

Reminiscences







Charles William  
and  
Elizabeth Jane

Picture opposite page: (1926?)

Front row:

Charles William Merritt, James Lee Grahl,  
Robert Walter Merritt, Mary Helen Grahl  
Anthony, Elizabeth Merritt Filstrup.

Back row:

Ella Bartlett Merritt, Jane Bartlett Merritt,  
Adella Clark Youtz, Anna Theresa Merritt,  
Dr. Charles Walter Merritt, Wilma  
Bartlett Grahl, Dr. Henry Bartlett



I think everyone at some time in his life wonders about his family roots and what kind of ancestry he had. I will try to oblige Julia and Jamie with a few highlights on their father and his family.

great grandfather Charles Merritt was of English, Welsh background. As I understand it, he had a publishing business, was married to Anna Theresa Kellyer and had five children. He felt the call of God and left his business to attend Garrett Biblical Institute. My grandmother described this life as one of poverty, hunger and answers to prayer. Upon graduation great grandfather Charles became a Congregational minister. He steadfastly refused a good parish and chose instead to open a mission in the worst shum district in Chicago.

great grandmother Anna Theresa came from a Quaker family which had a farm in Ohio. They moved to Chicago where the family sold drinking water via horse and wagon to Chicago residents. She remembered the great Fire and spent the night wading offshore in Lake Michigan.

I never knew great grandfather Charles since he died young. He had taken three mission parishes in Wisconsin. One day in a blizzard he walked to the country church for a Wednesday night prayer meeting. He left the horse at home because he felt the weather was too bad for it. He froze his lungs and died shortly afterwards.

great grandmother Anna Theresa lived with us as long as I can remember. Periodically she visited her other children particularly Robert who became a Congregational minister also. She was a merry old soul who had enormous influence on me but I don't know if that applied to my brothers. They loved her I'm sure. She had a definite pattern to her life. She read her Bible every day and all day Sunday after church. She read the whole Bible every year and taught me to do so but always encouraging me by saying I could omit the "beats". She worked every day from sunrise to sunset mostly mending, darning socks, knitting and reknitting sweaters, quilting and helping around the house. Every Monday she wrote letters and once a month took a day off. She would send me to the library to get a torrid romantic novel by Grace Livingston Hill. She always mouthed the words and rocked violently during exciting parts. After

three or four months she would pack an old suitcase, jam on her #3 hat and go to visit Howard and Robert, her other sons. These were really missionary journeys. She loved to talk to everyone on the bus she took and would always add her new list of acquaintances to the list of people she wrote to on Mondays.

When she returned the bus would stop in front of the house and a parade of people would bring in her luggage waving goodbye to her. Needless to say she got most of the mail. Your father and I would watch the mail for her pension check. When it arrived she would take us and our friends to the drug store for double chocolate malted milks. She was the most religious person I knew and by far the happiest. She lived to be 89.

Grandpa Charles Walter, known always as Walter, earned his own way from age 11. He worked his way through medical school, University of Illinois in Chicago, by being a Pinkerton security guard at night. He studied to be a surgeon but a month before graduation was doing a stint in the infectious disease ward and almost died of typhoid fever. He became bald and his hands shook too much for surgery. He became a general practitioner. His sister, Ella, lived near St Joseph and was married to an eye, ear, nose and throat doctor. Grandpa Walter set up practice in St. Joseph and married Jane Bingham Bartlett a sister of Ella's husband, Henry. Their children were Robert, three years older than the twins, Elizabeth and Charles William - your father, Betty and Bob.

Grandpa Doc, as my children called him, was utterly devoted to his profession. In his 47 years of practice we figured he delivered 5000 babies and not in a hospital usually. I never knew him to spend a whole Christmas with us and once we gave up a vacation when we were all packed to go. Someone was very ill. He kept evening and afternoon office hours even on Saturday and did home and hospital visits on Sunday mornings. He seldom went to church with us. I think being a preacher's kid had all he wanted of church. He had a beautiful tenor voice. After he retired, he attended church regularly and you could hear his voice over everyone else's. We never could get him to join the choir even though the choir director begged him. As a father he seemed somewhat aloof but he was not home all that much. We were very much family oriented and our home was a center to which

relatives flocked. Summers usually bound us with 10 to 15 boarders. Through the years my folks added ~~three~~<sup>two</sup> nephews and one niece into the family circle in addition to my grandmother. My father's sister died within a year of her husband's death. Their children, Charles and Adella, lived with us. Grandma lived with them in an apartment close by until Adella left for Oberlin and then Charles and Grandma came back with us. Jim Grahl, my mother's sister's boy, lived with us through high school when his Dad lost his job during Depression years.

Grandpa Doc was generally with us at mealtimes. He had a pet canary named Dickie. He would let it out of the cage at mealtimes and it would sit on his bald head. Grandpa loved horseradish. We children used to ply him with it because we could watch his bald head turn red. He was very generous and used to come home with quarts of vanilla <sup>ice cream</sup>. He had serious diabetes and kept to a rigid diet. I think that's why he would bring us sweets. One day he came home with a small, shaggy pony with a cart painted red, white and blue for Bill and me. Bob was too tall to ride Patie. Another time he brought me a miniature bulldog puppy because I couldn't swim all summer because of asthma.

Grandpa Doc was head of the Berrey County Medical Society, chief physician at the local hospital, and President of the school board in addition to his practice. Later he did take Wednesdays off when it became the thing to do. He would play golf (terribly) or take my mother for a day's fling in Chicago. He always took us to at least one Chicago ball game in the summer. He was fastidiously clean. I remember summers were filled with family picnics but he would never sit on the ground or in the sand but always ate standing up or <sup>sat</sup> in a chair.

Everyone loved Grandma Jane including your mother. She had one major devotion - family. She harbored ~~seven~~<sup>seven</sup> children until the day she died and, as I've already written, took in three others to love and raise. She was born and raised on a farm in New Plymouth, Ohio. She had four sisters and one brother. Her mother was a well-born, highly educated member of the Lee family who had lost her whole family in the war and came to teach in a country school in New Plymouth.

She married William Bartlett who owned a small farm there. He had just returned from the war with a bullet hole through his chest. (I understand he loved to let children put their finger in it. He died before I was born so I did not have that doubtful privilege.) He wrote an interesting biography of his war experiences which Uncle Bob has, if you are interested. They had ~~five~~ <sup>six</sup> children: Ella and Maude, who gave support to your Dad when he attended the University of New Mexico, May, Wilma, Jane, and Henry, who became an eye, ear, nose & throat doctor in St. Joseph. Grandma Jane's mother died of T.B. at an early age when she took an old T.B. lady dying of T.B. to care for in their own home since she had no one to care for ~~her~~ <sup>her</sup>. I named Mary after ~~her~~ <sup>my grandmother Mary Jane</sup> - Mary Lee Filstump.

Grandma Jane became a buyer in a department store in Athens, Ohio and had given up every marrying after age 35. She met Grandpa Doc one summer while visiting her brother Henry. Grandpa Doc gave Grandma Jane and her sister Wilma, a great social which Grandma Jane was surprised when he proposed because <sup>she</sup> Wilma was years younger. It was a good marriage. Grandma Jane was a conscientious mother and wife. I don't believe another case ever entered her head. Her discipline was always tempered by compassion. When we quarreled when small, we were lined up and given castor oil in case constipation had made us irritable. We were not allowed to attend a movie on Sunday and usually attended Sunday School and church. He went to the Methodist Church because Grandpa Doc was infuriated when the Congregational minister was treated unjustly by his parish. My mother dutifully taught Sunday school and belonged to the ladies aid society. When Grandpa Doc's brother Robert visited, he usually was the guest speaker since he was a minister.

Grandma Jane, with our enlarged family, generally had white linen table cloths and napking with our dinners - she had pride that we were a doctor's family and should live as such. I remember we always had to put our napkins back in our ~~sterile~~ silver napkin rings which had our names engraved thereon. The napkins had to last the week unless a mealtime catastrophe prevented it. We often had to quote a Bible verse at dinner. I think your Dad's favorite was "Jesus wept." I remember once we children plus nephews practiced flipping peas with our knives into our bowl shaped chandeliers over the dining table. My mother never suspected. My mother had a long time maid named Emma Schultz. She was pretty good except that she always called in with a "sick headache" whenever we had company - which was often. My mother had a schedule too - Monday, wash, Tuesday iron, etc. We all had household tasks especially on Saturday mornings. ~~Grand~~ Dad used to opt for cleaning all small rugs which was accomplished.



on the roof of the back porch. There he could sit on the roof and watch the lake, the train, the fishing boats and blissfully commune with nature until mother summoned him to more urgent tasks.

Every ~~Saturday~~ <sup>Sunday</sup> my mother baked bread, made cinnamon rolls, and cultured buttermilk and mixed buckwheat <sup>pancakes</sup> for Sunday fare. The aroma was glorious, and, with some coaxing, <sup>a few</sup> ~~some~~ warm samples were usually forthcoming. She also, believe it or not, made soap with lye and out left-over bacon fat. which she used for clothes washing. In our basement was a funny washing-machine which washed clothes by rotating suction cups. It made a terrible racket and walked all over the basement unless anchored-down.

Women's liberation was not a prime interest in our home. I recall my mother's exasperation when my Father bought our home while she was in northern Michigan with us. They used to take us north in summer to help my asthma. However, she accepted the choice with a certain amount of forbearance. The highway was noisy, but we did have private access to the lake and the view was marvelous. She had always dreamed of property known as edgewater where the prominent people lived. Our friends were so much family I guess we really didn't require outside neighbors, our nearest neighbor was an old Irish horse trader, Jim Murphy, who had a small grape orchard and a wheezy horse for plowing. He used to visit us sitting on my mother's best sofa seeking of horse manure and filling our ears with stories of slick horse trading deals. The object of his deals seemed to cheat another trader before he cheated you. A horse kicked him to death one day. Your father and I spent much time visiting with him in his old bron. He gave us all kinds of help in raising our pony, Ratie.

My mother belonged to the Michigan Children's Aid Society, and the D.A.R. - our ancestor was Miles Standish of Pilgrim fame. I have the family Bible of Mercy Standish, daughter of Miles. My mother attended these organizations but never held office in them - she was shy. When the D.A.R. refused to allow Marian Anderson to sing at their hall in Washington D.C., she resolutely resigned from the D.A.R. in protest. Toward the end of her life she became interested in world religions and enlightened her friends on these topics.

Your Uncle Bob was always a shining light with whatever he attempted. He was not much in sports but was always an all A student, <sup>often</sup> a president of his class, and a good musician.

I remember his high school graduation with grandpa Doc as President of the School Board and I was in the orchestra. He won all the honors as I remember. He often played trumpet solos at programs and I think he was on the debating society. He was a hard act to follow, which, I think, was harder on your Father than anyone else. In summer he ~~he went on~~ played in the city band and worked at the local shoe store.

He went on to the University of Michigan and graduated in chemical engineering with honors. Since it was depression years, he remained in College and received his master's degree and eventually his doctorate. He worked for a lumber company finding uses for waste materials while getting his PH.D. He married Nancy, who was working in the chemistry lab at the University hospital. When Uncle Bob handed in his doctoral thesis, the professor he had worked with was away on sabbatical leave. His substitute would not accept it, which discouraged Uncle Bob very much. He found other work. Nancy, the following year, retyped it and handed it in when his professor had returned. It passed with flying colors!

Uncle Bob accepted a job in the chemistry division in what is now known as National Starch Products. It made glue from corn products. He rapidly rose in the company until eventually he became Vice-President in charge of manufacturing. They lived in New Jersey but I remember they lived in Toronto, Canada for a year or so. Uncle Bob and Aunt Nancy were always involved in affairs in the public school systems in New Jersey and also in activities of the Unitarian-Universalist Church. They sang and still do in the choir of the church. Uncle Bob always saved time for his family and helped raise two very good children - Thomas and Jane. Since retirement Uncle Bob and Aunt Nancy have become world travellers and show slides of their travels in the local schools.

My life has always had a somewhat serious bent. I was a good student and so conscientious I used to make holes in the paper trying to write. I was a terrible tom boy - my mother used to despair getting me into a dress. However my playmates were two brothers and two boy cousins who lived with us, and a number of dogs and a pony. No need for dolls or girl's games. I used to resent playing football with my brothers because they only let me play center. I read a lot and walked the beach

a lot. I was good in gym and loved to draw dogs and horses. There were no art classes available so in high school I signed up for mechanical drawing. I guess this shocked my teacher because he wouldn't let me do mechanical drawing like the boys. Instead he set me in a corner of the room and taught me architectural drawing which I enjoyed. In high school I became annoyed because the gym was reserved after school for boys sports. I wrote a petition to the school board asking for a girls gym and got pages of signatures. My phys ed teacher took me aside and scolded me and told me never to bother the school board. I cried and tore it up. Later she confided that she had patched it and delivered it herself to the school board. Years later they added a gym to the building for girls!

I was a serious musician and played the 'cello in the orchestra and in a trio of piano, violin and 'cello. The trio played everywhere because the pianist's mother belonged to every women's club in town.

With your Dad, I attended Antioch College in Ohio for two years. It was a coop college where you work 10 weeks somewhere and attend college 10 weeks. My folks chose Antioch because your Dad really didn't like academics too well and they thought he would enjoy Antioch better than other colleges. I had a ball working in a jewelry store on 5th Avenue in New York City for my first job and in the outpatient department in St. Luke's Hospital in Chicago for my next job. The following two years I spent at the Art Institute of Chicago studying drawing and sculpture.

I married Uncle Ed and we spent eight war years in North Hollywood with Uncle Ed doing engineering research at Lockheed. Chris and Mary were born in California. Ed Uncle Ed quit Lockheed the day the war ended and we came back to Michigan. He took over the engineering division of the family's machine tool

factory. He successfully developed a machine for blasting coal with highly compressed air eliminating the firehazard of dynamite in coal mines. Paul arrived on the scene so, <sup>for 7-1949</sup> that time was spent raising the family, working with ceramic sculpture and metal sculpture, PTA and YWCA work, and teaching Sunday school. Later I became a Bahá'í and devoted all my time to that along with family duties.

When Paul was in the last years of college, we spent five years for the Bahá'is in Pakistan. Bahá'is work for peace between religions, nations, and people. Pakistan had had 4 wars ~~but~~ with India, primarily over religious differences. Also rights and education for women is almost non-existent. While in Pakistan we focused our attention on these problems. It was a great experience but a taxing one. We will never forget it.

Now that we are back in St. Joseph, we continue to teach the principles of peace. I still enjoy art work and Uncle Ed his putterings with mechanisms.

Your Dad was always a charming, mild, humorous fellow. As twins we always loved each other and ~~although we~~ looked somewhat alike, ~~except~~ he was always larger and taller than me. Personality-wise we were very different. I think it was too bad that we were always in the same class, <sup>at school</sup> nowadays twins are usually separated so that they can develop as individuals. The fact that Uncle Bob and I were such good students seemed to be delatorious to your <sup>Father's</sup> own sense of self-esteem. Yet everyone loved your Dad, and he was far more popular than we ever were. My folks tried to help the situation. We were never allowed to flaunt our report cards or mention much about it. Your Dad was smart enough, but generally took little interest in making the effort at being a student. He excelled in sports and loved all kinds of recreation. He could always make us laugh.

I remember one time when Uncle Bob, your Dad, and I were supposed to rake our lawn. We tried to burn the leaves making a huge smudge. Your Dad ran into the house and came out wearing Grandpa Doc's old army gas mask. We all rolled on the ground laughing.

One time at Christmas he wrapped his presents in old rags or rolled them in the back porch rug. He gave Cousin Jim, who lived with us, knitting needles with a card stating "mitten needles for the nit-wit to nit-wit."

Jim and your Dad shared the same room through high school. My room adjoined and I could hear them <sup>always</sup> laughing and giggling far into the night. Unfortunately Jim was an all "A" student too and on weeknights we usually sat around the dining table doing our homework. Jim and I would finish long before your Father would even get around to starting.

Your Dad was never mean or wild. The girls idolized him but he seldom dated preferring usually to go to dances with the fellows and or spending his time in some sport with his friends.

In the summers he and Jim usually found work picking fruit or stacking hay on a farm. He was a very likeable, nice person.

I remember him arriving in physics class with a frog in his pocket. Also in chemistry class a group, including your Dad, switched chemicals so that the teacher's class experiment didn't work.

He was a half-back on the football team. One time he came out with a concussion and Grandpa Doc wouldn't let him play in the next game which happened to be the game of the year. The school and the coach begged my father to relent. He refused. Your Dad felt very bad about the situation. He was on the basketball team and was a runner.

on the track team.

Your Dad's college career was at best a struggle. He enjoyed his work program at Antioch College working at Battell Metallurgical Institute in Columbus, Ohio. Scholastically he did not do too well and after two years transferred to the University of Michigan. He lived with Uncle Bob and Aunt Nancy. They still talk about how much they enjoyed him. School did not go too well again so he transferred to the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. My Mother had two sisters there - Ella and Maudie. Ella was a head nurse of a large TB hospital there. They gave him much support and he graduated as a mechanical engineer. The whole family gathered to help him celebrate.

He came to California and stayed with us for a short time until he was accepted in the engineering department of Douglas Aircraft. We saw a lot of him and his buddies then. He and Uncle Ed were great golf companions. We enjoyed both your Mother and your Father when they were married. We also enjoyed many smorgasbords at your Grandmother's house.

When we decided to return to Michigan, Uncle Ed and I enrolled in a bridge class. Bridge ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> a social must in Uncle Ed's family. We went often to your folk's apartment to practice since your Mother knew how to play. The games usually ended in hysterics, and we stumbled upon the call "elk" when we happened to make a good play.

Your Dad was very successful at Douglas and from all reports, did a good job and was well-liked. Your folks were getting along beautifully when we left California. We did not see them often after that. We corresponded, of course. I don't really know what happened to the marriage. Your Mother was a very efficient, motivated person and whether their personalities were too different I don't really know.

We loved them both. The loss of their home by the fire was a great tragedy for them. Your Dad's second wife was rather materialistic, sophisticated and worldly. I'm inclined to consider her a factor in the breakup of the marriage. She did, however, stay with him during his final illness. I give her that credit at least.

all I can really say is that we loved your mother and your Dad and we think the two of you are just wonderful!

Love always,  
Aunt Betty

P.S. This is probably more information than you really wanted <sup>to know</sup>. Just read what you wish.

also, I forgot to mention that on the messitt's side we had an ancestor named mad Anthony Wayne. Don't mention it to the poor Indians!

## More Reminiscences

by Uncle Bob

I think Betty has done a great job, but perhaps I could add a little.

Another episode in the Chicago fire (1871):- while Anna Theresa escaped to Lake Michigan, her future husband Charles was trapped but managed to jump on a passing freight train and escape. His eyebrows were burned off in the process.

My father grew up in downtown Chicago on the edge of the "loop". The elevated trains ran by their house and the noise was tremendous. They were extremely poor and frequently hungry. Fortunately they lived near a pretzel factory. If they could scrape together 5¢, they could buy a big bag of broken pretzels. My father always remembered how good those tasted. This poverty was a strong influence on my father's life. He had a horror of losing his money and worked desperately hard to be sure that his family was well provided. This is the reason that he suffered so in 1933 when the Michigan banks closed and he lost much of his money. I believe this upset caused him to develop the diabetes from which he suffered for the rest of his life. His life was an inspiration to his children. Without help he worked his way through Wheaton College (taking care of the Dean's cow among other things), and then through U. of Illinois Medical School, sending money home in addition. When in medical school he shared a small room with his brother, Bob, for whom I was named. Bob was working his way through divinity school. They had (and needed) only one bed since Charles worked all night. One of his jobs was working for Pinkerton Detective Agency in Chicago. He told us he always looked forward to Friday nights because that night his duty was to guard the gold for the CB&Q Railroad to be used for their Saturday pay day. He could curl up on top of the gold and get some much needed sleep. All this caught up with him and he almost died of Typhoid. He lost his hair in that illness.

My father was a great story teller. On Sundays after Church the family would gather for dinner. Usually Uncle Henry and Aunt Ella (my mother's brother and my father's sister) Bartlett and their family would join us and many visiting relatives on occasion. My mother was a great cook and my father would provide 5 gals. of ice cream. We would listen to all the stories, asking for old favorites to be repeated. Incidentally we all developed strong stomachs because Henry and Walt (the M.D.s) would vie with one another describing in gory detail the horrible sights they had seen during the week. (My father was called Walt in the family.)

Several of my father's stories are immortal. I'm sure you've heard them, but anyway--

One Saturday when my father was a boy (in the heart of Chicago) he was sent to the back yard for his usual chore of chopping kindling for fire staving during the week. Needless to say he didn't like this job. He came running into the house



crying, "Mama, there's a tiger in the back yard!" Now any normal mother is able to see through that one, so she told him to get back to work. But he managed to drag her to the window and sure enough there in the yard was a Royal Bengal Tiger. The small yards were separated by 6 ft. wooden fences which the tiger leaped effortlessly. The chickens which the family kept all tried to go through the small opening into the barn at the same time. The police came with heavy rifles but were unable to shoot in the crowded neighborhood. The tiger had escaped from the winter quarters of the Hagenbach & Wallace circus which was nearby. The zoo keepers came with the cage on wheels. They kept throwing steaks to the tiger so he wouldn't get hungry. Finally they lured him into a barn and shut the door. Then they put the cage containing food next to the barn and sawed a hole in the barn to match the door of the cage. So the tiger went into his cage and back to the circus.

My father had another story about the same circus. An elephant went wild in the exercise area and killed a man as the boys were watching. It was pretty gory so I won't repeat it.

Another favorite was the dog story. An assignment in Med. School was to catch a dog and perform a particular operation on him. My father caught his dog and took it to his room and performed the surgery. The operation was a success but the dog died. What to do? He had to go to class and he couldn't leave the dog for his landlady to find. He found a brown paper bag in which he put the dog and started for school hoping to find some place to ditch the dog. At the last moment he saw a meat delivery wagon in front of the nurses' residence which had similar looking brown bags in baskets. So he donated his bag and ran to class.

Betty referred to the visit of Aunt Wilma and my mother to their brother Henry in St. Joe when my father to be was giving them a social whirl. As a joke the two girls made him a completely outlandish bathing suit and presented it to him never dreaming that he would wear it. But he immediately put it on and grabbing an arm of each sister (he always had powerful hands) he propelled them down the street proclaiming loudly to all they met that Jane and Wilma had made him this beautiful suit.

You might be interested to know that my mother lived for a time in Santa Monica. This would have been about 1900. She had a rather well-to-do cousin who lived there and invited her to keep house for them. She described the town as small, quiet, and pretty. It was infested with sand fleas. They slept under mosquito netting. The trick was to get under the netting and kill all the fleas if you wanted a comfortable night.

The winter of 1917-8 was an unusually cold one. The "flu" epidemic grew to terrible proportions. Many died. My father was so overworked that my mother stopped the phone and pulled down the shades so he could get a little sleep. People pounded on the doors in desperation. The twins were a year old and had Whooping Cough. My father was very worried about them and arranged that my mother and grandmother

would take the three children to visit my mother's father in St. Cloud, Florida. We boarded the train in St. Joe and made it to New Buffalo (30 miles) before the engine was stuck in the snow. So we were all piled into ox sleds with all the baggage and carried to a connection with a train going south. This was war time and the train was over-crowded and short of food. We would stand in long lines waiting to get into the diner. Fortunately the twins would cry so loudly that we were allowed to go in before our turn. My mother had brought 80 cotton diapers which she tossed out the window as soon as they were soiled, much to the horror of the porter who thought her most extravagant. (No one was accustomed to disposables in those days). Finally we got to Florida and into a hotel. My mother couldn't understand why she felt so very weak. Grandma asked, "Jane, when did you last eat anything?" Then she remembered that in the interest of feeding what little was available to the kids she hadn't eaten for 48 hours.

We had a good visit with my grandfather. He had a grape fruit tree in his yard with the most delicious fruit. Not far up a path was a large swamp inhabited by large razor-back hogs which could be heard at a long distance. Along that path one day we came upon a 6 foot black snake which scared us all. We made an excursion to Daytona Beach and St. Augustine. At Daytona the cars drove on the sand by the water as I guess they still do. We used to walk to the beach and play in the sand. Your father developed a strange taste for eating sand with a spoon which scared me but apparently did him no harm. We loved the dungeon in the old fort at St. Augustine.

After we came home my father enlisted and served as Captain in the Medical Corps stationed first in Chattanooga, Tenn. and then in Fort Oglethorpe, Ga. We kids had to assume unusual duties with father away. Your father (age 2-3) was the "furny" man as he called it, carrying out ashes from the furnace with his little pail. He also found an old medicine case and carried that around saying "Now, I'm Dr. 'It.'" (While our father was away our ills were cared for by a Dr. Witt.)

One story my mother loved to tell was about the twins when they were 3-4 yrs. old. One day they decided to run away to get back at their mother for some punishment. They loaded their little wagon with a few supplies and prepared to set out expecting their mother to plead with them not to go. Instead my mother congratulated them on their fortitude and told them to write home in a few days and she would write to them. They trudged bravely off for maybe 3 blocks and then they couldn't stand anymore and ran home.

My mother was pretty good at this sort of thing. Your father did not have a quick temper like mine but once in a while he would get really angry (we called it "having a mad on") and he would not speak to any of us. My mother would say- "Billy has gone away. This is Alley Pete. Let's go put Alley Pete out the door. When Billy returns he will knock and we'll be glad to let him in." So she would put him out and he would be back to normal when

when he came back.

Another famous anecdote about your father - When he was quite small (probably about 4) my mother took us on the train to visit her sister (Ella and Maude) in Albuquerque, N. M. We went on the Santa Fe from Chicago. In those days the famous Harvey Houses were in existence at major stations. The train had no diner but stopped for meals at one of these stations. So it was quite a trip and tiring for small ones (and the adults!). Just as the train was about to pull into Albuquerque, your father couldn't take any more and said "Let's go back. It's too far!"

I recall another trip to Albuquerque in 1928. My father drove the five of us plus Dorothy Coulter (Maude's daughter). We had a 7 passenger Studebaker President. I remember many hot dusty roads. (Gravel roads were considered the best then. In Kansas City we stayed in a hotel and the temperature was 110. (No air conditioning in those days). A highlight was the trip south from Colorado Springs to New Mexico. It had rained steadily so the arroyos from the mountains were raging torrents. At each of these they had teams of oxen to pull the cars across. (for a fee, of course). We had to go around many rock slides. I made the mistake of stepping out of the car at one point only to sink to my knees in that sticky mud. (I was not welcomed back into the car with much enthusiasm.) One stretch of 19 miles took us 4 hours! We had a great time in Albuquerque - Aunts Ella and Maude were great hostesses. We all went to the big celebration held out on the mesa to which Indian tribes from many states were invited to exhibit their handiwork, dances, sports, etc. I recall very vividly a beautiful clear evening when an Indian with a fine voice sang "Salute to the Dawn" as he stood on top of a pueblo and the full moon rose over the mountain behind him. I don't think any of us ever forgot that trip.

Your father and I learned some things the hard way. One day two girls from a poor family came past our house pulling a little wagon containing bars of soap which they were trying to sell to earn much needed cash. I'm afraid we were guilty of making fun of them. (I'm sure I was the ring leader. It was not like your father to be cruel.) When my father learned of this, he made us go to the girl's house and not only apologize but also buy all their remaining soap with our own money. We were of course, unmercifully kidded by our playmates.

Adella Youtz could tell you how my father teased her. On Sunday afternoons when she was living with us

various young men would call on her. My father would help entertain them by serving them various not too delectable left-overs from the kitchen. Once he found some cold gravy which he presented as the kind of delicacy that Adella could make.

I think everyone who knew him loved your father. I still can't look at a snapshot of him when he was little without laughing. We had some hilarious times together. He lived with Nancy and me in Ann Arbor the second year of our marriage. He was working on his Bachelor's degree, I was in graduate school and making a little money as a research asst., and Nancy was working as a serologist in University Hospital. We managed to get the lower floor and basement of a run down old house by agreeing to be the janitors and fire the furnace. Other tenants lived upstairs. We had one bedroom and Bill slept by the furnace in the basement with our little Scotch Terrier, Herman, whom we all loved. You can imagine this was pretty close quarters for a newly married couple but your father made it nothing but fun. I look back on that year as one of the happiest. No one had any money so our entertainment was very simple. On Sunday evenings at 11 PM there was a radio program called "The Hermit", at which time you were asked to put out the lights and listen to the scariest ghost stories you can imagine. Bill was very glad to have Herman for company those nights. Sometimes we would splurge on beer and I remember once the three of us dancing down the street singing "Here we go gathering nuts in May" at the top of our lungs.

One time after we moved to New Jersey, Bill came to visit us all the way from Albuquerque non-stop by bus. He was attending the U. of N. Mexico. It happened to be Father's Day and we wanted to send an appropriate telegram to our father. (A Father's Day telegram was very cheap.) particularly to advise him that Bill had safely arrived. As we discussed this we got to laughing so hard we were rolling on the floor. When we finally completed the composition, I made Bill phone the telegraph operator. He was laughing so hard he could hardly speak, but he gasped, "This is sort of a 'pome!' - Greetings to you father kind. Willie arrived with sore behind." What fun!

Betty mentioned the pony that my father gave the twins. She was allowed to enjoy the pony but for Bill and me it was not all a bed of roses. We were assigned the job of rising early every morning. One of us had to clean out the stall and put fresh straw down, while the other curried and brushed the pony. You will recall that we lived on a bluff overlooking the lake. This was fine in summer but in winter icy winds came

off the ice in the lake. Rising from a warm bed and groping thru the dark to the cold garage required considerable fortitude (and caused some rebellion). We used to toss a brick with a mark on one side to see who carried and who cleaned. (My mother told me years later that she and my father watched the goings on from their bedroom window and sometimes were cruel enough to laugh.

As you undoubtedly know your father was a very good engineer and did well at his profession. Don't be deceived by his grades in school. What he learned he understood and remembered. I could get better grades because I had a letter perfect memory which would last long enough to take a test and then would be forgotten in a week. Grades are not a good measure of intelligence.

We were broken-hearted when your mother and father began having trouble. Bill came all the way to New Jersey in a desperate attempt to get some advice from Nancy and me. Would that we could have done a better job of counseling. All we could think of was to urge that he try to talk very frankly with Adele clearly explaining his problem. As he told us, he felt that Adele always made the important decisions and when he rebelled and insisted on his way, he was invariably wrong. He had lost his confidence and I'm afraid his wife couldn't help him build it back. What a tragedy! We can count ourselves lucky if we are blessed with a happy marriage.

