were no school traditions; the student body established its own traditions – one was a commitment to excellence. Orange and black became the school's colors – an everlasting fire to burn forever; the black its foundation. The Trail was awarded first place in the Missouri InterScholastic Press Association test in Columbia, its first year.

In those early years Southwest students won 16 national oratorical contests. *The Trail* said that the foundations for traditions, athletic and scholarly, were being laid for a school that should endure, will endure a century. *The Kansas City Star* identified Southwest in only its third year as one of eight schools ranking highest in the state in scholarship.

My class was 1930, the same as that of my husband, whom I had known since grade school. Our high school had become one of the most admired college prep institutions. Every year *The Sachem* had pictures, clubs, and organizations – young faces and all white.

In 1875 the Missouri Constitution had mandated segregation in public schools. Then in *Plessy vs. Ferguson* it was argued in 1896 that "if the two races are to meet upon terms of social equality, it must be the result of natural affinities, a mutual appreciation of each other's merits, and a voluntary consent of individuals."

But in May 1954 we had *Brown vs. Board of Education,* which declared that "we believe that in the field of education separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." Southwest felt no repercussions from this decision at first. It continued to have high scholastic records and to remain in the top rank of secondary schools. It would take pages to list all of the awards, and to report all of the honors some of which came later in life. For example, a 1961 graduate received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1996.

In the 1966-67 class were five black students who participated in the life of the school in many different ways. One of them reported that the school's emphasis was on "enriching the mind."

In 1969 the school put on a Camelot program and today many alumni in wistful retrospect declare that Southwest was a Camelot kind of place. In the words of King Arthur,

> Don't let it be forgot
> That once there was a spot
> For one brief shining moment
> That was known as Camelot.

Then changes became apparent because the school district lacked the funds to operate programs as before. There were fewer teachers and larger classes; less available money for classroom equipment and laboratory supplies.

Southwest's final 25 years must be viewed in the context of greatly intensified desegregation pressures. In another Supreme Court case it was ruled that when geographic attendance resulted in continued segregation, a school district was required to take further steps, including busing students outside their residential neighborhood. This decision would prove to be the death knell of neighborhood school systems and ultimately of Southwest High School.

The Vietnam War was causing unrest among young and old and fights were common among students in predominantly white and black schools. Hourly beats of police were established around schools. *The Trail* in an editorial asked "What can be done to stop the downfall of Southwest?"

Black Central High and Southwest had a friendly meeting; they agreed that busing was an unsatisfactory way to achieve racial integration. Why, when students and parents, black and white agreed, was it being pushed so hard? The only answer was that the government was going to integrate schools, no matter what anyone wanted.

In a major departure from the past, literary societies were transformed into social service clubs. The character of the school was changing as was the character of society.

After more years of trauma, the Kansas City School Board voted to close Southwest High at the end of the 1997-98 year. The enrollment had dropped down to 410. The class of '48 had its reunion and the prevailing sentiment was: whoever thought we would outlive the school?

Southwest High School, the school that was known as Camelot.

It was noted that the court-ordered desegregation brought a change in the educational approach and a change in the way the community viewed the high school. And so the massive plan to achieve both integration and a quality education at the expense of the school system failed.

XIII. A Trip to the Dentist:
A Toothsome Tale of Mouth-Watering Proportions

Today I had my semi-annual dental appointment. As I waited for my turn with the hygienist, I reflected on my dental experiences over the years.

My mother was intent on proper tooth maintenance of her two daughters. I wonder if this might have been because her own mother had not received such care. In rural Iowa in the nineteenth century, it was not available. What I now realize is that at a relatively early age, she had had to have all of her teeth extracted. This was done in Kansas City instead of her own hometown, which seemed primitive compared to my metropolis.

I remember this with horror: I thought that she might not live because of the bleeding. Grandma's face was all caved in, but she bore this stoically, without anesthetic.

At length, my hygienist called me. In olden times, the dentist did what the hygienist does now, and he did not wear a mask or work wearing gloves. We could not imagine any danger. AIDS was not heard of, and health hazards were not considered. His charges were also a fraction of what is routinely very high these days, accepted, and taken for granted. In those times, x-rays were not recommended or even thought of; indeed, they might be dangerous. Now, at the end of this very thorough procedure of probing, poking and polishing, my dentist simply appeared in the room to do a final check, and at this point, it is to be hoped that the pronouncement will be that the teeth are o.k.

We have had our family dentist for many years. He was acquired after our original dentist broke both arms, and then our next one was drafted. Our whole family is devoted to him. He even did a repair job on our daughter who has lived elsewhere for over 30 years. It was a porcelain cap restoration on the two front teeth, and she knew that no one could make it look perfect the way Dr. Smith would. (This is not his real name; I do not want to be accused of advertising!)

Dr. Smith made his pronouncement, and it was favorable. He said, "You have excellent teeth," and there was a sort of unfinished sound to his statement. I replied, "You were going to say 'for your

age'." He merely chuckled.

As I considered my dentist appointment, I had occasion to recall the early days of orthodontia. The waiting room was filled with kids who had mouths full of bands that looked like gold. It was my sister whose teeth were being rearranged. I would have to wait until I was older. I felt left out, so I put my gold ring in my mouth to simulate the appearance of braces, closing my lips tight around it. And, no, I never swallowed it!

There were two orthodontists in Kansas City in the 1920's. I can mention their names, because it has been a great length of time since they practiced: such as *50* years. They were brothers: Dr. Frank Sheldon and Dr. Homer Sheldon. We went to Dr. Frank. My father did not approve of Dr. Homer, who wore a wrist watch (considered sissified – at least by my father) instead of a Hamilton on a chain, resting in a vest pocket. Hamiltons were what railroads ran by, and they were absolutely accurate.

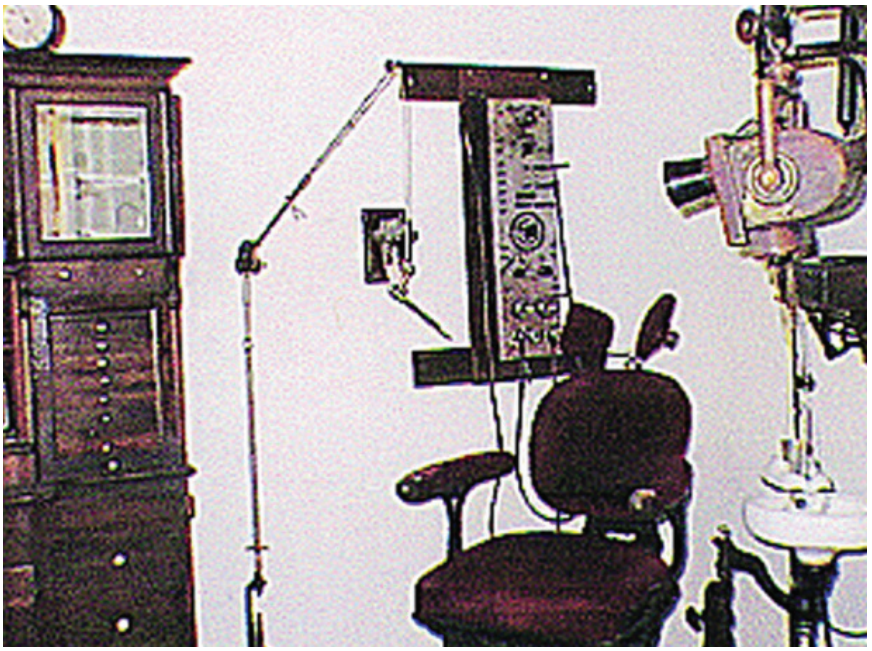
My memories also travel back many years to a time when I was pushed or, more likely, fell off a wall on the playground of the William Cullen Bryant grade school. When I bicycled home for lunch and showed my mother that my two front teeth had been chipped, she did not treat this lightly. I was taken to the dentist immediately. No real harm: these could be filed off without damage to the teeth, and they were.

In later childhood years, we had a dentist who was a family friend. And, yes, I did have fillings, and the decay was ground out and without the Novocain that today's patients expect. I hated this, and it did hurt terribly. But the fillings lasted, and they are still lasting. They were gold, furthermore, and they cost $10 apiece, an astronomical price at that time.

Nowadays, removal of wisdom teeth is not treated casually. It is considered about the same as surgery. I know this from the experiences of my grandchildren. For them extraction of wisdom teeth was carefully prepared and not considered an easy matter.

I had my wisdom teeth pulled in the dentist's office without any commotion before or after. I was scheduled to get a ride home with my father at 5:00 p.m. I stood at the corner of 11th and Grand, and I located myself near the curb for good reason.

I am grateful every day to my mother, who started me off on the right track! And *she* kept her teeth until the end.



Early dentist office.

XIV. Mentors and Influences

I saw a wad of paper thrown out of a car window the other day and was reminded of a time years ago when a cherished older friend chastised me for littering – a word little used back in the thirties; hardly anyone worried about the environment then. Never again did I do this but this recollection set me to thinking of individuals who have shaped my life – family members, friends and neighbors.

And speaking of neighbors, there was one a long time ago – his name was Max – who made grammar, spelling, pronunciation priorities in his life. He felt free to challenge and correct and initiate discussions. This is considered unpardonable, but oddly enough I didn't resent this and if other people did they didn't say so. The dictionary was consulted and word derivations were discussed. I'm afraid I said "heighth" – a gross error or not, according to one's viewpoint, but I have never said it since! Also, I was guilty of using the word "snuck." Bernstein calls this substandard, not even colloquial.

I considered another neighbor, Katherine, my role model and my mentor. She was brilliant, clever, fun-loving – all that a woman should be – as well as being good looking. I analyzed the secret of

Katherine Williamson, a near neighbor, was a wonderful listener and role model.

her charm and it was her ability to listen more than anything else. If I told her about trying experiences having to do with my children, she listened and gave an opinion which I valued. Sometimes she simply listened – not too easy for me or most people!

I have never forgotten the advice of my best friend's father, Clyde Taylor, before a group of us went off to college. It was: dominate your environment. My college grandson has considered this useful advice and so far he is doing this, inoffensively I think. My own dear father was satisfied with the simple admonition of Think – and after more than 50 years I still think this is very good.

Grandma Hartman had a lot of good horse sense but no college degrees. She knew that children as well as adults can be crushed by critical remarks. A grade school friend told me that I could never be pretty because I had a pug nose. Grandma said, "Margie, don't let that bother you; that is just one person's opinion." I have had reason to think of that wise insight many times since.

My family loved music – from singing around the piano played by Aunt Alice – a close family friend (there were no first names used by children for adults back then). Aunt Alice could read music and she could play by ear – I heard that it was because her heritage was all Welsh – a musical people. We had a victrola – not supposed to be as good as Grandma Hartman's Edison. Both of these had to be cranked with amazing frequency. My family had Victor Red Seal operatic selections. Symphonic recordings came later. I suppose the Kansas City Philharmonic was not first rate, but we didn't know it. I didn't like to go very much – it meant dressing up. It took my big sister to initiate me into an appreciation of symphonic music. What I especially recall was her making me aware of the melody in Brahms's Lullaby – so familiar – as it shows up plainly in Brahms' Second Piano Concerto. It was the beginning of my love of classical music. In condescending sisterly fashion she told me to be patient and in time I would learn to appreciate Beethoven's Eroica.

I went to the Christian Science Sunday School, although my parents had been Methodists in Iowa. Mother got tired of bazaars and church socials and quilting sessions. I learned at an early age that we didn't have doctors, and everyone else did. I felt deprived, although I was as healthy as everyone else. I wanted to be a Presbyterian. Still

I have inspirational recollections of my teachers, Mrs. Symonds and Mr. George. Some beliefs were planted solidly, never to leave.

Mrs. Quinby, my fourth grade teacher, told her class that the United States had never lost a war; what a satisfaction that was, but it was hardly a surprise since everyone knew we were the best country in the world. Now I find myself wondering what is ahead: did my generation live through the very best years of this country? Would it be downhill from now on? What a grim thought – especially when I have five grandchildren!

Although an interest in English history is very much an "in" thing nowadays – the Magna Carta and Princess Di being front page news – I don't believe this was so before World War II. In 1930 Miss Sparrow captured my imagination and I wanted more than anything to visit that country's history. She was slightly cross-eyed but this did not detract from her teaching style. Richard I (1189-1199) and his little-known wife, Berengaria, came alive in her teaching, as did King John's confrontation with the barons in the early 1200's – and all the way up to Queen Victoria and beyond – the result, a major in English Civilization and a life-time interest. I often think of Miss Sparrow – and yes, we did call her "Birdie" but not to her face!

These are just a few of the "influences" that come to mind.

Max Muench inspired an interest in words, grammar, and pronunciation. Max and Tiny Muench, 1948, in Michigan.

XV. Christmas 1973: A Saga

Oh, do you remember
That day in December
When mountains of snow came down?
By earnest endeavor
And driving most clever
For Lambert we hoped to be bound.

But the snow in our lane
Made our efforts in vain
We gunned, we struggled, we labored;
We had planned in advance
To not take the chance
Of a cab; 'twas our car that we favored.

We emerged from the snow –
Just how we don't know –
To the highway we managed to roll.
We proceeded most slowly
With attention quite wholly
Devoted to reaching our goal.

We saw Lambert Field
Completely concealed
In a layer of snow unbelievable;
We hoped for the best
Let our prayers to the rest
But what followed was inconceivable.

The planes were not flying
Our plight it was trying –
We sat for hours on end;
For Grandma and Grandpa
To get down to Tampa
On this our plans did depend.

Our flight it was grounded
We sure were confounded
And what were we now to do?
But by luck providential
(That ingredient essential)
Our standbys finally came through.

The crowds were tremendous,
Stupendous, horrendous –
Thank God we were finally airborne;
With frustration unmentionable,
But patience unquenchable,
We relaxed feeling not quite so forlorn.

This trip through the air
Was easy to bear
Though we came down hours behind time
And when we deplaned
We looked not in vain
We spied our dear son's outline.

We exchanged a warm greeting
But only quite fleeting
He conducted us out to the car –
Within its confines
"Twas arranged for all nine
And a trip in the night quite bizarre.

There were William and Jean
With kids in between
Little Margie and five year old brother
Son Dick's two month old
Was a sight to behold
Asleep on the lap of her mother.

From New York state
They'd arrived quite late

Their planes had problems galore.
They were worn out and weary
Kids smeary and teary
All wondered what more was in store.

In the dark of the night
But with warmth and moonlight
It was Sanibel Island we wanted
We plotted our way
Not once went astray
And arrived past midnight undaunted.

There's more I could say
Of each following day
In Florida's sunshine and sand
But I'll let it be known
(This opinion's my own)
To be home is perfectly grand!

Heavy snows were rare but beautiful at 5 Brookside.

XVI. Summer 1985: Out West with Granddaughters

Unless you have actually taken a long motor trip with two young grandchildren, you can't imagine what it is like. Sort of as Dickens wrote, "the best of times – the worst of times." But why did we do it? To show these New York children our beautiful American West just as we had on four previous occasions with our other grandchildren. Also, and just as important, it is a magnificent way to become acquainted.

A drive through Kansas tests anyone's patience: the oil rigs here and there, the distant farm houses, the amber fields – these are not of compelling interest. But then they did not know (and maybe I didn't either) of the vast quantities of fossils that have been collected in an obscure museum. These fossils came from an area of Kansas that was once an immense seabed.

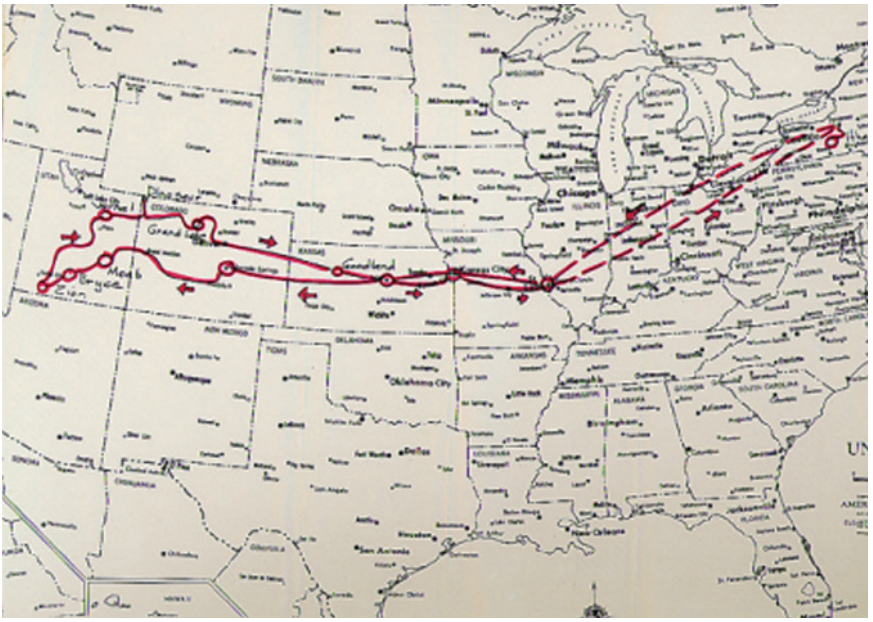
Indeed there was a considerable amount of bickering, but as they became used to our routine, they made their peace and anticipated the next attraction even if it was simply the motel swimming pool, a stop for ice cream, or slushies, or whatever the popular name is, a cherry coke for lunch, and Fruit Loops for breakfast the next morning.

To make snowballs in July in the Colorado mountains – what a treat! Also, we grandparents came to know the exquisite excitement that they felt when they realized that we were coming into tunnel country with maybe four or more long tunnels and no light at the end for a very long way!

Mirages are another fascination, and there are plenty of those in desert country. Furthermore, in our Midwest and East there are no places like Goblin Valley. The rock formations there are well named. It is a spooky place, quite unforgettable.

And what fun to bob down the Colorado River near Moab in life jackets. Grandma brought up the tail end of our small group, but the others, children included, shouted loudly, "Come on, Marge!"

We all loved bouncing the rapids in our rubber raft with a competent young Mormon guide in charge. One huge wave tumbled one of our young passengers to the bottom of the raft – a never-to-be-forgotten thrill. The lunch on shore, with tablecloth, was just what



Route of the 1985 summer trip with grandchildren. The children flew to St. Louis and then all four drove.

our hunger pangs called for!

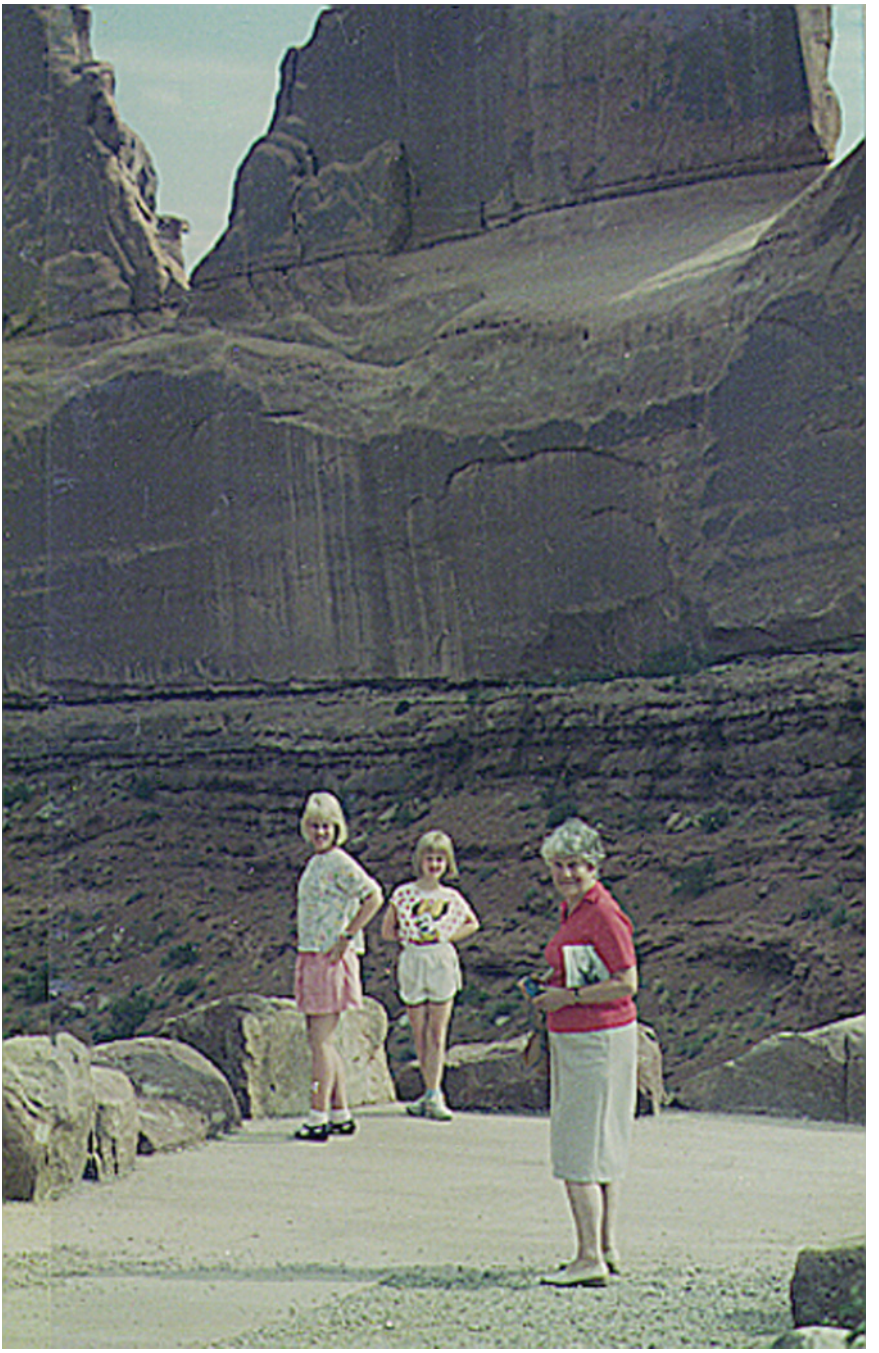
To ride a horse that had been taught to walk on the outer edge of the trail overlooking the precipice, into Bryce Canyon, caused great excitement. Perhaps it was the horses' choice, because it was softer footing there. At any rate, we were assured that the horses knew their trade, and accidents were unheard of.

Bryce Canyon defies description. Its colors are shades of pink and peach. It has thousands of pinnacles of different shapes and sizes. Mr. Bryce himself, in the last century, was said to have called it "a hell of a place to lose a cow." Bryce Canyon is truly a fairyland. It is perhaps more dramatic than Zion, and the awesome cliffs and wilderness valley with its rushing river make this a national treasure.

Dinosaur National Monument has a vast array of bones of ancient animals that are embedded in the mountainside where they were found not too many years ago. To know that there were such beings as dinosaurs is one thing, but to see these giant bones is something else. Such a visit, whether for young or old, enlarges one's horizons.

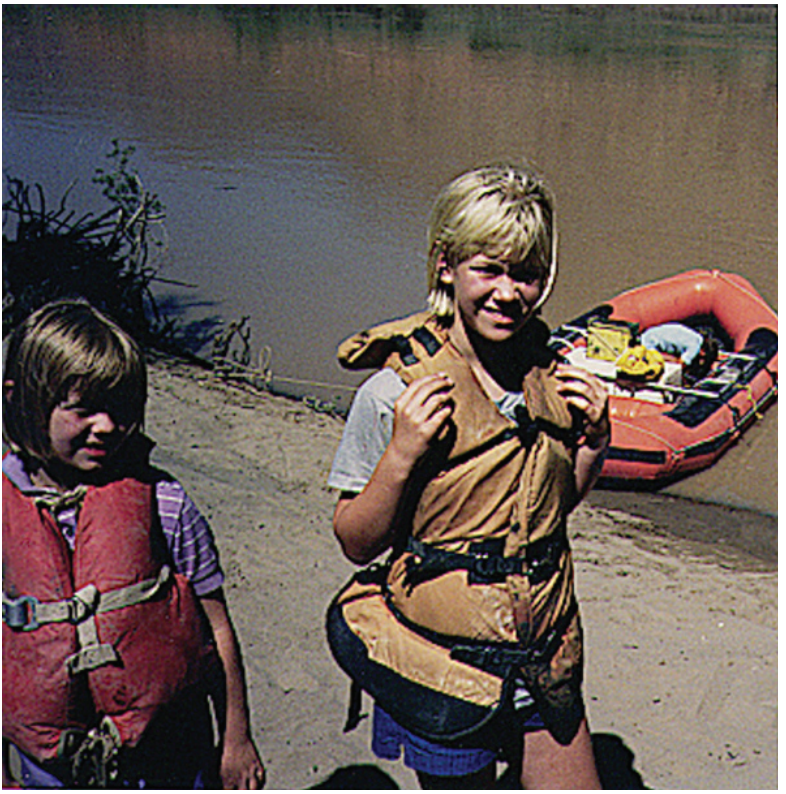
Best of all, and it still makes me quiver with pleasure, was when one of them unexpectedly said, "These really are the purple mountain majesties."

And I had never known what a blue moon is – only the expression "once in a blue moon," which means not very often! On this trip we experienced a blue moon in Zion National Park, that is, a full moon which occurred twice in the same month: our unforgettable July 1985.



On the 1985 trip Jennifer and Evie visited the Arches National Park with their grandparents.

Rafting on the Colorado River.



Jennifer and Evie Lovelace on the Colorado, July 1985.

XVII. Leaving 5 Brookside

We have moved, after 43 years in our home on Brookside; it has been a trauma. Now I am constantly looking for things, many of them insignificant. Did I throw them away, give them away, sell them – or are they in one of our two store rooms here at *The Brentmoor?*

Where did the movers put my mother's quilts, made by her in the 1920's? Oh, I found them stuffed in the buffet drawers as a protective cushion surrounding some objects d'art. Now I recall that I gave the log cabin quilt made by my grandmother in the 1860's to the Eugene Field House.

And did I throw away the pine needle pillow which I had made in the Wisconsin northwoods when I was 12 years old? It had long since lost its balsam smell but I was sentimentally attached to it.

I have a buyer for my linens, I think. Who is using large damask cloths these days? Today's young women do not want to iron them, nor are they motivated to hire someone to do so.

The same can be said for silver. Many brides want stainless steel. The tarnishing of silver makes it not the favorite it once was, at least among today's career-oriented young women. However, Regent Parade, and other consignment shops, do cater to the tastes of the few silver lovers. There is a demand for these treasures among older women who feel they have missed something. Yes, I am saving plenty for my descendants if they crave them. And my complete set of diagonal band-and-fan pressed glass – that has to be saved! Surely one of my female descendants will be an antique lover!

Our son and his Russian wife, also a scientist, admire American art and artifacts, including the decorations and furnishings that this country has always had in abundance. Right now this couple is in Los Alamos where he is the Orson Anderson Distinguished Visiting Scholar for the fall term, on leave from Cornell. The focus of the appointment is on magnetohydrodynamic flows in space and astrophysical environments and their associated energy dissipation processes. Does the work that this scientific couple do mean anything to me? Not at all (I had trouble with elementary physics on college) but I am proud of them.

At our wonderful home on Brookside we could not see the sky

and never a sunset; the trees had grown old along with us. Here we see wonderful sunsets with dappled skies, purple clouds and orangey red ones from our large outside balcony that we call a patio. Maybe I can't call it a plus, but the colony of ladybugs I have found is interesting. Most people are not envious of this bit of nature.

Our apartment is large and we have brought all of our cherished belongings. The wall of our bedroom is covered with family pictures taken over the years. I have found space for my pig collection, my pitcher collection, my soap collection from many of the world's hotels. This could certainly be called a decorator's nightmare. But we have decided – so what!

Nothing can get us out of here but the undertaker. That is a gloomy thought if I dwell on it, but I refuse to.

Five Brookside in the spring.

April 13, 1976, back view of 5 Brookside.

XVIII. Providence Leads to Providence: 2002

This is a grandmother story, so please be tolerant; isn't it known that grandmas are inclined to have strong sentiments regarding their grandchildren? This is especially true for a granddaughter namesake!

I am speaking of one who lives in Vermont but by September first will reside in Rhode Island. She is a college graduate and her kith and kin were very proud when she acquired her degree with honors.

She loved to write and it did seem to her and her parents that her career, if that was what she had in mind, lay in that direction. She had inducements and she thoughtfully considered the different schools. A scholarship lured her to Indiana University. Here she was praised by her professors. I cherish some of her writings. Hindsight suggests that there were good prospects in the Midwest. However, for various reasons she chose to return to the east.

She pursued all possible leads and nothing seemed auspicious. She hated to be discouraged but among other things she did not want to be a police reporter in the inner city of Amsterdam, New York. Also, the inner city of Baltimore did not appeal.

It was with doubts and reservations that she decided to pursue a degree in law. It was the Vermont Law School that she chose to enter if she were qualified.

From the very first day she loved this place. She flourished and even liked income tax law. Her journalism degree prepared her for various aspects of the study of law. She knew that finally she was in the right field.

My granddaughter is now near graduation from law school; this will take place in May. She had no reason to anticipate anything when she learned recently that she qualified for an interview with the chief justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court. But now in early April she was informed that she was right for the job – that is, the clerkship under the Chief Justice. She was looking forward to graduation but now she is excited about this job which will start in September. The contract is in writing and it seems that fortune has smiled on her. Her brother is in Providence (one of them); her parents and grandparents are pleased.

Marjorie Stinchcombe is sworn in as a member of the Bar, Providence, Rhode Island, 2002

XIX. Saying Farewell to our Oak Tree (2004)

Sunday, February 22, 2004, 10:40 a.m. in the Memorial Garden

"Join us Sunday, February 22 at 10:40 am in the Memorial Garden (good weather) or the Children's Chapel (bad weather) for a ritual honoring the large oak that stands in the center of our Memorial Garden. Tragically, tree experts have determined that the tree is in such poor condition that it must be removed for safety's sake. We do not take the death of this old friend lightly. Church members of all ages are invited to honor the tree and participate in this ritual by writing a poem, drawing a picture, taking a photograph, or otherwise creating something in memory of this oak. Rev. Suzanne Meyer will lead the solemn ritual and welcome your suggestions."

We had loved our oak tree for many a day
But now we must say goodby
It had shaded an especially treasured space
With its healthy strong branches high in the sky

Here at First Unitarian we go way back
To a year that few can recall
It was 1917 that the tree was acquired
Both it and the church were small

The many church changes as years went by
Are far too numerous to say
But our tree was strong, it grew and grew
Flourishing day by day

But sometime in these later years
When church and grounds looked great
Our gorgeous tree fell ill, alas
Digging nearby had sealed its fate

A brand new tree will be planted soon
But few will know the history
Just some old timers past their prime
May try to keep it a mystery

Marjorie Remembers

Part 2
Observations and Reflections of an American

Marjorie Remembers

❖ ❖

Part 2. Observations and Reflections of an American

Introduction:

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My mother grew up with a deeply-felt sense of being an American. With her parents' having come from Iowa, she always considered herself of the heartland, a true American. Returning frequently to Iowa throughout her childhood, she knew these fertile soils to be a rich asset, one of many, of a special country. My mother believed that the United States had been truly favored in its resources and mission.

For my mother, her own history was American history. At each signal point, from the arrival of the Van Everas in New Amsterdam in 1656, and then on to Canajoharie, New York, to participation in the American Revolution, family members played their part in the country's unfolding destiny. A grandfather's role at Gettysburg was honored, even though he was an 11-year-old hiding in the basement. The documents, letters, and papers of all generations were carefully organized and preserved.

My mother explained to us how her own family took part in the country's westward expansion – from the Mohawk Valley of New York to Pennsylvania and to Iowa and all the way to California, by one part of the family, long before many had thought of settling there. I cannot remember a time in my life when I did not have a

map of the United States on the wall. To look at it and to think of the different regions and their characteristics was instilled in us, and we tried to do likewise with our children. Every child must know the states and their capitals. Looking back, I realize that we grew up believing in Manifest Destiny. We thought that the United States had an inspired mission at home and in the world, a role that seems today much less clear.

Perhaps because her father grew up on a farm, my mother appreciated the good earth, which perhaps led her to become an early conservationist, now called environmentalist. From rafting on the Colorado to paddling in the Okefenokee or the Boundary Waters in Minnesota, she found this country a gift to be enjoyed, savored, and protected. From the presence or absence of the backyard wrens at 5 Brookside to the cranes of Nebraska and prairie chickens of Missouri, every creature warranted attention. The ideal of being close to nature might have been fostered in wonderful summers at Warwick Woods in northern Wisconsin. Certainly I do not think of my maternal grandparents as people who got close to nature, but they liked to view it. Years before the development of good highways, they traveled extensively.

My mother, like her parents, loved to see the country. Taking us and later our children on driving trips led to discussions of different times and places. To fly over just to get from one important place to another was to miss the whole thing, although the necessity and convenience of air travel were recognized. Sometimes Kansas or Nebraska could become boring, so then a game of Authors could help pass the time.

My mother believed that her forebears had played their part in United States history, and she thought that this role should continue. It mattered a great deal that you think about public issues. The family's well being developed in a larger context: how was the country developing? To want a good society and a good country was uppermost. Remembering past periods and re-thinking past ideas made an important theme in my mother's life, leading to her reconsideration of Eleanor Roosevelt and Jimmy Carter. On one occasion when she and I debated the presidency of Franklin Roosevelt on a car trip from Ithaca to Ann Arbor, we became so distracted that we missed

our turn-off and drove through the heart of Cleveland. Furthermore, thoughts, to be complete, had to be written, and that is how these papers came to exist.

- Jean Lovelace Stinchcombe

Marjorie Lovelace in the last years at the home on Brookside.

I. Gettysburg Revisited

In grade school (do they still call it that now?) we studied American history each year. My memory is undoubtedly foggy but I don't remember any of the kids thinking this was boring. If this was the case they knew better than to say so.

What especially stands out in my recollections is the time spent on the Civil War. I took a special interest in this because the crowning event of that war was the Battle of Gettysburg and in this I had a familiar interest. My Pennsylvania Dutch ancestors had settled there in Adams County and in the surrounding country before the Revolution. They remained and to this day the phone book contains a vast number of Hartmans. They liked it there and never left!

I had always heard about the battle and the stories of Lincoln's address and the reactions of the townspeople to this. I grew up hearing about Pickett's Charge, which determined the outcome of the battle, and, indeed, the war itself. General Meade had his position on Cemetery Ridge. First came a thunderous artillery bombardment. Then I learned that as the curtain of smoke lifted, the eyes of the Union defenders saw an unforgettable sight: 15,000 Confederate soldiers lined shoulder to shoulder a mile and a half from end to end. However, the attack was decisively repulsed, and thus the Union was saved even though the war continued for two more years.

During one class discussion I felt called upon to make my contribution. Based on what I had heard from my mother, I announced that my grandpa had been at the battle of Gettysburg. I followed this proud declaration with the statement that he had hidden in the cellar.

That night at the family dinner table I reported this with great satisfaction. My mother seemed less than pleased, although there was a hint of amusement when she asked, "Did you tell them he was 11 years old?" I had to confess that I had failed to mention this.

In 1924 when I was 11 years old I made my first visit to Gettysburg. Touring by motor car was rather unusual, but my family, which included my mother, dad, sister and me, drove east from Kansas City on a six week trip to explore the sights of America. The roads from Ohio on were concrete. Of course there was the coping

with flat tires, and of all things, speed cops. My diary mentions this (August 26, 1924). I wrote that we "had to drive slow near Dayton because the speed cops were thick." Going all of 45 miles per hour no doubt!

My mother insisted that I keep a diary although my sister who years later became a published writer defied this command. But to return to Gettysburg, my diary reports my first visit there on August 22, 1924. In it I mention Little Round Top and Devil's Den (I especially liked this).

We stayed all night at Cousin Cora's who lived with her family in a pre-Revolutionary War three storey brick house built right on the street. I suspect that when a family came half way across the country to pay a visit, a night's lodging (or more) was the expected thing.

On this visit I mentioned in my diary that "I like Cousin Lawrence especially." I know why, because he gave me Civil War bullets picked up by him on the battlefield. The Union side had three bands, the Confederate two, and I had these until recently when I gave them to my younger grandson, already a history buff.

When my children were growing up, we mounted a similar trip east, starting at Boston and proceeding south as far as Washington, D.C. Coming west we of course stopped at Gettysburg which was now becoming a tourist attraction. No, we did not stay in the pre-Revolutionary war brick house, although it was still inhabited by Hartmans. This was 1953 and the value of the tourist dollar had been discovered. It was called a Renaissance of Restoration. To add to the interest was the Eisenhower home. There were self-guided scenic tours, downtown historic district tours, observation towers – a walk into history so-called.

Continuing my own walk into history I maintained contact with my mother's immediate relations. My sister and I drove to Gettysburg from Philadelphia in 1980.

Most recently and probably lastly we made a brief stop in June of 1991 after attending a college graduation (every year we have a graduation and don't see the end in sight!). Cousin Eva, wife of my beloved Cousin Lawrence, whom I had never forgotten, had just turned 95 the month before. She had a gleam in her eye and talked with authority about the Gulf War.

I was so glad we made this brief stop because in another month I had word that she had joined her ancestors! I don't think she ever got far from Gettysburg and I never felt like asking her why. Probably she would have said that she had as full a life as one could want right there!

Gettysburg always fired national and family pride.

II. A Day of Recollection: Thinking of September 1, 1939

I well remember September 1, 1939. We were living in Des Moines, Iowa, in a third-floor walk-up apartment. It was scorchingly hot. My mother had come there with us to lend her considerable assistance. She had spread sheets over the massive velour furniture and bought some fans to make it half-way bearable. The refrigerator was not working so that we were dependent on the landlady's for certain essentials and this was two flights down.

We had moved from Lansing, Michigan, with a stopover in Kansas City for a birthing place for baby before settling in Des Moines for an unspecified length of time. Our own affairs seemed of monumental importance and were in a state of flux. In three months we would be moved to St. Louis, the home office, and our moving days, five in two years, would be over forever; but we didn't know this at the time.

My grandmother Hartman, Uncle Fred and Aunt Bess had driven over from nearby Ottumwa to see the new baby. Grandma thought the baby should be wrapped – swaddled, I believe it was called. A diaper was not enough, although I remember protesting. It was 98 degrees.

It was hard to talk about the main topic because our beautiful baby cried all the time. On that Sunday, Germany had invaded Poland. This seemed so far away from us and our concerns. We knew it was significant but only vaguely. It was totally unreal that bombs were falling on human beings who had done nothing wrong but who just happened to live in Warsaw.

But on September 1, 1991, exactly 52 years later I was to be vividly reminded of that day which was the start of World War II. We were in Warsaw, Poland. We had a patriotic Pole for our guide, Hendryk by name. Actually, we found all the Poles patriotic. This one spoke flawless, almost unaccented English. For those few days in Warsaw he fired our emotions as he told from memory his recollections of that agonizing time.

Polish history had never figured in my studies or in those of anyone I know. Polish jokes hadn't even become a fad before the war. I never heard of King Stanislaw August Poiatowski; and as for

anyone studying the language – what an impractical idea! The words have complicated spellings – (even the Poles admit this); as remote from our linguistic heritage as Chinese or Sanskrit. Take Rozyckiego for example.

This is not to say for a moment that Poland is not rich in culture. In spite of the fact that Poland has been severely treated by history in the last two hundred years, it has been able to preserve its valuable cultural heritage. Since the war, restoration has been made even though at one stage Hitler gave the order to wipe Warsaw off the face of the earth; ninety percent of it was destroyed building by building. Hendryk informed us that 200,000 people were massacred and in his words "the flower of Polish intelligentsia was destroyed." Of course we know that Germany fell to the allies and the ruins of Warsaw were "liberated" by the victorious Red Army.

The "Old Town" has been restored with amazing original detail based on old drawings and even 18th century paintings of Warsaw scenery by Italian master Bernardo Canaletto. This city is without a scrap of litter. The citizens are evidently proud that the city is immaculate; perhaps they are wanting to show it off to advantage. The local people smile a lot. Almost everything was rebuilt from the ruins using the same stones from the original foundations.

And now I must examine my world 52 years later. My daughter is happy and contributes to her community. She is not career-oriented but family-minded and active in her community. Her three children are a tribute to her, the oldest one in medical school. Her brother was not in the picture when World War II started, but was born less than two months before Pearl Harbor. He chose science for his career, influenced by Sputnik. His Ph.D. has served him well at Cornell.

Jeanie at the advent of World War II.

The Nazis were our enemies when my children were born but then the Communists took their place. Now there is a breath of freedom that one can feel in eastern Europe – not perfect but full of hope.

III. On Second Thought: Remembering Eleanor Roosevelt

I eagerly anticipated the television documentary on Eleanor Roosevelt. This was produced by women and was the story of a remarkable woman who was ahead of her times. (I say that now, but back when she was in the news I was influenced by my parents and their friends who disdained her.) I remember her very well and her daily column *My Day,* but I did not associate her with any significant cause or political opinion. My father had contempt for the New Deal. My mother was the daughter of a Democratic mayor but she kept a low voice as women did in those days. Her vital statistics were the same as Eleanor's and I now think she secretly admired her.

At no time was the nature of her relationship with her husband commented on; it was naturally assumed that they were congenial. In a sense this was true, for even after she learned of his infidelity she worked for his causes all through the war. She had improved her speaking skills from a bad beginning when her voice was high pitched and unpleasant; and she had overcome her shyness.

But to go back to the beginning, we learn that her mother did not love her as mothers do; her father she idolized even though alcohol conquered him. He told her they would visit the Taj Mahal together; she went there many years later but without him.

As a young woman she was reasonably attractive but as she aged she became downright homely, with buck teeth a distinguishing feature. She had close associations with several women but I do not think she was Lesbian even though several writers of today have labeled her that!

I took a great interest in the Roosevelt sons. That she was a very poor mother was not noticed or even hinted at in the thirties. Publications kept very quiet about such things. Since then we have learned of her mother-in-law's presence in the household, and her domination there; Eleanor had no real authority.

She began, in time, concerning herself with matters of public interest and policy. She cared greatly about quality of life among the poor, and espoused the plight of the "colored," which is what we called them at the time. I come from a family that treated them kindly and fairly but also expected them to "know their place." I

exchange birthday and Christmas cards with my mother's cleaning woman thirty years after my mother's death.

I am sure that most Americans respected, even admired both Roosevelts, and thought Franklin was responsible for ending the depression rather than the War. Still there were some in the Midwest who favored Alf Landon and thought he might win!

One of the things most remembered about Eleanor was her resignation from the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. This was because of their perceived rejection of singer Marian Anderson, an African-American as we now call them for an engagement in Constitution Hall. It is maintained today that the Hall was already booked and today's DARs have other explanations, but who can prove it today?

Eleanor is one of the women of the 20th century who paved the way for female equality (not that I remember any women of her time feeling neglected or persecuted). In the fifties she supported many civic organizations. She was a woman of great energy and she traveled the country giving talks to large and small groups. She was appointed Ambassador to the United Nations, one of the first important appointments – definitely a First Lady who was an activist. She saw no reason to keep still and she didn't!

I think Eleanor Roosevelt was a great woman and sometimes I whisper, "Dad, please forgive me." She was a role model for females in the latter part of the twentieth century.

Eleanor Roosevelt inspired conflicting thoughts, and, ultimately, admiration.

IV. A Never-to-be-Forgotten Trip: Traveling the Colorado

These long wintry days with the temperature hovering around 31 or 32 and with the outside world not beckoning (the thought of a broken hip cementing my resolve), and most meetings called off – have inspired me to contemplate my home atmosphere and take stock of years past.

And what do I remember best in these years gone by? It is a trip by raft down the Colorado River – in 1970, exactly 101 years after the trip by John Wesley Powell. He was the one-armed Civil War veteran who wrote "wherever we look there is but a wilderness of rocks – deep gorges where the rivers are lost below cliffs and towers and pinnacles, and ten thousand strangely carved forms in every direction, and beyond them mountains blending with the clouds."

My partner and I had always loved Arizona. We had ridden mules into the Havasu Canyon, home of the Havasupai Indians a couple of years earlier and we became enchanted with the idea of the river trip. The hazards of it were part of the excitement. The rewarding beauty of the place is heightened by the challenges of courting danger. We wore bright orange life-preservers every minute we were underway on this ten-day trip.

There is more than danger in the canyon's excitement. Above all there is vastness. The walls rise straight up from the river in many places, 1000 feet up to the top of the Inner Gorge. In some places the canyon's walls slope gently upward from a sandy beach covered with tamarisks, its lavender flowers soft and gentle against the green of the trees and the dusty, sun-washed red of the sand and stone.

The immensity of the canyons, the stillness of the sounds provoke the sort of emotions that builders of great cathedrals must have sought to induce. Deep inside the Grand Canyon there is a sense of being utterly removed from the mundane, the violent, the irrelevant, the picayune, the baser elements of the world.

There is a tendency, about midway on a trip of this kind, to become a bit blasé about the rapids. That feeling disappears toward the end when you have been pounded by the river, day after day, and you realize it will keep going, fast and furious, long after you are gone.

We went through the first rapid, shrieking and shouting, and praying a little. The water came up white, hard, fast and noisy after the flat, calm, still ride down the seven miles from Lee's Ferry, our starting point. It is falling into the low places, called holes – often several feet deep that gives you a rough ride. The boat folds up, front to back, as it bucks through the depression.

Before running a major rapid, the boatman pulls over to the side and studies the water. He sits in the back, hand on the tiller of the motor, eyes fixed on the river ahead. He makes the decision to go or to portage.

We were nostalgic when we reached Phantom Ranch, where we had spent the night with our children some years before after our mule trip down the Kaibab trail. This was where I declared I would never return. I never say "never" any more.

When we reached Lake Mead, we found we were reluctant to rejoin civilization. To one who has just emerged from the Grand Canyon, the lake looks artificial which, of course, it is, having been formed by the Hoover Dam. As to the rewards of a trip on the Colorado through the Grand Canyon, Major Powell declared that "the glories and the beauties of form, color and sound unite here."

Indian peoples had lived here for millennia, but the first Europeans came looking for what the canyon would not provide. In 1540 a Spanish captain in search of gold found an impassable barrier. In 1776 a Spanish priest pursued the souls of Havasupai Indians, who responded with hospitality but not conversion.

Theodore Roosevelt, in 1903, exhorted us to "leave it as it is. You cannot improve on it. The ages have been at work on it, and man can only mar it."

It has been threatened many times in recent years, but I like to think it is out of danger and will be left unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

Havasu Falls at Havasu Canyon in Arizona. Home of the Havasupai.

Granite Rapids of the Colorado.

V. Collectors and Collections of My Life

Treasure collecting has always been a favorite activity, whether of valuable items or things of no intrinsic worth. It has appealed to people of all ages and can become quite addictive. When I was a little girl I collected cigar bands; probably other kids did too; I can't remember ever starting a fad. For one thing men smoked cigars in those days: this was in the twenties. There were many kinds, and their bands were colorful. We traveled in California one summer and I remember that my grandmother, an old lady – all of 65 no doubt, was very cooperative. She bent over time and again to retrieve them from the sidewalk. I especially recall a favorite brand – Roi-Tan (either of the smokers or of the collectors.) Cigar smokers were not condemned; it was a man's privilege to light up his cigar in a closed automobile if he chose. My Uncle Fred did this and no one thought of complaining. Everyone choked but so they did!

My mother was one of a group of four women, long time friends. Usually they played bridge – it was Auction then – Contract didn't appear until the late twenties. But when they felt more daring they went for a drive in the country – maybe 20 miles or so in search of pressed glass at country stores. They were very successful. I have a complete collection of Diagonal Band and Fan. I want to add that my future mother-in-law was part of this group and she collected a pattern called Fishscale. I have no idea what happened to that!

My sister's friends and relations always knew what to giver her for special occasions – a Royal Doulton figurine. Figurines were for the serious giver – not with the astronomical costs of today but still costly. They came in different sizes, subjects and prices. The colors were varied, raging from soft pastels to deeper rosy shades.

And then there are the bird collectors – china, ceramic, wood, clay – no limit here. It is fun to be on the lookout for some choice bird that would be a prize addition to a friend's collection – some foreign place makes it more treasured than one from, say, Salina, Kansas.

I mustn't neglect the collectors of butterflies – mainly jewelry. One friend has so many hanging around her neck on chains that inevitably they become tangled – delicate ones and sturdier rope-like

types. She must allow a half hour after wearing these for untangling purposes. I can't say that she thought of this as an attention-gaining device but it certainly is. We say, "Can you get these off?"

It is hard for me to recall when my own special collection got under way; not too long ago I know, and certainly at the time I was not aware that pigs were "in"; in fact at that time they definitely were not. It started out to be only small pigs suitable for my kitchen window sill. I have there a mother pig covered by her family of eight – do I say "brood"? I have heard the proper word is "sounder." This came from the gift shop at the Missouri Botanical Garden. Then there are my pig pitchers, and hand-painted pigs from Costa Rica, a wooden pig from Helsinki, and two Doulton pigs from London. There is the smiling pig at the front door to welcome visitors, the replica of a child's toy – a pig on wheels with string attached from Galena, Illinois (1860's), a pig throw rug at the back door, a Belleek pig – the sacrifice of a friend from her Belleek collection, a pig with a Christmas wreath around its neck from an unknown pig lover who wanted her pig to be among friends, and a monumental pig with squinty eyes, a large standing slightly unstable pig pitcher.

The librarian in Clayton became interested when I had her searching out information on the world's largest pig, written about at length in the *Wall Street Journal*. We made a special side trip on our way east to see this pig in Lewisburg, Ohio. The librarian became intrigued and declared my collection suitable for a month's exhibition in the display case in Mid-County.

To transport the entire collection was not easy. The pig marionette, the pig bookends, the fat Balineese pig – a little cross-eyed – the triplet pigs, the ceramic pig from Winterthur and the pig from Eureka Springs, Arkansas that whistles shrilly when you blow on it – these are some of my swine.

Well, you guessed it; I began to get nervous. No, I didn't want pigs all over the house – waste baskets, door stops – but my friends had reacted. Now they knew what to give me for any occasion. I have three pig banks, chains with cunning pigs of pewter or glass, lapel pins, salt and pepper pigs, stationery, a "this little pig went to market" pig, a "Who's afraid of the big bad wolf pig?" And then there are my pot holders, pig towels for the kitchen, more refined ones

for the powder room, napkins holders, pig magnets for the fridge for daily reminders.

I am desperate for now my son has become hooked and is presenting me with larger and larger rather expensive pigs which must be placed around plants on the dining room floor – a sort of pig farm. I do not want him to give me one of these pigs that I have read about recently – the ones that make such marvelous pets. I'm frightened!

VI. I Love the River

The better part of my life has been spent near the Mississippi River. The summer of '88, a bad time for the river but a suitable time for some of us, provided the opportunity to become better acquainted. Of course there was the nation's birthday celebration by the River and under the Arch; and what could be more appropriate, later in the month, than to head north (hoping to escape the intense heat – unsuccessfully I might add) to northern Minnesota in search of the birthplace of the Mississippi – Lake Itasca? I had been there in 1922 – a nostalgic return.

It was indeed an unfavorable year for this sort of expedition because the Mississippi River had been ailing this summer at its place of birth, not because of industrial pollution as the September 28th editorial declared but because the drought of 1988 had been making itself felt all along the river. River levels were down, barges aground and wildlife habitats were shrinking. Still I write this with enthusiasm for the river, and not as the editorial describes it as "sickly green, anemic, sullen – a national disgrace."

Itasca State Park is a place of pilgrimage, a legendary wilderness of towering green-black and red-bark pines, wailing loons and the vivid transparent blue lake that gives birth to the Mississippi River.

Every year half a million people come to Itasca State Park to pay tribute to the small, singing stream that will grow into the Father of Waters, central highway and soulway of a nation.

This year the river at its source is barely ankle-deep and it's warm – like stepping into a footbath. Nevertheless one thinks of those 2552 miles it travels before it makes its way to the Gulf of Mexico. It is easy to envision the rich and colorful history of this area – the birch-bark canoes of the Ojibway Indians, the voyageurs, the fur traders, the lumberjacks. Itasca's human history spans 8000 years we were told; its natural and geological history spans millions.

This 50-square-mile park has carnivorous plants and rare orchids in bloom – and the herons, ospreys and bald eagles are numerous. The loons are of special interest – babies riding on their mothers' backs, their iridescent black heads glistening in the sun, and white wings and underparts showing.

I had never heard of Henry Schoolcraft who discovered the headwaters in 1832. I'm not going to make any comparisons with Sir Henry Stanley who found the source of the Nile but he does deserve a more prominent place in our national history than he has. I learned that he made significant contributions to our knowledge of the Indians. He was a prolific writer, incidentally, with an emphasis on the mythological and lyrical aspects of Indian life. Longfellow gained his information for Hiawatha from Schoolcraft's writings.

We went northeast to Bemidji and, yes, the Mississippi River flows north for a distance before it heads south. For many miles we followed the Great River Road southward – St. Paul, Red Wing, Wabasha – here there is a hotel that has been operating continuously since 1856; on to LaCrosse, Prairie du Chien, Balltown; this last is in Iowa and claims the best view of the river, and we didn't disagree. The town has 100 people and they are proud of the eagles and black turkey vultures that circle over the river.

To get a glimpse of rural America it was fun to eat at Breitbach's Bar and Restaurant where they specialize in roasted chicken and home-baked rolls. It's a family place and the young generation – 8 or 10 cousins – was having a game of hide and seek around the bar and bar stools. In some places this would have been annoying but not there.

The locks and dams along the river make a series of enormous lakes – like the one near Alton. The majestic bluffs and beauty of forest and water surpass what we have seen on the Rhine and the Danube.

Not many people have thought of going to Guttenberg, Iowa. Still it has its treasures – a facsimile of the Gutenberg Bible, brought here from a German print shop in Mainz after it was bombed during World War II. We did not choose to visit the fishery management, hatchery and aquarium containing 35 species of fish native to the Mississippi River basin. Dubuque, Davenport and Burlington follow, and of course Hannibal, Missouri's very own river town.

It was only by chance that we had signed up much earlier with friends to take the two-day river trip on the Spirit of St. Charles which sets forth on the Missouri, goes into the Mississippi and then the Illinois River before making the return trip to St. Charles. Where the

Mississippi and Missouri Rivers join, one can see a line in the water where the brown river meets the gray. It is the custom to make a wish and throw a coin in, hoping for its fulfillment. On this day's journey the calliope was playing many old and loved tunes but my favorite was Ol' Man River.

The person who wrote the lead editorial for September 28, long after we were home, declared that the Mississippi around here is an attraction "only for tourists or the hopelessly sentimental," and called it a "national disgrace." This man (or woman) ought to be straightened out. The 200 people on this boat might have been hopelessly sentimental, but they were sure having a good time and were full of appreciation for our wonderful river!

Headwaters of the Mississippi, 1922, when Marge first saw it.

Headwaters of the Mississippi, 1985.

VII. A Visit to the Prairies

It was in 1968 that we first became aware that there were large birds called Prairie Chickens in our state – of no interest to most people probably – but to others an intriguing ornithological study. It is hard to say why but then we are native Missourians and the Missouri prairies are the principal habitat of these colorful birds. As conservationists we are committed to saving their grass lands, a remnant of our past. We drove westward to see them and the birds.

To be a Prairie Chicken aficionado one must be prepared to rise early. (It is really more fun than getting up before dawn to search for Halley's Comet!) The booming grounds are not in our area, alas; they are in western Missouri. Therefore it is necessary to go to a town in the region to spend the night unless, of course, one is willing to forego a night's sleep – albeit short. El Dorado Springs is the town we selected – (about 3000 people) without much character and most certainly not quaint.

I well remember the maw and paw type motel we stayed in 18 years ago. There was no Jacuzzi bath such as we found in our Ramada Inn in our Prairie Chicken expedition this year in April. In fact it was rather like the one in "Psycho," Alfred Hitchcock's horror movie but none of those gruesome features I might add – that is, Norman Bates's mother in her rocking chair in the house on the hill! There was a small heater which barely took the chill off the room, a double bed with a saggy mattress and patchwork spread, many times mended; one rocking chair and two rag rugs. We had our private bath, of course, with shower and plastic curtain now somewhat brittle with age.

It was drizzling that April morning at 5 a.m. but we were not to be daunted. We had our ponchos for protection and we hoped the Chickens wouldn't be discouraged and postpone their courtship performance. We drove two miles to the appointed place as indicated on our nature guide map, and then mushed out to the blinds. This location was said to have been used regularly in the spring for 50 years or more.

We could see the Prairie Chicken cocks silhouetted against the sky and soon we could hear the resonant booming. The booming is

like the sound made by blowing across the open neck of a bottle. One of the most spectacular features of the display is the performance which accompanies the booming call. As a prelude the cock usually runs forward a short distance, stops suddenly and stamps his feet rapidly in a dance, sometimes pivoting in a half or full circle. During the dance his brilliant orange air sacs begin to inflate and he raises his long neck feathers. His tail, spread fanwise, snaps suddenly with a sharp click and the booming begins. When many birds are booming at the same time, the calls from the booming ground blend into one continuous, almost humming sound.

The booming announces the presence of males to females in the vicinity. Each male establishes a territory. The territorial disputes are accompanied by high-pitched cackles, peculiar grunts and much wing slapping as the contestants see-saw back and forth. We particularly enjoy the jumping two or three feet into the air. Two cocks, apparently bent on combat, sometimes stop and stare and then walk away.

The Prairie Chickens are endangered, and probably only a few people care. I think they have a lot more personality than snail darters although I have never seen one of these creatures to my knowledge. It was the snail darter that gave the conservationists a bad name (along with undue concern over the wetlands). How crazy can you be to insist on saving these fish or snakes or insects or whatever they are because building a damn would imperil them in their only known habitat?

A few years ago we took our grandchildren on a Prairie Chicken expedition. They felt pretty happy about this, because no other kids' grandma and grandpa even knew about Prairie Chickens let alone went in search of them!

This year's expedition was undoubtedly our last. We are getting older and the number of Prairie Chickens is diminishing. But it was fun to come back to our deluxe quarters, have a hydro-therapy bath and then partake of a breakfast that broke all diet restrictions. Naturally we talked about Prairie Chickens.

El Dorado Springs, Missouri, in the motel the night before launching prairie chicken Expedition, April 1985.

VIII. In Support of a Proper Urban Environment

Environment is a word that is in use a lot these days. A concise definition from my old college dictionary defines it as: surrounding conditions, influences or forces. However, many people think of it as having to do with nature – the saving of wetlands, or the almost extinct bladder pad (a flowered mustard plant found only in Missouri) – or maybe the Upland Sandpiper.

Perhaps they are bird watchers who wish to save the Rose-bellied Bunting, Black-eared Bushtit, Tawny-throated Leaf Thrower, or Dotty-winged Ant Wren – that is, make his habitat more suited to his requirements. I respect bird watchers and have recently come back from a trip where a group of them stood transfixed with their binoculars pointed upwards. The rain forests of Central America must be saved for Red-legged Honey-creepers. I don't have that kind of patience: looking at a cardinal on my backyard feeder is the best I can do in the bird-watching department. I must add, however, that I'm all for a proper habitat for the Prairie Chicken and Western Jackrabbit.

Now I'm an environmentalist on matters and conditions near at hand. I want the environment around Grand and Delmar to be free of pollution – visual pollution. I am working on this but perhaps it can't be accomplished in my lifetime. Only a short distance west of Grand on Delmar is our favorite parking spot when we go to the Sunday afternoon symphony. Alas, most of the block on the south side is littered with bottles, cans, tires, old shoes – rubbish of all kinds. It is distressing to go to the Symphony after passing such an evil sight minutes before. It is even worse to go by it at the end of the concert with those beautiful sounds in the mind's ear.

Three times I have managed to have the Citizens' Service Bureau call the Forestry Division (isn't that strange?) to clean this up at the property owners' expense. It is puzzling how bums and derelicts (what else can they be?) are able to produce so much debris. There is an ordinance declaring that it is important to display a clean, inviting environment, especially around our cultural institutions.

Betty, at the Citizens' Service Bureau, encourages me to keep calling. If Work Order #1411 didn't stop the desecration of our city in

this spot, perhaps the next work order will, and the property owners will tire of paying for the clean-up.

If somehow I could be successful in this venture I would feel that I had not lived in vain. There are not too many things I can look back on with a sense of real accomplishment. This would seem more significant than my success in getting two mail boxes moved to better locations, or a certain area too dark for safety lit up, or a fence erected near a dangerous spot. This is my project '87 – my effort to repay my debt to society.

IX. A Visit to Arizona

From far and near Tauck tourists came
In search of a winter vacation;
And Arizona was that place
The best in all the nation.

They met at Tuscon's airport
This special group assembled –
And Jim, their guide took them in tow
So no other group they resembled.

They did Sabino canyon
With expert Doug at the wheel
They went to Tuscon's National Resort
Where they devoured many a good meal.

To Tuscon's Desert Museum
And some to the Biosphere
Then off to beautiful Sedona
With Tlaquepaque quite near.

Some went to the town of Jerome
A mining town of the past
Others took some jeep trips
Their memories of these will last!

We loved the Oak Creek Canyon
And next – to the greatest of sights
With vistas totally spectacular
This trip's greatest delight.

Flagstaff and its exceptional museum
Montezuma's castle an intriguing spot
Phoenix and Scottsdale will long be remembered
Paradise Valley they liked a lot.

And finally the farewell part
At La Posada, to say goodbye
To Jim and Doug and the others
And they do this with many a sigh.

- March 1995

X. A Lament: Where Are Our Wrens?

For us it is a silent spring
No wrens have come this season –
Is this what Rachel Carson warned of
Our wild life gone for no good reason?

Did fires destroy their southern homes
Or hurricanes their wintering site?
We miss these feisty little birds
Their noisy twirpings our delight!

Our yard has houses – different kinds
Each one oft used by one or two –
The scout came first to check things out
For wrens polygamy is not taboo.

Obedient females did their job
They sat on nests while peering out
These to-be mamas seldom left
Their dedication quite devout!

At proper time the babes emerged
Pushed from the house by daddy
Their high pitched squeaks delighted us
We watched the process gladly.

They had two tunes, first one of joy
The second one of scolding
The babies joined their mom and dad
The family group unfolding.

Where oh where are wrens this spring?
For all these years they've come here –
Oh heavenly forces please prevail
And do not let them disappear!

- Spring 1998

XI. Down in the Okefenokee

Compared to other United States wildernesses, the Okefenokee Swamp is a small place, covering 680 square miles mainly in southeastern Georgia, with a slight overlap into Florida. It is a fascinating realm that both confirms and contradicts popular notions of a swamp. Along with stately cypresses, peat quagmires, and dim waterways, the Okefenokee has sandy pine islands, sunlit prairies, and clear lakes.

Besides three roads leading into the swamp, there are a few boat trails. The Okefenokee is as wild as anything in Central America or Africa. The label of swamp suggests mud but there is relatively little mud – rather it is peat.

Writers of the 18th and 19th century wrote about it, recognizing it as one of the world's wonders. Okefenokee means "trembling earth." The peat and vegetation are thickly compacted and bear weight but the entire mass is flexible. There is hardly any stagnant water in the swamp incidentally, and solid ground accounts for only about 5 percent of its total acreage.

Alligators are numerous – some 10,000 of them – and they sustain the primeval atmosphere of the Okefenokee. They come of the same stock that produced the dinosaur – a living symbol of 200 million years ago. The average length is about eight feet. We did not find them aggressive although early accounts tell of them attacking boats. We did hear that no dogs are permitted in boats (too great an attraction for the alligators). To us they seemed indifferent, somnolent, but frequently they swam across the channel not far ahead of our canoes, and we could peer a little too closely into their beady eyes. We saw hundreds of birds and turtles but only one snake. We know the place is a paradise for snakes but they kept out of sight, thank goodness! The most venomous varieties in the United States live here.

It is hard to believe that in the late 19th century and early 20th there were people living in the swamp. They created their own family dynasties. They were not quite civilized and not quite primitive. They fished and trapped and when they needed money they sold the skins of alligators. They had to be expert navigators or get lost in the swamp. The enduring legend of the swamp is that it was the

haunt of the lawless – a place of murders where an outsider's life was valueless the moment he intruded. Murder was impossible to prove because the victim was invariably fed to the alligators and his disappearance was explained as emigration to other parts.

On one of the islands in the swamp, Billy's Island, a band of Seminole Indians put up a last ditch fight against white domination. This was their base of operations but by the end of the century it had become the site of a boomtown, the center of an enterprise aimed at stripping the swamp of its lumber. Before the Civil War this island had its first white settler and this man's descendants were here until the 1930's. They farmed, fished, hunted and trapped here. They and others built a sawmill, stores, foundry and machine shop. We saw the cemetery and noticed what short lives they lived – pneumonia and cholera.

Later, another white man had a vision – he wished to drain the swamp. In 1889, he bought 380 square miles of the Okefenokee from the state of Georgia for 26 cents an acre. Digging at the rate of three miles a year, this man, Harry Jackson, could not, before the money ran out, get his boats and machines within range of the cypresses.

The cypress make the Okefenokee very exotic.

In 1895 Jackson died suddenly and the canal building stopped – 12 miles of canal had been built.

By 1900 the ownership of the swamp had passed to Northern lumbermen who built a railroad on wooden piles, driving it 35 miles into the swamp. Without going into further detail which might tell you more than you want to know about the Okefenokee, I will say that including lumbermen, swampers, tupentiners, moonshiners and hunters there were more than 2000 exploiters at work in this heyday of the swamp's destruction – all in pursuit of the cypress. But this wilderness had durability, and in the end it won.

The swamp drains into the Suwannee; in fact the swamp and the river are inseparable, both draining toward the Gulf of Mexico. But there *certainly* are no "old folks at home" down there, nor were there ever! This is not to say that the river which is clear and tea colored is not hauntingly lovely. This wilderness place, with its many flowers and birds, splendid sunrises and sunsets, is incredibly beautiful. Here is the place to renew one's spirits.

Numerous alligators lurk in the waters of the Okefenokee.

XII. A Vignette about Cranes

Can you think of any less captivating place to go for a vacation in March than Nebraska – that flat dreary farm land – brown, unless covered with snow, with only a few stark trees to silhouette the gray sky? Even the Indians declared Nebraska so treeless that the only shadows were cast by clouds. This is not really true today because a hundred years ago Arbor Day was started in a small town I had never heard of – Nebraska City.

However, I am not talking about our unplanned visit to the birthplace of Arbor Day, which was celebrated on April 8 at Shaw's Garden and Tower Grove Park in '88 – its centennial, but of the March migration of thousands of cranes – said to be 500,000, the world's largest concentration, to the Platte River for a six week vacation prior to their departure for far north places in Alaska and Canada.

When you pass the Interstate interchange at Grand Island, your eyes are drawn to the sky. Up there, are flocks of huge birds – not geese, not pelicans, not ducks, not eagles. You listen to their distinctive calls, sort of a tongue-trilling warble that sounds like somebody playing a flute while gargling. It is a centuries-old phenomenon – this return of the majestic sandhill cranes to their spring pit stop along a 100-mile stretch of the Platte River. Its broad sandy channels, without vegetation, provide ideal roosting sites for the cranes which spend the night on sandbars in the river's flow for six weeks.

It can hardly be called "roughing it" to spend a couple of nights in a Holiday Inn – and not even on the second floor! However we went prepared for cold weather – heavy boots and layers of warm clothing as instructed by the Nature Conservancy personnel. We had been lured to this outing by printed word that this is one of the most spectacular wildlife habitats in the world.

The cranes can be trusted to do their thing – like the swallows of San Juan Capistrano – to return here at a certain time as they have for thousands of years.

Our group was treated to a huge dinner the night before at Grand Island's oldest house – in order perhaps to make us sleep loggily until our wake-up call at 4:30 a.m. The group was small, only ten; more people had signed up for the later trip, assuming reason-

ably that the weather would be improved in later March. We were pleased, because it gave us a better chance to visit with these people who had chosen to devote their lives to saving our precious wildlife habitats and endangered species. The cranes aren't endangered, but this place where they stop to feed is. So much of the Platte's flow has been diverted for irrigation that its channels have narrowed and the sandbars have grown up with willows. Power plants in the area

Marge looks at sand hill cranes in Nebraska.

have damaged the natural surroundings.

Perhaps it does not matter to most people that the cranes need to rest here to gather food for their long trip northward, where they begin laying their eggs almost on arrival. The chicks have to hatch and grow enough during the summer to be able to make the trip southward come fall. Their lifestyle sounds complicated, but they have made it work for eons of time.

Our group of ten rode by bus to a certain point where we continued on foot – flat and dry, fortunately. We had only a bright full moon to light our way. A few smart souls had brought flashlights. We came at last to a 12-foot enclosed blind where we would spend the next couple of hours. By this time a mist hung over the horizon. We stood silently with binoculars poised, waiting for the advance army of Sandhill Cranes; and then they started coming – echelon after echelon – soaring, in formation, streaking across the moon. Some battalions zoomed in from the south, others from the east. And now it was gradually getting lighter. They were all intent on foraging for food in the meadows and pastures.

By some special arrangement it would seem the coyotes came out, and then the deer in single file. Somehow they seemed out of place in this location!

At dusk we returned to this site to watch the cranes fly to the river for nighttime roosting in the broad unvegetated channels. We were entertained by a mating dance, a sort of winged watusi in which they jump in the air and flap their wings. They line up, chattering. More and more fly in, taking their places in a long row on the sandbar. Their calls continue as they settle down and welcome the close of their day. It would seem that the sandbars are totally filled when more squadrons descend in formation to their nighttime roosting place.

By mid-April they will have refueled and by some instinct or pre-arranged agreement will start their northern journey. This phase of their migratory cycle will have ended.

We were glad to have visited Mormon Island, where once the Mormons had lingered on their western journey, to gaze at what we considered a spectacular sight.

XIII. Epic Poem on a Trip to Coastal Maine and Maritime Canada
(with apologies to Longfellow)

A sturdy group of thirty-five comprised our maritime tour –
We came from all over
The young and the older
Of Four Winds we were plenty sure!

We flew to Boston for a start; great Howard met us there –
On Dick's bus we went
Our first big event
To Portland and adventures rare.

The Scotia Prince for our first night – across the Bay of Fundy;
Not much money was lost
It was well worth the cost
It had sure been a jolly Sunday!

Next Yarmouth and Digby – we loved the Pines with its
beautiful flowers and grounds,
And lobsters delicious
Undeniably nutritious
And scallops – the best to be found!

Annapolis Valley and Acadia land we toured with pleasure
great,
We recalled Longfellow's poem
Of folks forced from home
And shed a few tears for their fate!

Halifax and Scotia Square were next on this great tour,
The Citadel was fun
Its cannon did stun
We saw much of the old and the newer.

To Peggy's Cove, a fishing village – excursion truly great,
A trip to the light house
By driver Dick Whitehouse
Thanks to Howard for promoting this treat!

The Bell Museum meant a lot; we little knew this genius man,
Of his works with sound
His great projects abound
The telephone is where it all began.

Cape Breton Island, beautiful place – its Cabot Trail exciting
The Scotch made their mark
With their plaids light and Dark
A marvelous place – most inviting!

Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown – was next for us to visit,
Here Canada was born
Its Federation formed
We loved this farming land exquisite.

Green Gables known to every child – we knew of Anne
before –
We met Lucy and Lester
Cute Cathy caressed her
We became experts in lobster lore.

New Brunswick was our very next stop; we reached there
by a ferry –
We came through Moncton
On our way to the Algonquin
And on Tuesday we were happy to tarry.

St. Andrews is a charming town; we're glad we got to go
there –
Its mansions compelling
We loved every dwelling
And the hotel a treasure rare!

To Maine and back to Canada; to Roosevelt's summer home –
He called it the cottage
The biggest to our knowledge
At Campobello we'd have loved to roam!

And Bah Hahbah, we reached at length – that quaint little
millionaire town;
We examined its shops
Making numerous stops
And at Acadia Park made the rounds.

Of blueberries, clam bakes, and lots of low tides – flowers,
ice cream,
mountain ashes and chowders
Lobster dinners galore
We could not ask for more!
For FOUR WINDS we'll shout louder and louder!

- September 1987

XIV. A Close Call, March 1993

Until recently I wasn't able to talk about it; it was March 11 that I almost drowned. But now I have a desire to tell of this experience to anyone who will listen.

We had planned in December a different sort of trip to celebrate our 80th birthdays, both occurring in March six days apart. To go on Marjorie Merryweather Post's sailing vessel, *The Sea Cloud,* in the Caribbean struck our fancies. We had visited many of these islands but this ship was going to some different ones. It accommodated only 70 passengers and a crew of 65.

The Sea Cloud was to depart from Antigua on March 9 for a ten day voyage. We reached there with no problem. The first day we were at sea, and on the next we dropped our first anchor, St. Lucia. The St. Lucians gained their independence in 1979. During a turbulent past, wars between France and Britain made this island a prize that changed hands 14 times. There is a volcano here and this mineral-poor island looks forward to the tapping of volcanic steam for relief from its crushing dependence on imported oil. Yes, we visited the "drive-in volcano" as it is called, and then walked through a wonderful tropical garden. After this it was back to the ship for a hearty lunch. It was announced that the afternoon activity was to be a snorkeling expedition on a beach in the shadow of the twin peaks of the Gros Piton and Petit Piton which rise straight out of the sea in the southwestern corner of St. Lucia. Everyone was invited to go and snorkels were provided for all. The passengers were not youngsters but on the elderly side like us.

I had loved this sport on Grand Cayman Island where the waters of the Seven-Mile Beach are smooth as glass. A young crew member today was in charge but was rather casual about this rocky beach with its choppy water, sudden drop-off, and undertow which he warned us about. I truly had no apprehensions, having been a life-long swimmer, and never afraid of the water. My husband admits to never having cared for water except in a bathtub. He always chooses to watch me, and lucky for me that he does and did! After some 15 minutes he noticed my snorkel flat in the water and when I didn't answer his call, he located the crew member in charge, fortunately

not far but not acting as lifeguard by any means. He swam out hastily some 50 feet and pulled me in, I was told; I don't remember this at all. I appeared to be dead – as a mackerel as the saying goes; yes, my husband thought so.

Tom applied mouth to mouth respiration and he was expert at this. I revived. This was only the beginning of an experience that will live in my mind from now on. Except for gurglings which did seem most unnatural I thought I was o.k. It was determined that I should be taken to a hospital immediately. The hospital which had x-ray equipment was some 20 miles away. The roads in St. Lucia were so rough that I could not be held on the stretcher in the ambulance. The sea was considered to be too rough also, although I had been attached by this time to an intravenous tube. This is evidently routine in such cases.

The island had one helicopter and this was brought to the scene thanks to the local naturalist, a man of international fame, who was scheduled to give a lecture that evening to the Sea Cloud passengers. A bouncy ride brought us to Vieux Fort to St. Jude's Hospital, small but well-equipped, with all black personnel including the main doctor, trained in Jamaica. Pneumonia was expected and chest x-rays showed this and even worse likely. I spent the night under the care of the most loving, attentive black nurses one could imagine. I was hooked up to five or six machines and was monitored every half hour. Oddly enough I felt very good and even without my oxygen mask I didn't especially notice shortness of breath. All I wanted at that point was to get back on the ship; we had only got a start on our trip. Incidentally all of our clothes were there.

We soon found out that the Sea Cloud had no intention of allowing us back on the ship. They were not equipped to handle a situation like this and they certainly didn't want a law suit. Calls started coming from their office in New York telling us that we would have to go home. A call came from our daughter who had been called during the worst snow storm in 100 years that her mother was in critical condition. (She had been listed as next-of-kin.) In the meantime we were without clothes (unless you count swim suits), cash or credit or anything. We were indignant; faxes were being sent back and forth from Soufriere to the ship to Vieux Fort and we finally accepted the

verdict that we would have to go home even with the east coast and southeast in the midst of the worst travel conditions in a century. Our clothes were brought to us after a wait of two days.

It did seem that if I could survive a trip to St. Louis with the required walking of miles in airports that I might have been better off on that ship. There were hundreds of stranded passengers trying to get from one place to another and it was a miracle that we secured a substandard motel on arrival in Miami at midnight.

The morning of March 16 we flew into St. Louis and the first thing I did the next day was visit my doctor, carrying the x-rays that I had brought from St. Lucia as evidence of my bizarre experience. He declared my x-ray of today's date perfect but told me also that under no circumstances should I have been allowed back on that ship. He said, "You had aspirated pneumonia" and not concerning himself with the propriety of it, he said two times, "Holy shit!"

The waters off St. Lucia have long been considered perfect for snorkeling.

XV. The Big Story: 1998-99

This scandal has gone on forever –
Since January last or December.
We heard Monica's name
Whatta dirty shame!
Our Prez is a low down philanderer!

At first he denied any sex;
The thing at first seemed complex.
He admitted he'd sinned –
Seemed truly chagrinned
Betty Currie and Jordan – nervous wrecks!

That intern was easily duped
Though she knew she had a great scoop!
Even dumber still
Was someone called Bill –
But his ratings sure didn't droop.

There are those who blame Kenneth Starr
For hoping Bill's record to mar;
But most think him distraught
Because he got caught
In this national scandal bizarre.

Way back was the Flowers affair
And of Paula we're all aware –
Under oath he lied
His sins he would hide –
A deception beyond compare.

Is this an impeachable offense?
Not only right-wingers incensed.
He degraded the office
In a way truly scandalous
So let the proceedings commence.

And then we think of the First Lady
And also of daughter Chelsea.
Will she stand by her man?
Now what is her plan?
But we all consider it crazy.

Now what about Linda Tripp?
Do you suppose she will lose her grip?
Then there's Congressman Hyde
But we took that in stride
These matters they'll probably skip.

Now when on earth will it end?
Into the next century extend?
Is resignation the solution
A kind of retribution?
And what does this really portend?

XVI. A Presidential Story: Re-thinking Jimmy Carter

At no time have I had a high regard for Jimmy Carter. I felt that his background was very ordinary, and I am one of those old-fashioned females who think that an aspirant to the presidency should not be known by a nickname.

I did not anticipate rewards of any kind from reading a Christmas present from my grandson, *An Hour Before Daylight.* Its subtitle is called "memories of a rural boyhood." I hasten to say that I have changed my mind; I consider this an enthralling story of the 39th president's early years. This book contains dozens of vignettes which illuminate the character of Carter.

Jimmy declares his most persistent impression as a farm boy was his closeness to the earth. He wrote that "soil caressed my bare feet and the dust was always up from the dirt road that passed 50 feet from our front door." He speaks lovingly of Plains, and a place called Archery, where he lived from age four until the great depression. He left for college and the United States Navy. Archery no longer exists.

He tells without embarrassment that from March until late October he never wore shoes and, yes, there were disadvantages: the possibility of stepping on a barbed wire or rusty nail. Also, the pine floors in the school room were not sanded but rough even when polished with used motor oil.

This is a minor matter of course. The emphasis is on the segregated social system which was practically unchallenged; it seemed that blacks and whites accepted each other as partners in rural poverty. The white families were relaxed in dealing with black neighbors.

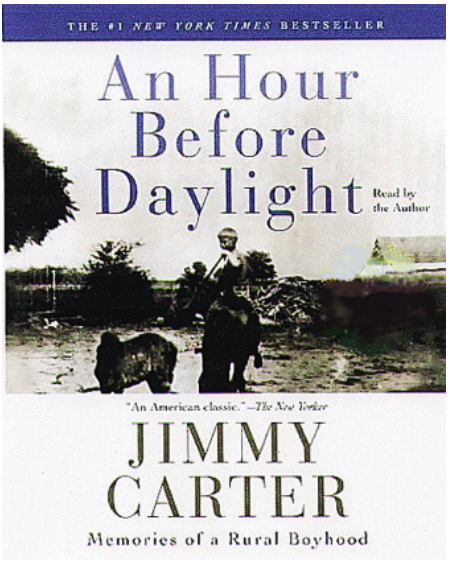
This little book provides a good picture of rural poverty. Electric lights were unknown until the late 1930's. There were no screens on doors and windows. Flies and other insects had unimpeded access. Powered radio served some of their needs. I was interested in his recollection of a late night in 1936. Alf Landon was chosen as the Republican nominee for president. In Kansas City, where I lived at this time, all of our friends and relations voted for Landon and were surprised at his poor showing! Jimmy's daddy (and this is what he is called through the book) was opposed to the New Deal and Roos-

evelt. He strongly opposed the interference of New Deal policies in the private life of farmers and business men; this was my own father's attitude and he, too, did not think Roosevelt's policies were the answer to the country's problems.

Carter's playmates were mostly the sons of tenant families. He could understand the plight of black families because he lived so much among them. Almost one fourth of tenant families were forced off the farms during the 30's and even after we entered the war in 1941. The rural families had nowhere to go for a better life. Jimmy understood why his parents never made an effort to induce him to remain on the farm. Life there was difficult.

While Carter was growing up, there was a shift toward dependence on peanuts. He began selling boiled peanuts on the streets of Plains when he was five years old; this was his first experience with the outside world. He continued doing this every summer. If things went well he would have no peanuts left by noon. He was happy to ride home with a dollar's worth of change in his pocket. He declared that this crop made the greatest impact on his life.

During the worst years of the depression, the most frequent travelers were tramps. They were never turned away by his mama. In 1938 almost one fourth of American workers were unemployed. In addition, there were the chain gangs. It seemed strange that blacks



Jimmy Carter's memoir recalled an earlier, simpler America.

and whites worked side by side all chained together. Stranger still was the fact that there were more white prisoners than blacks. Crimes by one black person against another were not considered important.

His best friend was Alonzo Davis, a timid black boy. This shyness evaporated when they were out of the presence of adults. Since the other playmates were black, Jimmy considered himself the outsider and strove to emulate their habits and language. He wrote that "my childhood was really shaped by black people." He played with the children, often ate and slept in their homes. He and his friend Alonzo worked, fished, trapped, explored together.

Head lice were a terrible affliction, and dog bites were feared. There were many stories of rabies and inevitable death if one didn't have 21 painful shots.

Jimmy speaks of the truly outstanding medical center they had in Plains. The senior nurse, his godmother, had high expectations for him. She gave him on his eighth birthday a matched leather bound set of Victor Hugo's works and a 20 volume set of *The Outline of Knowledge* – one of his treasured possessions today.

He learned to use firearms and to recognize poisonous plants and reptiles. He learned directions by studying the moon and was given a compass for when the skies were cloudy. On one occasion he got lost in the woods. He and Alonzo were so happy to capture a large snapping turtle. It was getting dark and he had forgotten his compass. He feared confronting his father, who had been looking for him. Jimmy called this one of the most unforgettable moments of his life when daddy found him, and folded him into his arms. He said "I thought you knew better than to get lost in the woods."

He is firmly attached to Plains today and so is his wife, Rosalyn, who is from there too. As a boy he went to school, to church, sold hamburgers and ice cream – this is where they raised their children. (Down to earth Jimmy said raised and not reared.) He said that they struggled here after the end of segregation and after he left life in the navy in 1953.

Carter's clear and eloquent prose evokes a time when the cycles of life were predictable and simple. He gives us a detailed and clear picture of a time and place in our history that would otherwise be lost and forgotten.

XVII. Hitting the Rails Again, 1997

We thought we would do something different this year. Is everybody flying to holiday destinations, or is Amtrak doing a good business? We decided to find out, and the answer is yes – at least during certain seasons. Railroad travel is not easy even though we thought it would be.

From here to Chicago required an early departure but so one has to get up at 5 a.m. to drive to the Amtrak station downtown! There is found a mixture of old and young, black and white, all very casually dressed, waiting. Of course the train is late; isn't Mussolini the only one ever who made trains run on time? Instead of the conductor we remember of old, there is a young woman who performs the necessary duties.

This train has an upstairs and a downstairs – the latter, ideal for the handicapped. However, in order to get to the café car it is necessary to go upstairs, traverse a few car lengths, and then downstairs. There is not much selection in the food department and no comfortable place to eat it. Still this is today's train travel and part of the adventure.

The train is immaculately clean. There are young families traveling, kids being treated to their first train trip, an old woman about my age, properly dressed as in former times – not in pants which is almost de rigueur for female travelers these days. She indicated she was making her 22nd train trip to Milwaukee. Obviously it suited her.

Finally we reach Chicago, where we must wait some five hours to board the Lake Shore Limited which goes all the way to the east coast. We had been told that the waiting room, called the Metropolitan Lounge, would be comfortable, with all the amenities. Probably it is most of the time, but now, December 21, it is filled to overflowing – not a chair in sight. Babies are howling, children are running madly, parents are trying their discipline – without success.

We decided to take a bus tour of downtown Chicago; I had not been here for fifteen years. I had loved Chicago as a young woman after graduating from Northwestern in 1934. Chicago is a magnificent city, and the views over the lake are dazzling. I was forced to admit

in my secret mind that these views made St. Louis seem tiny and undistinguished, totally lacking in glamour. But of course Chicago doesn't have our magnificent Arch!

Back to the station – and yes, in a revolving door we were jostled – undeniably targets for pick pockets or purse grabbing. Old but not ignorant, we foiled this attempt.

To board the train and to go what seemed a long distance to reach our first class car, required for us a "people mover" summoned by an efficient black woman official. She seemed out of sorts and nearly beside herself with unwelcome demands, but the evening was just getting a good start. She asked if we <u>really</u> wanted a "people mover" and we said yes.

We were at last on the train; we were told that wine and cheese were available for first class passengers in the dining car. We learned that this was eight cars ahead, and yes, I mean <u>eight</u>. We decided against this.

Our affable black porter, and we did call him George, made up our roomette. To spend the night in such small quarters might be better than sitting up, but I wasn't sure. To function in this 3 by 6 foot area represents an undeniable accomplishment. It had all the necessities, but I think that the TV could be sacrificed in this planning. The upper and lower berths were cozy, to describe them in the most complimentary terms. The roadbed seemed smooth until we settled down for the night. Then there were sudden jerks and jolts – much swaying vertically and horizontally. The train had to be going 90 miles per hour because we passed cars on a parallel highway. As a child I thought this was great fun; I'm sure the road bed was no smoother in the old days.

The sound of the train whistle is something I have always loved, its eerie sound blaring out into the countryside and fading in a Doppler effect. As a young woman I remember the train whistles from the Wabash train when it operated out of Delmar Station and the sensations it evoked. My nostalgia about trains dates from a trip to California when I was eleven years old.

Today it is different; there is no porter standing outside and calling out "All Aboard." I suppose we have to call this progress – that we can go somewhere now in two hours (by plane) which formerly

took two days!

Across from our quarters was a woman of advanced years. She was proud to tell us that she was 93, proud to be older than we were, and going all the way to Boston! Perhaps conversation with strangers is easier on trains than on planes.

The coaches were jammed – which was apparent as we walked through them on our trip to the diner – all eight cars! The tables had bud vases on them and white cloths, an attempt to achieve the elegance of former days. The waiter was overworked but accommodating. First class passengers were offered a free breakfast of their choice – a wide variety, besides bacon and eggs, grits, pancakes, hashed browns and waffles – anything!

Across from us sat a young woman, an African-American third-year medical student who talked to us freely and articulately of her plans and long-held hopes. We found her appealing and what and how she said it, encouraging both for her future and ours!

We reached our destination and were properly congratulated for having survived our taxing and monumental hejira – words of our daughter after our return.

XVIII. A Family Affair to Remember

We used to travel a lot – to foreign, even exotic places – but time has taken its toll: too much energy and endurance required. Then recently we did drive eastward – the occasion? – a family wedding – that of one near and dear to us. As Anne Lindbergh has declared, "An experience is not complete until it is written," or E. M. Forster, "How do I know what I think until I have written about it?" – and I say, "No occasion can be treasured or even savored unless it is written about."

On TV not long ago was a program on the development of the Interstate Highway System in the United States. I found this interesting for I come from a family that fell in love with the automobile and driving long before the Interstate. In above mentioned program it was stated that the automobile (its use, that is) is as important to the average American as food and even sex!

After my father traded in the equity in his bungalow for a down payment on his first car, a Hupmobile, in 1914, we made trips to Iowa to see relatives – often two days required and tire chains put to use many times to extricate the car from the mud.

Thankfully, it hasn't been like that for a long, long time because of the network of divided highways – not to mention concrete – that crisscrosses our nation. My partner and I have our chosen routes – going east to see our descendants – and our favorite eating places. There is a Red Lobster café in Terra Haute, Indiana that has welcomed us on many occasions. It has flavored baked bread that is put on the table immediately and appreciated; and its seafood specialties are a treat. We have never tried Red Lobster here in St. Louis – too remote; perhaps they do the same thing.

In Erie, Pennsylvania, we stop for a meal at a Holiday Inn where there is a waitress who reminds me of a long ago friend, lost track of since 1960. I say to myself, "Ginnie, you're holding up very well, and you have been working here for years!"

We eat in a room with a glass ceiling with numerous exotic plants trailing down from it, and water pouring over its sloped surface. This never fails to enchant me.

We are headed for Ithaca but we wish to delay our arrival, and

drive into rural New York where the placid scenery nourishes the soul. The color of the leaves is like an artist's palette – oranges and yellows, soft reds and all against a backdrop of blue mountains. We go into Olean, a place we would never have heard of except for a cousin who was born and grew up there. She hated it and in life after college days went to far-away California.

We chose not to stay here – in an historic bed and breakfast inn where a large basement sleeping area rented for $125 a night. We moved on in this beautiful pastoral country which could have been a foreign land – perhaps Bavaria – cows on the hillside, carefully manicured fields, scarcely a human – a far cry from the heavily traveled highways.

We next came to Cuba, New York – certainly never had heard of that! Motels are not too numerous in this off-the-beaten path territory. (We have never spent the night in our car – but almost once!) A stop for gas was considered advisable and the attendant was asked about accommodations and restaurants. She declared, "Yeah, there is a bran' spankin' new one – just opened up down the road" and a further question about a restaurant brought forth, "Yup, there is one of those not too far – it's pricey, but you sit down and they bring it to you!" Sounded like our favorite type of eating places.

This rural country with its dance of color and light at sunset time mesmerized us – a fantasy realm of warmth and vitality, transporting us out of our hectic American style of the nineties – and yet here it was – not too far from New York City.

Next day in Aurora, New York, a wedding ceremony was solemnized – the background: beautiful Lake Cayuga. A man, not for a long time my little boy, who has been invited to make his own nomination for the Nobel Prize in Physics, and his Russian associate, who published treatises such as the most recent – "Dynamics of Magnetic Loops in the Coronae of Accretion Disks" were married. This was truly a memorable occasion, saturated with both emotion and vitality.

Other members of our family later drove us to Burlington, Vermont, where a talented granddaughter, says Grandma, resides – a newspaper journalist. This drive took us through central New York where my Dutch ancestors settled in the 1700's. The Village of

Canajoharie looks very much as it must have looked for the last 100 years. It seems strange that this ancestor's descendant who headed west, as the admonition was in the 19th century, had later descendants who returned to this choice pastel green land – not by design, but by fate!

As for the Green Mountain state, who could ask for any land more intimate and translucent with its fenced farm plots, red barns and quaint villages – church centered?

But back to St. Louis that has its own compelling history and appeal not to be overshadowed or downsized by any other place! We love it here.

A signal event in the family: wedding of Richard and Marina.

With Marina came her daughters, Alina Blinova (L.) and Alisa Blinova (R.).

XIX. A Visitor to Five Brookside

It happened in the winter of '85; we will never forget it. Full well we know that any number of people have intruders. Why should we have an immunity?

It had been a quiet evening – perhaps a little television. As usual I had turned lights on in our bedroom – first floor, ground level. I like a house to be lit and look lived in even though there are only two people in residence. Of course I often refer to Grandma. There is a timer in a bedroom upstairs. It goes off about 10:30 because we know that "Grandma" likes to turn in early.

This particular evening was like many others. We went off to bed, closed the door (I don't like to hear the bonging of the grandfather's clock, especially if I have a bout of insomnia) and settled in for some reading. There is seldom a night when we don't attempt this; it may not go on for long but this is our pattern at home and away. I was starting....*And the Ladies of the Club*.

It was a quiet night but at four o'clock I realized there was movement in the room and I was suddenly wide awake. Well, it was just my roommate – nothing so startling about that! But shortly thereafter he said, "Did you hear that thump? We are not alone."

Windows were down (long ago we gave up that notion from our childhood that fresh night air is necessary for good health), and the door was shut. Then I saw in the faint glow produced by a neighbor's distant flood light a shadow flutter past a large mirror. Thank God it wasn't human!

We were out of bed in a flash with lights turned on – and then we saw it. An owl! He (or she) seemed only moderately frightened. My spouse ran to the library for one of our bird books. We have not been successful at identifying birds this way – and not this time either. There were fifteen different owls pictured. We thought it might have been any one of five. We eliminated the snowy; it certainly wasn't that. Well – maybe the barred owl!

And what was the owl doing? It had departed from a lampshade to a picture on a bureau top where it sat calmly on a picture of my daughter at age five. I had been instructed to get my camera – no adjustments required, thank goodness! I was able to take what turned

out to be a very good picture. The owl was curious about all this – intrigued as we were apparently.

We were happy as could be to capture the bird and to release it outside without injury to bird or hand. And then we speculated. There could only be one explanation; it had evidently come in several days earlier at the time of a chimney cleaning. We were mystified as to how it had managed to conceal itself and to cover substantial distances in the house without hearing or seeing it.

Probably the owl was becoming desperately hungry and had decided to risk all for a possible escape. It was a relief that it had left without calling cards and only a few claw marks in a lampshade to serve as a memento.

I never did return to .... *And the Ladies of the Club.*

A visitor to 5 Brookside.

XX. Alaska Bound

We hadn't especially wanted to go to Alaska although it is popular, we were told, with the elderly. Its particular cultural heritage had no real appeal. Also it was no bargain. We had been surfeited with brochures showing sumptuous meals aboard elegant cruise ships, innumerable photographs of ice-blue glaciers, old Russian churches, racing sled dogs, views of Mt. McKinley and Denali National Park. This was the perfect trip for senior citizens who had been everywhere else, and it wasn't too rugged; and since the 49th state was twice the size of Texas there was plenty to see even if we didn't go up into the Arctic circle where the Indians live, and simply visited the lower cities by bus.

To inspect the Alaskan Pipe Line and the University of Alaska, the most northern of all our universities where it is dark most of the school year, and the cities of the Inside Passage would give any American a lot to think about. Mainly a visit to Alaska would remind one of what it must have been like here in the lower 48 one hundred or more years ago. It is a primitive area. There are no historic documents but in an Anchorage museum there are many original works by the indigenous and resident Alaskans dating from pre-historic times to the present.

But we learned that no trip to Alaska is complete without an adventure over the White Pass and Yukon, the railroad born of the mad rush to the Klondike in 1898. All the railroads in the annals of history have had colorful beginnings. The few nuggets of gold discovered in Bonanza Creek in August 1898 were hardly enough to trigger the most incredible stampede for riches the world has ever known. By steamer up the Inside Passage the stampeders landed at Skagway to begin the 40 mile trek over White Pass to Lake Bennett. There they built boats and started the 500 mile journey down the Yukon River to the gold fields. The trip was a grueling nightmare of weather and rugged terrain. Thousands of pack animals perished; tons of supplies were abandoned along the way or lost in the rapids.

To give some background, on May 28, 1898, construction began on the White Pass and Yukon Route. Two months later the railroad's first engine pulled an excursion train over the first four miles of

completed track, making this the northernmost railroad in the Western Hemisphere. From there on, the going got tough. The grades were uncommonly steep and some of the workers hung suspended by ropes from vertical granite cliffs, chipping away with picks and planting black powder to blast through the mountains. Heavy snow and temperatures as low as 60 below hampered the work. Against all odds the track reached the summit of White Pass. The railroad had a rich and colorful history and hauled passengers and freight until 1982 but since then it has operated summers for the tourist trade.

We started out in Skagway, boarding a vintage 1890 parlor car known as Old Number 73. After a blast from her steam whistle we were on our way following in the footsteps of the stampeders over the Trail of '98. It is now reequipped with diesel engines to handle the grade. It skirts the rushing torrents of the Skagway River, gaining elevation through a narrow box canyon. Rounding a bend we are out in the open, crawling along the shoulder of a mountain. A trestle spans a gorge into a seemingly insurmountable mountain wall. Then suddenly the train disappears into a tunnel, emerging alongside the visible remains of the famed Trail of '98 etched in rock by the shuffling feet of thousands of gold-crazed stampeders and the weary hooves of their pack animals. The train steadily forges upward until it reaches the summit of White Pass. We've done it! In less than two hours we've traversed the wildly rugged mountain country that once posed weeks of agonizing ordeals for the Klondikers.

Skagway is one of America's great historical shrines. We had been living happily without the knowledge of it. Now we can remember it along with Paul Revere's home, Independence Hall, Plymouth Rock and Williamsburg but mainly we will think of Skagway as a rough and tumble part of our frontier past. It boasted over 70 saloons, shootings were common and the town was controlled by a gang of organized criminals.

By 1900 the gold rush was over. Life here since then has been relatively sedate. We are glad to have been there.

XXI. The 2000 Election

An Unfinished Story: The Agony and the Ecstasy

Christmas 2000 will soon be here –
How memorable the days since Election have been
Now surely we can dredge up some cheer
To darken these days would be a great sin!

Isn't this the season to be jolly?
Political warfare is building suspense
We hope to know very soon, by golly
Before the new year we commence.

This two thousand election will not be forgot
Its contestants George W. and Al Gore –
And different ballots – there've been a lot
With hand counts, machine counts galore.

To review the story from way way back;
Let's consider the dimpled chads –
The judges said no; they must not stack
Ballots that make one party glad!

The Gore lawsuit against Palm Beach
The county used low dimple rules
Another hand count – all voters they'll reach
But no – the public can't be fooled!

Now the Democrats do loudly declare
Miami-Dade is full of Gore votes
They'll win this fair and square
They think that losing there's remote!

The Leon county court denied
Gore's requests for recounts by hand
Judge Saul said these couldn't decide
Or change things as they now stand!

Gore's lawyers filed papers next
To appeal to Florida's high court –
An adverse ruling leaves them vexed
And time till December 12th is short!

George W's lead is extremely slim
It's only five thirty seven
A change in butterfly ballots for him
And pregnant chads could make Gore win!

The election battle won't go away
To our highest court it finally comes
But nothing is settled to some folks' dismay
But to be divided – they did not succumb!

Now Florida's high court said no, no, no
The butterfly ballot's to blame,
The scrapping continues between the foes
Will manual recounts settle this claim?

Have the absentee ballots been duly counted?
Hundreds have been thrown out
Has a Gore conspiracy been mounted?
To make sure Dubya is soundly routed?

The White House will go to the Florida winner
Electoral College is what we mean.
That outcome will make Gore's chances thinner
This 2000 election is the worst we have seen.

Patience is dwindling
Will one man concede?
The bells won't be ringing
Till we know who will lead.

But now a Florida recount is commanded
A significant omen for Vice-President Gore
Miami-Dade votes were demanded
Which promised his lead to quickly restore.

And next our Supreme Court does respond
It says the counting must stop
While it studies the case and on beyond
With Mr. Gore no longer on top!

It's December 12th and we must wait
Till the court makes a decision
We hope the date is not too late
And won't create a lasting schism.

So Merry Christmas to all
It's been a good year
This situation won't stall
Our holiday spirits, don't fear!

- December 12, 2000

XXII. Arrested Development

The world of computers is passing me by
At this time of my life I shall not even try –
To be a web surfer – a modem is needed
It's no use for me – though a guide book I heeded.

In recent weeks I've looked at web pages
Browser software is known – it's been here for ages.
To venture on line – now how to do that?
Or get on the Internet – takes a mouse or a rat?

True email users can dial for their letter
A two-way beeper is now even better;
You shuttle a cursor through an on-screen keyboard
It's called Access-Link – you deserve an award!

In cyberspace I won't cast my lot
In web cruising no, I don't plan to get caught –
A quantum leap forward must be our ideal
And filtering software – what will it conceal?

A handheld computer to go in your Net buff
If you're wanting to splurge – this should be enough
A laptop computer can serve very well
But I live in the past – so what the hell!

- 1997

XXIII. More Arrested Development

I saw an article this week
Technology and You.
It gave advice to newbees –
Its subject was How-To.

An estimated 40 million
Are connected to the Net
But many do not have email
They're in the dark – and yet…

They want to know of dot com
They want to surf the Net
Know search machines and browsers
To get online – you bet!

A Pentium is recommended
Computer Four Eight Six –
A processor to measure megahertz
Their hum-drum life to fix!

A site on the Web is what I want
That contains a database –
I'll check that www.
And be prepared in any case.

I can sign with ISP –
America Online – the choice of most
It offers many services
Shopping sites, from coast to coast.

Virginia Hick writes the Tech Talk news
She's the Post Dispatch reporter –
She tells what things are clunky
Things we don't know but or-ter!

Have you thought of a new dictionary?
The vocabulary is quite esoteric;
To keep up the language today
It can surely be called a new rhetoric!

- 1999

XXIV. A Political War

O when o when will it ever end?
This national matter of deep concern
American voters do comprehend
A fair election and for this they yearn.

We have faith in our system
Of two hundred plus years
But there are those we condemn
And others we cheer.

The counting by hand
Is not the solution –
There is deep distrust
And lots of confusion.

Suits have been filed
Overseas ballots not in
Florida folks are riled
Both guys plan to win!

President Bill cannot mediate
Too long linked to Gore
Suspicions he'd generate
Nor America's pride could restore.

To 1960 we can look back
When Richard Nixon left the race
JFK became president
American honor not debased.

Will this be resolved by Friday
Or go on into the next year?
Is harm done by delay?
Yes, that is what we should fear.

- November 2000

XXV. A New America: September 11th

In 1979 I wrote a piece in blank verse about a visit to Canterbury. It had four stanzas; in the third one I wrote:

> This hallowed place, its perpendicular Tower
> Inspires me who has no English blood
> I see these soldiers, veterans of two wars
> With medals dripping – proud and unabashed
> Come marching down the quaint and lovely lanes
> To drums and horns – with citizens at stark attention –
> For what occasion I do not know
> An anniversary by most forgot? But still
> The reverence paid them pleased me very much –
> It harkened back to simpler days:
> Their patriotic pride seemed dear and sweet
> Which we Americans, alas, "outgrew."

A critic who read this commented, "The idea that American outgrew England and her customs, including her patriotic pride, is well taken."

On September 11, 2001 that changed. We realized how much we loved and honored our country. Since then our American flag is flying from poles, windows, houses; we have red, white and blue jewelry which we are wearing proudly. We have paid a terrible price for our indifference. It took this devastating event to make us realize that we haven't properly appreciated our beloved country.

Now we salute our flag and sing our national anthem with zeal and enthusiasm. A thrilling moment which made my blood tingle and shivers run up and down my back took place in Powell Hall on September 30, when the Star Spangled Banner was sung by 2500 people in attendance with two conductors and the full chorus and the entire orchestra. At the conclusion there was tumultuous applause. We were no longer indifferent.

Now we are praying that terrorism can be eliminated; will this take ten years, or maybe a hundred?

With bioterrorism appearing, we realize that support for our

country and its citizens will be our priority. We are united and the minor matters that caught our attention, have disappeared.

On September 18, we learned that 52 million students in America's 107,000 elementary and secondary schools put their hands on their hearts and participated in an act that, for some of them, was unusual. They recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Until a generation ago the Pledge was a school-day staple, but it fell out of favor in recent years. Critics charged that it was "militaristic" or that the words "under God" (added in 1954) violated the separation of church and state. The Pledge is now making a comeback.

One high school principal reported that the Pledge has taken on "new meaning" for her and her students. These days she notes that the kids seem to be really listening to the words, grasping that they stand for something.

One American, born a foreigner, said "I always thought it was too bad Americans didn't fly the flag." "I get a sacred feeling from the flag which is everywhere, reminding us that freedom sometimes comes with sacrifice."

It is said that in New York City every second person is wearing red, white and blue. It's a way of showing solidarity and respect for the victims who died, and survived. It's a powerful and bold statement that says we're still here. These patriotic styles are a far cry from the grommet-covered belts and leather jodhpurs that were the season's hottest style before September 11.

Peggy Noonan of the *Wall Street Journal* writes "It isn't that all of a sudden we're not atheists in a foxhole; it's that all of a sudden we remembered THAT FLAG IS US. I don't think we'll ever forget what we learned. I don't think that we'll let it disappear again."

XXVI. Thinking about the 21st Century

And now I think of life in these later days – much, much later. Everything is different. Children ride buses to schools and depend on buses; their maintenance and their drivers are all important. I have been reading about a walk-out by bus drivers which stranded thousands of students when the 150 drivers did not show up for work.

Something else that is different: We know that in the twenties everyone had small pox vaccinations. This was done all over the world and the disease was eliminated. But now Missouri has requested 4000 doses of vaccine to inoculate health and hospital workers who would care for victims of a possible bioterrorism attack. Would we have imagined such a thing? About 2000 health care workers at 78 hospitals and 60 local public health agencies indicated that they are willing to take the vaccine and form smallpox response teams.

Today it is a different world for the more prosperous families. Very few of them, young or old, are confined to their homes because of lack of transportation. All have cars and I read about some who drive 200 miles a week shuttling their children to hockey games, softball practice and music lessons. Cutbacks in public funding have led many parents to drive farther for the arts, music, sports and other elements of what they regard as a quality education. The *Wall Street Journal* wrote that a Minnesota mother of four put a potty seat in her van for her toddler to use while she drove the other three children around. One mother says that she couldn't take it any more. "We were in the car all the time." Another said that she just made the best of it all and made her car into a cultural enrichment center talking with kids about topics from AIDS and Iraq to Bill Frist and national politics.

Awhile back abortion was not something that was talked about or written about. Young people were not even aware of this practice. The editor of the *Kansas City Star* is reported not to have allowed this word in print. This was also true of the word rape, and as for pornography, who in the world among the young knew what that was?

Today I have read about pet pouches and the question was: Does Fido need a snugli? Once reserved for human babies these

close to the body carriers are the new accessory for the pet set. Pet owners are really buying them. The nylon pet pouch advertised at $35.00 could have been a baby carrier except for the tail hole.

In the medical world there is a movement to steer patients away from using drugs unless absolutely necessary. There has been a growing interest in prescribing chicken soup and a good night's sleep. More and more doctors are now signing on to their own version of the drug free approach. One doctor suggests a strong slap on the back to loosen up congestion. There is growing medical evidence that it is better to treat a range of common illnesses from stuffy nose to constipation without medicine.

And, yes, our black brothers and sisters are full citizens in good standing in today's America. It took a long, long time. Some of us in this 21st century feel that this great advance is one of the most dramatic parts of American history that we have been lucky to share.

Marjorie Remembers

Part 3.
Memorable Foreign Places

Marjorie Remembers

❖ ❖

Part 3. Memorable Foreign Places

Introduction:

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My mother knew who she was: an American. From early childhood, she had heard stories of Unites States history; she had seen the country from sea to shining sea. Foreign travel had yet to become routine. Not until 1961, when they were 48 years old, did my parents make their first trip abroad together. This took place immediately after my graduation from Swarthmore. I well remember the whirlwind trip that our whole family made to London and various points in England, Paris, Rome, Florence, and Venice. On that trip, as we ate lunch in Canterbury, England on July 4th, the waitress put a small American flag on our table. That experience seemed to me to indicate both the appreciation of being in other places and the heightened consciousness of being an American.

My parents then began thirty-five years of extensive travel. Returning repeatedly to England, they explored the literary and political heritage that they had studied in Southwest High School. They were of the generation that appreciated the British antecedents of American civilization. Looking at the collection of British travel information – on cathedrals, museums, history, points of history – that my mother had accumulated, Richard and I decided, in 2006, that it had too much value to discard it.

My mother believed in extensive and intensive travel. Their travels took her all over the world with only a few regions omitted. I think only South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand were missed. Many times on the foreign travels, she liked car rentals, and they carried out amazing journeys in Scotland, Portugal, and Italy. Not afraid of the wheel herself, she made an excellent navigator as well. My mother did not like travel confined only to museums and galleries or to known hotels and tourist destinations. She liked to observe and see the people, to stay in historic settings, to enjoy the cuisine, and to study the culture.

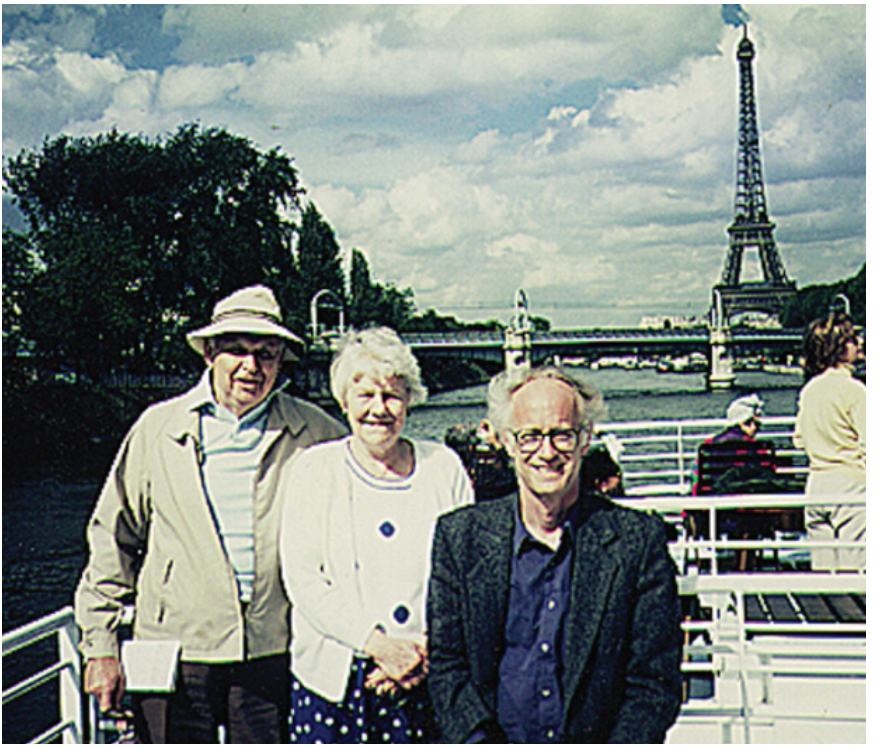
In preparing for their trips, my mother did extensive research. I can remember her saying that before visiting a country or city, it sometimes seemed difficult to delve into histories and accounts, but once seen, a place stayed forever in her thoughts. Then, in the return from the trip, my mother wrote extensive chronicles of travels, incorporating historical information and her own observations. She wanted to learn and appreciate the history of countries from Scotland to Uzbekistan, to see the great cities, not only the known ones, which she loved, but others from Krakow to AlmaAta. My mother said that by writing her experiences in the foreign countries, she retained them, and her extensive accounts were so informative that other people used them to plan their own travel.

My mother wanted to see beauty in works of art, but she also sought to see how people lived. She valued the memory of the sublime at the Taj Mahal and reflected on the "numbing experience" of Auschwitz. She did not turn down a trip to a concentration camp as "too difficult," even though on their trip it was considered optional. To her it was important. My mother thought about their trips not as excursions to great monuments and achievements but, rather, as enlarging the view of all of human experience.

Looking at my parents' travels now, I am surprised that I did not worry more about the strange airlines and destinations that they selected. I assumed that they were safe, because they always knew what they were doing. The days of their trips came before e-mail, today's means of immediate communication almost anywhere. When they came home, my mother always exclaimed with a gleam in her eye that it was a "killer trip." I remember considering if this really

meant good, but she felt proud of what they had undertaken and accomplished. Memorable foreign trips enlarged her consciousness and what she gave to others.

- Jean Lovelace Stinchcombe



Richard's scientific activities included work with the Institute of Astronomy at Cambridge University. This appointment enabled him to join his parents on excursions such as this barge trip down the Seine (1995).

I. Mexico in 1961

Do I speak of the fairyland beauty of Alameda Park with its Christmas lights twined high in its huge trees?

Or the market places in the Indian country with their dried meat which smelled even in the open air?

Or of the island of Janitzio with its bright-eyed children, some without clothes, swarming around us, and fat sows roaming the streets?

Or of the Christmas service in the Presbyterian church with "O Little Town of Bethlehem" being shouted in Spanish, and of wonder at what made this little group of Mexicans depart from their traditional Catholicism?

Of the Indians carrying unbelievable loads on their backs and heads, to say nothing of the overburdened burros?

Or of the pyramids, structures of an ancient civilization, and resembling the Egyptian in some respects, where great engineering ability is so evident?

Or of the ancient Aztec calendar stone, not to mention the stones where human lives were sacrificed to appease angry gods?

Of striking murals in abundance, of snow-capped volcano peaks, of modern architecture ahead of our own country?

Of Acapulco and Taxco with their balmy temperatures and flowers in profusion; of trucks parked on the highway with their drivers taking a siesta underneath?

Of primitive living conditions beyond belief, but not hunger?

Of the little quiver of pleasure when the customs man in San Antonio asked if we were native-born United States citizens?

II. Machu Picchu

The name of Machu Picchu comes from the Quechua Indian language and means Old Peak. The city, high in the Andes Mountains of modern Peru, is 76 miles northwest of Cusco and is at an altitude of 8000 feet above sea level. It has been established definitely that it is an Incan construction and in the opinion of most experts this construction of rock was built during the first half of the 15th century – around 1420.

It is impossible to know, say the archaeologists, why it was constructed or what its function was but the evidence is that it was for religious purposes – constructed as a convent, as an enormous palace for special women called Virgins of the Sun who were chosen from the empire's nobility according to their talents and physical perfection. 75% of the remains excavated there were female. It is reasoned that the presence of these holy women explains why the secret of the city's existence was so jealously guarded over the centuries.

It is not known what happened to the population – massacred by invading tribes? Natural causes? Or because these virgins left no descendants? Or perhaps they departed for other places for more water and land. It is definitely known, however, that it was inhabited until the beginning of the 17th century. This stone city was unknown until 1911.

A review of the Spanish conquest would be necessary to give a proper background. This is too long and involved to get into here. But briefly, in November 1533 the invaders entered Cusco and began sacking the city, searching always for gold. Most of what they found was melted down to ingots and sent to Spain. The Inca chiefs were murdered, thousands were made slaves, revolts followed. The angry Spanish then decided to destroy all remaining vestiges of Inca power. However, the sacred city where the pagan religion was practiced and where the temples and palaces were ornamented with gold and silver was never found.

Now Hiram Bingham was an American with degrees from Yale and Harvard who wanted to teach South American history so he decided to study the military campaigns of the South American liberator, Simon Bolivar. He traveled extensively there and he became

especially interested in Peru and especially in stories of a hidden city and thanks to the help of a native Indian farmer who became his guide, he climbed the canyon wall of the Urubamba and discovered Machu Picchu. Today some 30% is restored.

He employed 500 peons and little by little paths and terraces came to light. It is figured today that there were 250 homes and more than 100 series of stairs, totaling perhaps 3000 steps. It is surely one of the most exquisite and monumental works of architecture in human history – definitely a high point in the culture of man and, as someone has said, also a high point in the lives of those fortunate enough to visit it.

Huayna Picchu means "young mountain." The guide book says the ascent to the top is dangerous and should be approached only with great caution. The terraces which, from their impractical position, are supposed to have been sacred gardens, also served as retaining walls. The roofs are made of wood and thatch (straw); there is clay mortar between the rocks. There are caretakers of the terraces.

Agricultural District: The Incas cultivated products peculiar to the region – more than 200 classes of plants were useful as food and medicine. Except for the potato – bless its heart – which grows wild even now in the higher altitudes of South American, I am not familiar with any of the vegetables and fruits. (There was no mention of the Incas growing the lima bean which nowadays is common in South America.)

Water is brought down from natural springs and diverted to where needed. There is a main fountain – the Incas knew the principle of the siphon. The cutting of the staircases boggles the mind. The rocks were brought from natural quarries found in the surrounding area and transported into place with human labor as the Incas didn't have beasts of burden or the wheel.

Incas used niches for their belongings or sacred objects – doorways were not too high, suggesting a short people. The doorways were trapezoidal in shape.

Temple of the sun has a circular wall and behind it a huge natural rock worked into the form of an altar to celebrate religious rites, offer sacrifices and give homage to the sun god. It was considered

most beautiful.

The city of Cuzco is the archaeological capital of Peru. The word Cuzco in Quechua means "navel" and it really is the navel of South America – the center of the great Inca civilization. The city was founded around 1200 and when the Spanish conquered the city they took up residence in the palaces. It was a merging of two cultures with its mixture of massive Inca stone walls and early Spanish colonial architecture. The houses are often built upon a foundation of Inca stonework, the modern superstructure roofed with red tile. The narrow, irregular streets are roughly paved, the wide plazas, surrounded by arcades, are the site of markets and fairs. It is in many respects a primitive Indian city.

It has many churches where Spanish Catholicism is combined with pagan Indian rites. An earthquake in 1950 destroyed most of these, but I gathered they had been rebuilt and Indians didn't regard this as a bad sign.

Cuzco is protected by lofty mountains and lies at a height of 11,380 feet. Orchards and gardens surround it. There are little thatch covered dwellings on the hillsides. The llamas are really a sight to behold.

III. Canterbury

To visit Canterbury on Sunday afternoon
In late September – warms my heart!
See the golden light slant downward
'Cross those ancient stones – this soul of England!
Shades of Chaucer, Henry Second, martyred Becket,
Before the Romans came this place was live.

And Julius Caesar camped nearby, they say –
And visualize St. Augustine in trailing robe,
His Benedictine monastery – cultural center;
All through the Saxon period, it stood strong.
And now the tourists, same as Chaucer's pilgrims
Throng those narrow, cobbled streets.

This hallowed place, its perpendicular Tower
Inspires me who has no English blood
I see those soldiers, veterans of two wars
With medals dripping – proud and unabashed
Come marching down the quaint and lovely lanes
To drums and horns – with citizens at stark attention.

For what occasion I do not know
An anniversary by most forgot? But still –
The reverence paid them pleased me very much
It harkened back to simpler days;
Their patriotic pride seemed dear and sweet
Which we Americans, alas, "outgrew."

- 1979

IV. A Salute to Isabella

Spain is an intriguing country to visit; we thought so way back in 1967. Of course we didn't like those late dinner hours. By 10:30 pm we were ready to go to bed and were not thrilled about sitting down to a heavy meal of paella. Saffron is the seasoning for this dish and I have some in my kitchen right now but I always forget to use it. I think that I originally thought it just too expensive and that it must be saved. I'm sure all of its essence has departed long since.

It was in Granada where I first tasted gazpacho – that wonderful Andalusian cold soup with a tomato base, spiked with vinegar and oil, and on the side, bits of cucumber, onion and bread cubes to be sprinkled in it.

We had not planned to return to Granada, former stronghold of Moorish Spain at the foothills of the snow-capped Sierra Nevada range and part of the folklore of the world with its famed Alhambra; after all, a week in Morocco had given us ample exposure to the Muslim culture. Furthermore we were registered at a beautiful resort hotel in the countryside called La Bobadillo. Our travel agent in Spain, niece of an old friend who had chosen Madrid long ago for her permanent home, declared we would need some time there to rest up before returning to our frantic American life.

An inspection of our map of the region showed that Granada would be an easy drive as far as distance was concerned. We had remembered it as a sleepy little town and not as a busy commercial city which it has since become. The more we thought of revisiting Granada the more we convinced ourselves that seeing the tombs of Ferdinand and Isabella was an absolute must. Our sightseeing on the previous visit had not included them. By now we knew how much we owed to Isabella!

This turned out to be an ambitious undertaking. Country driving was not bad but there were just as many highway repair jobs in progress as on many of our interstates. On the outskirts of Granada we were certain that everyone was headed for el centro. Streets were packed; how were we to find the Royal Chapel? I employed my limited Spanish, not good enough even to be called "rusty" after more than fifty years. My "donde estás" evoked a certain interest but

brought very imprecise directions. At last we spied the great cathedral, one of Spain's most ornate but learned that the Royal Chapel which contains the royal couple is behind it. Our next problem was a parking space. The one-way streets, the motor bikes and motor cycles weaving in and out of the traffic flow produced some disturbed American psyches. Locked tight in a one-way alley by chance, we decided to do as the natives do – park on the sidewalk. This produced not one look of surprise; in fact our good fortune was admired by passersby. After this a couple of streets had to be crossed. Pedestrians seemed unconcerned as they dodged the oncoming traffic; we tried to join their numbers. To gain entrance to the Royal Chapel with the payment of the required pesetas was an accomplishment and we took note of the fact that Ferdinand and Isabella had wished to be buried in the recaptured city and not in Castile or Aragon.

The earliest part of the cathedral to be built, it is almost the last rich gasp of the Gothic in Spain. There are silver cressets and polychrome saints and coats of arms and arrogant black eagles, crimson velvets and golden coronets and crucifixes with pearls and rubies. We saw Isabella's crown and scepter, Ferdinand's sword and the banners that flew before them as they rode into conquered Granada.

Then there are the four marble effigies, massive, solemn and yellow with age. There are Juana the Mad and Philip the Handsome alongside the two rulers, her parents. The four of them whose lives were in constant conflict are entombed there forever. It is probably the figure of the great Queen Isabella that most draws the gaze – the best known of the four. The morning sun through the chapel's lone window falls, accidentally or not, only upon her. She seems at peace – well-deserved after a turbulent life. Her feet are stretched out, her hands together. The sense of repose, of silence, of eternal sleep is overwhelming. Her head turns slightly to the left as if even in death she is watching over her mad daughter. The stone is masterfully converted to velvet. She had created Spain which until then had never been a nation, though often a political entity with a long history of conquests, divisions and occupations.

We were soon to return to our beloved America. I dared not think too much about our Spanish Ford and its ability (and ours) to get us to Madrid for the next day's flight.

V. On the Amazon

In the north it is cold, it is bitter
You can't get by with a sweater –
But at Camp Amazon
In Peru as was found
The breezes aren't chill once you get there!

To get there is half the fun (they say)
On Peruvian Airlines, if they run.
It's ten hours by river
No roads – none ever
It's deep in the jungle 'neath the sun.

Have you heard of a place called Iquitos?
They said it was full of mosquitoes.
But when we got there
We found they were rare
I'll bet no one will believe us.

The camp we did reach after nightfall
We found it truly delightful
The river makes sounds
Jungle noises abound
We knew we were in for a sightful!

Our cabin's quite simple and plain
A pitcher and basin contained –
Shared john, not a privy
But it sure was iffy
The mirror would drive you insane.

The food was delectably native
Pisco sours slyly sedative
The napkins were teensie
Weensie, weensie, weensie
The thermoses more useful than decorative.

At last it was time to depart
We're sure it broke every heart –
We took to the river
Said goodbye forever
Still we say it was really a lark!

VI. A Numbing Experience: Visiting Auschwitz

It has been a long time since I was there – maybe ten years. In fact the visit was to be optional and many of the people in our group had no interest or were repelled by the thought. But I welcomed the opportunity to see what many have considered the most notorious place in twentieth century history. I am referring to Auschwitz, the concentration camp in Poland.

I don't think it was mentioned in our itinerary but in Krakow we were informed of a possible visit there. It is something I will never forget. I read recently that May 2 was to be Holocaust Remembrance Day and this has prompted me to write what I remember about this place, a gigantic and horrific factory of death.

The prison blocks in the camp contain exhibitions portraying its history. Above the main gate at Auschwitz, through which the prisoners passed each day on their way to work, there is a cynical inscription in Polish "Work Brings Freedom." This was the biggest concentration camp for Poles and prisoners from other countries. Here there was exhausting work, criminal experiments and mass executions. By 1942 it had become the biggest center for mass extermination of European Jews. Many were killed on arrival and it was this site that was singled out for the eradication of the Jewish population.

Many of the Jews condemned to execution arrived convinced that they had been deported for "resettlement" in eastern Europe. They were sold non-existent plots of land, farms, shops in fictitious factories. For this reason the deportees always brought their most valuable possessions with them. The distance between here and the place of arrest was sometimes close to 1500 miles, taking as much as seven to ten days to traverse. These prisoners were crowded body to body. Frequently some of the victims, especially old people and children, were dead on arrival. The survivors were in a state of extreme exhaustion.

First there was the selection into fit and unfit for work and they had been assured they would be allowed a bath. They were told to undress after which they were herded into a chamber resembling a bath room. SS men poured the substance Cyclon into special openings

in the ceiling. Within 15 minutes the people trapped inside died. After gold tooth fillings, rings, earrings, and hair had been removed the bodies were taken to incinerators. Human ashes were used as fertilizer.

To see human hair, suitcases, Jewish prayer shawls, tooth brushes, shaving brushes, thousands of spectacles made me shed a private tear. This <u>really</u> happened!

There were pictures of prisoners in three poses. I examined them and especially noticed women who were painfully thin. There were pictures of twins who served as objects of experiments.

The living conditions were beyond belief. The bedding consisted of dirty, threadbare blankets and straw; and then we saw the death block which was a prison within a prison, isolated from the rest of the camp. Outside was the Wall of Death. To stand and visualize the thousands of murders that took place there was a sobering moment. The largest room in the crematorium was the mortuary connected to a gas chamber; and if they needed another method of execution there were the gallows.

Again I say that being here in this spot where murder was routine, to see the changing room where victims were made to undress: the horror of this, the realization that this was not a torture chamber of the Middle Ages but something within our human memory is numbing.

It was a numbing experience to visit Auschwitz.

VII. South of the Border, to Baja

South of the border, to Baja we went
The troops of M. B. G. –
To study the flora
And cactus galore
And witness some whaling events.

The official botanist, our wonderful Ken,
A learned man is he;
Made us friends with the cholla
And oh what a joy-a
We saw more boojums than men!

Our leader was Philip, Félipé he's called –
A truly dauntless guide.
With him in charge,
There was no problem too large;
His energy boggled us all.

The man at the wheel, the handsome José,
With skill he drove our bus;
He stopped on request –
You all know the rest
To him we give our hoorays!!

Every day had adventures, I'll say, I'll say;
Our group was truly grave:
No water, no heat,
No lights, just Marguerites –
We survived for the bus ride next day.

Alas, it is over – we'll head for the states
Our Harriet found her bag;
And Louise's celebration
Highlighted our vacation
So what if our take-off is late??

- 1981

VIII. Another World: Home of Tamerlane

Our Aeroflot plane – and what a shabby, dirty interior it had – (we hoped, even prayed, that its internal system was trustworthy) came down for a reasonable landing in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, one of the 15 republics of the Soviet Union. This first stop in Central Asia was in the valley of the River Zeravshan which means "bestower of gold." We had flown 2000 miles in crowded discomfort from Moscow. This particular area was once known as Turkestan; the ancients called it "the precious pearl of the world." In 1971 Samarkand celebrated its 2300th anniversary. We had decided to test the oriental proverb which says "Better one look than a hundred stories."

My knowledge of the history of this area is very scanty and also of the personages who made the history. Of course it is not possible for school curricula to have routine survey courses of these distant places; it is hard enough to do even a passing job of Greece and Rome, and only a specialist can pursue in depth the history of Central Asia. Actually it is too remote from our own history to generate much interest. My ignorance of the moghul period of India and the Manchu emperors of China is monumental. But now another part of the globe confronts me with my parochialism.

At any rate a visit to this area makes Tamerlane (historically Timur the Lame – and his skeleton shows that he was a cripple) come alive. Samarkand was his home town and he intended to make it the most beautiful city in the world. Alexander the Great declared it "more beautiful than I imagined" so it is safe to assume that he succeeded for that time.

Tamerlane made Samarkand his imperial capital in the 14th century and the starting point of his conquests which subjugated countries for thousands of miles around. Tamerlane occupied Moscow for a year. Yet for me it is Napoleon who is associated with that city. Tamerlane seems to have been no lesser a warrior in his time and place than Napoleon in his.

In our western world we have read in recent years a book called A Distant Mirror by Barbara Tuchman which tells of the events in 14th century Europe – that glittering time of crusades and castles, cathedrals and chivalry as well as treacheries and assassinations, sea

battles and sieges – a truly chaotic era.

It is hard to realize that there was a civilization in the east as well as in the west with its equal share of great and dreadful happenings. While our school children study the Hundred Years War, children of the Soviet Union are studying the events of 14th century Asia.

The Russians conquered this area only 100 years ago but it is not their onion dome stamp which is on it and, incidentally, it has only been Soviet since the 1920's. (Recent news items indicate that the Moslem population is not always pleased even though the Soviets have made it an industrial and cultural center with a university, chamber of commerce, and agriculture of which they are very proud.) Still the new Samarkand is cold and lacks character. The magic spirit of the old center seems barely touched by the stark modern buildings that surround it. The unequalled craftsmanship of the glazed tiles makes it an outdoor museum of this form of art peculiar to Islam.

Tamerlane had summoned artists from everywhere to build monuments to the great men of the period, many of them army generals and court favorites. These mosques and tombs, built between the 13th and 15th centuries, have survived to this day – partly in ruins but priceless still under their gleaming domes.

I do not know of the Tuglu-Tekin or Siren Bika-Akad with their handsomely decorated tombs. Perhaps in that part of the world those names are as well known to students as are those of the Black Prince and Joan of Arc in our world – I wonder.

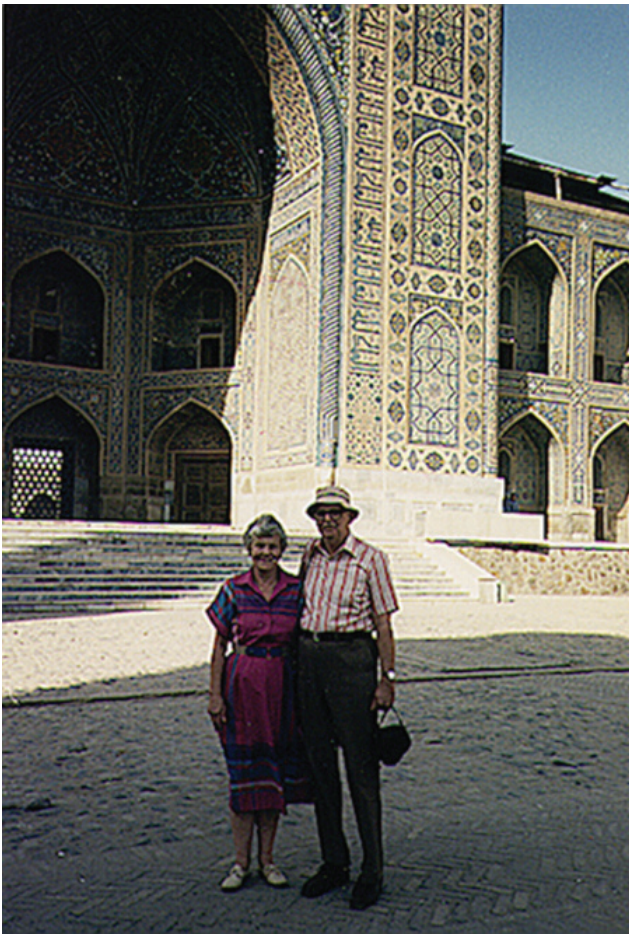
In the center of Samarkand is Registan Square. It has been renewed and restored to be sure, but I felt a tingle of excitement as I looked out at the three madrasas which frame it. I had forgotten that a madrasa is an educational institution; madrasas have been important down through the ages in the Asian world. Here is a fascinating example of ancient city planning. Six radial streets running from the city gates converge on the Registan which means liberally "sandy place." The three buildings are giants manifesting the supreme achievements of architecture in central Asia. Great credit must be given to the Soviets for the extensive and complex reconstruction.

It is hard to believe that the 15th century produced astronomers of any significance. However one Uleg-Bek had immense influence down even until the present times. His observatory can rival much

later ones. Eastern and western astronomers made use of the star charts of this scholarly prince, grandson of Tamerlane, for hundreds of years.

The great Tamerlane has a burial place called Gur Emir which arguably puts to shame any tomb in the western world. His tombstone of jade, made to order by his grandson, the astronomer, bears striking witness to the infinite variety of Central Asian decorative art and imaginative skills of its artists.

I have seen Napoleon's burial place in Les Invalides in Paris and U.S. Grant's tomb in New York City – but these western military monuments come in a poor third in grandeur.



In Registan Square, Samarkand.

IX. A Trip to the Cities of Central Asia

With Maupintour we chose to go
Our sturdy band of twenty one
To seek adventure in the east
To learn a lot and have some fun.

Intrepid Thierry led our gang
We thought he was the very best
Arcadi did the Russian bit
We surely put them to the test.

From Helsinki we started out
And then to famous Moscow
We tramped Red Square, the Kremlin saw
And Marveled at the Metro.

To Samarkand – a long, long flight
Uzbekistan we came to love
Its mosques and mausoleums fine
These things before we knew not of.

Bukhara next on Aeroflot
For some it was the best of all –
Its ancient streets, its citadel
Its plants and trees and minaret tall.

We've traveled lands of ancient lore
Of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane
The Silk Road was their stamping ground
Reviewing these will be a pain!

And Alma Ata in Kazakhstan
Father of apples and great bazaars
We learned of yurts and customs strange
And there we stayed in Hotel Otrar.

We knew of Armenia but not Yerevan
We liked its Plaza with buildings pink
Its foundation and music and festive air
Its historical past – to the present a link.

We bused and bused the whole long day
To get to Tbilisi
We passed a lake and mountains high
It surely wasn't easy.

Our final stop was Leningrad
Our last of Soviet cities
The trip is nearly over now
And that is more the pity!

To Helsinki we go at last
To Thierry we certainly owe a debt
To everyone we'll say goodbye
It's surely a trip we won't forget!

- 1986

Marge is relaxing at a cafe in Bukhara, 1986.

X. To Visit a Tomb: The Taj Mahal

We had never particularly wanted to go to India; had heard too much about the poverty. Also, we couldn't keep going to places just because they were there. There had been the Scilly Isles with their tropical gardens; Konya, Turkey where the whirling dervishes had once practiced their strange religion; the five-day canoe trip into the Okefenokee swamp; and another canoe trip on the upper Missouri River, where we spent our nights in the campsites of Lewis and Clark.

However, we had a great desire to see the Taj Mahal. We figured that India was a place to visit before we got too, too old. In '84, Indira was assassinated. The Sikhs didn't care for her; their most sacred temple in Amritzar had been desecrated by her troops. We put off our trip. Since then we have learned that all Sikhs have the name of Singh which means lion; also, the men all have a beard and wear a turban of 10 feet of material.

In 1985 we had reserved a place on a tour that sounded good – a little strenuous for senior citizens, but we thought we could rest when we got home – if we did! And then an Air India jet crashed into the Atlantic – a bomb, it seemed, and a year later this was confirmed. We didn't want to be sissies but we decided we simply could not anticipate with pleasure flying on Air India.

Another cancellation! I began to reconcile myself to never seeing the Taj Mahal, just as I have to not seeing Angkor Wat. Then in the late summer of '85 our chosen trip was resurrected with air passage on Pan American; this sounded safer somehow. We signed up, committed ourselves all the way. There was no backing out short of tossing away a considerable sum of money.

And yes, we did see the Taj – not by moonlight but at 11 a.m. There it was – the whitest white I have ever seen – polished and glistening in the sunlight. Does Agra have no pollution? In 300 years why is it not an off-white? With all that cow dung being used for fuel that would seem reasonable. Or do the monsoons every summer clean it off?

We did not think it was overrated as some have declared – that is, an over-iced wedding cake. It was a sublime experience to view

this huge domed square, white marble building, raised on a terrace, from the corners of which rise four slim minarets. Its tall main gate is inscribed with verses of the Koran. A rectangular pool with fountains playing, lined with cypresses, catches the shimmering image of this tomb. This airy dream is hard to reconcile with our everyday world. It is worth the trip just to store this vision in one's memory bank. Shah Jahan's tomb even made me weep a little.

A sublime experience: visiting the Taj Mahal.

XI. We Saw the Heart of Old Europe

Oh do you remember those days in September
When the Maupintour gang assembled?
They were old, they were young, they were short, they were tall
And no other group resembled.

They came from the east, the south and the west
A guy named Don was their boss
He took them in tow, the ropes he did know
So no one was ever at a loss.

The tour included nineteen in all
A congenial group to be sure!
They were always on time, yes, every time
So Don had no guff to endure.

With the help of Hendryk he showed them Warsaw
They learned of its brave recent past
They saw its Old Town, rebuilt as before
And now it is destined to last!

We'll not omit Chopin in Zelazowa Wala
And folklore dancing that night –
Then on to Czestochowa and its Black Madonna
Followed by Krakow – a super highlight!

This city has Charm – yes charm galore
Especially the Old Town and Main Market Square –
And Wawel Castle on a fortified hill
Of this place we had not ever been aware!

A full day's trip by bus to Prague
With a stop at the home of the Pope
A wonderful lunch at a place called the Flora
To the Palace in Prague and we were able to cope.

Prague is a city of steeples and spires
The views are a sight to behold
Charka gave us a long guided tour
And outside this city Bohemia unfolds.

Dresden was our very next stop
A boat on the Elbe our hotel
The Green Vault was the place to visit
And many other places as well.

We learned of Saxony, that ancient land
And to Meissen next we went
We had lunch in a private café
The Meissen factory was a great event.

In Berlin we filled the three days allowed
Museums and East-West sights
We marveled at monuments and grand boulevards
A trip to Pottsdam – a real highlight!

A now is the end of this marvelous trip
We gather together this evening
To say fare thee well to our Maupintour friends
And to hope for a reconvening!

- September 28, 1991

Traveling in Old Europe.

XII. A Saga in Verse, on Visiting Bonnie Scotland
(with apologies for mistakes and omissions)

We flew to Scotland in late July
To sightsee that beautiful land –
A Scottish lady named Elizabeth
Was in charge of this Maupintour band.

We met in the airport in Glasgow
And claimed our luggage there –
Then John with his coach superb
Drove us to Drymen quite near.

The next day we cruised on Loch Lomond –
In the Trossachs we saw the sights –
And later we entered the Highlands
The day was a total delight.

To Kyle of Lochalsh we journeyed,
And by ferry to the Isle of Skye
And here we saw Castle Dunvegan –
McLeods live here 'til they die.

And next by way of Loch Carron
To Dingwall we came for lunch
We explored the Culloden battlefield –
This Maupintour study bunch.

We learned of Bonnie Prince Charlie
And the Jacobite civil war –
The Highlanders all supported him –
They came from near and far.

To Inverness's Calendonian
But dinners in private homes –
We'll always remember those evenings –
Such hospitality we have never known.

The next day we cruised on Loch Ness
For Nessie we looked in vain –
A tour of Castle Cawdor followed
We loved it in spite of the rain.

The Scotch entertainment one evening
Made us love and appreciate this land –
Where the people are friendly and fun-loving
Their talents are truly grand.

And next we flew to the Orkneys
To the town of Kirkwall we came –
Skara Brae was a great sight
The name is deserving of fame.

A flight to the Shetlands followed –
We saw peat and ponies galore;
Took ferries to Unst and Yell
Saw antiquities more and more.

By British airways to Aberdeen –
With John to the Copthorne Hotel
In this city of granite and roses,
It's a place where we'd all like to dwell.

The Grampian country 'round Aberdeen
Was truly a sight to behold –
And Haddo House we'll ne'er forget
Family home of the Gordons we're told.

Next day we saw Crathes Castle
This place enchanted us greatly
Then we continued our journey
To Gleneagles – most elegant hotel we've been in lately!

We'll soon be leaving dear Scotland
With its lochs, and its crofts, and its heather
Into Edinburgh, great capital city –
We'll love it, come foul or fair weather.

So goodbye Elizabeth, John and the others
From all parts of the U.S.A.
We'll take home our memories, warm and tender
They'll stay with us for many a day!

- July-August 1992

Leeds Castle: England was always a favorite destination.

XIII. A Portuguese Visit

My birthday is in the month of March, and this season prompts me to reflect on past events. I do not know if I dare call them adventures – perhaps just memorable experiences.

I loved our driving trips to Europe. Because my mother prevailed upon me to keep a diary in my early years, this habit continued throughout our foreign travels. Sometimes it is fun to relieve past experiences.

It was exactly 20 years ago that we chose to drive through Portugal. I doubt that it was because we were thinking in the early 1980's about how Wellington led his Peninsula campaign in this area. Most likely the reason was because we wanted to see Madeira, which called for a short flight from Lisbon.

The landing on the island Madeira, an island of beauty and grandeur, was frightening: the plane quivered and shook as we came down on a runway between the mountains and sea – very, very narrow. At least the seatbelt did not break loose as it had on one flight in Mexico, leaving a remnant that I have saved as a reminder of a frightening experience.

Our literature informed us that in accordance with Portuguese law, the lady guests are reminded that the use of monokinis is strictly forbidden, a restriction that did not bother me.

There are no stop-and-go lights, and we were glad we had not chosen to drive and compete with the fearless islanders. A bus took us around this flowered, mountainous island. The tiny patches of land, very intricate and highly cultivated, amaze the American viewer. Toboggans are a special feature of Madeira. They are pushed and controlled by straw-hatted men in white suits. They go downhill at great speed, even though their course is controlled.

Next, back in Lisbon, we continued our mainland trip. We proceeded onto the freeway, if you can call it that, in our foreign Ford Escort with manual shift. Obidos, a quaint medieval village, we came to first. Obidos is a fortified city with small round towers and square bastions that look out over the sea. It is a story-book town whose narrow streets are filled with people. We drove through cautiously, but the people seemed unperturbed. It is said to be just as it was af-

ter the Moorish domination ended in 1148, at which time the houses were refurbished.

Our next stop was Nazare, a fishing village where small white houses are built along the foot of a steep rock promontory. We parked and looked around, taking in the local sights. The villagers were out in numbers, men and women dressed in black, and some barefooted. We surmised that Nazare had not changed much, if any, in hundreds of years.

We had never heard of Batalha, where there is a magnificent monastery cathedral. Out of the dozens of cathedrals we have seen, this ranks as one of the most stunning. It stands in a green valley, a mass of gables, pinnacles, buttresses, turrets, and small columns. The monastery is very intricate with its Founder's Chapel, Royal Cloister, Chapter House, and Lavabo, to name a few of the attractions. We did not find out what the Lavabo is – something to do with washing? The building complex is of a fine textured limestone that has taken on a lovely ochre color with the passage of time.

We drove on to Figueira da Foz, a resort village on the coast with a good fishing industry. Here we saw a parade that must have had some significance. Most of those promenading were girls, wearing black skirts, white blouses, and yellow aprons. Most impressive was the elaborate headdress of flowers that each girl wore. Perhaps they were celebrating the coming of spring.

There is no English seen or heard here, as far as we could tell. We walked along the street in search of an eating place. We found a place, and our order turned out to be fish and salad with lots of onion, all at under $10 for two. Portuguese is not like Spanish, and therefore we gained no clues as to the meaning of what was being said.

The next day we continued past Aveira. We certainly had never heard of this place. The beautiful country prompted us to buy some items for a picnic, bread and cheese. The wind was blowing a gale before long, so we sat in the car and enjoyed the view of the sea.

At length after our lunch, we decided to continue our trip. Our dismay was overpowering when we found that the car would not start. Both of us tried unsuccessfully. We did not think the car was out of gas, and we did wonder what we could do about our plight.

My partner walked up the road a distance and saw no sign of anything. Gas stations are not to be found in this part of the world.

Some people, local inhabitants, came walking by – a woman, her daughter, and her grandson. They saw our problem and volunteered to try pushing. I remember them fondly. So with me at the wheel and my husband assisting the others, a mighty effort was made. The car was pushed onto the road, finally gathering some speed that we hoped would trigger the engine. This maneuver had been successful in past experiences, but not now!

We raised the hood of the car and wondered what to do out there in what now seemed utterly remote and bleak countryside. We wondered how far to the next town? What a forlorn couple we were!

To continue our efforts to start the engine risked running down the battery. We attracted the attention of various passersby on foot and in cars. They realized our problem and showed a sympathetic concern.

Then, miraculously, a man driving the other way stopped. He was well dressed, about 50. We knew no Portuguese, and he knew no English. Finally, it was decided that French was the only hope. Mine was very rusty, even though I had won first place in the state of Missouri when I was in high school and had studied the language for six years.

Magically, our Portuguese man started the car – and with no apparent difficulty or use of special know-how. He indicated to us that, in fact, he knew all about cars; he had experience with them, and he himself had worked for Ford. He informed us that something had clogged up the battery.

We felt elated – it was a joyful moment followed by much handshaking, and I felt like hugging him. He and I then drove down the highway a bit to test the car with my husband standing guard over the rescuer's car. At length the farewell was finally accomplished, and mysteriously this road that had had very little traffic now became clogged even to the point of a tie-up.

No, the car was not low on gas, and it gave us no further problems. In the next town we chose to wander around on foot, but walking on cobblestones is no cinch, either.

We were soon to leave Portugal. Everywhere we had seen little figures of cocks, stylized and colorful. We were curious about these, and finally we learned that there is a legend dating back to the thirteenth century about a cock that rose out of a roasting pan to testify by this miracle that a man who was about to be hanged was innocent. We bought one of these as a reminder of our unusual good luck on this day in Portugal.

We departed Portugal, a magical country with kind-hearted people, beautiful seascapes, and deep woods. We hoped that Spain would be as hospitable.

XIV. Neptune Adventure

The Neptune sailed from San Juan port
On Washington's birthday '74;
The mood was festive
And quite suggestive
Of fun and sun and games galore.

Our ship cruised out toward open sea,
This sturdy craft with stalwart crew;
It sure was rough –
We soon had enough –
But 'twas the Gulf Stream – this we knew.

Alas: the ocean did not quiet
It shook this handsome little ship.
All tummies were nervous
Some were put out of service.
There was many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip.

The third day out was no improvement,
In fact things seemed to get much worse;
She rolled and she pitched –
She rocked and she switched
Perhaps we were under a curse.

Then came the night we'll all remember –
It was around the hour of eight;
Guests had gone in to dine
On good food and wine –
All hoped the waves would soon abate.

But next the room was total chaos –
Glass and china crashed and banged;
There were hollers and yells –
As guests fell pell mell –
To the floor where the wine bottles clanged.

Our crew of Greeks raced forth and back
To rescue prostrate folk;
Midst crashing of glasses
And bodies in masses –
At the time it wasn't a joke.

And from the galley deafening sounds,
What took place is a guess;
To the floor went the pots –
Both things cold and things hot
And the place was a godawful mess.

And finally this meal was done,
And now to leave the table
For to stay on one's feet
Was a trick quite neat
And not all the people were able.

At last the seas did settle down
And order was restored;
We saw things Mayan –
Had time for some buyin' –
And relaxed in the deck chairs on board.

We saw some sights in Panama
Honduras after this
Colombia, Cozumel –
Guatemala as well –
But San Andres, San Blas we did miss.

There's more to tell of this fabulous trip.
Offspring of the MAC
The Greeks had a word for it –
Don't ignore nor deplore it
"Twas unique to the Nth degree!

- 1974

XV. Trans-Canada by Train

The Royal York, our starting point
For Maupintour Nine Fifty One –
We gathered from the east and west
Intent on having fun!

Trans Canada by train it's called
The train for some was pleasure –
We also went by bus and boat
And the snow coach on the glacier!

At first we toured Toronto
A truly splendid city
Public buildings were superb
To have missed them – whatta pity!

But now I hasten to tell you
Of our outstanding leader
Ann Barker is this lady's name
She handles things when we need her!

We saw Ontario and Manitoba
The scenery was memorable
The meals were varied and tasty
The nights on the train deplorable!

And finally to Jasper Park
To the Lodge Guiseppi took us
This famous resort is very far flung
At least we all knew where the bus was!

To Maligne Lake today we went
A ride on a very neat boat
With two young women in full command
'twas an expedition of note.

The barbecue afterwards was super good
This stop was really great
And Maligne Canyon followed next
To fall in – what a ghastly fate!

The Columbia Icefield we'll not forget
On a thousand feet of ice it sits
The Athabasca glacier ride
Was one of the trip's greatest hits!

To Chateau Lake Louise we came
The dream spot best of all –
Where there are canyons and waterfalls galore
And mountains ever so tall!

We're really enjoying this wild, wild land
And many animals we've seen
Elk, moose and marmots and even bears
Some thin and some quite lean.

We loved the gorgeous Morain Lake
With its simply enchanting blue
And finally to Banff Springs Hotel
Alas, clouds obstructed the view.

A day for rest and shopping
In this enormous place
The Japanese were here in numbers
You'd think this was <u>their</u> home base.

And Kamloops was our destination
By Rocky Mountaineer we went
Petra was the girl in charge
She made our day a big event.

And now on to Vancouver
The end of the trip is in sight
Our days on choo choo are almost over
CP and CN have been just right!

The final day on Rocky
Through country very dry
For ospreys and big-horned sheep
We kept a watchful eye.

But back into the green land
Along the rivers we rode
The sights outside our windows
Were something to behold.

Our bus tour of glorious Vancouver
Revealed a city quite fine
And the memory of the Capilano suspension bridge
Will remain in my mind a long time!

So now it's goodbye, fellow travelers
It's all done, there's no more
We will all have fond recollections
Of Maupin's 951 Tour!

- August 1993

XVI. The Lovelaces Visit China

In November 1984, the Lovelaces went to Mainland China, visiting Guanigzhou, an important industrial city and formerly known as Canton – the Chinese love to change the names of places; Guilin (called the most picturesque city in China); Shanghai (where the Communist party was formed and the hub of commerce); Suzhou (China's garden city of many canals: the Venice of the East); Xian (ancient city of terra cotta warriors); and Beijing (formerly Peking and often called that even now, a city associated with the Chinese dynasties of the past, and the seat of government today).

What did we expect? We expected a somber, dull country with guides intent on indoctrination – visits to schools and factories aimed at showing how efficient their system is; mediocre food; no bright colors except possibly on children; thousands of bicycles; a generally grim atmosphere and sights that we had become familiar with through our friends' pictures. We did not expect a warm welcome with smiling faces or the excellent exposure to China's historical and archaeological culture. It was almost as if we felt it was our duty, part of our education, to visit this ancient land. We had failed to go when it was a novelty. Now it was simply old stuff.

What did we find? Mainly what we saw was a definite modernization program which has been much publicized recently but was initiated when Deng Xiaoping became leader in 1976. There are indeed vast numbers of bicycles; we learned that the government pays for the bicycles of the workers with subsidies over a period of five years. These are the only feasible transportation for China because of the huge numbers of people.

We found the Chinese eager salespeople, displaying their handmade wares at every opportunity and enjoying it; they appear to be a free enterprise people at heart. An outsider most certainly can't judge conditions; the central government undoubtedly continues to be thoroughly repressive, and it might be unwise to go too far in arming China. Patrick Buchanan declares that China is simply pulling the wool over western eyes. We, however, sensed no indoctrination efforts. We visited no schools; it was exam time, and the Chinese are serious about education. The porcelain, cloisonné and fan work-

In Beijing.

shops that we saw were pleasant, well lighted places with cheerful workers.

What did you learn regarding the status of women? In this country where once there were many 12-year-old brides and feet were bound (some of these can still be seen), there has been a change for the better. The Communists like to proclaim that women are integrated into all levels of their society. We in fact had attractive female guides who had excelled in college and were qualified to tell visitors about their country. But in a country of over a billion it is hard to make generalized statements. We do know that the wife of our guide in Beijing was a teacher who had to spend two hours each way to get to her school. She had no choice, they both freely admitted. In fact, it was conceivable that she could be sent to a place 2000 miles distant. It is mandatory for women to work; there is no choice between career and family. We gathered that China is still a man's world; women are being liberated but still not equal.

What do you think accounts for their situation today? Before our trip I had known virtually nothing of Chinese history, but a little knowledge does help one understand. During those many dynastics, China developed a unique civilization. The last dynasty ended in 1911, but things had disintegrated in the nineteenth century. Foreigners exploited the Chinese; warlords devastated the country; the opium trade flourished; and a wicked dowager empress extracted every yuan out of the peasants for 48 years. Wealth was accumulated in the Imperial City where no one was admitted – hence its name the Forbidden City. Then in the 1930's the Japanese invaded. This led to the formation of the Communist Party. Mao addressed his revolution to the deep-seated hatred and humiliation of the people. They were tired of this domination. Chiang Kai Shek did not represent to them this resentment. We only saw one picture of Mao. He has been out of favor since the Cultural Revolution when learning became a crime.

During the Cultural Revolution, books were burned, cultural relics were destroyed, temples were defaced, and intellectuals were beaten and tortured. This ended at Mao's death –1976. Now there is a great effort to reform China's educational system and make up for those lost years.

It is impossible to appreciate, it seems to me, these later develop-

ments without a slight knowledge of what went on before. Here we always thought that the Chinese and the Soviets were like two peas in a pod, but in the late 1950's Mao parted company with the Soviets. And now the Chinese are the only ruling communists to have openly and explicitly questioned the acknowledged tenets of Marxism-Leninism. Having startled the world, they back away a bit. But will it last? China has a history of sudden ideological swings.

What do the Chinese want in their future? They want a modern country of which they can be proud. They want a sense of international equality. They had shunned foreign investment and managerial and technological assistance for fear of becoming dependent on the wealthy, industrialized nations of the West. Now the leadership is inviting its old imperialist adversaries back. Whereas in the past, radios, bicycles, and wrist watches were considered luxuries, now some families aspire to television sets, refrigerators, and washing machines. This, however, hardly applies to the Chinese peasant. The peasant's lifestyle has significantly improved in the last 30 years, but it is arduous by any standard. It did not seem to us, though, that hunger was a problem either in town or in country, where cabbage is a popular item. In fact, we saw what appeared to be terrible as the food from the tourists' table – far more than anyone could imagine eating – was scraped into one vessel. No, dogs are a rarity in China.

The Chinese have become interested in fashion. The white miniskirts seen on TV at the Olympics became an immediate sell out when Chinese stores stocked them. Wall-to-wall carpeting is not a bit Chinese, but it can be seen in a few hotels. But I feel certain that the Chinese will not lose their cultural identity. They have discovered this world's goods, and they want some of them. Probably the majority want nothing more than political stability and economic prosperity. Can a country that will be 1.2 billion (a billion of them peasants) by the end of the century ever hope to do more than feed itself?

The People's Republic has made gestures toward Taiwan even in the last few days. This and Sino-American relations and cooperation remain the unresolved questions, according to the real experts.

At the top of the Lower Falls (494 steps), Yellowstone National Park, July 1951

The wonder of the world
The beauty and the power
The shape of things
Their colors, lights, and shades
These I have seen
Look you also while life lasts

Epitaph in an old cemetery, seen and copied by Marjorie Lovelace at Platt National Park, Oklahoma, on her 60th birthday, March 22, 1973. This statement was entered into a book of special sayings that she began to keep in 1927.

Marjorie and Eldridge after a long hike at Pilot's Knob State Park, Iowa, summer 1938.

Marjorie and Eldridge Lovelace at the home of Honey and Larry Langsam, nextdoor neighbors on Brookside, March 16, 2003. The party put on by the Langsams and Brookside friends Diana and Charlie Thomas honored their 90th birthdays.