Introduction to Hadley Journal Collection

In 2015, Betty Ann Hadley of Nashville, TN donated a number of family items to the Archives Department at the Nashville Public Library. The donation included 11 handwritten journals by her mother, Elizabeth Lois Meguiar Hadley, several yearbooks from Isaac Litton High School and Goodlettsville High School, and several color slides of historic houses in the Inglewood/East Nashville area.

Betty Hadley was a respected and beloved teacher at both Litton and Goodlettsville high schools, retiring from Litton in 1983. Her only sibling, Albert Hadley, Jr, became a renowned interior designer in New York City. The journals of their mother, Elizabeth Lois Meguiar Hadley, who was born in 1894, paint a rich description of life in the Nashville and Springfield area from her childhood through the World War II years.

Many historical events occurred in the time period Hadley records, including both World War I and II. Her access to family letters and documents allowed her to record how, for example, the Civil War affected the prewar and postwar lives of regular citizens. A number of her ancestors fought for the Confederacy in the Civil War and the descriptions of Union soldiers in Tennessee are decidedly Southern; she states how these perceptions of “Yankees” are passed along through generations, noting that “prejudice is like a poison, and it is so easily instilled into the hearts of children.”

The letters of her paternal grandfather, William “Buck” Meguiar, are particularly affecting. Kept by her father in his trunk, the letters depict some of the aftermath of the Civil War but primarily demonstrate the perennial hopes of parents for their children, the offered advice, and, in one letter, instructions on how to trade mules.

The descriptions of daily life in her maternal grandparents’ home Maple Bluff, located about 7 miles southeast of Springfield in Robertson County, mention “servants,” including the “Negro Mammy, Susan.” It is fair to assume, given the era, that the more accurate word is slaves, especially since she also notes that after the Civil War, “some of the Negroes remained loyal to their masters” and Susan was one of them. There are other references to African-Americans in the journal that are often stereotypical and derogatory in their description and are likely to be offensive to contemporary readers.

Of special note, particularly in regards to Nashville history, is the description of Vaucluse, the mansion built by Dr. John Livingston Hadley in the early 1800s in the area that became known as “Hadley’s Bend.” Albert Livingston Hadley, husband of Elizabeth Lois Meguiar, and father to Betty Ann and Albert Hadley, Jr, was a descendent of the original Hadley family.
The latter half of the journals is primarily dedicated to letters from Albert Hadley during his service in World War II. The letters describe his training in the states, his ocean journey to England, his service role abroad, and his on-leave trips into London. Although he contracts pneumonia in England, he is eventually returned to convalesce in hospitals in Memphis and in Kentucky, where his family is finally able to see him again.

The journals have, for the most part, been faithfully transcribed as written. In some instances, minor editing has been performed to clarify spelling or meaning, but only where it has been absolutely necessary. In short, the journals reveal the lives of an extended family deeply rooted in middle Tennessee and how the enormous cultural, political, and historic shifts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries affected their lives and dreams.

**Additional Hadley Resources at Nashville Public Library**

The Nashville Public Library is also home to the Albert Hadley Interior Design Collection, a generous gift from Mr. Hadley that includes his personal and professional book collections as well as scrapbooks and original interior design sketches. Mr. Hadley had a long and legendary career as a designer and decorator of high-profile projects in New York City, including the Mayor’s Gracie Mansion and the Astor Library. He also designed the Vice Presidential Residence of fellow Tennessean Albert Gore during his tenure in the White House. Albert Hadley died in 2012 at the age of 91.
Garnered Memories

By Lois Meguiar Hadley

(Volume I)

My Earliest Recollections

I was born in a small cottage in the suburbs of Nashville, Tennessee. I am the second daughter of Alexander Franklin and Maggie Hilliard Meguiar. My sister, three years my senior, was given the name, Mary Rebecca. Mary was for father’s only sister, Mary Belle, who died when she was nineteen years old, and Rebecca was for father’s mother, whose name was Rebecca Ann Williams. Evidently no name had been selected for another daughter, so my mother’s youngest sister, Addie, took it upon herself to name me; Aunt Addie chose the name, Elizabeth Lois, the Elizabeth being for her mother, whose full name was Elizabeth Ophelia Stanfield Hilliard, and the Lois was a part of her father’s only sister’s name, as she thought. Really, the aunt’s name was Ruth Lewis Hilliard Mangrum but Aunt Addie had always thought it was Lois instead of Lewis. I’ve always been rather grateful that she was mistaken in the name, since I much prefer to be called Lois. Then too, I was pleased when I learned that one of the great women of the Bible, Timothy’s Grandmother, was named Lois.

The name has never been one of the more popular girls’ names, since it is rather unusual to find another called Lois.

My memories of my first few years of life are very few. I was taught to call my sister “Sister,” and my earliest recollections are of us playing together in the shade of the trees of our yard.

I must have been two and a half or three years old when my father talked of moving his family to Kansas to live. Because I did not want to leave my Aunt Mollie Webb (my mother’s sister, who lived across the street from us), I remember standing by my high chair and stomping my foot and saying, “I not doin’ a ‘tep.” Not because of my determined remark but for other reasons we did not move to Kansas.

Another incident that made a lasting impression on my childish mind was a visit from the County Health Agent. Because of a scare of a smallpox epidemic the health department required all children to be vaccinated. My mother did not want my sister and me vaccinated, so when she saw the health officer coming she hid us in a darkened room and would not answer his knock on the door. I kept as quiet as my little shaking body would permit. Finally after much pounding on
the door, the agent decided no one was at home and departed. But until the day I finally had to be vaccinated I had a great horror of whatever the word meant.

I remember one of my grandparents, Grandma Hilliard, my mother’s mother, just one picture in my memory remains. She came to visit us, and I remember her as a very pretty woman with white hair and a sweet face. She was dressed in black and was wearing a black tight-fitting little hat or bonnet that had a black veil fitted over it, and the veil hung to her waist in the back. At the throat of her dress she was wearing a gold pin with my grandfather’s picture in it. Then, I did not realize that she was dressed in mourning for her husband who had been dead only a few years. Since her husband’s death she had lived with her different children, and she had come at this time to make us a visit. It was only a short time after this visit that she died of a paralytic stroke at the home of her daughter, Laura Bridges, in Springfield, Tennessee.

Both of my father’s parents had been dead for many years. During my first few years of life we did not own our home, but lived in rented ones. Finally my father bought a little home on West Seymour Ave., in East Nashville, where we lived until I was almost eight years old. It was located next to a strip of ground that was covered with lovely shade trees, and we called it, “The Park.”

My sister, and a cousin, Blanche Johns, and I spent many happy days playing in the park. Blanche was one of three children and the only daughter of my mother’s sister, Ida Johns, who died when Blanche was small. Blanche spent a good many summer vacations with us, and she and I were very congenial, and we played dolls and “ladies” day in and day out.

Another cousin, Ruth Hilliard, lived with us. She was the daughter of my mother’s brother Ben, whose wife had died, and he let mother take Ruth to live with us. Uncle Ben had two other children, Robert Lyle, who died when he was quite young, and B.G., who was younger than Ruth. Ruth was ten years my senior and I always looked upon her as an older sister. We four girls grew up like sisters, and I was the youngest.

Ruth went to Spout Spring Public School, which was a three-classroom frame building, located on Eastland Avenue about a mile or more from where we lived. She graduated from this school while we were living on Seymour Avenue. Sister started to school there and when I was old enough to go to school I went there too. For a few months Sister and I were sent to a private school. It was held in the Lewis Baxter home which was on the Gallatin Pike not far from where we lived.

Mrs. Lee Cantrell was the teacher; she was a sister of Mrs. William B. Walton, Jr. There were about fifteen or twenty pupils who attended this school. Ruth was of course old enough to go with the boys, and one of her ardent admirers was Ed Sparks, a very attractive boy, who lived on McFerrin Avenue. One day they went for a walk and I went along, just as any little sister might do. They were talking but I do not recall the conversation, but it must have been very personal because Ed said, “Remember little pitchers have big ears.” I did not fully realize the
meaning of the remark but I knew he had made reference to me and I was highly indignant. In my childish mind I thought both of them were rather ancient when they were actually about sixteen or seventeen years old.

As I think back over the past I cannot recall many times that my parents punished me. Only two incidents stand out in my memory, and both times if they had spared the rod they surely would have spoiled the child. My father was plowing his garden one spring day, and I was out watching him. I must have been five or six years old. I was sitting at the end of the furrow he was plowing, when I noticed an unusual plant growing nearby. When my father returned to that end of the garden I asked him what it was, and he told me it was a tomato plant. He told me not to bother it, but something akin to Mother Eve must have been in my make-up. For no reason other than I had been told not to bother it, I proceeded to pull it up. When father returned to that end of the garden he noticed the plant was gone and he asked me what happened to it. I reluctantly told him I pulled it up. So without further words, he applied the switch which I remember very keenly.

The other incident had to do with a pond that was in a field back of our house. Blanche and I had been told not to go to the pond for fear we might fall in. But this particular afternoon mother was taking her afternoon nap, and thus seeing our chance we slipped off to the pond. We were having a wonderful time playing at the edge of the water, when we looked up and saw mother coming with a switch in her hand, and a determined look on her face. The sight of the switch frightened us terribly, and we started for the house. But as we took each step the keen peach tree switch stung our little bare legs, and mother’s tongue lashing was very cutting too. I don’t remember ever visiting the pond again, and I have often wondered if we really meant to disobey, or if the urge for adventure was greater than our sense of disobedience.

From early childhood I have always loved pets and as far back as I can recall, we had a cat and a dog. They were a source of joy to me, and in turn they loved me. I was a great tease and found a great delight in doing things to scare and upset them. The first dog that I remember was a lovely white and tan setter, named Kate, with a most affectionate disposition. She was our constant companion and playmate. The cat was a large grey and white alley cat, that we called Ben. In our backyard there was a large wooden box, and many times I would climb on top of it, and tease Kate as I offered her bits of bread I was eating. I would pretend to throw her a piece and she would grab at it and because of her disgusted look, I would put forth a hearty laugh. The next bite I would really throw to her, and she displayed great patience as we spent hours in such childish pranks.

The horse that father had he had gotten from our family doctor, Doctor Loftin. She was a lovely bay-colored mare with a black mane and tail and a white spot in her forehead. She had previously been named Pet, and we continued to call her by that name. She was a very gentle horse and was good both as a harness and saddle horse. Often father would ride her and let me ride in front of him, and that was always a coveted experience. One night after I had gone to bed
I heard mother and father talking about another horse he had bought that day; I was supposed to be asleep, but could not keep quiet, I was so overjoyed at the thought of having another horse. I raised up and asked what the horse’s name was, and father told me he did not know--I immediately suggested the name, “Sankko.” Why I thought of such a name, I have often wondered, but that was his name as long as we owned him. Father drove either horse to a one-seated no-top buggy, or else to a covered spring wagon, which was painted a light blue. This was the means of the family transportation, except for the street car, about two blocks away, on the Gallatin Pike.

One day in the early spring of 1903, father came home and announced that he had bought a hundred-acre farm out on the Gallatin Pike about four miles from where we were living. He told mother that he gave eleven thousand dollars (11,000) for the farm, and she seemed to think that was much too expensive.

Sister and I could hardly wait to see the farm, for we had never been in the country and knew nothing of country life. In a few days father took us in the wagon out to take a look at our new home. As we drove out the pike, which was then just a dusty dirt road, every place that we came to we would ask if there was it. In those days the homes were far apart, each place consisted of quite a number of acres. Some of them were farms with several hundreds of acres. The ride was most interesting to us, and it seemed ages before we finally came around a gradual curve in the road and over a slight hill, where we saw on the left of the road the tops of some cedar trees. Immediately we asked if that was our place, and father told us it was. As we drove closer we could see the two story white frame house amid a small grove of trees.

Sister and I were overjoyed at the size of the yard and the house and the barns--we saw at once that life for us would be a new venture and a new thrill. Soon after our visit we moved our household furnishings, and chickens, dog, cat and horses to the country.

The Setting

The warranty deed from Isabella Smith and her husband Joshua E. Smith that deeded the farm to my father, A.F. Meguiar reads as follows:

For the consideration of the sum of eleven thousand dollars (11,000.00) of which seven thousand dollars is paid in cash and other property, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged for the residue A.F. Meguiar agrees to assume and pay four thousand dollars to North Western Mutual Life Ins. Co., being, a mortgage made June 27, 1900 and recorded in book no. 248 page 366 of the Register’s Office of Davidson County, Tennessee, for five thousand dollars, and a credit of one thousand dollars made in same. Said mortgage bears interest at the rate of 5% and payable semi-annually which a
vendor’s lien is hereby retained on the property; herein transferred to secure the payment of said mortgage.

We Joshua E. Smith and wife Isabella Smith have bargained and sold by these presents do transfer and convey, unto the said A.F. Meguiar, his heirs and assigns a certain tract or parcel of land in Davidson County, State of Tennessee, as follows; a farm of one hundred and twenty-seven acres, more or less, lying on both sides of the Nashville and Gallatin turnpike road, about five miles from Nashville, being a part of the tract of land once belonging to Thomas Craighead, and known as ‘The Spring Hill’ tracts and more particularly described as follows; beginning at an ash and hackberry, the original southeast corner of the [blank], thence with the original south boundary line there of west 246 poles to where the original southwest corner is supposed to have stood blazed pointers, thence northwardly with the original west boundary line 84 Poles, more or less; thence east and parallel with the south boundary line 246 Poles to the east boundary line, thence southwardly with said East line 84 Poles, more or less, to the beginning.

It being the same tract allotted to Thomas Craighead by decree in Minute Book E, page 319 of the record of the Chancery Court of Davidson County, Tenn. Purchaser to assume and pay taxes for year 1903.

The outside of deed shows that the deed was recorded March 19th, 1903 at 11:45 a.m.--B.F. Loftin, Register. The fee was $1.50, and State Fee paid was $11.00. P.A. Shelton was the clerk.

The farm ran on both sides of the highway and the Louisville and Nashville railroad cut the back of the farm in two. The two fields on the east side of the pike consisted of about 43 acres, in which were raised either hay or grain crops. There were no buildings in these fields but in one of them near the road there was a well with a hand pump. From this well any stock that father kept in these fields were watered. And people traveling along the pike in buggies and wagons would sometimes stop and get a drink for themselves, and often would water their teams at the large watering trough.

The fifty-eight acres that lay between the pike and the railroad was the part that the house and other improvements were on. The twenty-eight acres that were beyond the railroad were usually used to raise various crops in.

It has always been my understanding that Rev. Craighead had built the house for his son, Thomas. Originally it was a typical country home of its day, with two large front rooms connected by a wide entrance hall running the length of the rooms. A dining room and kitchen were back of one of these rooms, and an ell-shaped latticed porch made the rooms very pleasant in summer.
Some years later, a different owner had added a front hall and a room downstairs and one directly over it, upstairs, and a circular staircase ran from this hall to the upstairs bedroom. An ell-shaped front porch was added, which altogether made a rather odd-looking house.

The house was weatherboarded and painted white with a light brown or tan trimming and blinds at the windows were painted the same color. The room on the right as you entered was the room Mother and Father used as their bedroom.

The room across the hall from theirs we called “the big room,” because it seemed a little larger than the other one, and sister and I shared this room. Ruth’s room was the upstairs bedroom. The stair rail leading to the upstairs was a source of joy to me, for I loved to slide from the top to the bottom.
The downstairs room we used as our parlor, and it was furnished with Grandma Hilliard’s rose-carved furniture. The dining room joined Mother’s room and back of the dining room there was a dog trot or passage way which led into a very old looking kitchen with an open fireplace. Later this kitchen was torn down and a smaller kitchen was built. We had no modern conveniences, but burned coal oil lamps, and the water we used we pumped from a cistern, just outside the kitchen door, or else from a well that was in the back yard. Bathrooms were rare, especially in the country, and we had no such luxury. A path led from the kitchen door to a little house that was hid from view by the hen house, where the family spent either minutes or hours daily, looking over papers and magazines, as they attended to their physical needs. Back of the house and a little to the right was a red brick smoke house with a large wooden door, which was unlocked by a huge iron key. In the smokehouse was kept the hams and other meat that was killed every fall. To the left of the house in the back yard, there was a long red building which had different rooms under the same roof. First, there was a room with a huge vat in it, which was used for scalding the hogs at hog killing time. Next there was a space for two carriages or buggies; then a coal room, where the fuel for the house was kept. Last there was a tool room which was fitted up with a work bench and all of the necessary tools for keeping things repaired around the farm.

At the end of this house and under separate roof was the chicken house with roosting space and also the nests for laying and setting. About two hundred yards to the left of the house and in a separate lot was the large red stock barn. In the same lot there were other buildings for grain and separate stalls for horses; and at the back of these buildings there was a well and old-fashioned pump, from which the stock man watered.

Directly back of the left side of the house and in a different lot there was a cabin, which was built for servants. Blanche and I spent many happy days playing “ladies,” in the cabin, she being “Mrs. Cowan” and I, “Mrs. Shelton;” the names of our sweethearts of the day.

A few years after we moved to the farm father had all of the barns moved directly back of the house, about three hundred feet away. On the right of the house there was a large garden plot and orchard. Apples have never tasted as good to me as they did when I climbed the trees and helped myself. Strawberries too seemed sweeter and larger as I helped to pick them from the patch in the garden. My father always had a nice vegetable garden from early spring to late fall, and from the garden most of the food for winter was canned.

Father secured a colored man from Briarsville (a colored settlement about a mile distant), whose name was Phil Taylor, to help with the farm work. He was a very dark skinned man, short of stature, and he must have been about fifty years old. He was the old-fashioned type of darkie, one that any child would enjoy following around as he did his work. Many times when he came to work he would bring a bouquet of flowers from his yard, and until this day I have never seen flowers that looked quite so old-fashioned and lovely.
Sister and I followed Phil over the fields as he plowed, and the new turned earth was so soft and cool to our bare feet. Many times we rode with him on a wagon loaded with new mown hay, and what a wonderful experience that was for two little girls who had spent their first few years of life on a small town lot.

Father raised registered jersey milk cows, the first one he bought he named after me, and she was registered “Elizabeth Lois.” She was the mother of most of the small herd that he had. We all took a great pride in the beauty of these animals and also in the records they made in producing milk and also in the prices they brought when they were sold.

The first white hogs I ever saw were some Ohio Improved Chester pigs that father ordered from another state. They attracted quite a bit of attention because they were some of the first in this section.

For several years father had a hobby of buying Western horses and then having them trained as working or harness animals. They were untamed and wild and were often very mean. A Mexican man called Tony was secured to train these horses and it was one of the most exciting experience of my childhood to watch Tony hitch one of these animals to a two wheel cart and then watch them rear, kick and run. The broken English that Tony used was most interesting, but with his continual jabber, he usually managed to keep the steed under control.

There were so many experiences and so much for a child to learn about life in the country. One of the most unusual and one of the most fascinating days was the day the threshing machine was driven into the wheat field, and the crew of men got things in readiness for the wheat threshing. My eyes must have gotten very big with wonder as the machine was started up, and the grain was separated from the chaff.

It was a noisy engine, the men talked rather loud to one another as they worked; some feeding the machine while others filled the sacks with the grain.

In the center of the field there was a large hackberry tree and under this tree was placed a stove where a colored man cooked for the crew of men. I don’t recall anything he cooked except a wash boiler filled with cabbage and huge pans of corn bread.

As I look back over the carefree days, I would not take anything for the experiences and the life in the country. I think any child is cheated of much happiness and knowledge that has never lived in the country and has learned without a doubt that through Nature is Nature’s God.

**Tap Roots**

After we got established in our country home we began to look around to see where we would attend church. Two miles out the road was the small country village, called Madison.
There were two churches there, directly across the road from one another; one a Methodist and the other a Presbyterian.

A store and a post office combined was the extent of the business district, except for a blacksmith shop. A two-room red frame school house was the only school in the vicinity. The homes were scattered and few, but the families who lived in them, for the most part, were high class, cultured people.

Being of Methodist faith we attended the City Road Chapel Methodist Church. It was a red brick, one-room building where both Sunday School and church services were conducted. The preacher served both Madison and Goodlettsville churches, consequently there was preaching at our church every other Sunday. On the Sundays that our church was without a preacher our congregation went across the road to the services at the Presbyterian Church.

The Presbyterian Minister served both Madison and Hendersonville Churches, so the Sundays they were without a preacher they came to the Methodist Church to worship. Thus the two congregations became very close to one another. The Methodists always had a larger membership than the Presbyterians, but were no more faithful in performing their religious duties. Much of my simple faith was gained from listening to preachers of both faiths, and from the consecrated Sunday School superintendents and teachers that led and taught. Mr. W. C. Anderson and Mr. Taylor Stratton were two of the Superintendents that instilled Christian principals in the hearts of many of the youths of that community, as they exemplified by their words and their deeds, the true Christian principals of life.

There was a close fellowship between the people and their Pastor, and it was always a coveted honor to have the preacher to come home with you for dinner. People had time to be friendly, their mode of transportation was slow, and visiting was one of the main diversions. Every year we looked forward to a big church picnic, and to various lawn parties, and the best of all, a ten-day or two-week protracted meeting, or revival, where a visiting preacher conducted the services.

There was not so much form to religion in those days, all emotions were not suppressed, people enjoyed their religion and it could not be hidden. The songs that were sung were not so intricate that it took a paid choir to render them, but the whole congregation was inspired to sing to the Glory of God.

Miss Ermine Davis was the organist and she played on a little old fashioned pump organ. For many years Miss Marie Gray was my Sunday School teacher, she was a sister of Mrs. Taylor Stratton. She gave much of her time and her means to the work of the Church. She was a devout and faithful Christian, and her teachings have followed me through the years. Some of the families who attended the Methodist Church were the Loves, Chadwells, Strattons, Davis, Andersons, Grays, Shaffers, Shaws and the Ellis family.
When Mr. Stratton was serving as superintendent of the Sunday school at the Methodist Church, Mr. Everett Doolittle was leading in the same capacity at the Presbyterian Church. He was the village postmaster and store keeper and a highly respected citizen.

Mr. George Bradford was a pillar in the Presbyterian Church, as had been his sainted mother before him. Some of the families who composed the membership of the church were the Armisteads, Grizzards, Rossers, Doolittles, Bradfords and Mrs. Charles Anderson.

Among the Methodist pastors that I recall were E.L. Gregory, R.J. Craig, A.P. Walker, E.R. McCord, and J.R. Parsons. They were all good preachers and good pastors, but the most saintly of them all was Bro. Craig. He was the pastor when I joined the Church, and it was through his influence that one night at a revival I went to the altar to give my heart and life to God. The congregation was singing the hymn, “Lord I’m Coming Home,” and whenever I hear that song it carries me back to that altar where I so trustingly kneeled.

Brother Craig’s faith was so sweet and so simple that any child could understand it. Love and kindness radiated his countenance. Brother Walker was such a good looking man with dark hair and eyes and he wore a moustache. He and his wife had a son and daughter, and it was while he was our pastor that the little boy died. Sometime after the child’s death Brother Walker preached a sermon on “Heaven” that made a deep impression on my mind. I felt that he was talking to himself more than he was to the congregation, as he tried to get a glimpse of the Promised Land.

For a good many years Rev. Franklin was the pastor at the Presbyterian Church. He was a rather short, heavy-set man, who spoke without too much emotion but with a convincing faith. He was loved and respected by both the Presbyterians and the Methodists. During the many years that have intervened since my childhood days, quite a number of changes have taken place to the buildings and to the membership by both churches. The old church building where I attended church, and around which so many hallowed memories linger, has been torn down. In its stead there has been erected a handsome stone structure, with all necessary facilities for a thoroughly modern church. The church services have taken on the more modern style of worship. The membership is very large, since the small village of Madison has become a most thriving little city. The town boasts of every type of store, theatre, modern school and a thickly populated residential section.

The Presbyterian Church has made improvements in its building and its worship service has changed, but it has held on to a simple and dignified service. Its membership has increased and very few of the older generation are left. On Sunday morning chimes ring from the newly erected steeple, which remind the passers-by that he should take time to be Holy.

After our church home was established the next problem to be solved was the selection of the school to which my sister and I would be sent. A mile south of our home there was a little one-room frame school house located on the Gallatin Pike which was known as Maplewood
School. The school yard consisted of about an acre of ground, and it was shaded by any number of locust trees.

The ground had been donated by Mr. Jere Baxter, and had been a part of his huge estate, “Maplewood,” from whence came its name. The year we started to Maplewood School, Ruth Hilliard, my cousin, was made the teacher. She taught all grades, but the enrollment was not over twenty-five or thirty, so it was not too difficult for her.

Each class was called to the front of the room to recite their lessons, and a half hour or longer was allotted each class. The desks would seat two pupils, and Mora Sharpe was my desk mate, and I was always very fond of her. The room was heated by a coal-burning stove. The older boys would start the fire every morning, and keep coal added as it was needed during the day. The water for drinking was drawn from a well in the school yard, and it was kept in the house in buckets with dippers in each one, from which all of the children drank.

There was no lunch room, as there is today, but each child brought his lunch wrapped in paper or carried it in lunch boxes. At recess we all sat around and ate, and often swapped some of our lunch for something more appetizing looking that another pupil had. Before school started and at recess, games were played, the boys and girls playing together. Fox-in-the-Morning, Crack the Whip, Handkerchief, Cat and Rat, Ante-Over, and Baseball were some of the most popular games.

I always loved a good time and got much more from playing than I did from my books. One reason I was so careless about my studies then was because Ruth was the teacher and I did not fear her. One day she really did humiliate me though. I was very much in love with one of the boys, Edwin Shelton, and he with me. This particular day I had written Edwin a note and was passing it across to him when Ruth spied it being passed from one pupil to the next. She had it brought to her and she read it aloud, and made quite a lengthy talk about it. Among other things she called our love affair “puppy-love.” I was embarrassed almost to tears and was mad at her, but there was nothing I could do about it. While we were having recess Ruth was reading a letter the postman had brought her, when Edwin slipped to the door and poked his head in and hollered, “puppy-love.” I was very proud of him that he should have been so very brave. To this day, I feel that that incident was not handled in a wise way by that young teacher.

Usually most of the pupils walked to and from school, and some of them had to come several miles. Father carried us to school in the surrey, but unless the weather was too bad we walked home. The children that made up the school enrollment were sweet and unaffected since they had been brought up in the simple ways of life.

The five Griffin children who attended lived on Maplewood Lane; they were Ollie, Chloe, Annie, Summerfield and Bessie. Mary, James and Cornelius Marrin lived in a white frame house next to the school. The day Cornelius (or Neely, as he was called) started to school, he fell off the school bench. As he got up with a twinkle in his big brown eyes, he said in a
babyish way, “slackslents slill slappen.” This remark proved to be a saying in our household, when any minor accident occurred. The Marrin family was of Catholic faith, and soon after Mary finished school, she became a Sister and took the title of Sister Augustine. She was always a sweet person and as a girl she was rather timid, and would blush at the least provocation. James was a heavy-set boy of about eleven or twelve years when he attended Maplewood School. He had dark wavy hair and blue eyes, and his face was made attractive and boyish, by a bunch of freckles.

Edwin and Christine Shelton lived a short distance from school. Edwin was a few years older than Christine. He was a typical boy, and was real good looking, with brown eyes and hair. He had several ponies that he rode and drove, but his favorite was a dappled grey, named Dotsy Dimple.

He had two fox terrier dogs that followed him everywhere he went. He had taught them many clever tricks and they performed as he called them by name, Dixie and Trixie. He was the little boy I had the “puppy-love” affair with. Christine was a pretty little girl with golden curls and blue eyes. Her mother dressed her so fancy and she looked like a big doll. She and I were the best of friends and visited one another often.

Sewell and Willie Robertson lived in the neighborhood of the Cooper place. Sewell was about thirteen years old, and was rather tall with light hair and brown eyes. He was a good student and tried hard to lead his class. He and sister were in the same grade and they each tried to make the highest grade in the class. Willie was a pretty girl with brown eyes and hair, and rosy cheeks. She and I were classmates, and she was a very bright pupil.

Johnnie, Venus and Vergie Anderson lived near the Robertson children, and they usually walked to and from school together. The Andersons had never attended school regularly, so were older and larger than most of the children in their classes. They were good children, and I remember them best as we played games together.

Emily and Mora Sharpe were the two youngest girls in their family. They lived at their country home place, “Greenfield,” which was across from the school. The house was not visible from the road, as it sat so far back. They were attractive little girls; Emily was the older of the two. Often they would ride their ponies to school, “Garnet” and “Jet,” and I felt they were so lucky to be allowed to ride them. When they got peeved at any one they would call them a “Yap.” I did love to hear them say it, and watch their eyes snap as they said it.

Eva and Ben Light lived about a mile from school. The boys loved to tease Eva, for she had such a quick temper, and they enjoyed seeing it flare up. Every afternoon the walk home was made interesting by her remarks as the boys teased and fretted her. Jack Campbell was one of the tallest boys in school, and he added quiet a burden on the teacher with his mischievous ways.
Myra Mathis, Mary Loesch, Arthur Adams, Bedford Keen, Morton Peace, and the Adcock children attended school for part of the time, but I do not remember too much about them.

Sister was always a very dependable student, one that made life easy for the teacher. Her studies came first, and she always made good grades. I was the exact opposite, play came first, and if there was any time left, I studied after a fashion. The two terms I attended Maplewood School stand out in my memory as some of the happiest of my school days.

For the next few years sister and I attended Spout Spring School on Eastland Ave. Father either took us back and forth in the surrey, or else we drove our pony, “Bernie.” Bernie was so badly spoiled that we could hardly get him to school every morning, and could scarcely keep him from running away as we came home. If anything unusual happened as we went to school he would stop and look all around to see what had happened. Someone could slam a door and his curiosity got the best of him, and no amount of coaxing could make him go until he had stopped to see what was happening.

During my eighth and ninth grades we attended Madison School, and it was there that sister finished grammar school. It afforded two teachers, Mrs. George Crutchfield and Miss Hattie Rosser. Our school days there were very pleasant, and we enjoyed being with the other children. Some of the ones I recall were Gertrude, Bertie, Aline, Will D. and Edgar Anderson, Minnie and Harry Gee, Robert Vertrees, Faith Overton, Elizabeth and Tom Chadwell, Mary and Annie Stratton, who rode their pony “Bonnie” to school. Arthur and Tom McCampbell, Ed and Cameron Crutcher and Clayton and James Tone all lived in Neelys Bend and had to ride or drive to school.

The school system had not improved much since the days at Maplewood School. There were no modern conveniences; but we were none the wiser and enjoyed to the fullest the simplicity of it all. Miss Hattie Rosser had been teaching since she finished school, and was considered a wonderful teacher. I am sure she was, but she could ask me a question and scare the wits out of me. Her keen brown eyes could snap and I would try to shrink in size so that I could hide behind the pupil in front of me, to keep her from calling on me to recite. I am sure she must have considered me a very dumb pupil.

I tried to do my best in my studies but not until I got in the tenth grade at Eastland School (which was a new school on the corner of Chapel and Douglas Aves.) did I wake up to what it was all about. I liked my teacher, Miss Emma Walton, and really became interested in my studies, for the first time. I graduated from the tenth grade at Eastland School along with Jessie Harman and Georgia Willis. Just the three of us received our certificates.

My own reactions to education, as I grew up, seem to be typical of many young people today. But sooner or later the awakening will come, as it did with me. Some teacher will strike a
responsive chord, and will inspire a desire for learning. Blessed are the teachers that have such noble qualities.

The Gallatin Pike

The Gallatin Pike was in the days of 1903 not much more than a trail, just wide enough for two vehicles to pass one another, and it was very rough and dusty. It was located on the east side of Nashville, running from Main Street on out to Gallatin, a little town about thirty miles from Nashville.

In those days some of the finest homes to be found were located on this pike. Some of the oldest and best families had settled on farms that fronted on the Gallatin Pike. As a child, I admired the old homes with their big yards and stately houses. On the south corner of Eastland Ave. and the pike still stands the Edgar Foster home, it is one of the few remaining homes that has not undergone many changes.

It is a very stately two-story grey set back in a lovely yard, filled with shade trees and boxwood. “Lynnlawn” has been its title for all of these years. I knew the names of most of the families who occupied the homes along the pike, though I was personally acquainted with only a few of them.

Directly across the road from the Foster home was the Lewis Baxter home. I do not remember too much about the architecture of the house, but I do remember that the house sat fairly close to the road, and there were quite a number of boxwood bushes around the house. The Baxter property ran from the pike to McFerrin Ave. and was bordered on the north by West Seymour Ave. On the opposite corner of Eastland Ave. from the Foster home stood the Bransford home. The house was almost hidden from view by the grove of trees in the large lawn.

I remember a drive ran from the house to the road and a big iron gate opened from the drive onto the Gallatin Pike. To my childish mind the gate was a magic one; for as the horse-drawn carriage would near the gate, it would open for the carriage to exit and close after it had passed through. Many times I have seen carriages pass through this gate, driven by a colored man, and in the carriage would be seated stylishly dressed ladies. It made a lasting picture of elegance in my mind. Many years ago the place was subdivided and many little homes fill the once lovely lawn. The house still stands, on a small lot facing North Twelfth Street.

The northern side of the Bransford place was bordered by a narrow, rocky lane. I do not know if it had a name then or not, but it is now known as East Seymour Ave. Seymour Ave. on the west side of the pike was a better road, and it was about two blocks from the pike, on this road or street, that we lived. On the corner of West Seymour Ave. and the pike stood a large two-story red brick house where Miss Sallie Johnston lived.
I remember going there one night to an ice cream supper, and having a chill and getting sick from eating ice cream. Miss Sallie’s kindness and interest toward me led me to believe she was a very kind person; but all that I remember about her was lovely white hair. In later years her home was converted into a pie factory, and still later the Eastland Funeral home bought it and made the necessary changes for such a business. Directly across the road from Miss Sallie’s home was the Vaughan home. It still stands today, but its quaint beauty is almost hidden from view by a grocery and an electrical store that have been built in the corner of the yard.

About a block out the pike from the Vaughan place was the Merry Maney home. It must have been built much later than most of the other homes, for it was very different in architecture. It stands today among other homes that have been built from time to time. The Maneys had several daughters and Ruth visited them and they all attended Spout Spring School together.

The Sudekum place was on the west side of the pike, almost in front of the Maney house. It was a one-story frame house and as I first remember it, it was painted a dull yellow. The only store in this section of town was a grocery store, operated by a Mr. Newsom. We did quite a lot of our trading at this store, which was truly a little country store.

The next house on the East side of the pike was the McKinney place. It was an impressive colonial two-story house, built of red brick with shutters at the windows. It sat on a slight rise, in a large tree filled yard. Today the Eastland Baptist Church stands where this lovely old home once stood.

Across the road from the McKinney home was the Talbot home. It was a one-story white frame house that sat close to the road. A fire hall and a telephonic building have been erected on a part of the property. The house has been torn down, and other business buildings are being built.

On down the hill from the McKinney place there was another fine old home. When I first knew it the Chester family lived there. I think Mr. Chester was a preacher, and he had several sons. I have been told that the original owner of the place was a Mr. Delmas. Today Cooper & Martins very modern grocery store stands on the exact site of this lovely old home.

Directly across the road was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Percy Warner. Its large, lovely lawn and winding driveway running back to a rambling frame house exemplified life “in the good old days.” Mr. Warner and his wife had several daughters, and today they carry on in a traditional way with the elite of Nashville.

The Warner home place was sold to Trevecca College, and for several years it was kept up very much in its original beauty. Some kind of industrial school has taken it over, and has made many changes in the house. One of Nashville’s loveliest parks is named for Mr. Warner, “The Percy Warner Park,” located in Belle Meade. He gave the land to the city to be used for a park.
The William Franklin place joined the Warner place. It sat a great distance from the pike. It was a large two-story red brick house. Mr. Franklin and his wife had one daughter, Martha. Martha was such an attractive little girl, with big brown eyes and a happy smile; and she wore her hair in two braids, tied with ribbons. She was a most friendly child and she often rode her pony out to see my sister and me. She lives in another section of town now, and is Mrs. Howard Eskridge. Their home place has been subdivided and several streets and many homes replace the original beauty. Across the pike from the Franklin’s there were two houses not too far apart. The first one was the Hickman home, a one story white frame house, with a big yard, and surrounded by several acres. The place has recently been sold by the son Judge Litton Hickman. The trees have been uprooted, the house torn down, the lovely flowers transplanted into different yards, and a large modern grocery store stands ready to serve a thickly populated area.

Next door neighbors to the Hickman’s were the John Chadwells. Their house was a one-story white frame which was very quaint looking. It either burned or was remodeled and a modern two story frame home stands in its stead.

The next home to the John Chadwells was that of the George Strattons. It too was a one-story frame house and it was always so neat and well kept. So many times I have seen Mr. and Mrs. Stratton ride out the pike in their phaeton, driving a big bay horse. Their home still stands, but it has given way to some modern uplifts and has lost much of its simple home-like charm. Across the road from the Stratton’s home was the home of Mr. and Mrs. W.B. Walton. It had a most southern atmosphere, with a yard of magnolias and boxwood together with many other shade trees. It was a red brick house and once you entered you felt as if you had entered a house of storybook fame. The antiques and fine old rugs and draperies spoke as only such things can of ancestors of other days. This lovely old home has been turned around and it now faces a new street, Burchwood, and it too has undergone drastic changes. A filling station operates in what was once their lovely front yard.

On out the pike from the Walton home there was a small red brick house, where Mr. Casper Zopfi and his family lived. Mr. Zophi raised a market garden, and the straight rows of growing vegetables was my ideal of a perfect garden. What became of the original house I do not know, but there is a street named after the industrious little man, Zophi St. Thus it goes, man gives much or little to the world, and usually when life is over, such small memorials, if any, are erected to their memory.

Maynor Farm, where Dr. J.C. Loftin and his family lived, joined the Zophi place. Dr. Loftin married Miss Maynor, whose parents had built the house. The house still stands, and its quaint beauty of exterior and interior has expressed through the years, the high type of cultured people that planned and furnished the home.
Dr. Loftin was a typical high class country doctor of his day, who was loved and respected by the whole community. He and his wife had two sons and a daughter. The little girl died when she was small, and Mrs. Loftin had died when I first knew the family. Dr. Loftin was one of those rare characters one seldom meets, who to know them is to love them. He came into the sick room with a smile on his face, and before he left the patient felt much improved after hearing several of his hearty laughs. He wore a long beard which was snow white, and he was always immaculate.

He drove a bay horse to a buggy with a top to it. He carried a little black bag, in which he carried his medicines--while he made his call, he would mix the medicines; a little of this powder and a little of that, and then he would wrap the powder up in little squares of white paper; and give verbal directions for taking. He always seemed to know just what the trouble was, and just what medicine to give. The first thing the patient must do was to show his tongue to the doctor. As a child, I thought all one had to do was to let the doctor see your tongue, and he could tell what ailment you had. No matter how bad the weather or how dark the night, if any of his patients needed him, he never failed to go to them.

The small sum of two dollars for a professional visit was charged, and he was very lenient about collections. Dr. Loftin’s home still stands where his son Mr. Frank and his wife
live. What a heritage Mr. Frank has, and one can easily tell he was brought up “in the old school,” for he carries the air of a true Southern gentleman.

Across the road from the Loftin’s there was a large farm known as the Foster place. The house was impressive looking, sitting a long distance from the road. Its grandeur has long since been replaced by any number of modern homes, and several businesses front on the pike. The Foster farm was joined on the north by a large farm which at one time was used for the County Poor House. When I first knew it, Mr. Phil Shelton was the owner.

Mr. Mora Sharpe owned the adjoining place to Mr. Shelton. Mr. Shelton’s and Mr. Sharpe’s farms were sold and subdivided and Inglewood has become a thriving little community in their stead. For a good many years Mr. Sharpe’s home was used for the Inglewood Golf Club House, but today it is an apartment house. Shelton Avenue was originally the drive leading to the Shelton home place, and Greenfield Ave. was once the drive to the Sharpe home.

On the west side of the pike opposite the Shelton property was a two-story log weather boarded house, which was known as the Martin place. The story goes that Sam Houston spent some time in this home visiting either his or his wife’s relatives.

From the Martin property for over a mile out the pike was the large estate which at one time belonged to Jere Baxter. Maplewood Lane was the Northern boundary line of his property. Maplewood School was on a small part of the original farm. There were several small houses facing the pike on this land, which at one time had been used for tenants or caretakers.

The main house stood at the end of what is now known as Curdwood Boulevard, and it was a magnificent looking place. Joining Mr. Sharpe’s farm on the eastern side of the pike was a large farm that consisted of hundreds of acres, and was known as the Williams place. The main house was located near where Sunnymead Drive now is. In fact I think that was the drive to the house which sat about a quarter of a mile from the road.

The Williams property had a pike frontage of about a mile and on the northern boundary it joined the Craighead place, or the place which father bought. Today all of the farms have been cut up in small lots and sold, and many, many homes have been built. The Gallatin Pike has become a four lane highway, and is one of the most traveled roads in the state.

Man speeds on the highway day and night in his high powered automobile. We are told that we are making progress as the old gives way to the new methods and the more modern way of life. That may be true, and it may not be. When the Gallatin Pike was first settled man took time to live. He enjoyed his home and took a great pride in it, as the few remaining homes give evidence of. He moved more deliberately and gave more serious thought to the way of life, and showed a greater interest in his neighbors.
The quietness of Sunday afternoons was broken only by the whistle of a train in the distance, or by the echoes of the sound of horses’ feet as they trotted along the dusty road, carrying some lovers a ‘courting or friends going to visit other friends. The families of long ago, who settled along the pike were highly respected citizens who helped to lay the foundations of our city and our society.

The noise and speeding of the cars sometimes seem to get on my nerves, but I cannot feel that I would be happy anywhere else. I have lived by the side of the Gallatin Pike for so many years. I feel that it is a part of me, and I am a part of it. I love every foot of it, even if I do feel that man has been very unkind to it, in his tearing down of the old and beautiful and replacing with much that is unattractive and undesirable. I am grateful that I knew it when it spoke to the traveler in terms of beauty, refinement and culture, in its lovely architecture and in its stalwart citizens.

Neighbors

When we moved to the country, neighbors lived very far apart, there was no such thing as “over the fence visiting.” The nearest neighbors we had were the George Bradford family, whose farm joined ours on the north. Their home was at least a quarter of a mile from ours.

The farm, “Evergreen Farm,” had belonged to the Bradford family for several generations. Mr. George Bradford and his wife Mattie Walton (formerly of Robertson County) and their only child, Jean lived there; and also two old maid sisters of Mr. Bradford, Misses Irene and Grace Bradford.
Another sister, Locke, and a bachelor brother, Will Bradford, had previously left the old home place. Miss Locke had married a Mr. Robert McClure, and had moved to another state to make her home. Our family and the Bradford family seldom visited one another, in fact Mrs. Bradford and Jean did not seek their friends in the community, but attended church in Nashville. And the friends they made were mostly from the city. Miss Irene and Grace both died a short time after we moved into the neighborhood.

The Bradford house was one of the prettiest in the vicinity. It was most impressive and substantial looking, in its perfect setting. The spacious rooms were furnished with handsome antique furniture, much of which had belonged to the Bradford family for generations. Lovely portraits hung on the walls in the parlor. Two of the prettiest I have ever seen were of Mr. Bradford’s mother and of his aunt, Miss Sallie Brown. It was with a great sense of pride that Mr. Bradford pointed out the portraits of his various ancestors, and told something of the history of each.

Large mood burning fireplaces heated every room. In later years, after I had married, I have often sat before a hickory burning fire in that old parlor, with the silent eyes of those people hanging in the frames gazing at me. And I have felt honored that I could be a guest amid such hallowed memories of the past. The atmosphere of the architecture of the house and its surroundings were typical of the hospitality and the grandeur of the old South, and Jean grew up thinking that ancestry was the most important thing in life.

So many times in later years my heart ached for her, when she was left along in the home, after the death of her parents, as she clung so desperately to the material things that had been handed down through the generations.

_The Walton Home_

“Glen Echo” the palatial home of Capt. And Mrs. W.B. Walton and their family, joined the Bradford place. The two-story house was built in 1795 of handmade bricks.
Glen Echo

It was built on an Indian mound, and at the foot of the hill on the south side, there was a
never failing spring covered by a rock spring house.
Capt. Walton was a widower with five children when he married the young widow Emily Donelson Boddie, who had a small daughter, Laura. Capt. And Mrs. Walton had five daughters of their own, Lena, Carrie, Alice, Fanny and Daisy. We never visited in their home, for we were not very well acquainted with them. They attended church in Nashville so we seldom saw them. I did have some of my best loved paper dolls named for three of them, “Miss Alice,” “Miss Fanny” and “Miss Daisy.” So I am sure that I had seen them enough to admire them. And I thought Lena was such a pretty name that I often wished I had been named Lena.

Mrs. Walton was the daughter of Mr. Stockley Donelson, and the great-granddaughter of Col. John Donelson, of pioneer fame.

Glen Echo was bordered on the north by Walton’s Lane, (a narrow lane that led to Briarsville, a colored settlement) and the south side of the National Cemetery also fronted this lane. Capt. Walton died in August 1908, after a short illness.

Mrs. Walton lived to be almost a hundred years old. She was loved and respected by her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and by a host of friends. The lovely old home is still occupied by Miss Alice and Miss Fanny and by Lunsford and Laura Hollins. Laura is the
daughter of Laura Boddie Sharpe and Mora Sharpe. The various members of the large family connections continually return to Glen Echo, around which so many cherished memories linger.

Time has made many changes in the family circle, but the family ties were so closely knit; that every member is most loyal and is very proud of their ancestral heritage.

Hayesboro Farm

Recollections of my childhood and girlhood would never be complete without a vivid description of Mr. Bob Love and his home place, Hayesboro Farm, where Mr. Love and his nephew, Mr. Jack McGaughey, lived.

Mr. Love was an old bachelor and was around seventy years old when I first met him. He had the kindest face, which was softened even more by silvery white hair. He was very fond of children and in turn they adored him.

He raised honeybees, and on every visit I made, he would give me honey to eat, in its original state, in the honey comb. It was always a source of mystery and interest to me, how the bees could make the honey. So in my innocence I came home from one of my visits so enthused over the thought of seeing the bees make honey, that I got a glass fruit jar and started catching the bees as they sucked honey from the white topped clover in our yard.

I placed them in the jar, and all went well for the first few that I caught. But alas, I caught hold of one that gave me a genuine sting. My enthusiasm for catching them was at an immediate end, but the incident was told to Mr. Love by my parents; and he gave me a bee hive filled with bees. Many childhood hours I spent watching the bees as they kept so busy going in and out of the hive in their quest for honey. Mr. Love enjoyed games and I learned to play casino with him and we spent hours sitting on the front porch of his home playing. Mr. McGaughey was a good looking bachelor, with black hair and dark eyes and he wore a moustache.

A short time after we moved to the community he married Miss Rena Fergusson of Madison. They became some of our best friends and were some of our closest neighbors. Their home was at least a half mile from the pike, and it was almost hid from view by fields of growing crops.

At the back of the house there was an old-fashioned vegetable and flower garden, in the center of which a path led from the house to a log barn, and on either side of the path were fruit trees. On the north of the house, at the foot of a hill, there trickled a most fascinating little creek. A rock spring house covered in Virginia Creeper stood over the spring. Many times I have waded in the creek, where the water felt so good to my bare feet.

The house was so quaint and old-fashioned looking. It was built of frame and painted white, and green shutters were at the windows. It had a central room with a huge wood burning
fireplace, over which was a high mantelpiece, beautifully but simply carved. This was Mr. and Mrs. McGaughey’s bedroom; and where many of my happiest hours of childhood were spent. Opening out of this room was a bedroom which Mr. Love occupied until his death a few years later. A narrow enclosed stairway led from Mr. and Mrs. McGaughey’s room to an upstairs bedroom. Back of their bedroom was the cheery looking dining room, with its large open fireplace.

The furniture in the dining room always appealed to me, it was so simple and quaint. There was an extension dining table and a cupboard with glass-paned doors and several dining chairs. On the mantle shelf stood a tall antique clock that lazily ticked out the hours.

Back of the dining room there was a passage way from which the kitchen was entered. At the front of the house there was a bedroom entirely separated from the other part of the house except it opened onto the front porch.

Mr. McGaughey was a man of sterling qualities, and accepted life very quietly and slowly. He was always calm and collected, and enjoyed simplicity in life. Mrs. McGaughey was most industrious, always busy doing something. She liked to crochet, embroider and make tatting and she was very fast with the needle. She was an artist too, and her drawings and sketches were always an inspiration to me. She enjoyed canning fruits and vegetables from the garden, and many of the long summer days she spent in canning these for winter use.

Many times mother carried our fruits and vegetables to her house and we would can together, thus making our work easier and more enjoyable. Almost every year just before Christmas, Blanche, sister and I would go over to Mrs. McGaughey’s and make candy for the holidays. I still use many of the recipes for making candy that we made when I was a girl.

Mr. and Mrs. McGaughey did not have children of their own, but were real pals to all of the children in the neighborhood. They were better known to the young folks as, “Boss” and “Sam.” “Boss” was the nickname Mrs. McGaughey had for her husband and he affectionately called her “Sam.” Because they entered into any plans the young people had for a good time, it was they who chaperoned the young people of the neighborhood on many wiener roasts, opossum hunts, picnics and parties.

Their large farm lay from the Gallatin Pike to the Cumberland River; from Spring Hill Cemetery to the Williams property, and those acres afforded sister and me much that is really essential to the development of childhood. I have helped pick blackberries in those fields, have gathered persimmons and walnuts from the woods, and have fished along the river bank, and waded in the creeks.

Boss and Sam always went along to chaperone us, and entered into all of our activities; and were real pals with us. I feel that I owe much to this couple and to their home, for the rich experiences I enjoyed in my youth.
Boss passed away many years ago and Sam continued to live in the old home for several years, where her maiden sister, Nina, also made her home. In recent years she built a modern home on, Lovewood Drive, a street that runs through a part of the original farm. She says she built a “push-button” house so that she could live in comfort. She sold the old home, and as she turned over the key to the house, no doubt she turned the key to her heart, locking in memories that she will cherish throughout her lifetime.

The entire farm has been subdivided and sold in lots; and the community which has built up is called, “Hayesboro.” Many homes now stand where once were woods and fields, and it seems such a pity that the quiet, simple life has passed away with the coming of the new and the modern.

The Kerr Family

After a few years father sold a five acre strip of ground on the north end of the land across the road from our house, to a Mr. J.L. Kerr who had moved to Tennessee from Texas. Mr. Kerr built a two-story frame house on the land, where he and his family moved.

Mr. and Mrs. Kerr had six children but only three unmarried daughters lived at home. Miss Grace was the oldest of the three girls and she was a very frail person, with a lovely voice. We enjoyed hearing her sing and quite often we could hear her sing the popular songs of the day, as we sat in the swing in our yard. She sang, “Glow Worm” with so much feeling and expression, and I never hear it sung, that my thoughts don’t wander back to the days when she sang it. Maria, was the next oldest, and she was a quiet, refined little person, with a most pleasant smile. Alamanza (or Manza, as we called her) was the youngest member of the family. When the family moved from Texas they left behind a young man, Ray Stiff, who was in love with Alamanza, and from all accounts the family had hoped the love affair would be forgotten.

One winter night sister, Blanche and I went to visit the Kerr girls, as we often did. We had a nice visit, but returned home rather early. The next morning we were horrified at the news that Alamanza and Ray had run away to Nashville and gotten married, soon after we left. Mrs. Kerr sent for us, and when we arrived she was prostrated and had gone to bed. She was pitiful and heart-broken, and as she talked with us, she told us never to do such a thing. Alamanza and Ray came back home the night they married, and for several days the family were busy getting things ready for them to go to Texas to make their home. We girls never felt quite the same toward Alamanza, for we were so disappointed in her.

The Kerr family were staunch Presbyterians and attended the Russell St. Presbyterian Church. They were very cultured and refined people, and made lovely neighbors. Miss Grace died and Maria married Mr. Ivan Cushing and moved to Indiana, so Mr. and Mrs. Kerr sold their home and moved to a smaller home on Franklin St. in East Nashville.
The Spotswood Family

After the five acres were sold to Mr. Kerr, father sold the remaining land across the pike to Mr. Alvin E. Spotswood who owned the Hay Market Mills in Nashville.

Mr. Spotswood built a lovely two story yellow brick house, which had all of the conveniences and luxuries of an ideal home. He also built a fine barn, garage and a caretaker’s house; which the thirty acres required. Mr. and Mrs. Spotswood had three children. Odell the oldest, was a very dainty and pretty little girl, Alvin Jr., about two years younger, and George Washington, or. G.W. as he was called, was the youngest. Richard was born a short time later and Russell Tarpley, the baby of the family, was several years younger than Richard.

Mr. Spotswood was a rather quiet person, and did very little visiting among the neighbors. He was very pleasant and enjoyed having his friends visit him. He was a wonderful provider for his family, and had everything to make the children happy and contented.

Mrs. Spotswood was a pretty woman and was a most capable person. She was a wonderful mother and homemaker. She accepted life with a most optimistic attitude, and her greatest pleasure, seemingly, was in gathering her family together, and “the more the merrier,” for her heart was filled with love for her family. Many of my girlhood memories cling around that home, of its family, and their kin, who visited them so often. They were good friends and fine neighbors.

The Will Bradford Family

About the time that Mr. Kerr and Mr. Spotswood were building their homes, Mr. Will Bradford and his wife, the former, Miss Hattie Lee Maderis, of East Nashville, were building a two-story red brick house on the part of the Geo. Bradford land, that joined our farm.

Mr. Bradford was several years older than his wife, and he was very proud of her and of their three little girls, Sarah Claire, Harriet Locke and Marion Maderis. Mr. Bradford was a very plain spoken man, as all of the Bradfords were, but he was a good man. Mrs. Bradford had several sisters and some of her people usually made their home with them. A sister, Mrs. Sallie Vertrees, lived with them as long as she lived. She had three sons, Woodford, Robert, and Duncan, and they spent much of their time there too. Mr. Phil Shute, a cousin of Mr. Bradford’s lived with them until his death.

With the addition of the Kerrs, the Spotswoods and the Bradfords, the neighborhood became very friendly and visits were exchanged often. The women and girls formed a sewing
club which met once a month, and it proved to be a most enjoyable way to get better acquainted, and to keep up with the happenings in the community.

Spring Hill Cemetery

About three quarters of a mile out the pike were two cemeteries, the first one on the right was Spring Hill Cemetery, which was owned by Mr. J. Taylor Stratton. It joined the Bob Love place, and it was the burying ground of some of the city’s earliest settlers. There were two entrances to the cemetery. Large iron gates, were closed and locked at sundown every evening.

As a child I spent many Sunday afternoons walking over the cemetery reading the names and the epitaphs on the quint markers and monuments of the dead. Today it would seem to the average young person a very uninteresting way to spend an afternoon. But I think I learned to feel a reverence and sanctity for the burying ground that young people of today do not acquire.

I have watched many funeral processions pass our house, and the slow trot of the horses as they made their way to the cemetery, created a deep sense of humility and reverence for the dead. The carriages and hearse were all black and shiny and were usually drawn by pairs of black horses. In the case of the death of a child or a young person, a white hearse was used, drawn by a pair of white horses. It was a long slow trip from Nashville, and a good many times on hot summer afternoons, the family or friends of the dead, have stopped by our home to ask for a drink of cool water.

Through the intervening years many acres have been added to the cemetery grounds, and countless people have been buried at Spring Hill. The grounds have been beautified by landscape architects and a lovely mausoleum has been erected in the center of the cemetery, where the sacred remains of those who prefer a tomb to a grave in the earth, are at rest. When I walked over the cemetery as a child, the graves that I visited were usually of those I had never known, but as the years went by many of my friends and acquaintances have been laid to rest. And the time came, years later, that many of my own loved ones were lovingly buried in that hallowed “City of the Dead.”

The National Cemetery

The National Cemetery was on the left of the pike, opposite Spring Hill Cemetery. Northern soldiers who fought in the War Between the States, and lost their lives, were buried in this cemetery. It consisted of many acres of land, and a rock wall surrounded the grounds; and an impressive entrance gate opened on the pike.
Rows and rows of small stone markers marked the graves of the soldiers. Stately trees, so many of which were pines, shaded the grounds. Capt. Doolittle, the caretaker, and his wife, lived in the house on the grounds, and had the cemetery grounds kept in park-like beauty. Capt. Doolittle was the father of Mr. Everett Doolittle, and he was a most distinguished looking gentleman with white hair and a white beard.

He was a native of the northern states, and as the custom of the Southerner, he was spoken of by some as a “Yankee.” In my ignorance of the meaning of the word, whenever I saw him passing our home in his buggy, I would run into the house. I did not know just what kind of murderous feat he would perform; and it was several years later that I realized the meaning of the word, Yankee. Prejudice is like a poison, and it is so easily instilled into the hearts of children.

It is gratifying to know that much of the bitterness caused from that war is steadily being erased from the minds and hearts of the people. On Declaration of Independence Day, it was most interesting to see the crowds of people wend their way to the National Cemetery to decorate the graves of the soldiers with small United States flags and flowers. I never attended any of the services on this day, but I always enjoyed watching the throngs of people pass our house, on the way to the cemetery.

Capt. and Mrs. Doolittle attended the Madison Presbyterian Church, and were loyal and fine people. “Miss Mamie,” as Mrs. Doolittle was called by her friends, was a very dressy little woman, and her clothes and especially her hats always intrigued me.

The few neighbors in the community and the quietness and simplicity of life during my childhood, caused me to include the burying grounds, among the most important memories of my early life.

**Buford College**

Sister having finished public school a year ahead of me she made the choice of the college to which she would attend. Even though I had always planned to attend High School, the pattern of my future school days had been set for me. When September, 1911 rolled around I found myself enrolled as a boarding student at Buford College. The 1911 Catalog the College sent out was most attractive and described the school in the following unique terms:

Buford College, Nashville, Tennessee: a limited, select home college, for the higher culture of women. The limited enrollment guarantees personal care and character-building in the making of a woman for womanly ends.

The select student body creates a delightful, social atmosphere and rare personnel. The thoroughly Christian education promotes the harmonious unfolding of body and soul. The ideal location, within twenty minutes of the ‘Athens of the South,’ offers all the comforts
of a delightful suburban home, and all the advantages of a great educational center. The high attitude insures pure air, the springs, wells and cisterns pure water, the garden and wholesome cuisine pure food, the dairy pure milk, the poultry fresh fowls and eggs, and the laundry freedom from contagion.

The buildings are home-like, only two stories in height, surrounded with spacious galleries, and all the college work upon the first floor. The sanitation has been pronounced practically perfect, while Athletics and Physical Culture are emphasized. No death, no elopement, no casualty in the history of the Institution for twenty five years.

Within the last two years the curriculum has been raised to ‘The Standard College Course,’ guaranteeing the harmonious development of memory, imagination, reason and conscience, appealing to the high school graduate and to young women ambitious for higher culture.

The superior opportunities in language, literature, art, music, expression and domestic science, are unsurpassed. The University Bible Course is a liberal education, unifying all knowledge. The rare personnel of the faculty, composed of consecrated Christian women, native of the South, with University and Conservatory training, supplemented by a scholarly Lecture Corps, representing every department of the college, combine to insure mighty results.

Attracted by these favorable conditions and opportunities, Buford College, has drawn her patronage from every section of the United States and five nationalities. The great purpose of the college is ideal ‘Womanhood’ prepared to become home-makers, intelligent devoted wives and mothers, for the uplifting of humanity.

--E.G. Buford, Regent; Mrs. E.G. Buford, President.

Buford College was located about five miles south of Nashville, and the Glendale Street Car, served as the means of transportation to and from school. The buildings sat about two hundred feet from the main entrance gate; and were surrounded by lovely shade trees.

One of the buildings, “Chambliss Hall,” was a large two-story frame with a porch or gallery upstairs and downstairs, on all four sides of the building. The front door opened into a large hall, in which was the staircase that led to the upstairs rooms. Back of the staircase, double doors opened into the main dining room. Long tables which could seat at least a hundred girls were placed across the room. The building was steam heated, and two bathrooms upstairs served the occupants of the building.

From “Chambliss Hall” a concrete walk led to a newer and much more modern, two-story brick building, “Burgess Hall.” The lower floor of this building was used for the Chapel or
Study Hall, and class rooms. The upstairs was filled with bedrooms, except for the art studio. Directly back of the chapel, there was a large recreation room.

The Chapel had desks for the students, and there was a large rostrum on which Mrs. Buford sat as she taught her different classes; and all of the school programs were presented from this stage or rostrum. A baby grand piano, and several chairs, together with the large table Mrs. Buford used, constituted the furnishings. Several large portraits hung on the wall and also framed mottos, one of which I remember, inscribed in gold on a grey background were the words, “Through Nature Up to Nature’s God.” On the corner stone of Burgess Hall the following quotation was inscribed, “That our Daughters may be as Corner Stones, Polished after the Similitude of a Palace.”

Countless times I have read this inscription, as I passed the corner stone each time I came from Chambliss Hall, and no doubt it became indelibly inscribed in my heart. Blanche, Sister and I occupied an upstairs bedroom in Chambliss Hall, it was a corner bedroom. A large bell that hung in a tree under our window was rung for classes to change and also every morning to awaken the girls. In about thirty minutes it was rung again, this time everyone was supposed to line up on the gallery, to march into the dining room. Shed a colored man, and his wife Millie were the cooks, and it was Shed who rang the bell in the morning.

Each table in the dining room seated about twelve or fifteen girls. Mrs. Buford sat at each table for a week at the time and she called on a different girl from the table, to return Thanks. In that way every girl was trained to give Thanks before eating.

Mrs. Buford also guided the conversation at the table and her lovely table manners were soon imitated by the girls. On special days such as, Valentine, Easter, Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas the menu and table decorations carried out the motive of the occasion.

A covered porch led from the rear of Chambliss Hall to a little frame cottage, “Reeves Cottage,” where Mr. and Mrs. Buford and Mrs. Buford’s sister, Miss Louise Burgess lived. Miss Burgess, better known as “Miss Louie,” taught music and her studio was located in the cottage where she lived.

Mr. Buford was a tall, good looking man with dark hair and eyes and he was a trimmed moustache. He was a quiet person but very pleasant, and all of the girls loved and respected him. He attended to many things about the place.

Mrs. Buford was known to the girls as “Mother Buford.” She was a very distinguished looking person and had a most queenly manner. She was of medium height, but rather stout; her hair was snow white, and I never saw her when she was not perfectly groomed. She usually wore a string of pearls around her neck, and she had some lovely pins studded with tiny pearls that she wore much of the time. The girls all loved her, and her influence upon their lives was unbounded.
Her ideals were of the highest type and she instilled into the lives of those about her, principals and aspirations that no doubt have followed many throughout their entire lives. She taught Bible and Literature, and she was an excellent teacher. William Shakespeare, to her, was the greatest character found outside of the Holy Book. She quoted many passages from his various works; and she loved everything that he had written. In both Chambliss and Burgess Halls the teachers acted as monitors in keeping order among the girls. Miss Lucy Gray Kendall and Miss Ella DeLong Winfield shared a room in Chambliss Hall.

Miss Kendall was the English and Foreign Language teacher. She was a rather small person, and her hair was light brown and her eyes blue. She was a most capable teacher and a very pleasant person. Miss Winfield was a very dignified person with a most charming manner. She was tall, with black hair and dark eyes and class features. She taught mathematics, and she ranked among the highest in her profession. Their bedroom was at the far end of the hall from our room. Wherever you saw one of them you usually saw the other. Miss Winfield leading the way and Miss Kendall following close by. The girls called them the “Cat and the Kitten,” but of course only when they were out of hearing distance. Miss Virginia Derrick, from Arkansas, another teacher occupied the room next to ours. One of her sisters usually shared her room.

Miss Virginia was a very sweet person with red hair and brown eyes. When things upset her eyes could really snap and she would talk so fast it was hard to understand her. We all got along with her fine, and were always the best of friends. We did put things over though, such as midnight feasts in our room, but we had to be unusually quiet for fear she would hear us.

Mrs. Lillian Buchanan, the Art and Domestic Science teacher, and her three daughters, Ruth, Leah and Lucy shared a large room on the first floor. Mrs. Buchanan was a widow and the girls were rather small when her husband died. The girls were all most attractive, but Leah was my favorite; since we were class mates. Mrs. Buchanan was a very pretty woman with such a quiet, sweet manner. I always enjoyed the hours I spent in the Art Studio with her as my teacher.

Miss Edna Oliver, one of the piano teachers and Miss Olivia Lester, the voice teacher, roomed in Burgess Hall, and they were most attractive young women. I took piano and voice lessons from them, but I was never a credit to their ability.

Mrs. Sarah Bradley was the matron of the school, and was the mother of Sadie Bradley who graduated when I did. Miss Ann Puryear Wright was the Expression teacher.

During the three years I attended Buford College I came to know quite a number of girls, many of which were outstanding characters. Through the years that have elapsed many of them have proved to be a credit to the college and to humanity.

Any girl who fails to spend at least a year or two in boarding school has missed contacts, experiences and much happiness, that are of great value to her future life. I spent three of my happiest years in such an environment and graduated with an M.E. degree in May, 1914. The
graduating exercises were so impressive. For a week before school closed, various recitals, receptions and exhibits were enjoyed.

The Annual Commencement schedule from Thurs. May 21st to Thursday May 28th, 1914:

“Class Day” (College Campus) Thurs. May 21, 4 P.M.; “Senior Class Program” (Burgess Hall) “Promenade” (College Park) Thurs. May 21, 8 o’clock P.M.

“Art Exhibit” “Levee?” (College Salon) Fri. May 22, 8 P.M.

“Annual Alumnae Rally” (Burgess Hall) Sat. May 23, 4 P.M.

“Voice Evening” (Burgess Hall) Sat. May 23, 8 P.M.

“Commencement Sermon,” J.S. French, D.D. Nashville, Tenn. (Burgess Hall) May 24, 11 A.M.

“Y.W.C.A. Closing Vespers,” Address Allen Fort D.D., Nashville, Tenn. (Burgess Hall) Sun. May 24, 4 P.M.

“Expression Evening,” “Tennyson’s Princess” (Drama) (College Campus) Mon. May 24, 8 P.M.

“Senior Piano Concertante” (Burgess Hall) Tues. May 26, 8 P.M.

“Scholastic Graduate Reception” (College Parlors) Wed. May 27, 8 o’clock P.M.

“Graduating Exercises” (Burgess Hall) Baccalaureate Address, W.S. Faulkner, Attorney General, Tenn. Thurs. May 28, 10 A.M.

The Annual Commencement sermon which was given Sun. May 24 at 11 o’clock by Dr. J.S. French, pastor of McKendree Methodist Church was published, in part, in the Nashville Banner, and is as follows:

Dr. French chose as the subject of his sermon Hope,’ taking his text from the eighteenth, nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first verses of the first chapter of Ephesians. He said in part: Paul says in this chapter that the eyes of the heart must be opened first before we can see the way before us. How are the eyes of the heart to be opened? In considering this text let us look at it in three different parts. First, what is the hope of your calling? What are you young women looking forward to in life? What is your aim, your purpose? What are your plans? Are you considering the deeper things which, in the end, are the only things which count? What hope in your life stands out as the hope, the end most to be desired? What has all your education, your religion, done for you? Where is it leading you? What is to be the end of it all? The answer of a vast number of people to such a query would be, “I’m going along through life the best I can through good days and bad
days, just living the best I know how, and I hope when all is over I may get safely home to heaven above.” Now, my young friends, the trouble with this kind of an answer is that it does not go any further, it ends there. It isn’t big enough, it does not go far enough, and it has not caught the vision which Paul says comes only when the eyes of the heart are opened. There is something of vastly more importance than that, it is that hope expressed by Paul when he said he counted all things but loss in order that he might win Christ-- might be like Him--might pattern his life, as he passed along, after that of the great Server and Leader of mankind. And, after all, if you have this hope in your heart, the hope to be like Christ, all other things will take their rightful place in your soul’s journey here and hereafter. By winning Him, you win Heaven and every good thing God has laid up in store for the followers of His Son.

In the second place, the eyes of the heart should be opened in order that we may know what is His inheritance in the saints. God counts Himself rich in your affection. He is not concerned with majesty of the mountains. He is not interested in the power of the sea. And even the sun and moon and stars are of small importance to their Creator. The glory of Almighty God is in men and women. I say again, He is rich in your affection, and as you follow the character of Jesus Christ is He made happy. Nothing counts with God but character and His inheritance is the character of His Son revealed in the lives of men and women who have found Jesus Christ.

In the third and last place, if these two things are true, that character is worth gaining because it is best for the individual soul and because it makes happy the Lord, who loves us--how are souls, with their frailness and human weaknesses, to attain to that character which they believe worthwhile striving after? If we were dependent upon our own strength we never would attain it. But the text says if the eyes of our hearts are open we will see the power of Jesus Christ to do it all--to change us--to make us into the likeness of Himself.

Isn’t that a hope worthwhile, girls--not only the hope to be like Christ, but the hope which believes God will give us the power to become, through Christ, all that we would be?” A special feature of the service was the recitation by each of the seniors of a passage of scripture dealing with the keynote subject of the year and of the days, “Hope.”

Blanche and I graduated at the same time, May 28th, 1914. The graduating exercises were most impressive; the clipping from the Nashville Banner described it as follows:

Buford College was the scene this morning of an interested and appreciative gathering which assembled in Burgess Hall for the purpose of attending the annual commencement exercises of the school. The rostrum of the hall was beautifully decorated with the school colors of grey and gold, which formed a lovely background for the young students in their white silk caps and gowns.
The young women receiving the A.B. degree included the following: Misses Lucille Rosson, Kentucky; Stella Putnam, Ohio; Blanche Johns, North Carolina; Edith Parker, Texas; Mary Sue Brient, Mary Davis Read and Sadie Bradley, Tennessee.

Those receiving their degrees in the M.E. course were: Misses Sophronia Kelsey, Oregon; Maude Downer, Ruth Northington, Mary Rose Dinning, Nora Killebrew Downes, Kentucky; Ruby Graham, Alabama; Leah Buchanan, Lois Meguiar, Mary Emma Moores and Orlena Parry, Tennessee.

Post graduate students receiving diplomas in special subjects were, Miss Lockie Brown, Kentucky; Genevieve Brown, Oklahoma; Vera Bumpous, Julia Parrish and Rachel Ogilvie, Tennessee.

The baccalaureate address was delivered by Gen. Walter S. Faulkner of Lebanon. He spoke in his usual pleasing and inspiring manner, telling of the benefits of thorough training and education to young ladies who go out from such an institution in the world and of the success which awaits the student who mastered the work. The keynote of the 1914 graduating class at Buford College this year has been “Hope,” this thought being emphasized in many ways and on many programmes during the past school term.

Therefore the Commencement programme followed the idea in detail, every number being on that subject. Preceding the programme Mrs. E.G. Buford, President of the school gave a brief talk in which she explained the idea of the programme, saying that it carried hope as a unit of thought throughout.

After Mrs. Buford’s talk the programme of the morning was given as follows: “Hope,” piano duo, Miss Genevieve Brown, Miss Norma McMillian; Invocation, W.L. Caldwell, Nashville, Tenn. “Hope” (The Anchor of the Soul Both Sure and Steadfast) (Bible) Misses Read, Dinning, Kelsey, and Moores, Student body; “L’Esperance du Roi” (Adams) overture, piano sextette, Misses Kelsey, Leah Buchanan, Parker, Parry, Johns, Moores. “Hope Focalized,” The Holy City, Jerusalem, Miss Putman; M.E. representatives: Class, Miss Maude Downer, Hope Positive;” faculty, Miss Sophronia Kelsey, “Hope Relative;” College, Miss Leah Buchanan, “Hope Superlative;” Voice Violin, “La Speranza” (Rossini); “Hope Beatific;” Misses Brient, Beadley, Northington.

Art, “Hope Aesthetic,” Miss Meguiar; Miss Nora Downer, figure, proportion (Angelo); Miss Ruby Graham, action, symmetry, (Phidias); expression, “Hope Amarous”--“Enoch Arden,” poem (Tennyson) Miss Vera Bumpous; piano (Strauss) Miss Genevieve Brown; A.B. representative, class Miss Edith Parker, “Hope Unified;” faculty, Miss Blanche Johns, “Hope Energized;” College, Miss Lucille Rosson, “Hope Crystallized;” “Hope Divine” “Stabat Mater,” piano duo brilliant (Rossini) Misses Lockie Brown, and Genevieve Brown.
It was a matter of interest to those on the inside to know that the President of the College, herself, arranged and planned the programme, no small project when so many things had to be considered. At the conclusion of Mr. Faulkner’s address the choral class sang the “College Ode,” written by Mrs. Buford, who awarded the diplomas and degrees of the morning. As each young woman came forward, Mrs. Buford, in a few simple words received the work of the graduate, telling of her achievement in the special lines of study undertaken.

The last and most touching feature of the morning occurred when, kneeling before their high priestess, the young graduates were crowned by the beloved President of the school. Laurel wreaths woven from the bushes on Buford campus were, following the usual custom of the school, used as the crowns, and as Mrs. Buford placed them on the heads of the girls before her, she quoted a classic phrase appropriate to each student’s character and life ambition. When they arose from their knees at the close of the ceremony there was scarcely a dry eye among the laurel-crowned participants in the service. The benediction was pronounced by Dr. Carey E. Morgan, pastor of Vine Street Christian Church of this city.

The majority of the Buford students will leave Nashville today, a few remaining over until Friday and Saturday.

The Banner’s write-up failed to mention the fact that Mrs. Buford presented diplomas to the graduates. She also presented a lovely picture of herself and a Bible with the graduate’s name and the date she graduated inscribed in gold on the cover of each.

Dr. Faulkner’s address to the graduates was given in part in the local newspaper and is as follows:

Young ladies of the graduating class: I greet you on this your commencement day. You rest before my eyes as a rainbow of promise; but as a humble representative of a race of poor moral males, I stand before that promise with fear and with trembling. To view you one might consider you nymphs and muses with no other thought than modestly and peacefully to go forth into the world and gather the tomorrows, as roses into your aprons; but should he repose too serene a confidence in that picture of peace and promise you present, it is because he has not kept abreast with the trend of the times and is not familiar with the history of your sex.

The first woman was a militant suffragette. Though the first lady of the land, on her commencement day, she spoiled a garden of most beautiful hopes, turned flowers into thorns and thistles and made man forever a servant and a St. Patrick.

Since this day, when not engaged in toil on bruising serpents with his heel, man has spent his time in pursuing or fleeing from the woman. History reveals that man has made more
rapid strides than woman, but this is probably due to his having first adopted divided skirts. Though fashion has hobbled her, she has made much advancement in recent years. From the ducking stool she has risen to dispute the right to hold the reins of government and no man knoweth what a day may bring forth. We have seen the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, we have seen the Byzantine empire come and go, and so tomorrow we may behold rising in unparalleled magnificence and lighting the world with its splendor, the Bombazine empire with its vast domain extending from Kalamazoo to Calleo.

The split skirt brings freedom and when the tie that binds has been fully loosened the rose will be to the swift. Seriously, young ladies, the world you are this day to enter is filled with opportunities and hope, and inspiring Goddess beckons you onward.

Oh how I wish all the golden tomorrows that await you may be filled with pleasures that bring not remorse. As you go flitting through life like white butterflies in the sunbeams of fashion, remember a very wise man has said, “women, like moths, are caught by glare.” I would strive to impress you that anything in this or any other world that is not genuine, that is not substantial is not worthy of your admiration.

The ancients were wont to say, “Beauty rides on a lion.” The expression has a meaning. It is not the decoration; it is the outward show of inward worth. Your beautiful faces are aglow with the strength of health. The imitation sparkles as does the precious stone, but when you once discover the paste behind it, its glory fades.

There is another thought. I almost know you know it, but you will allow me to tell it here. Beauty is action; Speaking, rhythmic graceful motion. Nature is beautiful because it undergoes continual change.

Tell me not that girls should not be educated. That every faculty they have should not be given such training as to make the most of it, for how could you cope with the advancement of man and how could you be what God intended you to be unless you developed those powers He has given you. I would just as soon expect to see a flower without sunshine and shower, bloom and give forth its fragrance as to see a stagnant soul with an animating face.

Beauty without grace is the hook without the bait. Beauty without expression tires. A girl who is fit for nothing but to have her picture taken isn’t worthy of a moment’s time. How fortunate you are to have received the training of this excellent school and how worthy it is of you to have availed yourselves of the opportunities offered. This famous school has done for you what poets and novelists do for their heroines to make them admired and loved. It is the Shakespeare--it is the Scott, that has made of you real, living Juliets, Portias, Rowenas, and Rebeccas. I congratulate you, young ladies, that Mrs. Buford has baited your hooks with the real worm. There are those who would change the order of things if they could. They would place a woman in a sphere, never occupied by her in the
world’s history. There would be no meetings between Pyramus and Thisbe under the Mulberry tree.

Were I a painter and could I wield the brush, I would make for you a picture of what I conceive to be the grandest conception of realistic beauty. I would paint for you the picture of a true American mother with her babes. I would give to her the face of an angel and her eyes would beam with hope and love. I would make her the queen of a happy home, lighted with the joy of her heavenly smile, charmed by the music of her melodious voice. Her every thought would be for those entrusted to her care. Duty would be her guiding star, her only wages love.

Fameless, unheralded and unknown, but around her a halo glows that shows that God is nearer than any place on earth. In your creation you were not designed for brutal force. It does not become you. God has made you weak, but has given you a power more strong than physical force. You are those lamps which we this day commit to the stream of time. If you should stray from the paths of virtue and of truth—if you should fall among temptations and sink beneath the wave, then America will sink with you. But through the fluctuating voyage of your lives, should your lights ever shine as examples of virtue, America will still be the land of liberty giving light unto the world. Sister, sweetheart, wife, mother, home. All that has survived to us of a paradise lost. The golden links of love that chain us to our heavenly hope. In you lies the destiny of the world.

Young ladies, like little birds, full fledges, you are now to fly from the nest and the mother’s care. When the ark had floated upon the water’s bosom for months and months, we are told that from its window there were loosed two doves. One returned with an olive leaf, the other never returned. As you fly from the windows of the school today, may you someday bring back to us the olive branch of peace. But should you build your nest in some far away land and never return, may the prayers and blessings of this faculty abide with you forever and keep you steadfast.

After the exercises were over Blanche and I were congratulated by our loved ones and friends who had come to attend the graduating exercises. Among them were mother, father, sister (who had graduated in 1913), Aunt Addie Ware, W.T. Johns (Blanche’s brother) and Aunt Mollie Webb.

Blanche and I both received quite a number of gift flowers and we went immediately to A.J. Thuss, photographer, and had our pictures made in our caps and gowns surrounded by our lovely flowers. My reaction to my graduation from college was rather typical of most graduates, I imagine.

I felt that a definite part of my life’s activities had come to an end. I was standing on the threshold of a new venture. Even though I had finished school, I did not feel prepared for a business career. In fact there were not too many girls who worked in those days. School teaching
was the chief vocation and not having experience, I felt at a loss to know how to go about securing a position in a school.

Mrs. Buford had so thoroughly instilled into my heart, the fact that the highest aim and certainly the ideal goal for every girl, was that of a homemaker. I had no doubt that in due time my “Prince Charming” would make his appearance into my life!

Following an illness of more than three weeks Mrs. Elizabeth Burgess Buford, wife of the late Ellridge Gerry Buford, died at one o’clock Thurs. morning Feb. 12, 1920 at Buford College, at the age of 62. She was a native of Cornersville, Tenn. She was a graduate of the Columbia Athenaeum at Columbia, Tenn. She served for seven years as woman principal of Martin College in Pulaski. In 1901 she came to Nashville and founded Buford College, and had attained marked success in her life work.

With her death, the institution which she founded, closed its doors and became a cherished memory to many young women who had been benefited by the culture and high ideals for which their beloved Alma Mater had stood.

**Pattern of Life**

After a few days of relaxation, sister and I went home with Aunt Addie and Blanche to Shelby, North Carolina, for a several weeks visit. That visit was one of the highlights of my girlhood. The social life in a small town was a revelation to me, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. We met all of the young people that Blanche had grown up with, and that we had heard as much about. Aunt Addie and Uncle Robert Ware were so sweet to us, and did everything to make our visit enjoyable. Aunt Addie was mother’s youngest sister, and she was such a fine person. She was rather small of stature with brown hair and eyes, and a dimple in her cheek. She was rather hard of hearing, which seemed to irritate her at times, especially when she did not hear something Uncle Robert would say to her, and when he raised his voice as he repeated it. Uncle Robert was a dentist and had his office in Shelby. He received his education at Vanderbilt University in Nashville. It was while he was a student there that he met Aunt Addie, who was then a young widow. Several years prior she had married Mr. Mel Haynes in Florida, who lived only a few days. In fact, he was on his death bed when they married.

Uncle Robert called Aunt Addie “Missie” most of the time. He was a very affectionate man and liked attention, and Aunt Addie rather spoiled him as she humored his every whim. During our visit Aunt Addie and Uncle Robert displayed a great interest in all of our social activities. Late hours usually found Blanche, Sister and me sitting on the back porch with Aunt Addie and Uncle Robert enjoying a bowl of fresh peaches, as we told of all of the happenings of the day. So all in all, our visit was a glorious one, and the end came all too soon.
In the latter part of the summer after our return from Shelby, Sister and I were invited to Sonora, Kentucky to visit Uncle Charlie and Aunt Ada Meguiar. That was a wonderful two weeks of fun and good times. Uncle Charlies was my father’s half-brother. They had the same father but Uncle Charlie’s mother was my father’s step-mother.

Uncle Charlie was the only child of that marriage, and was a good many years younger than my father. His father died when he was quiet young, and his mother, (Granny as Sister and I called her) brought him up in Franklin, Kentucky. He went to Vanderbilt University where he graduated in dentistry.

He was such a nice looking man, with a quick mind and excellent taste in his dress and manners. He ranked among the highest in his profession. In fact he was honored with the presenting of the International Fellowship, for outstanding work in his profession. He was presented a lovely black cap and gown, elaborately decorated, at one of the national meetings.

Uncle Charlie’s office was in a part of their little home in Sonora. Aunt Ada was a native of Gallatin, Tennessee, being the only daughter of Capt. Charles Sanders and Sue Graham Douglass. During her young ladyhood she was considered one of the prettiest girls in Sumner County.

When we visited them she was a most attractive woman with a winning personality. She was full of life and fun and entered into all plans for making our visit enjoyable. Sister and I fell in love with both Uncle Charlies and Aunt Ada, for we had never really known them, since we had only seen them a few times. About a year after our visit to them they adopted a baby boy who they named Charles Douglas.

Sara Boddie of Gallatin, Tennessee, a cousin of Aunt Ada’s was visiting Aunt Ada and Uncle Charlie at the same time we were. She was such a pretty girl, with golden hair and blue eyes, and a charming manner. We three girls had such a lovely visit, and we became very fond of Sara, and the friendship has continued through the intervening years. Sonora was a very small town, but it had a few young people who helped to show us a good time; Emmett Gentry, Joe Mason, Mae Akers and Thad Lively who lived in a small town a short distance away.

When we left Sonora, Sister and I stopped off at Franklin, Kentucky where Uncle Fount Meguiar met us and took us to his home near Orlinda. He and his wife, Aunt Dora, lived at my Grandfather Meguiar’s old home place. The house was a large two-story white frame, with a small front porch downstairs and one the same size directly above it. There were shutters at all of the windows. The rooms were large and most comfortable in the summertime. My grandfather had built the house for his family, and had furnished it with rosewood furniture, which had been moved away years before. It was here that my grandmother, Rebecca Ann Williams Meguiar died, leaving her husband, two sons, Franklin (my father) and Fountain and one daughter Mary Belle.
About a year after my grandmother’s death my grandfather William (Buck) Meguiar married a local school teacher, Miss Maggie Self. In a few years the daughter Mary died at the age of nineteen; after a long illness. My grandfather also died at the home place, when his son Charles (by his second wife) was about ten years of age. So the memories that lingered around the old home place were very sacred, and they constituted in a very definite way, my own background.

Uncle Fount had bought the home place after the death of my grandfather, and had continued to make his home there and farm the land. Aunt Dora was a good cook and at meal time the table was literally loaded with all kinds of good food. She was a very quiet, retiring sort of person, and I thought one of the best people I ever knew.

Uncle Fount was a good looking man with brown hair and eyes that had a twinkle in them, and he wore a mustache. He loved a good time and enjoyed having company. He liked to sing and belonged to a neighborhood quartet, from which he derived a great deal of pleasure.

He and Aunt Dora had one son, Eugene, or “Gene” as he was called. He married while he was quite young, a Miss Lucy McKnight. He and his wife and three children, Harmon, Ammond, and Grace lived in Franklin, Ky. Sister and I visited with them for a few days before we returned home; and we enjoyed being in their home.

After our visit was over we came home and settled into the pattern of life which Mother and Father had established during our absence. The days passed, Spring came bringing with it the spring flowers. The jonquils or “butter cups” were scattered over the yard and when they bloomed each year, it was a sign to us that Spring had arrived. Later the fragrant pink, blue and white hyacinths bloomed. Several old-fashioned rose bushes and lilac bushes added beauty and fragrance with their profusion of blooms. A lovely coral honeysuckle grew by the south corner of the house, and its trumpet like flowers were always a joy.

Spring meant beauty and hope to me, with its freshness and new life. Father was usually planting the garden at the time the fruit trees were in bloom in the orchard. Nests full of downy little yellow baby chickens were peeping out from under their fussy mother hen. Loving hands were planting flower seed about the lovely tree filled yard.

It was Spring—the time of beginnings of all kinds of Life. Summer soon followed bringing many thunderstorms during the sultry days. We took refuge from the heat in the lawn swing in the yard under the shade of the maple trees. Many happy, carefree hours were spent this way, as we were entertained by watching the few travelers that passed in buggies and wagons.

The household chores were performed each day, and little happened that would have been of particular interest to most of the young people of today. We had quite a lot of company during the summer months, mostly relatives who came from a distance to make us a visit. We looked forward to Ruth’s homecoming each summer. Since she moved to San Antonio, Texas to
live in Jan. 1907, she usually came home every summer. At least she came until her marriage to Capt. Jeff Austin August 15, 1917, and from then on her visits were shorter and less frequent.

Fall returned with all of its gorgeous coloring. The turning of the leaves to shades of golds, reds, and browns always enthralled me. Even if it meant the dying of nature and the on-coming of winter, this was my favorite season of the year. It was harvest time, and we gathered in the late fruits and vegetables. Many nights the family sat around shelling black-eyed peas for winter use. Each of us contributed our part to the making of the home. Soon the nights would get cool, and fires had to be made in the grates, because Jack-frost had made his annual visit.

One night each Fall, when the Harvest Moon was shining bright a group of the neighbors would go to Mr. and Mrs. McGaughey’s woods and go opossum hunting. After the hunt, which usually ended without the opossum, a big bonfire was built. We all sat around the fire roasting marshmallows and wiener, and eating, singing and talking until the older folks said it was time to go home. It was a great sport, and the whole neighborhood looked forward to these occasions.

Winter brought with it the snow and ice and cold, which we felt very keenly with only grates to heat the house. The beauties of winter were never surpassed by another season; the snow and ice covered the trees and the vegetation making fairy-like patterns. I always loved it, even though we could not always be comfortable. There was a feeling of unity and closeness as we gathered around the open fire in Mother’s room.

Our light for reading was a coal oil lamp placed on a table near the center of the family group. Each night during our school days usually found Father helping me with Arithmetic problems, for that was always an impossible subject for me. Bed time came when the 9:30 Interurban ran in front of our house, as it made its way to the little town of Gallatin. The Interurban was our means of transportation except for the horse and buggy.

It passed every hour and how many, many times I have rushed to catch it as it went into Nashville. The first real cold spell meant “hog-killing” time had arrived. I always dreaded this time to come, for I hated to think of the hogs being killed, and too it meant a lot of work. The lard was cooked out in the yard in a large iron kettle and it had to be stirred continually. We always had Negroes to help with the work, but even so there was plenty for all of us to do. The meat had to be trimmed, the sausage seasoned and ground. And the weather was always so cold you could not be comfortable attending to any of it. The highlights of winter were Thanksgiving and Christmas; but especially Christmas.

For weeks before Christmas, Mother, Sister and I were busy making the gifts that we gave. Embroidery scarves, pillow cases, towels, handkerchiefs and such, to send to our Aunts and Cousins who lived in distant cities. A few days before Christmas Mother would start her baking, the big fruit cake was always the first to be made. Then a yellow layer cake iced in a thick chocolate icing with halves of English walnuts placed between each layer and on top.
was a white layer cake; iced in white icing and decorated with almonds and cherries; and always there was a lovely coconut cake, which was Father’s favorite.

Boxes of oranges always arrived from Father’s orange grove in Florida, and their arrival never ceased to be a thrilling occasion. For days before Christmas we would watch for the Postman to come so that we could mail our packages, and also hoping that he would bring some Christmas packages for us. The postman was Mr. Tom Shields who lived on Neely’s Bend Road. He traveled in a little white wagon or buggy that had a top on it and he drove a big black horse. He carried scales to weight the packages and collected enough money for stamps for mailing. Just before the holidays the mail was so heavy that night often found him delivering the mail. Madison was the post office that served this section. Mr. Shields was a very pleasant man, and he carried the mail for several years, he was married to Miss Anna Pearcy of Hadley’s Bend.

On Christmas day we usually had a big dinner at home and had cousins Mary and Eddie Davis and their little granddaughter, Beulah Mae, and Aunt Mollie Webb, to take dinner with us. Or else we would be invited to one of their homes for the day. They were the only relatives we had who lived in Nashville. Mother’s sister Laura Bridges and her family lived in Springfield, Tenn. Only about twenty-eight miles away, but a visit once a year, if that often, was the extent of seeing them. The Christmas holidays over we started back on the usual routine of living; thus the years passed, each patterned very much like the year preceding.

In August of 1916 Blanche wrote us a most exciting letter telling of her engagement to Mahlon Wright. She had met him in Sanford, Florida the previous winter while she was visiting her step-mother, “Miss Mattie.” He had just returned home from a ten days visit in Shelby, and it was while he was on this visit that they became engaged. Blanche was so thrilled over the lovely ring he had given her, and with their plans for a wedding the following summer.

Mahlon was a native of Hartwell, Georgia, but was working as a clerk in the Post Office in Sanford. Sister and I were thrilled too, and yet we dreaded the thought of Blanche marrying, for we realized she would not be “foot loose and fancy free,” and her visits to us would not be so frequent. But we immediately started making things for her Hope Chest, and kept up with all of her plans.

In May 1917 Sister and I left for Shelby. The wedding date had been set for June the sixth, and I was to be the Maid of Honor, and Sister was to be one of the bride’s maids. For a few weeks before the wedding many parties and social affairs were given in Blanches’ honor. Her trousseau was the last word in beauty and quantity. She had dresses for every occasion and accessories to match each outfit, and we were as excited as the bride. We were so anxious to meet Mahlon and I sent him a note in one of Blanche’s letters, and his reply, was proof of his excitement and happiness--

Monday
Dearest Cousin,

I appreciated your missive received Friday last, and was delighted to know you were having such a good time. I know you think the end is coming all too soon, but me, thinks ‘twill never come. But isn’t Blanche a good girl to have a good time with?

No, it behooves me to let others speak of her in commendable terms, she being part of my possessions. I know you are calling me all kind of bad names for breaking in to your pleasant visit. Never-the-less, I shall (the preacher said last night) “agonize” to attain the station of Dearest Cousin. But before we forget! What do you know about those cards, “Mrs. Wright?” Wouldn’t she be in a predicament should I join the Soldiers, and my “second” a married man? I am glad you and Miss Mary have gone to visit with Blanche as she needs your (I feel safe in saying) sane council. I hope she will continue to play the mirthful role. Am looking forward with the greatest pleasure in meeting my new cousins and shall look for that cordial hand. With very best wishes--I am most sincerely, Mahlon.

Hello Blanche, you too Cousin Mary.

A few days before the wedding Mahlon arrived! He was of medium stature with light brown wavy hair, grey eyes and a most pleasant manner. Sister and I gave him the “once over” and decided from the first that he was everything he should be. The wedding Day dawned bright and clear, and everyone set about to get the house in readiness. The ceremony was to be at Aunt Addie’s and Uncle Robert’s home at 515 W. Warren St.

By night the house looked lovely with a profusion of flowers, and an altar had been arranged in the living room. The local newspaper described the wedding in the following words:

Brilliant Wedding Wednesday Evening. A wedding of great beauty and social interest was solemnized on Wednesday evening at 8 o’clock at the home of the bride’s uncle and aunt, Dr. and Mrs. R.E. Ware, when Miss Blanche Johns and Mr. Mahlon Wright of Sanford, Fla. were covenanted in marriage in the presence of a large concourse of friends and relatives. In the spacious Ware home on this happy occasion, the effect was one of perfection, of arrangement and elegance. The bridal colors were pink and green as emphasized in the gowning of the maids and in the lovely floral decorations. White and green, however formed the color note for the bridal room. Before an altar of handsome ferns, arranged in pyramid from, showing the work of a skilled artist; and white pedestals twined with ivy, upon which rested silver cathedral candelabras with lighted tapers, the whole outlining the half circle for the bridal party, the vows were spoken, Rev. W.R. Ware, of Statesville, a brother of Dr. R.E. Ware’s performed the ceremony.

The gift room, in which many handsome presents were on display, was also in white, while in the dining room pink was beautifully in evidence. Just before the ceremony a delightful musical program was rendered, Miss May Kendall presiding at the piano. Miss
Mabel Irwin In her rich voice sang, “Schubert’s Serenade” while Mrs. J.L. Pendleman of Salisbury sang with beautiful effect, “At Dawning.”

At the appointed hour, sounded the notes of Lohengrin’s Wedding March, the bridal party entered. Miss Mary Meguiar of Nashville, Tenn. led the procession, making a pretty picture as she descended the vine clad stairway, being met at the lower step by Mr. Jack Dover, of this place.

Miss Meguiar was beautifully gowned in pink satin with tulle and iridescent trimmings, and carried sweet peas tied with pink tulle. Following came Miss Ruth Mundy of this city, with Mr. J.P. Wildman, of Chase City, Va. Miss Mundy wearing a handsome creation of pink satin with silver lace trimmings, carrying sweet peas. Master Baxter Childs, the son of Mr. and Mrs. E.T. Childs of Wadesboro, as ring bearer, handsome in a white suit, preceded the bride, carrying the ring hidden in a white lily. The groom with his best man and brother, Mr. J.C. Wright of Hartwell, Ga entered from the dining room and awaited his bride at the altar. The bride descended the stairs on the arm of her maid-of-honor, Miss Lois Meguiar of Nashville, Tenn. The latter, a pretty brunette, was a charming picture in the dress of Nile green meteor, with tulle and iridescent trimming. She carried a shower banquet of roses. During the ceremony Miss Kendall rendered softly, with lovely effect, “To a Wild Rose.” The bride wore an elegant gown of soft white satin, with over-dress of georgette and trimmings of real lace and pearls. She carried a shower bought of bride’s roses and valley lilies, and encircling her head was a wreath of exquisite orange blossoms to which the veil of tulle was fastened. Immediately following the ceremony an elaborate reception was held and during the reception hours hundreds of callers paid their respects to the bride and groom. A delicious ice course was served in the dining room while refreshing punch was dispensed in the rear hall.

Assisting Dr. and Mrs. Ware and the bridal party in receiving were: Mrs. C.R. Hoey, Mrs. L.P. Hennessea, Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Washburn, Mrs. J.H. Irwinn, Misses Mabel McBrayer, Della Stamey, and Elaine Hamrick and the members of the Ishpening Club, of which the bride is a valued member. Mr. and Mrs. Wright drove to King’s Mountain and caught the south bound train for Sanford, Florida, where they will make their home.

The wedding was the culmination of much thoughtful planning, and it was beautiful, and also very solemn as the bride and groom repeated the sacred vows. After the departure of the bride and groom, there was a “let-down” feeling that pervaded the household. Sister and I remained for several days after the wedding, but it seemed so lonesome without Blanche, we were glad when our visit was over and we were on the train headed for home.

On August 15th of the same year, Ruth married Capt. Charles Jeff Austin of the United States Army. The wedding took place at Aunt Lee Dukes home in Houston, Texas. After a quiet but impressive ceremony the bride and groom went to Galveston, Texas for a two weeks stay;
after which they returned to 440 Taft Blvd., San Antonio, Texas, where they made their home. On September the 1st Capt. Austin resumed his military duties at Ft. Sam Houston.

A Tree in the Forest of Life

The Family Tree is an interesting subject to the person who is speaking of his own family, but it can be a very boring subject to a disinterested audience. Somehow I have always rather admired the person who spoke of their ancestors in a proud but not in a boastful manner. In most instances I do not think it is at all necessary for a person to give definite accounts of the lineage of his ancestry, in order to be fully appreciated by society.

Usually the imprint of culture and refinement of past generations is very easily detected in the manners of a person, so that there is little use in the airing of the Family Tree. Fortunate is the person, however, who finds much in the lives of his ancestors, to try to emulate in his own life. And greatly to be admired is the person who finds these qualities and tries to reach even higher levels in his own life.

One of the saddest pictures in human society is the character who continually boasts of the “blue-blood of aristocracy” that flowed in the veins of his ancestors for past generations, and in an aimless sort of way, lives his own life without the least effort to add a greater fame and glory to the name he bears.

Some names have come down through the years bearing more fame than others, and the world appreciates the deeds that have made that true. Other names through the carelessness of the possessor, have been stained and blotted, and have lost the honor that was their inheritance. We can readily see that we could not possibly have been responsible for the actions of our forefathers, even though in some instances we might like to be able to erase stains and blots on our Family Tree. If there are such stains and blots, we can do much to erase them, in the fine upright lives we live. We can carry our name above reproach, and often can place it in the hall of fame, by deeds of valor that we perform.

Personally I have never spent a great deal of time digging up the past history of my Family Tree. So far as I have been able to learn, there was nothing to be ashamed of, and I am grateful that I was able to inherit a name that has stood for truth and courage. My Father used to tell me we were of Scotch Irish descent, and as a child that had very little meaning to me. He was proud of the fact, no doubt, for that was one of his earliest teachings to his children.

My paternal grandfather was William Meguiar, better known to his friends as “Buck” Meguiar. He was a son of John and Sarah Williams Meguiar, both natives of Robertson County, Tennessee.
John Meguiar was a farmer of Irish descent and accumulated a large property. He and his wife Sarah had three sons and two daughters: William, Thomas and Presley and Mollie and Lucinda. Presley was born April 15, 1825. At the outbreak of the Civil War he entered the Confederate Army and served throughout the four years in the Commissary Department. He went to Louisville at the close of the war and engaged in the tobacco re-handling business. He operated the firm of Meguiar and Helm. He was a member of the Chestnut Street Methodist Church and took a prominent part in Church work. He married Miss Nannie Curd of Bowling Green, Ky., who died in Louisville in 1873, and three years later he married Mrs. Mary Ray White of Mt. Sterling, Ky. He did not have children of his own but he had two step-children, Mrs. Robt. H. Trimble and John W. White of Mt. Sterling. In 1904 he died of pneumonia and was buried at Mt. Sterling, Ky.

I have no record of Tom Meguiar. Lucinda Meguiar married a Mr. Tom Waldron and lived in Franklin, Ky. They had one son, Presley. I saw cousin Presley Waldron several times, and he was such a nice person. He married but he and his wife did not have any children of their own. Mollie Meguiar never married. She was from all accounts a person of strong convictions. She spent her entire life in Franklin, Ky.

William Meguiar (my grandfather) was born March 26, 1816. I do not know anything about his early life. On Jan. 11, 1844, when he was 28 years old, he married Rebekah Ann Williams, eight years younger than himself. Rebekah Ann was a daughter of Matthew and Charlotte Williams. Matthew Williams was originally from South Carolina. He came to Kentucky and married the widow Charlotte Simmons Vick. Matthew and Charlotte Williams had four sons and two daughters. Thos. J. the oldest son was born Nov. 23, 1821; Rebekah Ann was born June 15, 1823; Francis M. (Frank) was born Sept. 15, 1824; Nick C. was born Dec. 10, 1825, another daughter, I don’t know her name, grew up and married a Mr. Davis, Cousin Eddie Davis was their son; Washington J. Williams the youngest child was born March 21, 1828.

My grandfather, William Meguiar and Rebekah Ann had three children: Alexander Franklin (my father) the oldest child was born Jan. 15, 1847; Mary Belle, the only daughter was born, Jan. 26, 1849; and William Fountain, the youngest child was born Nov. 23, 1853. My grandfather bought his wife’s home place after the death of her father, Matthew Williams. He paid $2568.00 for the 321 acres of land. My grandfather built a large two story frame house on the land and he and his family moved into the house. The farm was located between Orlinda Tenn. and Franklin, Ky.

William Meguiar was an extensive speculator and farmer. He was a good businessman and accumulated a large estate. He was a member of the Baptist Church, and he was also a member of the Masonic fraternity. He was a man of sterling qualities and definite convictions and he was highly respected by all who knew him.
I know so little about my grandmother, Rebekah Ann. She must have been a very industrious woman, because I have some lovely quilts that she pieced and quilted, and I also have some handwoven woolen coverlets that she made. I have a photograph of her and her mother, which I prize very highly. I have wished so often that I might have known her. I feel that I was deprived of much joy and happiness by not having known but one of my grandparents, and I was so young when Grandma Hilliard died, that I remember so little about her.

My grandmother, Rebekah Ann died May 12, 1863, when she was just forty years old. My father was sixteen years old when she died, Mary Belle was fourteen and Fountain was ten years old. My grandfather being left with young children, did as so many men do, started looking for an eligible woman, to be mother to his children.

A local school teacher, Miss Maggie Self, became the object of his attentions. A little over a year after the death of his wife, on Nov. 1, 1864, he and Miss Self were married. The marriage made quite a difference in the home, and the children were never really happy at home any more. Two years after the death of his mother, father wrote the following poem and sent it to his sister, Mary.

May the 12th, 1865

Sister--

This day two years ago our hearts were filled with grief you know we were mourning the loss of one whose place can be filled by none.

We were praying in vain, That she might wake again. But she sleeps on and on

Will she make ‘til the judgement morn.

Sister, when I think of that kind Mother. Who to us was dearer than friend or Brother.

It drives the tears to my eyes, and strengthens my prayers for a home in the skies.

Sister, my feelings I cannot express. For I am somewhat distressed. But I wish to remind you of the day when our good Mother was called away.

Sister, although our trials may be hard. I hope we will eventually reap our reward. High up in the Heavenly Land. Where we will clasp no more the parting hand.

Sister, when this you see, remember me. Though many a mile apart we may be.

--A.F. Meguiar
A little over three years after my grandfathers’ second marriage, a son, Charles Wilbur, was born Jan. 28, 1867. My Father and his sister, Mary did not spend too much time at home. During school months they both attended school away from home. Judging from many letters that I have read from my Grandfather to Father and Aunt Mary, he seemed to feel very keenly his responsibility of guiding both of them to adulthood. In many of his letters his advice to them seemed mature for such young people. A letter that he wrote Aunt Mary while she was away at school seems rather amusing advice.

It was rather typical of most of the letters that he wrote to her. It is well-written and well-preserved even though it is eighty-nine years old.

Franklin, Ky., April 15\textsuperscript{th}, 1865

Mary---

Your letter of the 8\textsuperscript{th} inst. is to hand. I am sorry that you speak so much more of coming home the 5\textsuperscript{th} Sunday, and of other things, than you do of your studies. You do not say a word about what you are studying or how you are getting along with your studies. Mary remember that I told you the object of sending you to school was to prepare you for usefulness and to entitle you to the name of not only were woman, but an accomplished Lady. Now how are you to do this, by a close application of your mind, and energies to your Books and Studies.

In this way you will in the shortest time prepare yourself, not alone for keeping company agreeably and interestingly, but for general usefulness, in this life. And do not forget that you have an Immortal Spirit destined to live as long as Eternity shall roll its ample rounds. This Immortal Spirit must either enjoy all of the joys and blessings of Heaven or all the curses and miseries of an Endless Hell.

Oh Mary, My Child, try and shun the later place and meet your Ma in Heaven. Read your Bible as well as other books and do not seem to think so much about keeping company until you get an education, and then if you and I live, I will give you every necessary opportunity to keep the best of company.

You speak of wanting to come home the 5\textsuperscript{th} Sunday on the cars. I do not want you to do this. You would have to change cars at Bowling Green and there be detained several hours among strangers, besides it would cost me not less than $10 or $15 for you to come home and get back on the cars. Though I do not mind the expense as much as I do you being thrown among strangers and no Gentlemen to see to all at Bowling Green.

I only consent for you to come Home the 5\textsuperscript{th} Sunday if you can get your cousin Sue Evans or Luan Vick or Miss Elin Penick and some clever Gentleman to come with you all in a
Buggy. Say Billy Evans or some studious nice gentlemen, perhaps Brother Gardner may come out in a Buggy: if he does and your cousin Sue Evans or Luan Vick will come with you, you may come on the 5th Sunday; or if Billy Evans will come with you and his sister Sue or Luan--in a buggy, you may come on Saturday before the 5th Sunday. But you must not come on Rail Road nor in a Buggy unless some Lady and clever Gentleman will come and go back with you--and if you can’t get someone to come in a Buggy with you, I want you to remain at School and try to be contented.

Pleasuring about is not the way to get an Education and this is what I am sending you to School for (an Education). It seems I will be broken up if this War does not stop. Since I last wrote I have had one horse and two mules taken from me. I have but little stock left to place, and your schooling this session will cost $100. Try and learn all you can Mary, free your mind from pleasure trips and place it on your books. And try to so act as to make your room mates, class, teachers, Mrs. Morton and all about the Academy love you. I am glad to hear you say Mrs. Morton is kind to you, be kind to her, that is the way to make friends.

We are all well. The Baby cannot crawl yet and has no teeth, but knows how to cry. Your Ma says she will write again soon. Write if you see a good chance to come home the 5th Sunday, so I may know it.

--Wm. Meguiar

Excerpts from some of his other letters show the type person he was and also the happenings in the world at the time he wrote them.

In a letter dated May 21, 1865, which he wrote to Mary--he says in part:

I have nothing of importance to write now as the fact that we are all well, this should give us all hearts to rejoice and make us feel unusually thankful to our Heavenly Father; who keeps a constant watch over us poor mortals; who are here for a few fleeting moments only. Then to be summoned to appear before Him, who gave us our existence, as we should consider, for a high and noble purpose. Then let us not fall short of that great design for which we were created.

First of all, we should prepare ourselves for usefulness in every way we can, and then pursue it with an unfahtering step; ever keeping our eyes and minds on the highest and noblest objects of earth. And to so conduct ourselves as to gain and attract the admiration of all who know us.

There are several of the boys just returning from the Southern Army We hope this cruel war is over. Mary, try to be as well prepared for the examination as you can. I know you have not had an equal chance with the rest of the school; but do your best and show that
you have done as well as any of them, for the time you have been there--this is all that will be expected of you by your teachers or anyone else. Be sure to know well all you profess to know.

I have had to talk to Franklin some about his carelessness and inattention to business, he seemed to think hard of it at first; but seems alright now. I hope he sees the importance and propriety of being advised by me, as all children should by parents; who are the best and only true friends that children have; they should therefore obey them.

You all ought to know that I will never advise you to a wrong thing, although you may not see it now. The time will come, if you all live, that you will see and acknowledge that your parents are your best friends. You may think that you are too much restricted in many ways, but you will see and acknowledge if you live long, it is all for your good.

Remember Mary the Bible says, children be obedient to your parents--in addition to this, your Dear Mother said when dying, Children be good children and mind what is said to you. These last words I had placed on your Ma’s tombstone, as a living memorial for you, her children, to look at when you want to know your duty to your parents as children. And I do not want you to fail to go when convenient to your Ma’s grave and look at and try to appreciate these dying words, spoken to her living children. Mary you ought to write your Aunt Lucinda, her health is not good, but better than it has been. Nothing more of importance. Your affectionate father, Wm. Meguiar.

Another letter written to Mary:

Franklin, Ky. Dec. 17th 1865

Mary--

As today is cloudy and snowy I failed to go to Church and seat myself to write to you, the last letter that I expect to write to you dated 1865. I may write you another this year though it is doubtful if I do or not. It is only one of the many things that we will never have an opportunity of doing in dates which are past and from us forever gone.

Just so, with you in your studies nothing that you have not accomplished in 1865, is now beyond your reach or nearly so; as its end is near at hand--and just so 1866--the ensuing year. Think of it Mary, what you fail to accomplish next year in your studies--to you is forever gone in that date. And as the events of 1865, politically speaking are of a character long to be remembered. Yes, I may say never to be forgotten should one event be; I.E. the War.
If you can accomplish anything next year in your Studies that should be as memorable to you as an individual as the War should be to us as a nation. Then you may truly say, you have accomplished great things; whereof you are glad--and so would I be. I mean by this, simply to say Mary, that time once gone can never be reclaimed, it is like water spilt on the ground, which can never be gathered up again. Time waits not for us. We are all swift passengers from this to another world--and during our stay here we should endeavor to be useful as we can. And especially be prepared to exchange worlds whenever called to go--a day should not pass with us without examining ourselves on this subject.

You have little idea Mary how it comforted me to read one of your letters in which you said that if you should die away from home at any time, for us not to grieve for you, i.e. that you felt prepared for death when it comes. Oh may you continue this way Mary. It is worth more than many worlds like this. It is and ever will be to me a source of the greatest pleasure to recur to the death of your Aunt Sarah, now near years ago.

I feel that her angel--like conversation to all of us when dying was but a few days ago. I wish and hope that the last moments of us all may be like hers. We have not as yet determined whether to send you a box for Christmas. I am going to Nashville and may not get home in time to do so.

(Volume II)

If I do not you must not think hard of us. We wish to send you something nice for Christmas. We would like to have you here to enjoy Christmas with us; but it is best for you to remain there.

Your ma is now without anyone to help her, the girl we had was so trifling we let her go Friday. Your ma is getting dinner now--Sunday, while I write. I will try to get someone to help her in a few days, perhaps tomorrow.

Dick Rose and his sister, Mrs. Babb have just come in from Missouri and expect to remain until Spring. Mrs. Babb has two of her youngest children with her. She has eleven children and looks quite young for one of her age. She said when she left here you was an infant. Your mother waited on her when she was married--and that seems to have been but a few years ago.

Dick Rose was in the Southern Army under Gen. Price until the surrender. He looks quite lean to what he did when he left here; but talked like himself yet and will make the country his home, so his father thinks.

Negroes are coming here all the time nearly to get me to hire them, but so few of them are any account, I am unwilling to hire but a few of them. Many of them are strolling
about through the country as yet without homes, and some of them, not likely to any soon-
two have been to see me today for homes.

I feel unsettled as yet in my mind, as to whether I ought to remain on a farm any longer
or not--if I could sell my land in a day I would do so, but of know of no chance just now. I
will let you know from time to time what I intend doing. All are well--no news of interest.

Good-by--Wm. Meguiar

My father had saved many of the letters his father had written him, they were all tied in a
package and were in his trunk. I read all of them and considered it such a privilege to be able to
read them. Not having known my grandfather, I feel that I have gained an insight of his fine
qualities, that without having read the letters, I never could have had. I was unable to find a
single letter written by my grandmother. But I think she died before father had been away from
home, so I suppose that is the reason he did not have any letters from her. One of the letters to
father from my grandfather is as follows:

Franklin, Ky., Aug. 18, 1867,

Franklin,

I have been getting out wheat and doing other things since receiving your last letter,
consequently have delayed writing until now. We are well except Mary. She is some days
better and some days worse. She stayed with her Aunt Lucinda two weeks--came home
Friday last. Her Aunt Lucinda came with her and will stay a while with her. Doctor
Walton advised your Aunt Lucinda to stay and ride with Mary every day, when the
weather is suitable. Riding is the best thing she can do so the Doctor says. In reference to
the way I understood your letter to Miss Virginia, i.e., the direction of it, I am not
responsible. I don’t know who directed it to my care--yet it was done. I suppose by the
person in whose hands you placed the letter--and in so doing there was no harm done,
for I acted not amiss with the letter, as I have before explained.

You should not be opposed to me seeing your letters, or know with whom you
 correspond-for as I have before said, I am the truest and best friend and adviser and will
do more for you and go further for you than anyone else in the world. Consequently you
should look to me for advice in almost every particular for a while yet--until you are
more experienced in life. Upon the subject of choosing a companion however I am less
inclined to say much--unless in case of great objection to the personal character or merit
of an individual--in such an event I would feel it my duty to say a great many things.

So far as Miss Virginia is concerned I have said about all that I expect to say You say
that you suppose if she was a lady of wealth that I would have no great objection to her--
good sense and propriety--prudence and proper discretion in all things stands far above
wealth in my estimation. Franklin, wealth with these qualifications--of course would be no objection--neither should it (wealth) be a leading object without these qualifications. I do not know but what Miss Virginia possesses all of the qualifications that I have here enumerated. Still I think you are too young to marry--for a while yet--you say for prudential reasons you cannot say yet what you will do--thereby intimating that you have marrying under serious consideration. If you have, I think you would do well to defer it for a while yet--say a year or so--until you can acquaint yourself with business.

I would like for you to go to school to some grad college 1 or 2 years, if you are so disposed. I think you would greatly appreciate it in after years. If I had had this opportunity tendered to me when I was your age I would have cheerfully and gladly embraced it.

I have said about all perhaps on this subject that is necessary at present. You can act as you think best. Franklin under all the circumstances--do not think that I am hurt with you in any way. I am only advising you for the best I think--and do not forget that I am the best and truest adviser you have on earth. Write to me freely at all times, and on all subjects--that you may feel that you wish or want advice on, and I will freely give it--and do it with much pleasure.

Yours,

P.S. Aug. 27th, '67 Mary’s health is not so good as when you was down. She has been spitting up blood very freely for several days until the last five. Dr. Walton thinks her in a very critical situation. She is still able to ride about some--if she gets worse I will let you know. I did not get your letter requesting me to send you some money until today--if your Uncle Presley does not come up soon I will send you some money or if Mary does not get too bad for me to leave. I think I will come to Louisville soon and buy some tobacco. No general news of interest.

Your Pa, Wm. Meguiar

My father was twenty years old when this letter was written to him. He must have been working in Louisville, and I don’t know who Miss Virginia was. Evidently grandfather felt he was very much smitten with her and he was giving much serious thought to the matter. The Dr. Walton that was mentioned as the family physician was the father of Mrs. George Bradford, who was our neighbor when I was growing up.

A letter from Aunt Lucinda written June of 1867 also shows that the family felt worried for fear Franklin would fall for some of the temptations in a big city. It surely must have been his first time to be away from home and on his own. Her letter shows what a fine character she was, and is as follows:
June 26th, 1867

Franklin,

I write you this morning, feeling sure that you will be glad to hear from home. I guess you never knew before, how to appreciate a letter. This being the case I hope you will write often, and not think it such a task as you once thought it was. We are all glad to hear from you no matter how often, and not think it such a task as you once thought it was. We hope you are well pleased with you home and employment. You are in a place doubles where many temptations will be presented to lead you astray, but you should by all means resist them and when you have grown older, and are better prepared to judge for yourself you will ever feel grateful that you have taken such a course; one thing especially you should guard against; that is being captivated by the ladies of Louisville or anywhere else. You have no idea of the deception practiced by them; they use every conceivable means to blind and captivate the unsuspecting.

Respect all ladies who are worthy of respect, but never think of anything else until you have become fully settled in business. Your Pa has given you and Mary opportunities far superior to those which most persons have, this however should not spoil you, but should make you feel grateful. Perhaps you will think that I am talking about things which do not concern me—but hope however that you will not think so.

I feel my duty to tell you what I think, knowing that you are unacquainted with many things which time alone can make you see and understand, and this is the reason that you should be very slow in making the acquaintance of any lady; and I think you are too prudent to act otherwise. I promised your Ma when dying that I would give you the best advice I was capable of giving. I know that I cannot advise as she would have done, but I know what her feelings were in reference to her children’s marrying young; she wanted them by all means to wait until they were capable of making a wise decision in this important matter.

Don’t get in a hurry, Franklin like too many do, and think you are waiting too long, if you do you may live a miserable life the remainder of your days; but know this, that there will be as nice ladies five or ten years from now as you have ever seen, and then you will be much better prepared to detect the deception practiced by the fair sect.

Franklin don’t think that I have any fears of you acting so unwisely, I have more confidence in your judgement than this, but want what I have said to make you think of these things.

Mary’s health is not very good, but hope she improves. Your Pa and Fountain are very well, your Ma has not returned. Tell your Aunt Fannie to write, tell her to come down soon. When are you coming home? Write and tell me how you are pleased with your new
home. I would give you the news in general, as I have plenty of paper, but my eyes are hurting very much, so I will stop. If you don’t write to me you had better not come home. Give my love to Presley and Nannie.

--Lucinda Meguiar

One of the saddest letters I have ever read was written to my father by his sister, Mary, about five years after the death of their mother. It shows so plainly how heartbroken and grieved she was. The handwriting of the letter was small and very neat. She expressed herself so well for a girl of nineteen years. It is as follows:

Franklin, Ky., Feb. 9, 1868

Dear Brother,

I have been from home two weeks nearly. Aunt Lucinda and I went down home last Saturday and came back Tuesday. I don’t know when I will go back again. Miss Mag will keep the house shut up and I can’t stand it. Aunt Lucinda told Pa it would kill me if I stayed there long at a time. I have been staying with Almarinda three or four days this week.

I went to see Aunt Lizzy one day. This morning I am at Uncle Tom Waldron’s. Aunt Lucinda is reading and the others are eating popcorn, and I am writing to one I love and think my letter will be appreciated by them. This is a gloomy morning here, and then I think how gloomy and sad it must be at home, there is no pleasure to be seen there, only with Fountain and Pa and thinking of the past, what has been. And when we did look on home as being a place of repose and pleasure. When we enjoyed the visits of our friends and relations. That is some consolation to me to think what once was, but will never be again.

I can’t look forward to the future with much pleasure. Only what I expect to see with you and Fountain and Pa, if he ever gets over the trouble he is in now. Franklin, I sometimes think I would not go back home at all if it was not for seeing Pa and Fountain and looking at those things that remain there of mother’s. And then the grave, that there lies a good mother, one who has passed over the dark shade of death and feared no evil. I have wondered if she had a child that would meet death with as much composure as she did. Franklin, I have often thought that I would soon fill a space in the graveyard by mother. But one would be filled with a perfect being and the other an imperfect one. Miss Mag says the cold that I take this winter will lay me in the ground next spring. Well enough on this subject, Aunt Lucinda and I went to Salem last Sunday, there was a very nice crowd there. The circuit rider went home with us and stayed until Monday, he is very good company.
I have not seen Betty yet. No deaths since I wrote you except Jessy Fuller, he died last Tuesday week with consumption. Mr. Joe Offatt died in Franklin last week, he killed himself drinking. I will tell you of some of the weddings. There have been so many I can’t remember them all. There was seven from last Thursday until Tuesday. Miss Mattie More and Dr. Arrington; Dr. McClendon and Miss Sis Townsend; Mr. Russell and the widow Williams; Mr. Longo Fuquay, I have forgotten who to. Mr. Bell? Caudile has bought the Turner place, paid $10 an acre for it.

Pa will have to see Major Willis and Pleas Cook for his money. Well I have written all of my interest to you. They were all well when I left home. Fountain is still going to school to Mr. Mr. Ware? Franklin now write to me soon, if you please.

Your true sister, (Good-bye) Mary

The following letter was written by my grandfather to my father, the same Sunday morning that Aunt Mary had written him.

Franklin, Ky., Feb. 9, 1868

Franklin,

The object of this note is to know how long you expect to go to school in Bowling Green--if you intend going the session out--all right--if however you think of going to the Commercial School in Louisville, which I spoke to you about when you was here. I would like to know it soon. I will go to Louisville soon perhaps and will call to see you as I go up to a[s]certain what you will do, and if you think of going I will a[s]certain what you will do, and if you think of going I will a[s]certain when there, something of the expense and when the school will expire.

You can continue in Bowling Green as long as you wish--unless you intend to graduate in some college, I advise you to go to this Commercial School before you quit. I want to give you as good an opportunity to prepare yourself for usefulness in this life as I am able to do (I feel the want of it, I mean this preparation). There are three things necessary in order to succeed well in any undertaking (to wit) Preparation -- Steadiness -- Industry--these properly applied will always succeed.

You have, as I am proud to say--steadiness and I hope industry--and I feel it my duty to aid you in preparing yourself for business. I hope you have abandoned the idea of marrying soon--if you ever had any such notion. The opportunity that I intend giving you will at all times enable you to marry when you please--and whom you please--if you will conduct yourself right--as I hope and trust you will do.
I was in hopes Mary’s health would improve so that she could graduate at School--but I fear she will not be able--her health seemed to give way 2 or 3 weeks ago, but she seems better now. She is staying with her Aunt Lucinda now.

Fountain is going to Mr. Jo Weirs School at this time, at the old school house--when that breaks I will send him to Mr. Wilkerson. I have just read a letter from your Uncle Presley--he says Mr. Hansbrow has come down in this direction to try to buy tobacco--they think tobacco can be bought much lower in the country than it can be in Louisville--in this they are mistaken I think--I look for tobacco to run high in the country this year.

If you wish you can write me and let me know how long yet you will go to school in Bowling Green. I may not get to stop and see you as I go to Louisville, yet I intend to do so. It may be 2 or 3 weeks before I go up--or it may be sooner. I want to go to Nashville before I go to Louisville. No news of interest here. Your Pa--Wm. Meguiar

In all of grandfather’s letters to my father along about this time, his deep concern for Mary’s health was expressed. She had taken a deep cold, perhaps from living conditions at that time, and she was never able to overcome it. It developed into tuberculosis or consumption as it was called at that time. Perhaps if her mother had lived she might not have had it, for she was young and needed a mother’s advice on how to care for herself. Then too, she was most unhappy at home after her father’s second marriage, and that too, no doubt, contributed to her physical health.

At the age of nineteen years, after a long and exhausting illness at her home near Orlinda, she passed away. She was laid to rest in the family burying ground beside her beloved mother. The burying ground is a small plat of ground surrounded by a rock wall, on the Meguiar home place. It is across the road from the house. The ground is covered with ground ivy, which climbs over the graves and tombstones. The following tribute was written by one of Mary’s teachers:

Mary Belle Meguiar, only daughter of Wm. And Rebecca Meguiar, was born in Robertson County, Tennessee. Jan. 26, 1849, and died in the same county, Aug. 24, 1868. She professed religion when quite a child, and connected herself with the Methodist Church, of which she remained a consistent member till her death.

Her last illness was protracted and painful but she bore her sufferings with a patience and resignation rarely seen. Though desirous to live and hopeful of recovery to within a short time of her decease, she frequently expressed herself ready to go. When in her last moments her voice had failed and her tongue was stilled, she gave to her inquiring friends answers by signs, indicating that though passing through the valley of the shadow of death, God was still sustaining and comforting her. Belle was for parts of two sessions a pupil of mine at the Russellville Female Academy, and hence I had an excellent opportunity of studying her character and disposition. Of an unusually amiable temper, quiet and dignified manners, studious habits, perfectly tractable in fine, every way
faultless and with positive traits of character, enough to make her a girl of note in the school, she was a universal favorite, and when failing health placed it out of her power to be longer with us, she was inquired for with the liveliest interest, and remembered with sincere esteem.

I saw her once after she became unable to leave her room, and was gratified and profited by the interview. And though denied by providential absence, the privilege of conducting her funeral services, as I had been requested to do, I rejoice to learn that she died so calmly. Farewell, dear Belle, though we shall see you no more here, we expect to meet you. Where sickness, sorrow death and pain are breathed not in the balmy air, where singing Angels dwell and where mid fadeless flowers, perennial bowers, with nobler powers, far happier hours we’ll spend in rambling o’er the plains, where pure effulgent beauty reigns.

--David Morton

The following inscription was placed on her tombstone:

She faded in beauty
She faded in youth
In the spring tide
Of innocence virtue and truth
She hath gone from the trials
And sorrows below,
To that land where the rivers
Of pleasure do flow.

Then let us for hear to complain
That she has now gone from our sight
We soon shall behold her again
With new and eternal delight

Mark the inscription, as you passers by
You now live, as once did I
Regardless is death, in its sickly rage
Youth is the victim, as well as age.

Five years after Mary Belle’s death, when my father was twenty-six years old, he received the following letter from his father. Evidently father had finished school and was working for his father.
Franklin, Ky., Feb. 19\textsuperscript{th}, 1873

Franklin,

I learn from Mr. Samuels that Wm. Had directed a letter to be written to him and directed to Brandon, Miss. Supposing you would be in that country several days, I learn you had sold no mules when you got in the neighborhood of Brandon.

I feel much surprised at this, you must have made constant, hard travel to go from Selma to Brandon in the short time which you did. Such traveling of mules as this will never do-you keep them so jaded that you will never sell them. When you are in market you should go slow--stop and see every planter, or put your mules up in a secure lot and feed and water well and ride all around over the country and see who wants mules, and have them go see your mules; or take the mules to them.

You should travel together and not one alone in a strange country, for you will be suspected of having money, as it is known you are there with mules--so go together all the time, and be watchful and careful. If you do not sell the mules where you are, I advise you to go in the direction of Canton or Kaziezko, or rather I would go from Canton in the direction of Lexington in Holmes County and in the direction of Carolton or Yazoo City. This is all a splendid mule market, I have been over a great portion of it. I saw two men in Nashville the day you left there, from Holmes County, Miss., who live there. They came here to buy mules for themselves and neighbors; saying there had been but few mules in that section of country this winter. And for fear they could not get them by staying at home they came here to buy them. They came from Nashville to Fountain Head and Richland Stations; and there stopped and bought their mules, and are gone home. This is why I advise you to go in that direction with your mules--do not become discourage--for I know you can sell the mules, for a good price if you will be industrious and try. You must not expect the mules to sell themselves--sell for cash only. There will be a market there for mules until late in March this year.

McElwain is back from Georgia wanting 2 more cars of mules, he has sold since Christmas over 100 mules. He did well with the 60 mules bought of Buntin & Carter at $140 & $145 round. Stringers are still buying and shipping mules to West Tenn.

You must not let every trader beat you selling mules, this will not do. Feed well, travel slow and sell every man a mule who wants one, if he has the money. I repeat be industrious and don't take the blues, you have nothing to call your home, it is as easy to get a good price as not, if you will do good talking.

--Wm. Meguiar
This was the last letter that I could find, written by my grandfather. On July 9, 1879 at the age of sixty-three years, after a short illness, he died at his home-place. The following item was among the clippings in father’s trunk.

**In Memoriam**

Death, that reaper who is no respecter of persons, but who with his shuttle reaps down the bearded grain with a breath, as well as the flowers that grow between, has invaded the Church at Sulphur Spring, Simpson County, Kentucky and stealthily entered the house of our dear brother, Wm. Meguiar, and regardless of the efforts and wishes of physicians and friends snatched as his victim, the head of the household.

Wm. Meguiar was born March 26, 1816 and died--died July 9th, 1879 aged 63 years, 3 months and 13 days. Bro. Meguiar was twice married. He leaves two sons by his first wife and his last wife and one son to mourn the loss of one whose counsels they will greatly miss.

He joined the Church at Sulphur Spring, Simpson County, Ky., if we mistake not, in the fall of 1871, which time until death he was a faithful, zealous and devoted member of the Primitive Baptist Church. He was always ready when duty called, to obey. Visiting Ministers and the humble pastor of his church will miss his many and liberal acts of charity and kindness. In our last visit to that church we were made to feel sad as we looked upon the vacant seat and felt the loss of the hand of charity, which before had not failed to be extended to us.

Often have we approached the church feeling low spirited and gloomy, only to be relieved by a smiling look and cheering words of this dear brother, with which he always met us. He was dearly loved by all the brethren, and if he had any enemies we have failed to hear of them. It is needless to say that the Church and the community in which he lived, will miss him. We append these lines to Sister Meguiar, the disconsolate widow.

--S

The following inscription was placed on his tombstone:

William Meguiar, born Mar. 26, 1816, died July 9, 1879. The pains of death are past labor and sorrow ended and life's long way fare closed at last, his soul is found in peace. The widow, Maggie Self Meguiar, was quite an intelligent woman, and wrote quite a bit of prose and poetry. After the death of her husband she penned the following lines:

‘Gone--Gone! How striking! How much meaning in that little monosyllable, Gone! I say it to myself as the first dawn of day breaks on my vision, and as the little birds send forth
their cheerful notes the vacuum made in my heart re-echoes, Gone! Oh yes, each hour and every moment it rushes from the depths of my heart, Gone! At nightfall, when the sun has sank out of sight, the chirping of the crickets, together with the mourning of my heart repeat, Gone! When the night is far spent and I awake as from some sudden start from my sleep, the thought rushes from my mind, Gone! As I wind my way wearily and forlorn to the family burying--ground, and I set my feet on the stone steps, I then realize (as my eye catches a glimpse of the new-made mound) that solemn word, Gone! And it still reverberates as I send my sobbing prayer to Heaven, while I cling lovingly, but oh, so vainly, to the hand of him who is, Gone! Yes, William Meguiar is gone!--gone! His friends will no more enjoy that cheerful and cordial greeting, which was his custom to bestow. His dear sons, whose hearts were knit to his by a habit of growth, unanimity of desires and parental ties, and who are now verging on to maturity and need his stimulating and affectionate intercourse, will no more see his erect form nor hear his clear and argumentative admonitions and entreaties to be, diligent, useful men. Ah! With what secret craving tenderness he studied their interest, and with what silent bursts of fondness and joy he realized in their proud figure of opening manliness. Oh! May each of his dear sons strive to be obedient to their departed father’s wishes, as if they were yet under his immediate watch-care and may they ever remember his living words as he approached the portals of death, and may those angelic soul-lit eyes as they caught a glimpse of Jesus and the heavenly clime, ever be present in their minds, waving them onward to meet that sainted father in the better land. Oh! How painful is our separation, yet God in His super-abounding wisdom has removed my dear husband from his family’s embrace, I know His ways are right, tough His judgement seems severe; and feel to say, though I am cast down, yet I am not forsaken, for God’s promises are, to the widow and orphan. Oh! I am made to fully realize what it is to be a widow--so lonely--but God who has smitten will heal my bleeding, aching heart, for truly there is help in no other. Oh! My God, let not my widowed heart despond, lest the dear immortal which is committed to my care should prove a curse and outcast from heaven. Oh! May I seek the guidance and assistance of Him who “took little children in His arms and blessed them;” make me the instrument in Thy hand, O Lord, to mould and fashion my dear boy’s mind so as to be, led to the fountain of living water ere it has time to taste the sweet but poisonous draughts of evil. Permit me, O Lord, before pride and vanity enter his heart, to see it adorned with that meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price. May I, by precept and example lead him to seek from those enduring riches that pass not away, so as to meet that sainted one, ‘Whose bark has left life’s cold bleak shore, no more to plow? The sea of time, Its billows be passed safely o’er, now he is happy in blissful clime. He is free from sorrow, grief and pain, and all the ills of human life, we would not wish him back again, Tho’ much we love and miss him. Our hearts are left to mourn in gloom, Bereft of one we love so well, Whene’er we pass his solemn tomb, The gushing tears will our
sorrow tell. We here will see his face no more, Nor his dear children enjoy his love, But when our earthly toils are o’er, We’ll join him in his home above.’

--Maggie, July 26, 1879

I would like to tell something of the Williams family--my grandmother, Rebekah Ann’s brothers and sisters. I never saw but one of them, Francis M., the second son, visited in our home once.

Tom Williams, the oldest child of Matthew and Charlotte Williams married a Miss Tarpley. In 1857 they moved from Kentucky to Johnson County, Mo., seven miles northwest of Warrenton. They had three boys and three girls. Francis Marion (Frank) Williams the second son of Matthew and Charlotte Williams joined the Methodist Church at the age of fourteen, and was licensed to preach in 1846. He united with the Tennessee Conference at Clarksville, Tennessee in 1848 and was superannuated in December of 1906. He married Miss Calistia Hicks of Hickman County, Tennessee on April 19, 1802, and to their union eight children were born. They lived most of their married life in Mississippi, and the last church he served was at Waynesboro, Miss. Uncle Frank and Aunt Calistia visited in our home once and while they were visiting us he preached at City Road Chapel Methodist Church, at Madison, one Sunday.

Sister and I had our pictures taken with Uncle Frank while they were with us. He and Aunt Calistia were an adorable couple and it was a joy to be able to know them. They told us about their children and their families. At the time of Uncle Frank’s death in Feb. 1912, when he was 87 years old, five of his eight children were living. Rev. W.M. Williams (Will) of Jackson, Miss., Mrs. S.P. Grant (Mollie) of Oak Ridge, Miss; Mrs. W.C. Wetherbee (Ida), and Mrs. J.W. Alexander (Ackie) of Waynesboro, Miss., and Mrs. A.B. Kling of Sataria, Miss.

Will Williams, Uncle Franks son who was a Methodist preacher married Miss Mattie Starr, they had two sons and two daughters. One of the sons Frank Starr Williams went to China at the age of 17 as a Missionary, and from there to Japan. He married while in Japan and they had one son. Frank Starr and his wife separated and he married a rich widow. He gave up his work in the Mission Field and joined Ambassador Drew’s staff, and when war with China broke out he was ordered home. His second wife was mysteriously killed while visiting her daughters in Chicago. Frank Starr Williams returned to Mississippi and bought a large stock farm near Vicksburg. He re-married and he and his wife live on the farm near Vicksburg, Miss.

Nick Williams the third son of Matthew and Charlotte Williams married a Miss Huntsman. They had two sons, Nick and Emmitt Williams, and they lived at one time at Bessimer, Alabama.

Washington J. Williams the fourth son of Matthew and Charlotte Williams married a Miss Brewer, they had eight children, 3 girls and 5 boys. R.B. Williams or “Buck,” one of their
sons and his wife Minta visited in our home, when I was a girl. After my father’s death mother and sister visited them at Chetopa, Kans.

Matthew and Charlotte Williams had two daughters, Rebekah Ann (my grandmother) and the other daughter whose nick name was “Henry” married a man whose surname was Davis. They had two sons. One of their sons, Eddie, married my mother’s first cousin Mary Deaux, and they lived in Nashville, Tenn.

My father, Alexander Franklin Meguiar was the oldest child in his family. His character and his disposition were the result of his background and the incidents that transpired in the home during his boyhood and young manhood. He came from a family that had sterling and stalwart characteristics. His father was a man of definite and profound convictions. He put forth every effort to excel in whatever business transactions he engaged in. He instilled into my father the importance of diligence in the making and saving of money. He attended church regularly and he was held in high esteem by his many friends, and he was loyal and true to their friendship.

My grandmother must have been the type of wife and mother that was so typical of that time and age. So sweet, yet so unassuming; performing her duties as wife and mother, with love and devotion. Guiding by example and precept those young lives entrusted to her care. Faithful and industrious as she looked after her household, in an admirable manner. Just when father was at the age when he needed a mother’s love and counsel most, his mother was taken from him, by death. It was sorrow that he never really overcame. Then in a few more years his only sister, Mary Belle, after a trying and heart breaking illness, was laid to rest by the side of his mother, in the family burying ground.

The women that he most loved in all of the world had been snatched from him and he was only twenty-one years old. No doubt he spent much of his time in brooding and re-living in memory the days before his childhood home had been so broken up and so changed. A stepmother was brought into the home, after the death of his own mother, who reigned over his own mother’s possessions, this too, no doubt, was a most trying experience.

A step-brother and a younger brother of his own were of great concern to my father, since he was six years older than his own brother and twenty years older than his step-brother. When father was thirty-two years old, death claimed the dearest and best friend that he had left on earth, his devoted father.

After a short illness, which gave little time for the family to realize the seriousness of the disease, he was taken from them. My father was left guardian of both of his brothers, and that was a difficult task, even though his father had tried to train him in business affairs.

By nature and also by experience father had become a very dependable and a very conscientious person. He and Mr. Jim McElwain organized the McElwain-Meguiar Bank in
Franklin Kentucky where he worked until a short time after he and my mother married. A clipping from a Nashville paper reads:

On Dec. 29, 1890, Mr. A. F. Meguiar a prominent banker of Franklin, Ky and Miss Maggie Hilliard daughter of Col. And Mrs. B.G. Hilliard, were married at the residence of the bride’s parents on the Dickerson turnpike. Rev. B.F. Haynes performed the ceremony. Mr. and Mrs. Meguiar left immediately after the ceremony for Florida where they will spend the winter. A clipping from The Times, a newspaper of Franklin, Ky. Reads: A Happy Event, for years Mr. A.F. Meguiar, familiarly known among his intimate friends as “Frank,” has borne uncomplainingly their gentle badinage about his unmarried state, smiling good naturedly under their cruel persecutions, and no one ever dreamed that he would ever be anything but a confirmed celibate, content to roam about in the sunshiny fields of bachelordom, preferring to appropriate what treasures he might find and what fruits he might gather to his own satisfaction, rather than be forever dividing by two the rewards of his diligence. Timid, modes, reserved, blushing like a boy at the mention of a woman’s name in connection with himself, it is a problem harder of solution than can be found within the lids of any arithmetic, how he managed to find his way along the thorny, danger-haunted way that leads up to the citadel of a woman’s heart. That he had made the trip successfully was first known here Tuesday of the holidays, when it was announced that he had led to Hymen’s altar on the preceding evening a fair bride, Miss Maggie Hilliard, of Nashville. The ceremony was conducted by Rev. B.F. Haynes of the M.E. Church, and was witnessed only by a few friends. The pair left on the next train for the groom’s Florida home where they will spend their honeymoon; among the fruits and flowers of that genial land and will return here next spring. Miss Hilliard was formerly a resident of Robertson County and is a graduate of Franklin Female College. She and her husband have known each other for years, and have kept up a regular correspondence. She is a lady of great personal beauty and possesses besides, many charms of mind and character which eminently fit her to be the wife of the man she has wedded. As for him, everybody knows a better soul never lived and him numberless friends with one acclaim jubilate over his good luck. The Times, as one of these, wishes him and his lovely bride everything that can contribute to render two united lives contented and happy.

--Franklin Times

The following September, sister was born in Franklin, Ky., she was named Mary Rebecca, for my father’s mother and sister. Three years after sister was born, mother, father and sister moved to Nashville, Tenn., to make their home. They moved into a new house on Mile-End Ave., across the street from Aunt Mollie and Uncle Benn Webb, and it was here that I was born Oct. 1, of that same year.
Father was a man of medium height, with brown hair and keen blue-grey eyes, and he wore a moustache which was most becoming to him. He was a very quiet person, having little to say. I have often thought that he will not have as many idle words to give account of as so many of us will. He was a most dependable person, when he promised to do a thing that was the thing he did. His morals were of the highest type, and he was the most modest man I have ever known. Sister and I loved and respected him, but sometimes there was fear mixed with our feelings, not because of his few words, we often wondered what was running through his mind.

He was never extravagant in money matters, but was really very saving. This was due to his early training, and then it did not take as much of the material things of life to satisfy him, and he counted the cost of things before he spent his money for them. In all of his duties of life he was most punctual, and the chores he performed around the home were done at almost the same time each day. If you knew his day’s routine you could almost tell the time of day by each duty as he performed it. He was a member of the Methodist Church having joined it Aug. 28, 1880.

He was a devoted father, and he was always deeply concerned over his family’s health and welfare. During our grade school education he spent much of his time in carrying us to and from school in the buggy. He saw to it that sister and I both had college educations. At the time we took it as a matter of course, but later we realized that sacrifice on the part of both mother and father had made it possible. One night in the summer after we graduated from college, all of the people in the neighborhood gathered in our yard and honored father with speeches and the awarding of a diploma, which read as follows:

Old Hayesboro School: See’st Thous A Man Diligent In His Business, He Shall Stand Before Kings.” Be it known that A.F. Meguiar, having completed the full course required by this Institution, having cheerfully complied with every demand on his patience, his time, his horses, his vehicles, and his pocket-book, in consideration of all of these things, we present him with this, Diploma, with the degree of Master of: Patience, Helpfulness, Willingness, Endurance, Loyalty, Meekness. Attendance: 100%; Deportment 100%, Scholarship 100%, Average 100%. This Twenty-ninth day of May nineteen hundred and fourteen.—The Whole Neighborhood Faculty.

After the diploma was presented, a big rocking chair was presented to father, which they termed as “The Chair of Leisure,” which the neighbors hoped he would enjoy. All this graduating exercise came as a great surprise to father, but it was a gesture which he highly appreciated.

Since I can remember father did not have a job, but ran his farm, on which he raised registered jersey cows, some horses, pigs, chickens, and most of the food that we ate he raised in the vegetable garden. He was an “old bachelor” when he married my mother, and I imagine that many women had looked upon him as a “good catch,” but he fell in love with mother and went
with her for several years before they married. He called my mother Maggie most of the time, but he had a pet name of “Ginsey” which he called her often. They were a devoted couple, but were never very demonstrative. As a child I followed father about the farm as he did his chores, and we were great pals. He instilled into his daughters morals and ideals which remained with them; even though modes of dress and customs in society changed, we carried the same old-fashioned standards by which we measured life. For this I am grateful, for I feel that it is much easier to meet life and its problems if we have a moral standard that every passing custom cannot change.

As the years go by, I find myself longing to be able to go back to my childhood and ask my father many questions that I would like to know the answers to. I would like to get closer to him and really know him better. As a child I dared not break the spell of his silence, I did not know how to draw him out. Now I think I would know and understand him so much better than I did then, he was so quiet and so refined. He had a sense of humor and loved a clean joke as much as anyone I ever knew. I am so deeply grateful for the upright character he was, and for the simple and humble life he lived.

My maternal grandfather’s name was Beverly Grover Hilliard, he was born at Tar Creek, North Carolina in 1819. His mother was Miss Mary White before she married my great-grandfather Hilliard. They had a daughter, Ruth Lewis, who was about two years younger than Beverly Grover, my grandfather.

When my grandfather was eight years old, his mother and father left North Carolina and moved their family to Tennessee. They made the trip in a covered wagon, driving a bay and a white horse. They settled in Hickman County near Centerville, Tenn. in 1828, where a short time later my great-grandfather Hilliard died.

My great-grandmother married twice after the death of her first husband, Mr. Hilliard. Her second husband was a Mr. Pickard, and had one son, Dave Pickard. They may have had other children but I have no record of it. After the death of Mr. Pickard my great-grandmother married a Mr. Black. If they had children I have no record of it. She made the remark to some of her relatives that she was born White but would die Black.

At the age of fourteen years, my grandfather, Beverly Grover Hilliard, went to Columbia, Tennessee to live with his great-uncle, John Hilliard. His uncle had five children; Polk, Wright, Robert, Mattie and Amanda. Grandfather Hilliard worked at a hotel in Columbia, when he was a young man. While he was working at the hotel he met a pretty young girl, Miss Elizabeth Ophelia Stanfield, whom he fell in love with. Miss Stanfield (was born July 9, 1825) lived in Columbia with her family. Her great-grandmother was Avarilla Warren Caldwell, and she was from Virginia, being among some of the first families to settle in Virginia.

One of Avarilla Warren Caldwell’s daughters, Betsy Banks Caldwell, married a Mr. Stanfield, and they had five children, John, Silas, Caroline, Avarilla and Elizabeth Ophelia, the
young lady that my grandfather fell in love with. Elizabeth Ophelia was named after the mother of Jas. K. Polk, governor of Tennessee 1839-41, and he later became the eleventh President of the United States.

Grandfather Hilliard and Elizabeth Ophelia Stanfield married in Columbia, Tenn. Dec. 15, 1847, he being 27 years old and she was twenty-three. While they lived in Columbia, two sons were born to them, Johnnie and Hugh. Soon after Hugh’s birth they moved to Nashville, Tenn. where grandfather had charge of the Nashville Inn. Another son, Beverly Alvis was born during their stay in Nashville. Having three small sons, grandfather thought they should move to the country, so he purchased a 1200 acre farm in Robertson County, Tenn. It was located about seven miles southeast of Springfield, Tenn. It was an ideal country home, and they set about beautifying it and making a happy home for their family.

The home place was known as “Maple Bluff.” It was a large two-story frame house with a porch across the front of the house both upstairs and downstairs, with a brick chimney at each end of the house. The house was surrounded by a grove of lovely maple trees and the yard was enclosed by a white picket fence.

The house was comfortable and was large enough to accommodate the growing family, and also the many friends who shared the hospitality of the home. The large parlor with its wood-burning fireplace, was furnished with rose-carved furniture, upholstered in black horse hair; the large dining room was the gathering place for the happy family at meal time.

Grandpa’s and Grandma’s bedroom, with its open log fireplace, was the most important room in the house, for like a magnet, the whole household was drawn to that hearth stone to share the love and congeniality of that dear couple.

The big kitchen played a very definite and a very necessary part to the family’s happiness and welfare. Equipped with the big iron wood burning stove, and also the open log fireplace, in which hung the big iron kettles. Several skilled Negro servants prepared food that teased the sense of smell and satisfied the sense of taste. Grandma supervised in a queenly manner, the planning and the serving of the meals, prepared by her capable servants. The girls and boys bedrooms were all upstairs, with separate stairs leading to the rooms. They were entirely separated from one another with walls between.

Maple Bluff was a pretty place, and it certainly stood for everything that made a family happy and contented. First and foremost, Grandma and Grandpa loved one another with a steadfast love. It was a Christian home, they were devout members of the Wartrace Methodist Church. A family altar had been established, the daily reading of the bible, was a part of life at Maple Bluff.

After the birth of the three boys, six daughters were born, at intervals of every two years. Mollie was the oldest girl, then Ida, Laura, Maggie, Lee and Addie. The children lived such
happy carefree lives, guided by love rather than by the rod. They loved and respected their mother, but they all seemed to idolize their father. He was so kind and sweet with such an understanding manner. The children grew up when there was a house full of servants [ed note: Susan, b. 4/1/1843; Thomas, b. 1/2/1846; Isaac, b. 4/4/1844]. A Negro Mammy, Susan, cared for each of the babies as they came along; and all of the children adored her.

My grandmother was a pretty woman and was a typical southern lady of her day. She spent much of her time among the flowers in her flower garden; which was laid off into beds surrounded by walks which were bordered with sweet violets. She raised all kinds of old-fashioned flowers. It must have been a lovely place, and the fragrance and the beauty from that dear garden, seemed to sweeten and beautify the lives of the children who grew up amid the abundance of blooms.

So many of the happy experiences that my mother enjoyed during her childhood and young ladyhood, she shared with her children, as we were growing up. I feel that my own life has been made richer, because of the influence of the love that was radiated down through the years, from that grand old home. Of all of the experiences and happenings in the home that I was told about, there was not a one that marred the beauty and the sacredness of that home.

While the youngest children were still quite small the oldest children started marrying. Johnnie W., the oldest son, married Mattie Rutherford, and they had two girls: Alva and Mabel. Uncle Johnnie was a red-headed man with a pleasant personality but a shiftless sort of disposition.

Hugh G, the second son married Fannie Patterson, a neighborhood girl, who was very sweet and made a place for herself in the hearts of the entire Hilliard family. They had one child, “Little John,” as he was called. Fannie died when “Little John” was 2/1/2 yrs. old, still a baby and Grandma took him to live with her.

A few years later Uncle Hugh went to Florida where he met and married Kate McEaddy. They had four children, Mack, Kizzie, Iva and Hugh Jr. While the children were small, Uncle Hugh died a tragic death. Beverly, or Ben as he was called, the third son, married Harden Baggett, a neighborhood girl. She was a most energetic person but was never very strong. They had three children, Ruth, B.G., Jr., and Robert Lyle Harden died when Ruth, the oldest child, was thirteen years old. Ruth came to make her home with us. Robert Lyle died when he was quite young and B.G. died when he was twenty-one years old. Uncle Ben was a good looking man, rather heavy set, with red hair and brown eyes. After Ruth moved to Texas to make her home, Uncle Ben lived with her until he died.

The girls must have had a wonderful time as they grew up at Maple Bluff. Mollie and Ida, the two oldest girls, were young ladies at the same time. Mollie (Mary Elizabeth) married Ben Webb of Nashville, while she was quite young. When I first knew Aunt Mollie she was a very pretty and a very proud person. She and Uncle Ben did not have children, and she lavished
her devotion on sister and me. She was continually doing lovely things for us, and she and mother were most devoted to one another. She and Uncle Ben had a nice home and they had everything that heart could wish, until the last few years of their lives when they had serious financial difficulties.

Ida (Ida Ophelia) from all accounts was a rather reserved and dignified person. She died when I was too young to remember her. Mother so often told me that I was more like Aunt Ida than anyone else, and it always pleased me, because I knew how all of her sisters loved and respected her. Aunt Ida married William Taylor Johns of the Black Jack Community in Robertson County. They moved to Florida, where three children were born to them. Albert, the oldest child, died while he was rather young, of pneumonia. W.T. Jr. the second son, was very much like his father in looks and disposition, Blanche was a little girl with a most happy disposition. Aunt Ida died when Blanche was quite small. After her death Blanche went to Shelby N.C. to make her home with Aunt Addie and Uncle Robert Ware, and she spent several summer vacations with us.

Laura (Laura Virginia) the third daughter was full of life and fun, and as a girl kept Maggie (my mother), who was most reserved, upset with her pranks and her impromptu behavior. She was the only red-haired girl, and she had sparkling brown eyes and a dimple in her cheek. She and mother chummed together, and as long as they lived they enjoyed being together, and reliving in memory the happenings during their childhood and girlhood. Aunt Laura married her girlhood sweetheart, John Bridges. He was a very kind and cordial person, and they were true sweethearts during their entire married life. He always called her “Miss Laura” and she called him John. They had seven children, but two little boys died in babyhood. Carol, Hilliard, Forrest, Davis and Elizabeth Bridges, were the children that made up the happy family.

Maggie (Margaret Lavinia) was the fourth daughter. She was a pretty but rather timid girl, and she was always very lady-like. She did not have as many love affairs as Laura, and some of her admirers were very annoying to her. She was musically inclined, she played the piano by ear, and she had a lovely voice.

She met Frank Meguiar (my father) when she was at College in Franklin, Ky. Even though he was several years her senior, she never really loved anyone else; and after several years of corresponding and courtship they married. My sister Mary and I were their only children.

Ruth Lee or Lee as she was called was the fifth girl in the family. She was the tallest girl in the family, with dark hair and mischievous brown eyes, and dimples that played hide and seek with her changeable moods. She had plenty of life to keep things moving at a rapid pace among the young people at Maple Bluff. She was very much like her mother’s sister Avarilla both in looks and in ways. She married Marshall Dukes, a most distinguished looking person. Three
little girls were born to them: Ruth Elizabeth, Naomi and George Marshall. While the children were small they moved to Houston, Texas to make their home.

Addie Forrest Hilliard was the baby of the family and, she said, she was “the runt.” She was a sickly child and was always smaller than the others. She and Lee were most devoted, and played together when they were children and shared their interests as they reached young ladyhood. Aunt Addie was very refined and was well educated and cultured. She first married Mel Haynes in Fla. when she was in the hospital, where he died. She taught school several years before she married Dr. Robert Ware, a dentist, after which she moved to Shelby N.C. to make her home. They had one baby girl, Ophelia who died in infancy.

(Volume III)

Mother

My Mother was such a pretty woman, with long black hair, lovely blue eyes and classic features. She was about five feet, two inches tall, and she was a very modest and a rather retiring person.

She was born at Maple Bluff January 6, 1861, and was the seventh child in the family. She was named Margaret Lavinia, but was always called “Maggie.” She was brought up at Maple Bluff, where she lived such a happy and such a full life; where love prevailed and where restraint was never unduly exercised.

She grew up, one of a large family, and where many visitors also shared the hospitality of the home. She had a passionate love for every member of her big, happy family, and throughout her life, their joys and their sorrows were shared by her, in a most sincere manner.

She was born the year the Civil War started, and while she did not actually remember much about it, she heard her family tell so many gruesome tales of the plundering done by the Northern soldiers. She had heard the family tell of the time the Yankee soldiers came to Maple Bluff and took all of the meat from the smokehouse and all of the provisions from the kitchen, even the food that was being cooked on the stove. And how one of the soldiers started upstairs to ransack that, when he met Aunt Ail (Grandma’s sister) on the stairs, and how she became so infuriated that she kicked him down the stairs. She had also heard of how some of the Negro children had been taken from their mothers, by the Yankees, and were never returned, even though the mothers cried and plead that they might be allowed to keep them.

Her own aversion to the atrocities were formed by hearsay, but were so indelibly stamped in her memory, that she never overcame some of the prejudice and hatred caused by the War. The slaves were freed after the War, but some of the Negroes remained loyal to their masters,
and Susan, the Negro Mammy, who cared for all of the Hilliard children, was one of them. Susan’s love and fidelity was fully appreciated by the entire Hilliard family.

So many incidents that occurred in the kitchen among the Negroes were always a thrill to me, as mother told me about them. The time that the Negroes were eating supper and had a quarrel and one of them spit buttermilk in the face of another struck me as being unusually funny. Then the time two of the women got into a fuss and one of them ran after the other one with a butcher knife, and Grandpa had to settle their quarrel. The superstitions that were handed down to the white children, by the Negroes, were many and amusing; and strange to say, many of them took root in the minds of the white children, and many were handed down to their own children and grandchildren. Even though there were nine children in the Hilliard family, there was never a serious illness during their childhood. They were quite normal children, they played and romped and had their quarrels as any all children do.

They all rode horseback and some of them were quite at home in the saddle. Mother was always more or less ill at ease, for fear her steed would run away and throw her. The girls’ love affairs, as they grew up, could easily have been the inspiration for a novel on romances, with the characteristics of each girl so pronounced and so distinct.

The neighborhood boys were always most attentive, although their attentions were not always fully appreciated. Mother had one admirer, Nathan Clark, in particular, who was uneducated and yet very persistent. I don’t think she ever went with him, but he found it convenient to stroll over to Maple Bluff quite often. One hot Sunday afternoon, he with a bunch of boys, was sitting in the yard, by the side of the front porch. He was leaning over in his chair, and his collar stood away from his neck, and mother peeped over the upstairs bannister, and seeing such a wonderful opportunity poured a glass of cold water down his neck.

Such pranks were frequent and kept things lively at Maple Bluff. Mother and Aunt Laura shared their good times, though mother was quite restraining to Aunt Laura, as she admonished her quite often, for her seeming imprudence, as her effervescent disposition bubbled over. Mother and some of her sisters went to Franklin Female College in Franklin, Kentucky, and I think it was while she was a student there that she met my father.

After she finished college, she taught school in a one room log school house, located near Wartrace Methodist Church. I don’t know how long she taught there. It was about this or perhaps a little later, through a business deal, instigated by a so called friend that Grandpa Hilliard lost his home and all of his life’s savings. This was a blow from which the family never regained their financial status, and from then on Grandpa’s health began to decline.

After Grandpa and Grandma had to give up their home, Maple Bluff, they went to Florida to live, and Mother, Aunt Addie and Aunt Lee went too. Neither Grandma nor Grandpa were very well, so they soon returned to Tennessee, and they located on the Dickerson Road in Nashville. It was while they were living there that Mother and Father married, in December of
1890. The following February 4, 1891 Grandpa Hilliard died. The write-up in the local newspaper was as follows:

B.G. Hilliard was born in Maury County Tennessee, November 23, 1819. In 1847 he married Miss Ophelia Stanfield at Columbia, Tennessee. To them were born nine children who still survive. He removed to Robertson County in 1853, where he engaged in farming. His health becoming impaired in 1884 he removed to Florida. Not being benefited, he returned to Tennessee and died at Nashville, Feb. 4, 1891. When fourteen years of age the deceased was converted at a Camp Meeting in Maury County, under the preaching of Rev. John B. McFerrin, and at the same meeting he was instrumental in the conversion of his grandfather. Throughout his long life Brother Hilliard was an earnest worker in the Church and Sunday school. He contributed largely to the building and support of Wartrace M.E. Church, South, in Robertson County, of which he as a member until his removal to Florida. Late in life there came financial reverses and broken health. He was confined to his room for three years, and to his bed most of that time. The writer visited him often during a few months previous to his death, and he was always cheerful, though suffering much. He loved the Church and spoke often of his faith in God, and hope of eternal life. When speaking on this subject he would say, “I have no fear, all is well; I trust in the Savior.” Only a few days before his death, during the visit of a friend, he became very happy in the presence of God. He died, as he had lived, a Christian.”

--F.P. Turner

By the death of the head of the family, the union of a happy man and a happy woman, was severed. The home that they had established and which was a happy haven for their children, and which had been the gathering place for a host of friends; had now become a happy memory. Even though her children tried to comfort their mother, Grandma was never able to enjoy life as she had before. She made her home with her daughter, Laura Bridges and her family, in Springfield, Tennessee, until her death, caused by a paralytic stroke, a few years later.

My earliest recollections of my own mother were as she drew me close to her, and showered me with love and kisses. She was a very sensible and also a very kind and gentle mother. She was diligent in her task as wife and mother, and the outside world never proved to be the inspiration for negligence of her duties toward her family.

In fact she was happiest when she was at home with her family. She was a most industrious person, and much of the time her undertakings far exceeded her physical strength. Whatever she undertook to do, she put forth every effort to make the completed task as near perfection as she could make it.

She was a beautiful seamstress and she was also a wonderful cook. Her heart and hands reached beyond her own family, to those in need of her services. Many of her kin people took refuge from their own troubles, in her love and unselfish devotion.
Her council to her girls was a constant practice, and she had very little patience with morals that were not above the realm of criticism. To me, the best trained voice, will never compare to the lovely soprano voice she had. So many, many evenings she sat at the piano, in the parlor, and played and sang, as her little family gathered about her, and enjoyed the old refrains. Many of the old tunes, I connect with her and those happy occasions. Some of my favorites were “Grandfather’s Clock,” “Maggie,” “Where Is My Little Dog Gone,” “In the Sweet by and By,” “Daniel Tucker,” “Little Brown Jug,” “Old Black Joe,” and many, many others.

She loved the life in the country, and enjoyed gathering vegetables from the garden and fruits from the orchard. She liked cows and the chickens, and the money she made from the sale of milk and butter, afforded her much financial satisfaction and pleasure. Whatever duties that went with housekeeping, she accepted as her obligation; and she went even beyond the call of duty, in her efforts. Even though she was faithful to her own little family, her heart was bound up in the lives of her own brothers and sisters and their families.

She was a person of strong convictions, and was well informed on the happenings of the day. In the latter part of her life, after Father’s death, she found much joy in sharing her home with her widowed sisters, and in making a home for Sister. The radio was the means of many hours of happiness for her as she kept up with her favorite programs.

She made the type Grandmother that every child has the right to expect. So devoted, so understanding, so patient, so appreciative and so indulgent. In all of her relationships of life her nature had been tried and not found wanting. A good friend, wife, Mother, Daughter, Sister and Grandmother. When I read the 31st Chapter of Proverbs 10:31 verses, I think of my own Mother. “Yea, I rise up and call her blessed!!”

Sister

Sister, three years my senior, was the idol of my Mother and Father, when she arrived. They were older than most parents when the first child arrives, and a baby girl was the culmination of their dreams of many years.

She was a beautiful baby with blue eyes and a fringe of light brown hair. Father chose the name, Mary Rebecca but they called her Mary. She developed into a dainty little girl; and for three years she held the spotlight in the home, with her winning ways.

Then I came along to usurp some of the attentions. When Sister first saw me, she mistook me for a baby brother, and quickly suggested that I be named Robert. She adored me from the first and her three years of seniority in the ways of the world, gave her the right to counsel and control my behavior.
She possessed quite a different disposition from mine. She was rather quiet and timid, and did not care to play as I did. She preferred books and the association with older people, while I loved to play dolls or anything that made for a good time.

In school she was a good and a dependable student, and made good grades in her studies and in her deportment. She had a wonderful memory, and could remember dates without the least effort. She was always very neat with her school work and also very thorough, but she was rather slow with her work. She had a way of putting off her duties, until the last minute, and then she would not have time to complete her task on time. She had a will of her own, and it was sometimes difficult for her to see the wisdom of her parents, when their ideas were different from her own.

She was a rather timid girl and that trait followed her into womanhood. She was easily teased and she would blush at the least provocation, which was very annoying to her, because it created a greater desire of a teaser to tease and fret her.

Her admiration for the opposite sex was never made public, but she was a hero worshipper and kept all of her feelings well hidden from her classmates and friends. She had so many fine qualities and such unchangeable ideals. She was a perfect example of a modest girl and woman, and she could never reconcile herself to anything less than perfection in the modesty of others. Customs in the world changed from the days of her girlhood, but her ideals of dress and manners never wavered.

She was quick to express her ideas of right and wrong and she endeavored to instill her ideals into the ways of the people about her. This was a habit that her loved ones resented at times, yet they admired and respected her because of her steadfastness of convictions.

She possessed a deep love for all of those who were bound to her by the ties of kinship. There was nothing that she would not do to help any of them, and she was most generous in lavishing gifts and in the giving of her time and means that they might have a good time.

She shared in a most unusual manner the joys and sorrows of those she loved. And those that she loved, knew that she appreciated them, and they expected and looked for her sincere interest. Truth and honor were the foundation stones of her life.

She was a true Meguiar in her high standards of life and in her quick temper, and from the Hilliard side she inherited the deep love and devotion which was so characteristic of that family. The fusion of two families, with such profound and such different characteristics sometimes causes an offspring to have a greater struggle to keep the instincts and traits of character under control. People are so quick to criticize others for their seeming peculiarities, never stopping to realize that mixtures of natures and characteristics of families, that are the culmination of generations, cannot be overcome or sometimes mastered in the life of an
individual. People who are the results of such unions, so often are called peculiar, but to me, they are interesting people, if one tries to understand them.

Sister was not always understood by people, and yet, her ideals, her devotion, her honesty, her sincerity, her forgiving spirit, and her pride, made her one of the most loyal and one of the finest people I ever knew.

She never overcame the indulgence of her parents, and in many ways she was unprepared to combat the problems of life. People, so often took advantage of her trusting manner.

Sister did not like all of the duties of housekeeping. She did not like to cook or sew, and found much of housework drudgery. She never married, though she had several admirers. None of them met the requirements of her “ideal,” so she preferred to remain single.

To me, her life seemed lovely and sad as she lived alone after Mother’s death. She loved flowers, and for many years her life was filled with the work in her flower garden. She was a devoted daughter, a faithful friend, a loyal and devoted sister, and an indulgent aunt to her nephew, Albert and her niece, Betty Ann.

She and I were always very close, as we shared our joys and our sorrows, and we kept in daily contact with one another. After the death of Mother and Father, there was an even closer tie that existed between us. We shared our yesterdays together, as only children with the same background and the same Mother and Father can.

So often we reached back into the Past and pulled the golden threads from memory’s storehouse and rewove the patterns of life that we learned to weave as we were growing up.

In all of the patterns of the past, Sister held high the ideals of life from which many of my happiest dreams were fashioned.

A Sacred Vow

In the summer of 1911 the Kerr girls planned a party, and they talked so much about it that Sister and I got all excited over it. When the night finally arrived we dressed with as much care as if it were for our formal debut to society. When we arrived at the party we felt a keen disappointment to find that very few young people were there; mostly married people and a few unmarried people who were much older than we were. They all sat around and talked and some played the piano while others sang, but there was no planned entertainment. Bert Hadley was there, he had brought Mabel Grizzard to the party. We had heard of him, for he lived in Hadley’s Bend, and was often at the different social affairs at Madison, but we had never met him.

I noticed that he came around several different times to talk with me, but I did not think much about it. A few weeks later a letter arrived at home while we were at Buford College
addressed to Sister from Bert, saying that he and Matt Thompson, a cousin of his, were coming to see us the following Friday night.

That particular Friday, Blanche and I had come home from Buford to spend the weekend, but Sister had remained at school. When Bert and Matt arrived we noticed that they did not seem too disappointed that Sister was not there, and Blanche and I thought that was strange.

Later we learned that Bert had asked at the Kerr girls’ party the name of the oldest Meguiar girl, and had been told the name was Mary. He had mistaken me for the oldest, so it was quite embarrassing for him to make the explanation. Bert was the eldest son of Albert Hadley, (grandson of Dr. Jack Hadley) and Matilda Wade Hadley.

Bert was tall, with brown eyes and lovely brown hair that was naturally curly. He was not handsome, but was a most friendly fellow, with a very pleasant smile.

Although he had left home and was living in Lebanon, he was a perfect example of the saying, “you can take a person out of the country, but you can never get the country out of the person.”

His home was in Hadley’s Bend, which was only about four miles from our home, but it was rather hard to get to, since there was not a bridge across the Cumberland River at that point. A ferryboat carried travelers in and out of the Bend, and it did not operate after dark.

Consequently most of the visits Bert made were in the afternoon that is if he planned to go back home to spend the night. Much of the time he spent the night in Nashville or else he would go to Lebanon where he was working when I first knew him. I appreciated Bert’s friendship but I did not encourage his attentions. He was twenty-four when I first met him and I thought he was much too old for me to go with.

I was really younger in my ways than the average sixteen year old girl. I had lived a rather quiet, simple life, and most of the companionship with other young people had been in the various schools I had attended, for there were few young people in the immediate neighborhood. Robert and Duncan Vertrees were the nearest and they came to play Rook with us quiet often, and went with us on most of the outings in the neighborhood. I had other boyfriends too, but none of them lived close by.

One fourth of July, Bert was coming to see me and Clough Robinson was coming with him to see Blanche. Clough called and asked Blanche if we could go for a buggy ride, and without Father’s permission she told him we could go. Nevertheless, at the appointed hour both boys drove up, each one driving a good-looking outfit. Blanche went to see if her precious plans could be carried out, and she was told they could not. So, the four of us spent the afternoon in the swing in the yard. Bert and I were not upset over not getting to go, but Blanche and Clough fusssed all afternoon. The incident became a laugh provoking story, from that day to the present.
Mother and Father had rather old-fashioned ideas about rearing us girls, and even though we did not approve of all of their ideas, we respected and observed them. The thought never occurred to me to do other than abide by all of their wishes.

When Father was a young man and called on a young lady, the custom of the time was, to bid her good-night not later than ten P.M. and if the rule was not observed the head of the family rang a bell suggesting to the young man that it was time to leave.

Our parents thought it wise to make the same rule in their household, and suggested to us that the use of a bell might be a good thing. While it was never used, after the clock struck ten, I became very uneasy, and no doubt showed my desire to bring a pleasant visit to an immediate end.

It is such a tragic thing that many parents seem to forget their feelings and attitudes when they were young, as they curtail much innocent pleasure of their young people by their unjust rules and harsh criticism. And while some parents are too strict others are entirely too lenient and do not instill into their children the morals and ideals that are so necessary to admirable manners and credible behavior.

At intervals, for seven years, Bert came to see me. I was rather indifferent to his attentions, although he gradually became more persistent. I felt that he was most sincere and most dependable, and in the fall of 1917 our friendship turned into deeper feelings. In April of 1918 he presented me with a lovely diamond ring, which was a visible sign of our engagement and we immediately started planning for an early Fall wedding.

I had not been quick in giving my affirmative answer to Bert, but for weeks I weighed in a most serious manner, the question of marriage. I wanted to be certain that after I had said, “yes,” I would have no regrets. After I was certain that I could not be happy without him, I gave him my answer.

There were several problems that seemed to hinder our plans. World War One had come as a great shock to a peace-loving nation. Woodrow Wilson had been elected President of the United States in 1913. War in Europe had threatened the peace of the world. While many were urging American intervention in the European conflict, Wilson exerted every possible influence for peace. But after Germany declared unrestricted submarine warfare, then U.S. entered the war.

The security of life was shaken and a helpless and an uncertain state of mind prevailed. The young men of the country were called into military service, and many of my friends and cousins were among the list to be called; and most of them had to go overseas.

My immediate family was not affected by the war to a great extent, since I had no brothers and Father was much too old for military service. Some foods were rationed and prices soared in living expenses. War was the topic of interest and conversation. News did not ravel as
fast then as it does now, since there were no radios to broadcast it. The daily newspapers carried in big headlines the progress or defeat that was taking place on the battle front.

It was hard then for me to realize the necessity of war, and as the years have passed I still feel that through different world relations, many causes for bloodshed could and should be averted. There were few young men left at home, and if they were left there was usually a dependent or a physical defect that caused their rejection. Bert’s brother Wade was called and that was a great blow to his family. Bert was practically the only boyfriend I had that was not called, and if the war had continued for a longer period, he too would have had to go.

Those of us who did not have to make drastic sacrifices could never quite realize the untold agony suffered by those who had loved ones in the conflict. One of my best friends, Rufus Boddie of Gallatin, had to go. A letter he wrote me just before he left the States made me realize more fully, what a great price the boys were paying that we might have freedom.

His letter was postmarked, May 1, 1918, Wednesday Evening

_Dear Lois -- When you receive this short message I will be rolling on the high seas to parts unknown, but with good spirits, eager to do my share to crush the Imperialism of Germany. So, the next letter you write address it, Sgt. Rufus F. Boddie, Co. B, 113 M. G. Bn? American Expeditionary Forces._

_The only disappointment I have is that I was unable to go home and see my friends, but such is not to be. I suppose Sara and Mother told you they were expecting me home, but things happen quick in the Army. So “Good-bye” Lois, may you be blessed with the best of the Lord’s blessing. I have certainly enjoyed your friendship and I only hope that we meet after it is over there, for I won’t be back before. Give my best regards to Mrs. Meguiar and Mary._

_Bye-Bye, Sincerely, Rufe_

I was kept busy writing letters to many of the boys who were in service, trying in my feeble way to encourage and cheer them with bits of news from home. Another thing that brought sorrow to our household was the serious illness of Aunt Mollie Webb. She had cancer and was brought to our house so that we could care for her. She was older than Mother and Mother looked upon her more as a mother than a sister. Her intense suffering was heart-breaking and I learned to administer the hypodermic which helped to ease the pain. In September of 1918, Aunt Mollie passed away at our house, and while we were heart-broken, we were relieved that she could be at rest.

All of that summer, I had been busy embroidering linens for my hope chest. With Mother’s and Sister’s help we embroidered and made tatting and crocheted trimming for six pairs of sheets and pillow cases, besides several suits of hand-made underwear.
We had planned our wedding for the latter part of November, and we did not postpone our plans because Aunt Mollie had asked us not to. Sister and I shopped for clothes and visited the dressmaker often. Father was quieter than usual, really he never discussed any of the wedding plans with me.

Mother helped with everything, even though her heart was very heavy; after the death of her Sister and the thought of having to give up her baby girl. Then, I did not realize how she must have felt, but not I shudder to think what emotions she must have experienced.

At the beginning of the War, the Government bought all of the land in Hadley’s Bend to be used for a Powder Plant. Its isolated location made it an ideal place for such an important war manufacturing plant. The people who lived in the Bend set about to find and purchase homes to which they could move. As suitable places were found, the families, who had for so many years been such a united little group, began to move, and as they settled they were scattered in various parts of the country. It was a sad move, for many of them, the Bend was the only home they had ever known, and the ties of kinship and friendship had become welded together, as they had shared all of the interests of their own little community.

In the Spring of 1918, Bert found a place on West Eastland Avenue, which he rented and to which he moved his Mother and Howard. Soon after they moved there, Bert bought a seven acre place in Springfield, Tenn. (where he was then working), and he had the house remodeled, and Mrs. Hadley and Howard moved to Springfield where they spent the summer. Hadley’s Bend was a unique little settlement with quiet an interesting history. The original Hadley tract of some 3000 acres was given to Robert Livingston for diplomatic services in England with Monroe. At this time the United States had only lately secured its Independence from England, and the young government was heavily in debt, so Livingston took what was known as Hadley’s Bend in payment for his services.

It came into the possession of Dr. J. L. Hadley through his mother who was a Livingston. When Dr. J. L. Hadley, better known as Dr. Jack Hadley came into possession of the Bend in the earlier part of the 19th century, he built the old homestead, “Vaucluse.” Tennessee was at this time part of the State of North Carolina. A large portion of the estate had been handed down, and bore the distinction of being one tract of land which had never been sold in the history of the world.

In the olden days Vaucluse presented a magnificent appearance to the chance traveler who turned the bend in the little road, and came suddenly upon it sitting in the midst of trees, surrounded by its large gathering of slaves homes and out-houses, as if it had been picked up bodily by some great power and transformed from its original home in England or France to its present location. The main building was a two story red brick structure, with large windows and over-hanging roof framed in ivy.
On one side was a Negro hospital made of the same material and to balance it on the other was the carriage house, while in the rear could be seen the slave quarters. Before it, was an old-fashioned flower garden with white graveled paths and primroses peeping from behind tall, gay colored hollyhocks and surrounding the whole was a red brick wall five feet high with false turrets every twelve feet. A brass knocker was on the large oak front door on which was engraved, “Vaucluse.”

Upon opening the door an exquisitely designed hallway was entered, with its high ceiling in dull gray and the many colored rag carpets on the polished floor. On one side stood an old Grandfather’s clock, on the other the family hat stand brought from England, with its horn knobs for hots and its long glass, and by its side the walking stick holder with its sedately quiet ivory handled walnut sticks, so appropriate to an old southern gentleman.

Through heavy somber-hued tapestries, drooping languidly from the high arch at the rear of the spacious hall, glistened the polished rounds of the stairs, slowly ascending to the large bedrooms above. The door to the left of the old clock, opened into the hospitable parlor with its grand old stone fireplace surrounded by a half circle of huge luxuriously cushioned chairs, that seemed to invite you with open arms, to sit and dream of the days gone by.

There also was the old massive mahogany piano, the horse hair sofa, and in the corner a glass case containing a collection of curling sea shells. But by far the most noticeable feature of the room was the paper on the wall. This paper was originally ordered from France by Andrew Jackson for the Hermitage, but the ship lost its course, and when it did arrive Jackson had secured paper for his house elsewhere, so this was sold to Dr. Hadley for Vaucluse. Different from modern paper, it was in eight inch squares and portrayed scenes from the Grecian mythological tale, Cupid and Psyche. No two of the gray steel engravings were alike, and indeed half a day could easily have been spent in the inspection. In the great room across the hall the paper was of similar origin but portraying scenes from Paul and Virginia.

On through the heavy draperies and past the polished stairs was the commodious dining room, with the long table and stiff backed chairs, that were ever freely open to the chance passerby, whether he be friend or stranger. On the mahogany side board was much of the family’s fine old silver.

On through the swinging door was a typical southern kitchen, capably managed by several of the family’s dependable Negro slaves. Thus was Vaucluse, the home of Dr. Jack Hadley (Bert’s great-grandfather) just before the outbreak of the Civil War.

After the war, which caused much destruction in the Bend, the house was never restored to its original splendor but instead the Hadleys built smaller dwellings in other parts of the Bend.

At the beginning of World War I when the land in the Bend was sold to the Government to be used for a Powder Plant; Vaucluse was torn down; thus wrecking a house that had
embodied both beauty and stability of structure, and one which had been Home to some of the earliest and most prominent settlers in Tennessee.

The residence of Livingston Hadley was abandoned by the Hadley family. While not as old as Vaucluse it dated back to about the time of the construction of the Hermitage. It was built by Dr. Jack Hadley for his son John, who also became a doctor. The land in Hadley’s Bend was some of the best farming land in Tennessee. Bert was born in the Bend in a small house his father, Albert Hadley, built just after his marriage to Matilda Wade.

Bert’s father died of a fever October 27, 1900, leaving his widow with five children; Bert, Wade, Carrie, Laura and Howard. Bert was the oldest child, and was just fifteen years old when his father died. Bert and Wade, who were two years younger than Bert, with the help of hired help, continued to farm the land, and assumed the responsibility of the family.

As soon as Bert finished grammar school he took a business course at Draughons Business College in Nashville, and later secured a position in Nashville, leaving Wade to take over the farm.

Wade was called into Military Service in the early part of World War I, and soon after he left, all of the families moved from the Bend, so that the Government could take over and build one of the most important Powder Plants that was constructed in the United States. These were the world conditions, and the difficulties our families experienced as Bert and I began to make plans for our wedding.

The date of our wedding was set for Nov. 20th, 1918 at seven o’clock at City Road Chapel Methodist Church in Madison, the days that followed were filled with completing in detail the plans for the wedding.

On the morning of Nov. 11, 1918 we were overjoyed at the glorious news, “The War Is Over!” An army of workers at the Powder Plant in Old Hickory (which had been Hadley’s Bend) marched by on the Gallatin Pike, yelling and blowing and beating on all types of noise-making objects as they rejoiced that the horrible war was ended. It was a day of great rejoicing and praise.

In a few weeks the boys started returning home from camps and from overseas. It took a longer time for some to get home than for others, but there was rejoicing among their loved ones and friends as each of them returned.

Life again began to slowly to get back to normal, though many of the young men had difficulty in getting adjusted to civilian life and in getting started in their business careers.

I found the parties that preceded the wedding, the gifts, and the preparation for the wedding, all to be most exciting.
On the night of Nov. 19th the rehearsal took place at City Road Chapel. I wore a Nile green silk crepe evening dress with a full skirt over which was a tulle over-skirt edged in iridescent trimming, with this I wore silver evening slippers. Bert sent me the prettiest corsage I have ever seen, of pink sweetheart rosebuds and lilies-of-the-valley.

Sister and Laura Long (Bert’s sister) were my only attendants, except for the flower girl, Odell Spotswood, and the ring bearer Charles Douglas Meguiar. I had chosen Reverend Robert J. Craig to perform the ceremony, because of all of the pastors we had ever had, I loved him best of all.

Since Wade was still overseas, Bert chose Dr. Allen Grizzard a lifelong friend to be best man. The ushers were, Charles Weaver, Wallace Long (brothers-in-law of Bert), Mr. Harvey Cotton and Arthur Tippens. Sara Boddie Swaney, of Gallatin, played the piano, and Mary Poston, a schoolmate at Buford College, sang.

After the rehearsal Laura and Wallace Long entertained the bridal party and a few close friends at their home 710 North 12th St.; and it was a lovely and happy affair.

Our wedding day dawned cold and misty. It was a very busy day indoors. The gifts were still arriving, the house was being made ready for the reception, and friends and relatives were coming in and out, helping with whatever they could find to do.

It was a great disappointment to me that neither Ruth nor Blanche was able to be present for the wedding, and it was a disappointment to them too.

Ruth’s small daughter Mildred Lorrain was only three months old and Blanche’s first child was expected the following March. Mother and Father went to Nashville the day of the wedding, to select their gift for us.

They chose a set of Havilland china which was so dainty with sprays of pink flowers, and the dishes had a scalloped gold edging. Mother said Father selected it for he thought it was the prettiest set that Phillips and Buttorff had.

Sister, aunt Ada Meguiar and Mabel Clark, my cousin, went up and decorated the Church, getting ferns, flowers and candles from different friends. When they finished, it was a lovely and impressive looking altar.

I was very calm all day and very happy. My heart has no uncertain feelings, only a flutter of excitement was its only reaction. As I dressed for my wedding--the event I had planned for and dreamed about for many years, even before I had any idea who the man would be that would meet me at the altar to become my Husband, many thoughts ran through my mind. This was the last time I would be called by my maiden name--so soon I would be the wife of Bert Hadley and from then on I would be, “Mrs. Hadley!” How strange it all seemed! When I left the house, I would not return the same, I would never be the same carefree girl I had always been.
I was excited, but not afraid for months I had given much serious thought to the step I was about to take. I was certain that I was in love with Bert, and he with me, and I had felt that I could not be happy without being with him. I do not think a more innocent nor a more sincere bride ever marched to the altar.

The plans for the future and the ideals upon which I expected to build our home were firmly fixed in my mind. I had earnestly prayed that our lives might be united in a perfect and understanding love, and that the home that we would establish might be acceptable in our Heavenly Father’s sight.

All of my emotions were grounded on innocence and faith, and with a love that had never been cheapened by insincere flirtations. So with a simple faith, a bright hope in the future, and with a great love burning in my heart, I was ready to go to the altar to answer “I will” to the profound question, “Wilt thou love, cherish, and keep thee only unto him, so long as ye both shall live?”

Bert and I had been very positive that our wedding would be on time, and we were humiliated when it was almost an hour late.

Brother Craig had told one of the ushers to tell Bert he would come from Gallatin and stop off at the church, rather than meeting at the Hermitage Hotel, as was first planned.

The usher failed to deliver the message, so Bert and Dr. Allen Grizzard chased from one hotel to another looking for the preacher. No doubt they created many laughs as they frantically went from one hotel to the other looking for the Parson, with their full dress suits and high top hats.

Finally they came on out home to find me still waiting for them, and to learn from one of the ushers who had rushed down from the Church, that the preacher and the guests were impatiently awaiting the arrival of the bride and groom.

I do not think Bert ever quite forgave the usher who failed to deliver such an important message.

The wedding was lovely and the vows were impressive and sacred.

I realized the Church was filled with guests, with quite a number standing along the sides and in the back of the Church.

The guests at the reception, which was at our home on the Gallatin Road, showered us with congratulations and good wishes.

It was such a pretty affair and so many of our closest friends and loved ones were there.
Elizabeth Bridges, a cousin, and Sallie Tippins, a lifelong friend, helped to serve. If I had had a larger wedding, they would have been the other attendants.

After we had greeted all of the guests and had cut the wedding cake, Bert and I went to change our clothes.

I went upstairs and removed my wedding dress and veil and dressed in my going away outfit. I wore a taupe wool suit trimmed in a black mink collar, with it I wore a georgette silk blouse in a lighter shade, and a hat of the same shade, trimmed in light brown plumes. My shoes were high top button shoes in the same color as the suit.

Bert wore a dark blue wool suit, black shoes, and a dark blue overcoat which had a velvet collar. I thought he looked so nice.

Goodbyes were said, and my heart stood still when I told my parents goodbye and felt the quiver in their voices and saw the tears in their eyes.

It was all over—the excitement of planning for the wedding, the parties, and all of the ski-riding. We were man and wife, and on our own!

We were driven to the Hermitage Hotel where we spent the night. That night Bert and I had both kneeled by the side of the bed in prayer. I know not what the groom’s prayer was, but the bride asked that the Heavenly Father bless this union and help them establish a home that would be acceptable in His sight. It was uttered in all sincerity and all humility, for of all the things that she most wanted in life, she wanted most of all a Christian home filled with love. The next day we left by train for Atlanta, Georgia, where we stayed until Saturday, when we went to Chattanooga and spent the night. Sunday we went to Murfreesboro and spent the day with Carrie Weaver and her family, and from there we came back to Nashville and spent a few days with Mother and Father before to Springfield, Tenn. to make our home.

The Banner gave the following account:

HADLEY-MEGUIAR WEDDING

To witness the marriage of Miss Elizabeth Lois Meguiar and Mr. Albert Livingston Hadley, of Springfield, a large assemblage filled the City road chapel on the Gallatin road last night at 7 o’clock. The ceremony was impressively performed by the Rev A. J. Craig of Donelson, before an altar decorated with massed ferns and lighted with pink Cathedral candles. A musical program was given by Mrs. Frank Swaney of Castallian Springs, at the piano and Mrs. Charles Poston, vocalist, who in lovely voice sang Schubert’s Serenade and Love Is Like A Flower. During the ceremony the “Flower Song was softly played.
The bride was exceptionally lovely in her wedding toilette fashioned of white chiffon, over white satin, with a court train and a tulle veil caught to her hair, with a Juliet cap or orange blossoms touched with pearls. She carried a bouquet of bride’s roses and lilies of the valley. She was attended by her sister, Miss Mary Meguiar, as maid of honor, who wore an effective gown of pink tulle and satin trimmed with iridescents, and the groom’s sister, Mrs. Wallace Long, as matron of honor, who appeared in her wedding gown of white satin and chiffon, trimmed with silver lace.

Both carried bouquets of Russell roses. The little flower girl, Margaret Odell Spotswood, wore a lace trimmed white crepe frock and carried a basket of pink roses from which she scattered the petals before the bride. The ring-bearer, Master Charles Douglas Meguiar, was in a white linen pages suit and carried the wedding ring in the heart of a lily.

Dr. Allen Grizzard served as best man and the ushers were Messrs H. I Cotton, Wallace Long, Charles Weaver and Arthur Tippens.

The ceremony was followed by a reception at the home of the bride’s parents, Mr. and Mrs. A.F. Meguiar, where the decorations repeated the wedding colors of pink and white, and ices in the same tones were served.

The bride’s Mother was assisted in dispensing hospitalities by the groom’s Mother, Mrs. Tillie Wade Hadley, Mrs. Chas. P Weaver, Mrs. C. W. Meguiar, Mrs. W. M. Pardue, Mrs. William Bradford, Miss Elizabeth Bridges and Miss Sallie Tippens.

A wedding register was kept by Mrs. Oscar Clark, of Algood.

Mrs. Meguiar’s gown was of black satin and Georgette trimmed with jet and she carried a bouquet of Ophelia roses. A large and handsome collection of wedding presents were displayed. On the later train the bride and groom left for a Southern wedding trip and on their return will make their home in Springfield. Mrs. Hadley’s traveling gown was of taupe cloth with a blouse and hat to match.

In addition to those mentioned, the out-of-town guests were Mrs. J.A Bridges and Miss Elizabeth Bridges of Springfield, Prof. and Mrs. Charles Weaver of Murfreesboro and Mrs. C. W. Meguiar of Franklin, KY.

Nine Oaks

“Nine Oaks,” our first home, was located a mile south of Springfield, Tennessee on the Greenbriar Pike.
The house was two-story white frame, with a large front porch. The front door opened
into a wide hall in which was the staircase that led to an upstairs hall from which three bedrooms
and a small sewing room were entered.

On the left of the front door, as you entered, a door opened into a small living room
which was heated by a coal burning stove, and it was furnished with two large rocking chairs that
were upholstered in black leather, a lounge sofa, and oval shaped table and one or two more
rocking chairs. The furniture was some Bert bought when he rented the house on West Eastland Ave.

Back of the living room, double doors opened into a bedroom which Bert and I furnished
with ivory bedroom furniture. It was heated by the stove in the living room. This was our
bedroom, and the furniture was the kind that I had always hoped to have.

A door opened from the bedroom into the hall and also one opened onto a small back
porch.

Across the hall from the living room a door opened into a long, narrow dining room. In
this room was Bert’s Grandmother Wade’s cherry dining room table, and some odd chairs that
had been brought from the Bend. We bought a sideboard and a china closet, in which to put our
wedding gifts of china, cut glass and silver. Back of the dining room was a large run down
kitchen. The uneven floor was covered in a faded and worn linoleum, and a large coal burning
range was at one side.

An old unattractive sideboard which had belonged to some of the Hadley ancestors was
on another side. A small table was on the opposite side of the room, and it held a bucket of water
and a wash pan. A table sat in the center of the floor, and it was here that we ate most of our
meals. A pantry opened out of the kitchen and it was filled with old kitchen utensils and a flour
barrel sat in on corner which had a biscuit board for a cover, and it was there that I made and
rolled out many biscuits.

At the head of the stairs, Mrs. Hadley had her room furnished with an oak bedroom suite.
It was a light and cheery looking room, and it too was heated by a small coal stove. The bedroom
that opened into hers had a white iron bed and an antique bureau, together with several rocking
chairs.

The third bedroom was the most attractively furnished room, with an antique four poster
bed, a walnut dresser and a washstand, which I was told belonged to Wade.

The house sat about sixty feet from the highway, in grove of lovely old oak trees. It was
from these trees that the place had been given its name by its previous owner, a Mrs. Thompson.
The yard was enclosed by a picket fence, and on the south of the house there was an old-
fashioned flower garden, which had a profusion of blooms the following spring.
Back of the house there was a small orchard and vegetable garden. The remainder of the seven acres was cornered with lovely shade trees. It was a quaint old place, and it was quite comfortable home-like. We started out with a good many animals. Father gave us a registered Jersey milk cow. Mr. and Mrs. Kerr gave us six white Wyandotte hens and a rooster, and Bert had his high spirited riding horse, “Bessie.” Bert bought me a little spotted pony to drive to a fancy wicker trimmed buggy, and that was my way of getting about. We got two or three pigs and a big Collie dog, so we started out as farmers, on a small scale. Bert adored piddling with all of the animals, and he spent his idle hours changing their stalls and pig pens from one location to another. He worked in Springfield, where he had charge of a Farm Implement House, consequently he did not have too much time to spend at home.

When we got to “Nine Oaks” we were its sole occupants, since Bert’s mother had gone to Murfreesboro to spend the Winter with Carrie and her family, and Howard had gone to Nashville. While I was happy at Nine Oaks, I felt a keen disappointment that I did not feel the mistress of the house. It was filled with another woman’s possessions, and I never felt free to make changes and put forth effort to carry out my own inclinations.

Before I had married, I had established in my own mind the pattern of our first home. As a girl, I had read an article in some paper which expressed in such a beautiful way the ideals and dreams that I cherished. In fact, it was the blueprint from which I had hoped and expected to build my own home. It was entitled, “The Soliloquy of Home,” and is as follows:

The last nail has been driven. The last brush mark is dry, and the last remnant of the restless artisan has been cleared away. I stand, complete, ready for your occupancy. I am no longer mere wood and plaster and brick and metal and craftsmanship. I am home, in the sweet fullness of the wonderful word.

It has taken self-sacrifice to build me. Years have passed, monotonously, perhaps, and the heart has hungered for my peace and quiet, but now, now, man and woman, your nest is complete. The blue sky smiles gently above it and here, in all the broad reaches of God’s Wonderland, is one tiny patch you may call your own. It was worth the waiting and the heartaches and the delay. Man, light your pipe and don your smoking jacket. There is your table and your evening lamp and your dreams. And you, woman, we would have you sing in your tidy kitchen and plan such magic ideals as never were born short of paradise.

My snug ramparts will do much ward off the unhappiness of the big outer world. Indeed, if you but know it, man and woman, I am a world until myself, complete, beautiful and satisfying. And when you, man, are wearied of the office and the bustling town, and when business shall have buffeted your beyond endurance you may turn your eyes my way, sure of rest and release. Yes, I am the antidote for the hurts of the commercial highway. I open my doors to you, who have been rebuffed and beaten and cowed and
hammered down to the dust by Life’s long struggle for existence. An unassuming little convent amidst roses and green lawns, for woman, sick of the battle with stern reality. Here, sure of herself, mistress of all she surveys, she is privileged to draw the blinds and close the portals, bolting herself in from that which humiliates. A princess, may hap (sic), in a castle of content. From the battlements she shall peer outward upon the panorama of the nervous day and see it pass, touching her not, leaving her happily wedded to her lullabies. Yes, I represent one of the purest and most holy ideals man or woman may hide in their heart of hearts.

Home”—the word itself was first whispered in heaven and then sent wondrously echoing by the angels. Love dwells with my walls. God Himself smiles in at the sunny casement, and mixed with hopes and ambitions and spiritual dreams is the laughter of little children. I am incomplete without childhood. The rooms seem lonesome indeed, for all their life, if babies be not there to coo and to cry and to crawl joyously along the golden path of the sum as it shines there on the sitting room floor. A chalice of maternal affection am I, smothered in jasmine and tea roses.

During those solicitous days when hammers pounded upon me, and the scent of white pine and paint and tar and lime were in the air, you came to the top of the hill, arm in arm, you two, and stood at quite a distance, looking at me in silence, as if a word might dispel me into nothingness again. It was difficult to believe that I was being created, that from the toil and the waiting material reward had sprung and was taking pretty shape. And the days passed, the grass flung its green fabric over the scarred earth, the clambering vine grew strong and luxuriant, the roses she had planted took firm root and buds came with the springtide—a magic mosaic of beauty welded together by June. Come, hide with me.

As birds build nests in high trees and raise their young, you two, man and wife, are to climb the long hill and plan for a new sort of future—a future in which little hands and little lips and little voices are destined to play wise parts. I’m waiting for you. As sweet and as clean as the very flowers at the door. No unkind word has been said within my portals, no sufferings have been known, not so much as a tear has fallen on my sparkling threshold.

Take me and see well to it that I be kept still sacred. Sweethearts must lodge here—sweethearts until the twilight of your companionship; my rooms long for those honeyed, inconsequential, birdlike things men say to women and women say to men when their love is a holy s the hand which made it possible. There is a porch up whose white columns the honeysuckle clammers, there is an attic where cobwebs will be spun from dark rafters, and where old love letters will someday rest in a horsehair trunk; there are closets just right for toys; there is a cool, long hall and a pretty little dining room, at whose windows dainty white curtains will ripple in the wind and geraniums burn orange
and red, as if painted; there is a pink and white bedroom, overlooking meadows and hills, and dream things lying far below in the afternoon sun; there is a room set apart for books and leather covers and magazines, and consecrated, we confess, to the mystic oriental fumes of tobacco smoke; there is a certain corner—yes, a certain quiet, sunlit corner, where a crib should stand, with room beside it for a rocking chair and one of those tall, sedate sewing baskets of cream willow. There is cellarway, rife with poetic mystery, and shelved for those delicious jams and jellies Milady will make; there—but no. I will say no more. Come, I am impatiently waiting for your both.

My children, my lodgers of the long sacrifice. When the last stroke of hammer and brush had been given there remained but one more thing to make me truly habitable—God’s benediction—and last night, as the world slept, the dews and the summer rains fell, singing their way along the roof, and dawn gave golden assurance that He had given it.

I kept my disappointment well hidden from my husband, and in spite of the fact that the furnishings of my new home were not of my choosing, some the sweetest and happiest memories of my entire life cling around the time we spent at Nine Oaks. And if I could go back with the experience I now have, I am sure I could do a better job of overcoming the obstacles that I encountered as a bride.

The long winter evenings that followed our arrival at Nine Oaks, Bert and I spent in our own home. The living room had been made quite cozy and home-like by the addition of many of our wedding gifts. An electric lamp that Aunt Kate Hadley (the widow of Uncle Livingston Hadley) gave us for a wedding gift sat on the oval table. Many passersby told us how much they admired it as it shed its light through the large front window. It was a most unusual lamp, having a glass shade which showed a lovely autumn scene, in the rich autumn coloring. Also on the table I kept a round cut glass bowl that Dr. Hayes gave us. It was so delicately etched in dainty sprays of flowers, and it had a bell like tone when it was struck.

Bert usually kept it filled with chocolate drops for me, but when it was empty our little black and white kitten liked to curl up in it and take a nap. Pictures were hung on the wall that gave a personal touch to the room. Our bedroom, with its ivory furniture was the result of one of my girlhood dreams. Before we married I told Bert what type furniture I wanted, but I refused to go with him to select it. I was entirely too timid to go shopping for the house before we were married. In fact if I had discussed more freely with Bert the dreams and plans I had for our home, I am sure more of them would have been realized. But I could not bring myself to discuss such personal things with him. Such old fashioned timidity would seem quite strange to the frank and matter-of-fact young people of today, who seem to discuss and plan their homes and the size of their families without the least evidence of timidity or embarrassment.
I enjoyed my household duties and found cooking three meals a day quite interesting. I put much thought on the meals I served, and not a day passed that I did not make a dessert for the man I loved. We were more like a couple of school children, were so happy and carefree.

Even though I was happy to be with Bert, the ties of my home and family were just as strong, and a week did not pass that we did not go to see Mother and Father. In fact we went so often that Father was afraid Bert might neglect his business to bring me home. After a visit with them I was always ready to return with Bert, for I never wanted to let him go back without me.

We first attended the Presbyterian Church in Springfield but later we both joined the Methodist Church.

Rev. R. H. Hudgens was the pastor and we enjoyed his friendship, as well as the services and the membership. Our first Christmas was a very happy one, we shared it with Mother and Father and Mrs. Hadley, and we went to see Carrie and her family. On January 1920, Mrs. Hadley called from Murfreesboro to tell us that she had another grandson, Charles Weaver Jr. Matilda and Elizabeth were overjoyed at the arrival of their little brother. Carrie had married Charles Weaver soon after she finished school. He was a teacher and at this time was teaching at Murfreesboro State College. Carrie was a very impulsive happy sort of person and made friends easily. She had light brown curly hair and grey eyes. Her husband, Charles Weaver, was a very refined and cultured person. Their little girls, Matilda and Elizabeth, were both such pretty children, with brown eyes and naturally curly hair. Charles Jr. readily became the idol in the household.

Early in March we had news from Sanford, Florida that Blanche and Mahlon Wright had a son, Mahlon Louis Jr. We learned that he was a fail child, with red hair and blue eyes. I could not picture Blanche with a real baby. As a little girl she had played “lady” and she was a devoted “Mother” to her doll, but this was so different. But I was sure she would make a sweet Mother, with the happy, affectionate disposition she possessed.

(Volume IV)

Early in the spring of 1919 Wade wired saying he had arrived in the States and was on his way home. His family was excited and happy. Bert and Howard met him at the station in Nashville, and after he had visited with his mother and Laura, he came on to Nine Oaks to be with us.

Wade was a good looking young man of medium height, with brown hair and blue eyes, that had a devilish twinkle in them. He was a big tease, and he had a sarcastic way of saying things, with a half grin on his face. He and Bert looked a good bit alike, at least there was a strong family resemblance. As boys and young men they had shared their problems and their good times together.
Wade was considered an unusually good farmer when he lived in Hadleys Bend, and he was a most dependable person. When Wade came home he had many plans for the future. First he and Bert bought a farm near Greenbrier, and then he turned his attention to the sweetheart he left behind when he went overseas, Elizabeth Dabney of Clarksville, Tenn. They were cousins, Wade’s grandmother, Laura Donelson, and Elizabeth’s grandfather, William Donelson, were brother and sister.

Elizabeth was a vivacious girl, with red hair and brown eyes and a happy disposition. She was the daughter of Lizzie Donelson and Edmund Dabney, and she had one brother, Edmund who was several years her junior.

During her girlhood she had visited relatives in the Bend, and she and Wade became interested in one another. Much of their romances were renewed as they visited us at Nine Oaks; and in a short time they were making plans for a June wedding.

On May, we received a long distance call telling us of the arrival of Wallace Gentry Long Jr.; son of Laura Hadley and Wallace Long. Laura was a good many years younger than her husband, whom she married when she was quite young. She was such a pretty person, with light wavy hair, blue grey eyes and a lovely complexion. Her voice was low and soft and she spoke in such a quiet manner. Wallace, her husband was a perfect example of a true Southern gentleman, with lovely manners and a modesty that was unusual. He adored Laura and he showered her with lovely and thoughtful attentions. He loved and appreciated beauty in life and in nature, and he put forth every effort to be surrounded by beauty.

My heart rejoiced with Laura and “Mr. Long” when Wallace Jr. arrived, for my own heart had a song that it was singing--my own emotions were beautifully expressed in a poem that I found and treasured at that time entitled, “The Secret:”

Dim the night, and the stars are infinity; white in the snow in the width of the street; Something seems drawing me close to divinity. Dear is my secret, and sacred and sweet. Here I lie dreamily musing and slumberless. Thrilling at dear little echoes that start. Silent I lie, with my thoughts that are numberless. Something is whispering under my heart.

Pink as a rose is my secret, and beautiful. Firm little petals the shape of a mouth (God make me loving and tender and dutiful)! Dear little voice like a mind from the south, soft little toes that are dimpled and delicate (how I shall I thrill as I kiss them apart). Wee little hands that are warm and affectionate. Angels are whispering under my heart.

Christmas is coming, and children are slumberless (hush, oh, my heart, for your secret will keep)! When it comes next, oh, my gifts will be numberless. Pink little stockings and – oh, I must weep! Dim is the night, and the stars are infinity; dear little echoes continue to start. God, you are drawing me close to divinity. Heaven is whispering under my heart!
In the early spring we secured Maude Henry, a colored woman who lived close by, to work for us. She came each morning and cleaned the house and cooked the noon meal. She was so good natured and jolly. Her characteristics were so like those of the slaves of olden days, so humble, and also very loyal and dependable. She had a husband Tilford and three children, Joe Henry, Albert Sprouse and Georgia Mae. The problems of Maude’s family necessarily became our interests too, and some of the problems were interesting and amusing while others were rather up-setting. On several occasions Maude was hurriedly called home because Georgia Mae, the youngest child, was having a fit. It always explained it was caused from “the worms,” and she didn’t seem to get too upset.

Joe Henry was always “a slow to learn child,” and Maude gave that much thought and concern. Albert Sprouse, was the favorite child, and his name was always a matter of pride, since he was named after one of the leading business men of Springfield.

One Sunday when there was still quite a bit of frost in the air, and the day was rather disagreeable, Maude informed me that Georgia Mae was going to join the church and was to be baptized in the creek that afternoon. I felt that it was too cold for her to be immersed in such icy water, and suggested to Maude that it might give her pneumonia. Very sincerely Maude made the emphatic reply, “None it won’t hurt her if she’s got religion.” Evidently she had religion or else the angels were watching over her, for she was baptized along with several other converts and seemed none the worse physically.

Maude’s voice was often very pleasing and quite melodious as she went about her work singing some of the Negro spirituals. One in particular that I liked and that I often got her to sing for me was “When The World Is On Fire.” She could give it the swing and the rhythm that only a true product of her race can. She never felt in any sense that she was being oppressed by the laws of segregation. But she was happy mixing and mingling with her own race socially, and she found a great joy in serving so humbly and so well the “white folks” that she loved and knew to be her best friends.

The day of Wade and Elizabeth’s wedding arrived and “Nine Oaks” was like a beehive, as everyone was up early, intent on getting to Clarksville. The wedding was to be at 8:00 that night.

Sister, Wade and Howard were with us. Howard had previously come to Springfield to work with Bert in the Implements Store. He was twenty-one years old, and he was the youngest child in his family. He was a rather quiet person with a nice disposition. He looked a good bit like his brothers, with brown hair and eyes. Wade and Howards left right after breakfast, and Bert kept hurrying me to get ready to go.
Finally sister, Bert and I left around nine o’clock, and as luck would have it, we had car trouble and it was late in the afternoon before we arrived. It was a sultry day, and heavy clouds floated in the skies, and it lightened and thundered. I think it rained a little just before night, but then it cleared off and it was a beautiful night. It was a garden wedding and it was lovely, the ceremony took place under the lovely old oak trees, with the star studded sky as a canopy.

Miss Dabney and Mr. Hadley marry at Clarksville. A marriage of unusual interest throughout the state by reason of the prominence of the families which it unites is that of Miss Elizabeth Dabney and Mr. Wade Henderson Hadley which was beautifully solemnized last night at the home of the bride’s parents, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Dabney, near Clarksville. The ceremony was performed at 8:30 o’clock in the presence of a large gathering of friends and relatives.

The wedding music was rendered by an orchestra. The scent of the wedding was the attractive lawn of the home. The bridal party came from the house down an aisle formed by tall stands of flowers joined by ropes of smilax and Jackson vine, and lighted by candles in tall brass candlesticks, which led to an improvised altar of palms, ferns and flowers.

The attendants were the matron of honor, Mrs. Albert L. Hadley of Springfield; the bridesmaids, Misses Katherine Wallace and Carrie Turnley; the ribbon bearers, Misses Nettie Wade and Mary Hooper Donelson of Nashville; the little flower girl, Wena Elizabeth Hambaugh, of Birmingham, Ala, and the ring bearer, little Elizabeth Weaver of Murfreesboro, the groom’s niece.

The groom’s best man was his brother, Mr. Howard Hadley of Springfield.

The bride was lovely in her wedding gown of white satin and Georgette crepe trimmed in pearls. Her veil of paints lace was worn by her aunt, Mrs. Laura Donelson Wade at her wedding. It was adjusted with sprays of orange blossoms and she carried a chatelaine bouquet of bride’s roses and lilies of the valley. The matron of honor, a recent bride, wore her wedding gown of white satin trimmed in lace and carried white sweet peas. The bride’s maids wore girlish frocks, pink Georgette crepe and carried Killarney roses. The children in the wedding wore white organdy and lace frocks with pink accessories and carried baskets of pink sweet peas. The little ring bearer carried the ring in a French bouquet of flowers.

The ceremony on the lawn was followed by a reception and ices were served. A profusion of flowers and ferns were used in decorating the home.

After a wedding trip Mr. and Mrs. Hadley will make their home near Springfield, where he is a successful young farmer. The bride has frequently visited relatives in Nashville
and has a wide circle of friends here and in her home community, won by her charming personality. Mr. Hadley is the son of Mrs. Tillie Wade Hadley, and has many friends to be interested in his marriage. He has just returned from overseas, where he saw nine months active service with the 30th division.

Among guests from out of town who were present at the wedding were the groom’s mother, Mrs. Tillie Wade Hadley, and brother, Mr. Howard Hadley of Springfield; Dr. and Mrs. Chas. P. Weaver and little daughter Elizabeth, of Murfreesboro; Mr. S.D. Wade and daughters, Misses Nettie and Susie Wade; Mrs. W.L. Dismukes, Mrs. C.G. Pearcy, Mrs. Thomas Shields, Mr. and Mrs. C.G. Pearcy, Jr.; Mrs. Wm. Vess, Miss Virginia Vess, Miss Elizabeth Crutches, Mr. Matt Thompson, Mr. and Mrs. R.E. Wilhoite, Misses Martha and Hallie Turner, June Turner, Mr. David Dismukes and Miss Susie Dismukes, all of Nashville.

Elizabeth and Wade went immediately to the farm near Greenbrier, Tenn. Elizabeth had been an athletic type girl and had enjoyed all of the outdoor sports, and she knew very little about the duties of housekeeping. Her experiences as she cooked for the crew of men who threshed wheat a few days after her marriage were like a nightmare to her, but the rest of us found them very amusing. Bert and I enjoyed having Elizabeth and Wade live near us, and we visited one another every few days. Our lives became very closely united as we shared so many of the same interests.

During the summer Bert’s mother, whom I always addressed as “Mrs. Hadley,” since I could not bring myself to call another woman “Mother,” came to Nine Oaks to visit us and to spend some time with Wade and Elizabeth at Greenbrier. She was a rather tall person with white hair, brown eyes, and a nose and mouth that were typical of the Wade family. She was always well groomed, usually wearing a neat house dress, with a light shawl thrown about her shoulders. She was a rather timid, but a very gracious, person.

For many years she had encouraged the idea that she was never free from some kind of ailment, and the devotion of her children as they had looked after her was unusual. She seemed to enjoy poor health and the attentions that went with it. Many of her meals had been served to her in bed and instead of looking after her household, her household had looked after her. She was always taking some kind of medicine, and she was continually consulting her physician about some of her ailments.

She was deeply interested in people and in their affairs. She had a great curiosity, which kept her alert, and her conversations over the telephone were satisfying and entertaining to her. She had a very generous spirit and enjoyed sharing her worldly possessions with those she loved. During her girlhood and young ladyhood, her family kept servants and during her married life she was able to keep a servant, consequently she had never done any hard work. On one occasion she told me that she had never so much as washed a pocket handkerchief.
She had spent her married life in Hadleys Bend, seldom leaving her own home to visit with others or to venture to Nashville to shop for herself and her family. She was a very devoted mother and the interests and activities of her five children, were a source of deep concern and a great satisfaction to her. She came first in their lives, and the devotion and tenderness which they showered upon her was a beautiful tribute to their mother.

Mrs. Hadley was always proud of her ancestors and she had instilled into her children a pride in their family background. She bore most unmistakably the imprint of culture and refinement. She was a direct descendant of Colonel John Donelson of pioneer fame, being a great-great-great granddaughter of Col. John Donelson.

It was Monday April 24, 1780 that Colonel John Donelson, with his son Capt. John Donelson and his wife Mary Purnell, formerly of Maryland, together with several others, landed at Big Salt Lick aboard the good boat, “Adventure.” They had left Fort Patrick Henry on the Holston River, December 22, 1779, and arrived after almost incredible toil, danger and handicap at the Big Salt Lick. This expedition was performed all the way by water, at the risk of hourly destruction. The men composing the party were almost continually in martial array, in order that no sudden onslaught from the surrounding savages might unexpectedly surprise them. They were repeatedly attacked by the Indians on the Tennessee River, and nothing but constant readiness for each succeeding conflict, together with the good providence of God, preserved them from the horrors of butchery.

Upon the arrival at the bluff on which Nashville now stands, the whole surrounding country exhibited the appearance of a dreary wilderness. Col. John Donelson wrote in his diary,

*Mon. Apr. 24, 1780 – This day we arrived at our journey’s end, at the Big Salt Lick, where we have the pleasure of finding Capt. Robertson and his company. It is a source of satisfaction to us to be enabled to restore to him and others, their families and friends, who were entrusted to our care, and who sometime since perhaps despaired of ever meeting again. Though our prospects at present are dreary, we have found a few log cabins which have been built on a cedar bluff above the Lick, by Capt. Robertson and his company.*

Thus the Donelson family was one of the first families to settle at Big Salt Lick, which was later known as Nashville, and through their bravery and fortitude they began to establish the beginnings of a town, which has, through the intervening years, become a thriving city, which is rich in historical background.

Capt. John Donelson and his wife Mary Purnell had ten children, Rachel, (who later became the wife of President Andrew Jackson) Stockley, William, Severn, Mary, Catherine, Jane, Alexander, Seven, and Samuel.
Stockley Donelson, the oldest son of Capt. John Donelson, was twice married. His second marriage was to Phila Ann Laurence. They had six children, William, Laura, John, Emily, Caroline, and Laurence.

Laura Donelson (Stockley Donelson’s daughter) married William James Wade of the Hermitage community. They had nine children, Laura, Susie, Emmie, Stockley, Levi, Laurence, William James and twin girls Carrie and Matilda. Matilda, or Tillie as she was always called, married Albert Hadley, great-grandson of Dr. Jack Hadley of Hadleys Bend.

The marriage of Matilda Henderson Wade and Albert Hadley brought together two families who had borne with distinction the honor of being two of the most outstanding families which were connected with the founding of Nashville and its surrounding territory. Both families had by their bravery and fortitude, been able to help establish a tradition in life and society that was typical of the high standards by which the city of Nashville was founded. So indeed, Bert’s mother and her children had just cause to look back with pride to their ancestors that carried so honorably the names they bore.

When Mrs. Hadley arrived at Nine Oaks I felt a keen sense of my own youth and inexperience as a housekeeper. And I tried doubly hard to come up to the standards that I was sure she had established in her own mind, for the wife of her eldest son.

She seemed so different from my own mother, she seemed so restless with no definite plan and purpose for the activities of each day. It was difficult for me to become adjusted to this new relationship.

So often the relationship seemed strained, and I am sure it was caused from a lack of understanding, and too, perhaps a jealousy existed that neither of us realized. I always admired many of her characteristics, even though I did not always understand her. Perhaps it was asking too much of a young wife to share her home and her husband with her mother-in-law, when so many adjustments in her own life were taking place. I had determined in my own heart to be the kind of daughter-in-law that she had expected, but I am afraid I failed on several occasions.

During the summer and fall I found great pleasure in sewing and getting things ready for the arrival of our child. I had never sewed very much, but the handwork that I turned out was quite pretty and the layette was completed in due time. We had many guests at Nine Oaks during the summer and fall, several members of the family came and made visits of several days duration. Mrs. Hadley was with us most of the time, and she was always like a magnet, as she drew those she loved about her. It was great fun having a house full of guests, but the strain was greater on me than I realized.

Dr. Richard L. Matthews, our family physician, was most understanding as he tried to guard my health against the strain that he realized I was under.
The night of the anniversary of our wedding rehearsal, Nov. 19, 1919, our baby son was born at Nine Oaks. Attended by our loyal friend and physician, Dr. R.L. Matthews, and a nurse, the small bundle of squirming life was tenderly bathed and clothed, and placed by my side. I gazed on his little angelic face with the deep joy and pride experienced only by a mother with her first born. He was a beautiful baby, so fair with clear blue eyes and a fringe of auburn hair, and a beautiful little mouth. As he lay beside me, he clutched my fore finger in his tiny, beautifully formed hand, as if he understood that I was his mother – that he was a part of my being, and I was a part of his. What a heavenly experience!

Most the remainder of the night he lay by my side as I watched his every movement. Not ever having been associated with such a tiny baby, I did not realize that his continual whimper was not normal. I realized the nurse was very much concerned, but I did not know until the next day that both she and the doctor feared that our baby would not live. Bert was so overjoyed at his son’s arrival, and he hid from me the anxiety he felt. Finally the doctor came to my bedside and explained in such a gentle and such a sweet manner that our child was what the medical profession termed a “blue baby,” one in which the valves to its little heart did not function properly. I was told that few such babies survived and if they did, they were invalids as long as they lived. I tried to control my grief, because of my heartbroken husband, and too, they all warned that too much emotion would be bad for me in my weakened condition. Mother and Mrs. Hadley were both with us, and they, too, were torn by the truth of the baby’s critical condition, but they tried to be brave and conceal their grief.

At the hour when Bert and I had exchanged our marriage vows, just a year before, our child, our precious little son, slipped quietly away, and I felt then as I do now, that he went to become a little angel in the Heavenly Land. I did not see him after his body was placed in the little white casket, to be taken to the Springhill Cemetery, and laid to rest in the Hadley burying ground.

The weeks that followed were very trying. For the past nine months plans for the future grew stronger with the passing of each day, and now life seemed so empty. The memory that we cherished was so precious, and yet was not understandable. We did not question God’s wisdom, yet we felt that we had been denied one of the greatest gifts of life. Letters of condolence from friends and relatives were received, and they did not fall on deaf ears, nor on hearts that had been hardened by the denial of the presence of our precious baby. One of the sweetest and most comforting notes came from Aunt Kate Hadley:

Montreat, N.C.

Dec. 22, 1919

My Dear Bert and Lois,
I send you my love and sympathy for your great disappointment. My heart aches for you this Christmas time, that you were looking forward to with such joyful anticipation. But don’t forget a loving kind Father sympathizes with you and is very near, and it makes Heaven very near when our loved ones are waiting for us there. Is it not wonderful to be the Father and Mother of one of whom Jesus said, “There Angels do always behold the face of my Father, which is in Heaven?” May many precious thoughts come to comfort you this Christmas Tide, when the Christ child came to earth to give all little children a right to come and live with Him in Heaven.

Your house is consecrated by this little darling having stopped there on its way to another home above.

With love to you both.

Love,

Aunt Kate

Our immediate families felt very keenly their own disappointment and grief. Bert and I were drawn even closer together, our love for one another was deepened, as we comforted each other. We accepted our sorrow, as one of the acts of God’s wisdom, and tried to go on courageously.

The Christmas holidays arrived and even though our hearts were grieved we tried to be gay and happy.

Bert was like a little boy as he tried to conceal the gift he had gotten for me. For days he had me guessing what his gift was, and he gave so many strange clues. When Christmas morning arrived, I was overcome with surprise when I opened my gift and found that he had been so extravagant—a lovely brown fox fur neckpiece, the thing I have wanted for so long! We went to Nashville to spend the holidays with our families and everything was done to make us have a pleasant time.

The winter months soon passed and spring time returned bringing with it the flowers that bloomed in profusion at Nine Oaks. In the early spring we again realized that we were expectant parents. Our hearts rejoiced and yet there was a constant fear, that again we might be denied our greatest joy.

Wade and Elizabeth’s home was blessed by the arrival of a son, Wade Jr. He was a little red-headed baby that resembled both of his parents. Bert and I rejoiced at his arrival and we were frequent visitors, peering at the baby as he lie sleeping in his cradle, and thrilling at his every new development.
Summer came with its long, lazy sultry days, and in the latter part of the summer Bert decided to sell Nine Oaks. He had invested money in the farm at Greenbrier and he felt we should have a smaller place in which to live. We both hated to part with Nine Oaks, our first home, for it was such a pretty place and we had spent so many happy days there. In later years we regretted that we had sold it, for we never could find a place in Springfield that we liked as well.

Bert bought a small house on Batts Boulevard, in walking distance of his work. We moved in the early fall and soon felt at home for we had such good neighbors; the Pitts, lived on one side of us, and the Bell family on the other. The Williams, the Bradys, the Dorris, the O’Briens and the Binkleys were some of our closest neighbors. Our house was much smaller than Nine Oaks, with only two bedrooms, a living room, dining room, kitchen, a hall, and two porches.

We secured a cook, Mamie Murphy, who lived nearby. She was a large, good-natured Negro, and she proved to be a most capable servant.

Jack-Frost arrived in due time and he was very lavish with his paint brush, dipping it into the rich tones of reds, browns, and yellows, and turning the dull green leaves intro a riot of color. The country roads were bordered by great stalks of golden rod, and bushes of bright red sassafras, and large cones of red sumac. Bert took me for a ride each afternoon and I reveled in the beauty that surrounded us. In the late afternoon, the hills in the distance were clothed in a purple haze, which turned to a mist of gold at sunset. Mother Nature had done a marvelous job in making a beautiful world, when our second son, Albert Livingston Hadley, Jr. made his appearance on the morning of November 11th, 1920. The day too was most important since it was the second anniversary of the signing of the Armistice, which had brought to a close World War One; and had set free once more, the men and boys who were in military service. Peace had reigned for two years, a peace that had been won by heroes, many of whom had paid the supreme sacrifice, that the world might be free.

Bert and I were beside ourselves with joy and gratitude at the arrival of our son, who was a lovely, healthy and perfect baby. Dr. Matthews again attended mother and child, and he too, rejoiced with us on the arrival of our son. Albert was such a pretty baby with a little bald head, deep blue eyes, a dainty little mouth and pretty little nose. He lay beside me, wrapped in a little pink blanket, and he looked all about the room as if he might be seeing fairies. He was so good, if he felt the urge to cry, he seemed to try so hard to suppress it. From the moment he arrived our interests centered about him, life for us took on a new meaning. The blessing that come with parenthood also carries a grave responsibility, and the helplessness of a tiny life entrusted to the care of its parents brings forth the best in a man and a woman.

Gratitude, love and faith mingle together in the hearts of conscientious parents, at the arrival of their offspring, and from that day to the close of their lives their first concern is for the
happiness and welfare of their children. A child is the crowning job of a man and woman, who are bound together by the ties of a pure and a steadfast love, and together they plan to nurture and cherish that little life that has been given to them.

Mother and Mrs. Hadley both came to be with us and to help care for our baby, even though we had a registered nurse. We had a difficult time finding the kind of milk that agreed with Albert; but we finally found that Harlick’s Malted Milk was the answer to the problem. He started to gain weight and to sleep well at night. As new parents we discovered that our broken rest at night was our most trying adjustment.

Christmas day we spent at home in Springfield, and it was such a happy day. The little Christmas tree stood on a table in the living room, all decorated with tinsel and balls and Santa Claus had had much fun in placing toys under the tree that were appropriate for a tiny mite of a baby.

Albert’s eyes followed the bright lights on the tree as he snuggled in the arms of his parents. That night as our son lay asleep in his crib, which his grandmother and grandfather McGuire had sent him, there was a quiet peace that hovered about our home, that seemed akin to that found in a stable centuries before.

On January 1st, 1921 we wrapped Albert up in blankets and put all of the curtains on the car, and with Mrs. Hadley and sister, who had been visiting us, we journeyed to Nashville to see Mother and Father. Albert and I remained for four days, and it was such a wonderful experience to be able to take my child to see his grandparents. It was so gratifying to see the love they expressed for their grandson, and to be able to share with them, my dearest possession.

As Albert grew from day to day, each new development was sensed by his parents. His first laugh, his first tooth, his first word, his first step were all recorded in his Baby Diary. On Sunday April 24, 1921 he was christened in the Springfield Methodist church, the pastor Rev. R. H. Hudgens performing the rites. It was such a sweet and such a sacred service, and as parents, Bert and I solemnly promised to endeavor to bring Albert up “in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord.” What a solemn and sacred vow! One of the most heartbreaking experiences of a young mother is when her baby boy’s curls have to be cut to please a father who is concerned for fear long hair will make a “sissy” of his child. The time came all too soon when my baby turned suddenly into a typical little boy. And both he and his Dad were so proud of the results that an experienced barber with pair of scissors achieved. Albert came home and greeted me by saying he was “Daddy’s little man,” as he proudly showed me his first haircut.

My sudden burst of tears caused a very puzzled and most concerned expression to appear on his face. It seems strange and yet it is so typical for a mother to cling to the innocence and the lovable baby ways of her child, and often it is with a deep sense of concern and regret that so early in life her baby becomes an independent and self-sufficient individual.
Teeny, a little girl who lived in South Springfield came to live with us and help me care for Albert. She lived with us for almost a year and she proved to be a wonderful little nurse and Albert adored her.

Edmund Dabney, the second son of Wade and Elizabeth was born November 23, 1921. He too was a red headed baby and he was such a pretty child. Wade Jr., Albert, and Edmund were babies at the same time and Bert and Wade were such proud fathers.

Again we decided to move. This time we bought Aunt Laura’s and Uncle John Bridge’s farm, which was about half mile beyond Nine Oaks on the Greenbrier Pike. It was here that Albert spent his second Christmas, this time more toys appeared under his tree. It was right after Christmas that we decided to sell the farm and move to Nashville to make our home. While we had enjoyed living in Springfield we had from the first expected to move back to Nashville some time for we had always thought of it as home. So as we turned out backs on Springfield and started moving our belongings toward Nashville, an epoch in our married life was being closed.

Many of our happiest dreams had been realized and some of our most heart-breaking disappointments had been experienced. We were wiser and more serious individuals, and with a love for one another and our child that had been fired in the furnace of life’s experiences, and it had been made more lasting.

**Move to Nashville**

Before we left Springfield we had rented a five room house on Kirkland Ave. in Inglewood, and it was there that we first started housekeeping in Nashville. It was a new five-room house, with all modern conveniences. It was about four or five blocks off of the Gallatin Pike, and there were few neighbors, because the houses were not very close to one another, in fact, there were only a few houses on the street. Bert had previously secured a job as a salesman with a Real Estate firm. He worked hard and spent long hours trying to make real estate sales, and he did real well considering the slump in business that had taken place since the close of World War One. The next summer we bought a little five-room frame house on the corner of Catherine and McChesney Avenues in Inglewood. We were so thrilled because we again had a home of our own, rather than a rented place.

The house was small, the rooms were not large, and it was not a new house, but it was a most comfortable place to live. The lot was about 100 x 200 ft.; and it was enclosed by a wire fence with small front gate that that opened on McChesney and a large gate opened on Catherine, through which we drove into the yard. The back part of the lot was fenced into two yards, one for the garden and the other for the chicken yard, with a small hen house in one corner of it. Bert enjoyed working in the garden and raising chickens. He was a most industrious person, and there was nothing he enjoyed more than working in the yard and garden. He loved his home and was
very contended and happy. When he was with his little family, Albert liked the big yard in which to play, and he always loved feathers and he enjoyed going into the chicken yard and picking up the feathers that were scattered about and trimming his big straw hat with them. While we lived on Kirkland Ave we had gotten Albert a little Fox Terrier dog which he named Trixie, and they were the greatest of pals. Trixie was a black and white spotted dog with such a nice disposition.

One night Albert was sitting in his high chair eating his supper and Trixie was so overcome by the smell of his food that she pranced from one side of his chair to the other. Albert stopped eating as he watched her maneuvers, and looking down at her he said in his babyish voice, “matter Trixie, feet hurt?”

The neighborhood was sparsely settled, there were only a few houses on McChesney at that time, and the street was a dead end, since it had not been opened up across the Gallatin Interurban tracks.

The Hollis Epps family were our next door neighbors. Mr. and Mrs. Epps, their two children, Charles, a boy about ten and Margaret, a little girl about seven. They were such nice people and made such good neighbors.

Mrs. Epps and I did most of our visiting over the back fence, however on several occasions both families took outings together. Albert was a most friendly child and he waved good-bye to Mr. Epps as he left for work each morning, and greeting him on his return each afternoon.

He liked to go see Mrs. Epps and quite often he would slip off and go to see her and ask her if she had any cookies. Mrs. Epps knew that I punished him for slipping off and also for asking for cookies, so she usually gave him the cookies and told him he had better run on home so I wouldn’t spank him. Albert could not understand why I objected to his visits and his begging for cookies.

So often children fail to see the wisdom of the discipline that their parents enforce. In many instances the natural instincts of a child are greatly harmed by events that seem so trivial to a young parent. It sometimes seems a tragedy that children must be governed by the inexperience of such youthful wisdom, and yet often more mature minds are entirely too lenient and too indulgent in their disciplinary demands.

It was such a great satisfaction to me to be able to be near enough to Mother, Father, and Sister, so that I was able to see them whenever I wished. Scarcely a day passed that we did not go to see them and our visits were a source of joy to them too. They all adored Albert and they were most indulgent in their attentions of him. One night we left Albert with them while Bert and I went to town and Albert had such a good time. He climbed up in Father’s lap and dressed him up in some of Mother’s hats and put furs about his neck. It amazed Father that Albert was so interested in such things, and he asked Mother where he had learned so much about woman’s
clothes. The thing that seemed so strange to me was the fact that Father enjoyed it as much as Albert did. They were great pals, and Albert always called him “Favver.”

After we moved to Nashville we started going to City Road Chapel Methodist Church and I was so happy to be able to return to the church I had loved since I was a child. Albert enjoyed going too. He was in Mary Stratton Morris’s Sunday School Class. One Sunday he went after he had been sick with a real bad cold, and in all seriousness he said, “Miss Mary, I had an all over bath last night, it was the first one I have had in a long time.” No doubt his statement startled his teacher, but the fact was, I had washed his hair for the first time since he had had the cold, and he thought of that as “an all over bath.”

When Albert was three years old he repeated the 23rd Psalm at Sunday School, at the opening exercises, and it caused quite a lot of comment, since he was so young. He had learned it as we read it to him each night as we read our family devotionals.

Albert’s third Christmas was enjoyed at our little home in Inglewood. He had such a pretty little tree that Bert dug up in the country and placed it in a large pot. When the holidays were over, Bert planted it out in the yard, and it still stands there, and it has grown to be a big tree. Santa Claus brought gifts that a real boy could enjoy. One of the gifts that he enjoyed most was the Indian play suit. He always liked gay feathers and bright beads, bright colors always intrigued him.

We went from my own people to Bert’s family get-togethers and the holidays were spent in such happy fellowship. The hands of love had grown even deeper in our own little family, and we had reached out to include in all that made our lives happy, the members of our immediate families. It was most gratifying that we lived so close to them that we could share with them our joys, and we could find in them an abiding and steadfast love in us and all that we undertook to do.

Blows came into the lives of each one of us, and those that came to a little boy just three years old, are not at all understandable. It had been a happy day in the life of our little boy, he had romped and played in the yard with Trixie most of the day. And he had just gone into the house to get cleaned up before his Daddy returned from town. After being left outside alone, Trixie wandered into a neighbor’s yard and when she came back home a few minutes later, she was seized with the most horrible convulsion. She had gotten a dose of strychnine, and in a matter of minutes she was dead. Albert stood and watched her as she suffered and died in agony, his face bore an expression of complete amazement, which turned into a flood of tears, and a pitiful pleading for the life of his faithful and devoted companion. Neighbors gathered about Trixie and expressed their regret at her tragic death, and tried to comfort her little master. Trixie’s death brought days of sorrow and loneliness for a little boy who was much too young to understand the cruelty that is so often encountered in life.
More mature minds were prone to think that for a person who would stoop so low as to poison helpless and innocent animals, surely there is a punishment that will be meted out to them by One who is a Just Rewarder.

Early in the spring of 1924, Father was taken desperately ill with a kidney infection. He had to be rushed to the Protestant Hospital for an operation. The anxiety and deep concern for his recovery was experienced by each member of his family. It was the first serious illness he had had since I could remember. I went to the hospital the night before he was to be operated on the next morning, and as I saw him sitting in the chair in the hospital room with a most serious expression on his face, I felt that that was his hour in the Garden of Gethsemane. I wondered if his faith was equal to the ordeal that he was facing and I quietly prayed that it might be. After my short visit, when he kissed me good-bye, he told me not to worry that everything would be all right. It sounded so reassuring and yet I realized that for a man of 77 years, his was a most serious operation.

He seemed so alone and it was so hard to know that we were helpless and unable to help bear the suffering that was inevitable. He stood the operation and seemed to be getting along nice. Our inexperience with operating cases and the signs and symptoms that foretell a turn for the worse made us ignorant of the danger that he was in. I did not get to stay with him much because Albert was sick with a cold, and I had no one to stay with him. Mother and Sister together with capable nurses and doctors, looked after him. He had been in the hospital about ten days and Mother was in the room with him, when without warning, he died of a heart attack.

That day was one of the darkest days of my life! Father’s death left his family stunned and helpless. The security of life seemed to pass with the last breath he drew. He had been the Head of his household, and it seemed that it would be impossible to go on without him. The funeral was on Sunday afternoon at City Road Chapel. Brother E. P. Walker conducted the service. Mother, Sister, and I wore black with heavy black veils. I seemed dazed and so little of the final rites could I even recall. His body was laid to rest in Springhill Cemetery on a lot that was purchased after he died. When we came home, after the funeral, Mother heard a bird singing in the yard, and she said she didn’t see how the birds could ever sing again How typical of a heart that is crushed by the death of a devoted companion. Even nature should put on mourning and share in the loss!

The days that followed were so trying and each of us had our own way of meeting and accepting our great loss. Of course, I had my own little family, which gave me a greater security, and a greater reason for living.

Mother and Sister were alone and I worried so over them. Even though they continued to live at the home place during the summer, life was so changed, we were so conscious of the vacant chair and the stilled voice. Mother was remarkable as she undertook to wind up Father’s business affairs. He had never shared any of his business problems, nor in any way prepared her
for the duties that befall a widow. She was a sweet, Christian character that went ahead and learned her lessons in a quiet, refined manner, finding help from business people that took a great delight and genuine interest in advising her in every problem she encountered. It was not easy, for her heart was broken, and the responsibilities of everyday living fell heavy upon her shoulders. The shock of Father’s sudden death proved to be too great a shock for Sister and she had a nervous breakdown. Mother and I were so concerned over her, that we had little time to think of our own grief and loss.

In the fall, Mother decided to take Sister and go to Kansas to visit some of Father’s relatives. She asked Bert and me if we would move out and take care of the farm while they were away, for they had expected to be gone until the next spring. We hated to part with our home but we felt that our duty was to help Mother in any way that we could. Albert was so attached to the place on McChesney Ave that he screamed and cried and told the moving men not to take his bed and chair away from there; but in spite of his pleading we moved to my childhood home on the Gallatin Pike.

In a few days after our arrival, Mother and Sister left for Kansas, and again a great loneliness swept over me that almost overwhelmed me. Life seemed so strange, the home that had always meant security and happiness now seemed so empty. The family furnishings seemed to be ghosts that stared at me. My voice echoed through the big rooms, everything was so quiet and still. I walked from room to room with a great pain clutching at my heart, trying to find some place, some familiar spot, where I could find a feeling of security—a sense of a desire for living. I found comfort in my own little family, but I felt so keenly the fact that never again would my life, nor those of Mother and Sister be the same.

Bert and I tried to care for the farm and the stock, as had been the custom of Mother and Father. Albert loved the country, and enjoyed helping his Daddy with the chores that were necessary each day.

In November the weather had gotten cold and Albert wore heavy clothing and wore his over shoes and went to help feed the stock and milk the cows each day. He would come in from doing these chores with rosy cheeks and cold feet and hands. The house was large and airish, since it was heated by stones and grates. It was not cozy and warm like our little home on McChesney had been, for it was heated by a coal furnace. Albert took a deep cold which we doctored in the usual manner, but which grew worse instead of better. Finally one Sunday afternoon he had to be put to bed with a high fever and coughing. I took him some orange juice and when he sat up in bed to drink it, he screamed and caught his side; and I feared he had pneumonia. We called Dr. Robert Grizzard and when he came and examined him he told us Albert had double pneumonia.

Bert went wild with fear, and came into the kitchen where I was preparing a meat poultice to put on Albert’s chest, and he said, “Oh, Lois we are going to lose him.” Even though
I too feared for his life, I tried to appear calm and I replied, “Don’t say that, we are going to have to fight and fight hard.” Albert was such a sick little boy, so we wired Mother and Sister who had left Kansas and gone to San Antonio, Texas to visit Ruth and Jeff Austin, and told them they had better come home. We got a nurse though Albert wanted me to give him all of his medicine and do everything for him. I had taken a deep cold too and felt too bad to keep going, but I did manage to stay up and care for him.

Finally one morning, Dr. Grizzard came in and examined Albert and he said, “Darling, you are better this morning, and Doctor is so glad.” I never heard words that sounded as good to me and in fact we all felt so grateful.

Albert remained in bed for a month and got up for the first time on Christmas Day. He was so weak he could scarcely enjoy the toys Santa Claus had brought him. Albert was always such a good child, he was easy to control and was very submissive to our discipline. He was a very affectionate child, but rather sensitive. He was easily hurt and if he was scolded for any reason, he cried as if his little heart would break. In our inexperience, Bert and I may have expected far too much of him, we wanted him to be perfect; and we expected his behavior and his manners to far exceed his years.

The first child often suffers from the lack of wisdom and the inexperience of its parents. The larger the family the greater the understanding and more tolerant the parents become. Consequently a large family is usually a happy family and the children enjoy a freedom that is unknown to an only child. Slowly Albert regained his strength and with the coming of spring and the warm days, he again became a healthy and happy little boy.

During the summer Bert and I bought a part of the Will Bradford farm that was located on Maplewood Lane. It was about a hundred acres, and much of it was in woods. We built a three room frame house on the part that faced Maplewood Lane, and in the fall we moved into the house. It was a small house but it only cost us $900.00 to build it. The rooms were plenty large, the living room and dining room combined had a large wood burning fireplace in it. The bedroom was 14 ft. by 14 ft. and the kitchen was nice and roomy. Stairs went up in the kitchen to a floored attic, which we used for storage.

We had no modern conveniences, we burned coal oil lamps and got our water from a well in the yard, and Bert cut the wood we burned in the fireplace. We had a coal oil stove that we cooked on. We did not have a telephone, electricity, nor running water, and yet I think we enjoyed the year that we lived there as much as any we ever spent. We found the simplicity of life a great boon to my frayed nerves caused from the experiences of the past year and a half. Bert got Albert a dog, a beautiful tan and white part collie, which Albert named Pep.

She was a wonderful watch dog and she was devoted to Albert. They would play together like two children, and Pep would stand between Albert and anything that she thought would
harm him. She looked very ferocious, showing her teeth when she got mad and people were afraid of her. But she was a very kind and gentle companion for Albert and he loved her dearly.

After we moved to “the woods,” Mother and Sister rented the home place to a Mr. Robertson, and they went to Florida to spend the winter with Blanche and Mahlon Wright and their three children, Lewis, Martha, and Cullen. While they were there Sister secured a job at a bank in Sanford and she fell in love with the “sunshine and flowers” that were so different from the ice and snow she had always been accustomed to. While they were in Florida we missed them so much and quite often Albert would get me to hold his hand and guide the pencil as he wrote letters to “Grandma.”

The following spring I was taken desperately ill with flu and was threatened with pneumonia, so Mother returned home to be with me. She and Bert were most concerned over my condition because we were expecting our third child, during the coming summer.

After Mother arrived she was so restless and so miserable she caused me to become dissatisfied with our little home “in the woods.” So we set about to sell it and we found a place at 1003 West Greenwood Ave., where we moved the middle of July. After Sister returned from Florida, she and Mother and Mabel and Oscar Clark rented the house next to ours and they all kept house together.

It was so good to have them for next door neighbors, they were so much company for Albert and me, and we spent a good part of each day with them.

August 2, 1926 had been a hot and sultry day, and my maid, Minnie, and I had been busy most of the day cleaning and cooking. Bert returned from work and we enjoyed our evening meal together and Albert had fallen asleep and been put to bed. About nine o’clock our baby girl arrived and she was the exact replica of the little lady we had been dreaming about for so long. She was a dainty baby, with deep blue eyes, a fringe of dark hair on the back of her head which showed definite signs of curling. When she yawned we noticed that she had a big dimple in her cheek. I had previously chosen the name Betty for my daughter; and Sister and Mabel thought Ann Hadley was such a pretty name. So I combined the two, calling her, Betty Ann. When Albert awoke the next morning and found that a baby sister had arrived during the night he seemed puzzled and a little shy. He had been given no warning of her expected arrival, and no doubt it came as a shock to him, and perhaps he felt a sense of neglect as he shared the love and attention of his parents with this little doll-like bundle of squirming life. For the past six years he had enjoyed the attentions that are bestowed on an only child. Through necessity, he was cheated of some of his usual attentions, and he was still too much of a baby himself to understand that the neglect he felt was not intentional, but the demands of a newborn baby were necessary. From the first Betty Ann had colic and cried a good part of each night. Bert and I were up every night rocking her and walking the floor. We felt desperate and Dr. Lee seemed of little help. I insisted she was hungry, but he failed to increase her formula.
One night Bert had rocked and walked the best part of the night. When he finally got her to sleep and laid her so carefully in her bed, he had no more than gotten her down when she gave her familiar, “A-la,” and he looked at me in utter disgust and said, “Oh, hell!”

In our desperation for rest for ourselves and a desire for any naps that she could get, we found the household tipping about and speaking in whispers so that she would not be disturbed. Consequently, Albert spent a great part of each day with Mother, where he felt free to play without having to be so quiet. After weeks which lengthened into months, the colic stage finally passed, and the household began to live more normally. Betty Ann developed into a very dainty baby, her head was a mass of golden ringlets, her eyes turned to a dark brown, and her smile brought forth her dimple in her cheek. Albert was an ideal little brother as he watched over and played with her. He loved to play with the children in the neighborhood too, and usually there was a group of children playing in our yard. Albert went to see the little boy who lived across the street when the child was sick with a cold, and in a few days he came down with whooping cough. Betty Ann was only six months old, and she also had whooping cough. Dr. Lee frightened us by telling us it was such a serious illness for so young a child. However she got along better than Albert did. Later they both had the mumps and I took it from them and I was quite sick, having a relapse which made me so weak I could scarcely raise my hands. When Betty Ann was about a year old Teeny came to live with us for several months, before she went to Detroit to marry “Dutch” Elliott, a former sweetheart from Springfield, Tenn. Teeny was so much help with the children. She adored Betty Ann and Betty Ann loved her and called her, “my Teentie.” Teeny had lived with us before when Albert was little, and we felt she was a part of our family. She was a very ambitions girl, and she wanted to learn to do everything like I did. We all missed her when she went to Detroit to live.

Mother bought a house at 1128 Greenfield Ave, in Inglewood and she and Sister moved there. It was a pretty one-story, brick house that Mr. Ernest Parker built for a home but which he later sold to Anne and Bill Franklin. It was from them that Mother bought the place. It was located on a big shady lot and was in such a lovely neighborhood. The house had a living room, dining room, kitchen, three larger bedrooms, one bath, and a front and back porch. It was a most comfortable house, both in summer and winter.

It seems strange how vital it is to one’s happiness to have the tie to the home of their parents.

Even though Father had gone, the home that Mother established had the qualities of love and security that were so necessary to my little family’s happiness.

It meant everything to my children to grow up in the love and affection that they found in “Grandma” and “Aunt Mary”.

Perhaps we depended too much on them, for our own good, but I am sure they would not have had it any other way. It was such a joy and satisfaction to me, to be able to go to them in all
my joys and in all my problems, and to find the sincerity of two loving hearts that really cared. All of the relatives found the same understanding and love, as they visited in the home. There was seldom a time that some member of the family was not there, and they were always welcome.

After we moved on Greenwood Ave. we found it too far to go back to Madison to Church, so Bert moved his church membership to Woodland Street Presbyterian Church, and sometime later I moved my letter from Springfield Methodist Church to Woodland St. Church. The church had previously been located on Woodland Street, but the East Nashville fire destroyed the building, so the congregation built a new church on the corner of Gallatin Road and Gartland Ave. but continued to call it Woodland St. Church was about 300 loyal and devoted members; and it was more like one big, happy family.

Dr. Walter L. Caldwell was the pastor of the church. He had a wife and three children, Charlotte, Paul, and Anne. Dr. Caldwell was a good looking man of medium height, he had blue eyes and dark hair. He was a scholarly man, with a dignity that was becoming to a “man of God”. He led his little flock by precept and example and his convincing and steadfast faith was like a “light unto their path”. Mrs. Caldwell was the perfect minister’s wife, with her sweet, unassuming manner. She stretched forth her hands to those in trouble and her many acts of kindness endeared her to all of the members of the church.

Charlotte was a beautiful young girl with a lovely, soprano voice, which she shared so generously in the service of the church. Paul was a good-looking young boy, when I first knew him. He was very much like his Dad in looks and statue. “Annie Mae” as the youngest child was called, was such a sweet, affectionate child.

The children grew from childhood to adulthood during the years that Dr. Caldwell was pastor of Woodland Street Church.

Dr. Caldwell was always appropriately well dressed and he would have been a credit to any pulpit. He delivered two sermons on Sunday; one at eleven o’clock and one at seven o’clock, and he conducted a Wednesday evening Prayer Meeting service.

By his strong convictions and his unshakeable faith, he won the love and deep respect of his entire congregation. Our little family was among some of the most loyal members, we loved the church as we did our own home. Its services came first in our lives, and we all derived a deep sense of pleasure and satisfaction form the services we rendered to Woodland Street Presbyterian Church. On May 8th, 1927, Betty Ann was christened at church, by Dr. Caldwell. Two other babies were christened at the same time, Dorothy Appleby and Mary Teresa Wade.

Both Albert and Betty Ann joined the church when they were quite young, and they attended church services even before they were able to sit alone. They grew up in the church, and they enjoyed each Sunday when it was time to go to Sunday School and church. As they grew up
they took an active part in the Young Peoples Work, attending the conferences at Ivoea and Nacome.

Bert was an active member of the Men’s Bible Class, and served as its President at one time. This was a phase of the work that he derived a sense of pride, and the fellowship was a source of pleasure to him. I served as President of the Woman’s Auxiliary for two years, and those two years stand out as two of the happiest and most satisfying of my life. I truly dedicated my life and my time to that service. I feel that I put “first things first” in that two years’ service.

In the fall of 1927 when Albert was almost seven years old, he started to school, at Eastland School which was located on the corner of Douglas and Chapel Aves., about a mile from where we lived. And he continued to go there until we moved on the Gallatin Road.

(Volume V)

Sunny Gables

In the spring of 1927, Mr. James W. Solley, a real estate developer, from Louisville, Ky. offered to buy the home place on the Gallatin Pike. He offered $1000.00 an acre for the fifty acres that lay between the Gallatin Pike and the L & N Railroad.

After much thought and consideration we all decided that perhaps it was the wise thing to do, although it was like tearing our very heart out to think of giving it up. But there was no one to farm the land, and mother could not keep help, and it was too much for her to see after. Bert and I tried to persuade mother to keep the house and a few acres for her home, but she did not think it was a wise thing to do.

So, very reluctantly we all signed the deed which gave the new owner the right to take over the place. Memories seemed to cling about every tree, flower, every room in the house; in fact every foot of the ground seemed to bring forth sacred memories that haunted us day and night. Like flashes of lightening that illumine the earth, come our memories of the past, making even more sacred and dear every incident that had taken place during the twenty-five years that we had lived there.

Indeed it meant the breaking of ties that could never be re-established in this life. It was our home, and nothing in life can replace that when once it has been dismantled. Without much delay, crews of men were placed on the property to clear away all buildings, fences and many of the trees and shrubbery that we had spent years in getting established. Streets were laid off and lots staked for selling. The new subdivision was given the name of “Broadmoor.”
Salesmen were placed on the property and lots sold well. I was reluctant to give up
the property, so when the lots were ready to be sold, Bert and I bought three lots that
included a part of the original yard with several of the lovely shade trees that I had
always loved.

In the early spring of 1929 we selected a house plan that appeared in a current issue
of the Ladies Home Journal. The picture that appeared in the magazine was of a rather
unusual looking two-story house, and it had something of the charm of the houses built
long ago. It appealed to us, it was a friendly looking house, and the floor plan was
clear cut, with an air of honesty, since there were no deceptive little nooks.

The rooms were large and very live-able, with a fireplace in the living room and
another in the master bedroom upstairs. The dining room suggested to us the ideal
place for family get-togethers, with ample space for Grandma Wade’s cherry
dining table to be lengthened to seat ten people comfortably. The triple window in
the dining room showed a window seat the length of the three windows. We could
imagine how bright and cherry the room would be in the winter, and how comfortable
it would be in the summer having a door that opened out to a long side porch.

There was a kitchen with a large pantry, and a breakfast room between the kitchen
and dining room. An attractive stairway in the entrance hall led to three bedrooms up
stairs, and each room had a large closet besides there was a linen closet in the hall
and a small closet in the bathroom. One bathroom served the three rooms, and to us
that seemed adequate for our little family’s needs. All in all we found few changes
that we would care to make in the floor plan, so we decided that our home would
be an exact copy of the original.

In the early spring we secured a man with a team of mules and started excavating
for the basement. We measured and planned very carefully, so that not a one of the
lovely shade trees would have to be cut. For they were like great monuments as
they had sheltered my young life from the summer’s seen, and I had hoped that
the shade from these same trees might be a happy haven for my own children as they
played beneath their outstretched branches.

Indeed I was building our home upon the sacred spot that was the foundation for my
happiness during my childhood and girlhood. I wanted the things that had brought
happiness to me, to bring even greater happiness to my own little family. Each day
Bert and I would ride out and watch the progress of the workmen, and we thrilled at
every finished part of the structure. Instead of having a contractor we secured a head
carpenter, who looked after the job. We let contracts for each phase of the work;
stone work, brick work, plumbing, wiring etc. Continually there were decisions to be
made about materials and finishing work. We chose a light cream colored brick for
the outside walls, with white trim around windows, doors, porches and the lattice
work. The shutters at the windows were painted a dark green. The inside trim was the
part that took such a long time to finish. The painter was most meticulous, and every
stroke of the brush had to bring forth the desired results or else it had to be repainted.

The walls in the hall,
living room and dining room were painted a lovely shade of yellow with a touch of green stippled through it. It was so fresh looking, with the white wood work and mahogany stained doors.

Albert and Betty Ann enjoyed watching the progress of their new home, and the sand pile and the blocks cut from the lumber were all they needed to build many castles; which were no sooner built before they were torn down, to give way to another childish plan.

Before Sunny Gables was completed Bert and I realized that it took a lot of planning and a lot of patience and a great deal more money than we had figured on to turn the raw products into the completed house. Finally on August 26, 1929, Betty Ann’s third birthday, we moved into our new home.

Hadley Home on Gallatin Pike

At last our dream was realized, and our hearts were filled with gratitude. To us, it was beautiful, and we were so proud of it. I chose a solid grey rug for the living room, and the same shade of grey with a figure in it for the dining room. The draperies were made of a green and gold brocaded material, which hung over panels of ecru.

I had had “Grandma Wade’s” dining table refinished, and the Hadley sofa covered in a grey figured damask. The two over-stuffed chairs that we started housekeeping with were covered, one in red velvet and the other in a black figured damask. Mother gave us a steeple clock for the living room mantel, and a pair of andirons and a grey wicker basket to hold the fire wood.
I needed quite a lot of furniture that I did not feel able to get, consequently there were many pieces of furniture that I had to use that didn’t fit into the surroundings, but I had to “make do” until I could do better. The yard had to have immediate attention, and we set out an abundance of shrubs and trees. After a few years of growth, we realized we had far too many. Bert was continually bringing trees and shrubs that he found in the country, and he enjoyed putting them out.

On the south side of the garage I had a small formal flower garden laid off in beds, which were bordered with brick. For many years it was a thing of beauty with flower blooming from early spring to late fall. Ours was the first house built in the new subdivision, but soon a few others were erected.

Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Solley built a home on Gwynn Drive. Mr. Solley was a brother of Mr. Jas. Solley, and had come to Nashville to help develop the subdivision. They had three small children, Kenneth, Margaret, and Charlene.

The Hewgleys also built a house on Gwynn Drive, they had several children, but only two of them, Bobby and Loucile, were old enough to play with our children. The Fred Ragans built a nice home on the corner of Maplewood Lane and the Gallatin Pike; and they had a girl, Dorothy and a son, “Buddy.”

Mr. Chas. Hudson built a gas and oil station on the corner of the Gallatin Pike and Malquin Drive. His children were all grown, but two of his grandchildren, Fred and Thelma Dunnebache, were the age of our children, and they joined in all of their games.

The A.E. Spotswoods still lived in their two story house across the pike from us. Their youngest son, Russell, was a year older than Albert, and he and Albert were like brothers. Russell, Albert and Betty Ann played together all of the time. Alvin Spotswood Jr. and his wife, Dot, built a small home directly across the pike from us, and they had a daughter Nancy, just the age of Betty Ann and a baby boy, Rodger. The children of all of these families played together continually, and most of the time they played in our yard.

For many years after we moved to Sunny Gables I kept help. Bert was always so thoughtful of me, and did not want me to overtax my strength by doing the house work and seeing after the family’s needs. We had a small frame house built on our fourteen acres across the railroad, and we usually had a family living in the house that helped with the housework and kept the yard.

“Dannie,” an intelligent young colored girl who lived in East Nashville worked for us for quite a long time. She was an unusually good cook, and equally as good with the house cleaning. She was very fond of Albert and Betty Ann, and they adored her. She made doll dresses for Betty Ann’s dolls, and she spoiled both children by her indulgence in their demands of her time. After she quit working for me, Will Johnston, a colored “tramp” that Bert picked up as a hitchhiker,
and brought home with him, worked for us for a year or two. He was a rare character, with a very moody disposition. He had a curiosity that led him from his chores, just when I needed him most. He would drop his tools, and go across the railroad to see about someone he saw over there, or else he would stop is work and go on the pike to see about someone whose car had broken down. This habit was most provoking as I tried to get the work done. Betty Ann was about five years old when Will started working for us, and he loved to tease her, because she would get so mad at him.

He told me one day that I had two things he was crazy about, and that was Betty Ann and the jersey milk cow we had. He milked and churned for me, and they were chores he didn’t mind, because he was so fond of the milk and butter.

Finally, one day Will wandered off and I suppose the urge to live the life of a hobo was too great for him to ever overcome. I so often wondered what ever became of him.

Zammie and Lizzie, a couple of real country Negroes worked for us for about a year. Zammie had served some time in prison, and he had a hateful disposition, and grumbled about everything I asked him to do. Lizzie was a tall, rather simple-minded person. She knew very little about any of the modern conveniences, and we continually feared she would asphyxiate all of us, for she was so careless with the gas stove. She would come over every morning at the peep of day to cook breakfast, even though I insisted that she wait until a more reasonable hour. Time meant nothing to her, as she had been used to starting her work as soon as the sun came up, or even before. She was a very nervous, jumpy sort of person. One night we had some friends over to eat supper with us, they were people that we had never had eat with us before.

Lizzie was serving one of the guests, when all of a sudden she rushed from the dining room with the baking dish of food, leaving the guest holding the spoon with which he had been serving himself. The dish was hot and she had practically run to the kitchen to get a pot holder to hold it with. That was one of my most embarrassing moments, and I decided that would be her last time to serve any of my guests.

We had a good many other servants who stayed with us for short periods of time. Each of them was so different in disposition, that they added variety to the life at Sunny Gables. Cora and Sam were the first family to live in the house we built across the railroad but they did not stay long. Sam was so ill-tempered with the stock, Bert made them more.

Olivia Clardy, Dannie’s sister worked for me before Dannie did. She was a tall slow-moving Negro girl, who did her work well. Charlie Martin, Dannie’s step-father did yard work for me, for quite some time. He was the one that laid off and planted my little formal flower garden. He set out a good many trees too.

Bertha, a light colored Negro who was rather shiftless with her work, lived in one of the R.R. section houses on Maplewood Lane. She worked a part of each day for me. One Sunday
night she came running to our house, all out of breath, and she was almost white, she was so frightened. She and her husband had had a quarrel and he had threatened to kill her. She had come to us for protection. She hid in the pantry while we got ready to drive her to Nashville, where she was going to stay with some of her relatives.

As we drove out of the yard we saw her husband coming down the pike, and Bertha got on the floor of the car to hide from him. After a few days they made up, and she was back at work.

Estelle Covington, a young colored girl worked for me after Bertha quit. She worked in the mornings before she went to school, and on Saturdays. Estelle was a very smart girl with great ambitions. She told me she wanted a home, so she could entertain like I did. She fell in love with Pitt, Sallie Randolph’s son, and they ran away and married. The last I heard from her, several years later, she owned her home, and had a car and they had a house full of children.

Maggie, the daughter of a family that lived on the place, was a good-looking young colored girl. She helped with the housework and cooked the evening meal. Evidently she had acquired the idea of superiority for she was very prissy and resented being told what to do. One day I told her to clean the bathroom and she said she didn’t think she was supposed to do that. I asked her who she thought was going to do it, and she said, “the maid.” I asked her what she thought she was! She answered my question with “yes” and “no,” and she never in any way resembled the humble, old-fashioned servant. She was a product of the trend of the times, and her ignorance and inexperience made a perfect background for the seed of intolerance and race-prejudice to take root.

Finally I had to fire Maggie because of her impudent ways. The most outstanding and faithful help that we ever had was Uncle Milus Randolph, an old colored man, who came to us from Robertson County. He had a wife, Sallie, who was a rare individual. She was part Indian, with keen black eyes, and a temper that was ungovernable. Sallie was a short fat person and her size was increased by the unusual amount of clothing that she wore. She kept a rag or scarf tied about her neck, and she usually kept her head covered with some kind of scarf. She continually complained of aches and pains caused from rheumatism or some such ailment. Often she would ask me for any discarded clothing that I might have, even though she could not squeeze herself into it.

I told her on several occasions that she would not be able to wear my clothes, and she would always say “No’m I’m not so big when I gets picked.” She had a unique expression, if she planned to do anything or go anyplace at a certain time, she would invariably say, “If I live and nothing happens.” She talked real loud, and she had a way of cutting her eyes and frowning as she spoke, especially if she was berating Uncle Milus, as she so often did.

Uncle Milus was a humble and kind person, with such a sweet, quiet manner. He was stooped from arthritis, and went about half bent. Sallie made his life miserable with her
unreasonable demands, but he took all of her mistreatment uncomplainingly. Uncle Milus always kept a couple of pigs which he fattened with the garbage he collected from the white people in the neighborhood. He presented a familiar and rather pitiful sight as he walked in such a shuffling, half-bent fashion, pushing a home-made two wheel cart. He gained the respect of all of the people in the neighborhood by his kind and dependable manner.

Uncle Milus endeared himself to each member of the family at Sunny Gables. He did a certain amount of the housework and he kept the yard beautifully. He had very little natural instinct about either, but he tried to do his work the way I wanted it done. As he cleaned the living room he was very careful with all of the china and glass accessories scattered about the room. He called them my “play pretties” though he did not know the use nor the value of any of them. He learned very few of the flowers by name, even though he worked among the flowers in my garden all of the time. He thought my care of them was a waste of time, though he cared for them according to my directions and without complaint.

Uncle Milus was very fond of Albert and Betty Ann, and was so interested in all of their interests. For about twelve years Uncle Milus lived on our place, and worked for us, and in all of that time he was a kind, humble and faithful servant. He died after a few days’ illness and the whole neighborhood called to pay their respects and to express their esteem for his humble and upright character. A lovely floral offering was given by his white friends, who had known him during the years he worked for us. As he was laid to rest in Robertson County, by the side of his first wife, the words of a verse of one of John Ellerton’s poems seemed a fitting tribute:

Now the laborer’s task is o’er; now the battle day is past, no
lands the voyager at last.
Father, in Thy gracious keeping, Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.

In the fall after we moved to Sunny Gables, Herbert Hoover, a Republican, was President of the United States; and it seemed he could not prevent the economic, political and social disturbances that followed. It was world-wide. In the United States the stock market crashed after a period of wild speculation. President Hoover set up boards and established commissions to deal with special domestic and foreign problems in an effort to revive business.

He proposed a moratorium on war debts between nations. There was an unrest caused from these conditions, and countless people were thrown out of employment. As a result, seldom a day passed that some unfortunate person came to our door begging for food, or asking for financial aid. It was a pitiful sight, when stalwart men and boys, and even women, were begging for food, because they could not find employment, so that they could be self-supporting. While our means were limited, we never denied food to those that asked for it.

Many times I went to the kitchen and cooked food for them, when there was nothing left from the previous meal. One night the doorbell rang, and when Bert answered it, he saw a nice looking young man and his wife standing there. They were begging for a place to spend the
night, because they had no money to pay for a night's lodging. We made them a comfortable
place to sleep in our basement, for which they seemed so grateful. The next morning I prepared
them a good hot breakfast, after which they went on their way.

It was not unusual to see whole families walking along the highway, begging a ride from
the passerby. And the freight trains were means of transportation for many of those unfortunate
souls that the depression brought such terrific financial reverse to. For four years the entire
country suffered financial reverses. Many of the wealthy citizens lost everything they had. It was
a panic-stricken world when Franklin Delano Roosevelt became the President in the fall of 1933.
Possibly no other President of the United States ever faced difficulties more numerous,
complicated and world-wide than those which greet Franklin Roosevelt.

Roosevelt, a staunch Democrat had enjoyed the advantages of wealth, education and
social position. He had served in the state legislature, and during World War, President
Woodrow Wilson had appointed him assistant secretary of the Navy. With increasing popularity
and prestige in his own party, he served two terms as governor of New York. Upon his record as
governor he was nominated for the presidency and won the election of 1932. There was still
widespread unemployment. The nation was experiencing a general depression.

The unusual demands made upon banks by deposition caused President Roosevelt to
declare a four-day bank moratorium the day after he took office. Following that, he required all
gold to be turned in to the federal government, announced the suspension of gold payment for
the redemption of United States money or bonds, and reduced the gold content of the dollar. One
of the first acts of Congress during Roosevelt’s term was the repeal of the eighteenth amendment
of the Constitution.

National industrial recovery was undertaken on a large scale through governmental
agencies. Business and industrial codes were set upon in an attempt to prevent unfair practices
and to insure maximum employment. Huge sums of money were appropriated for federal relief
agencies and public works. Soon the nation felt a greater confidence and security, and life began
to take on a more normal trend.

Full, Happy Years

It was a fast-growing community that we had moved into. Many of the families that were
living in the community as I was growing up were still there, but many new homes were being
built and new comers were moving in, and many changes were taking place.

The George Bradford family was still living at the old home place and the Walton family
still lived at “Glen Echo.” Mr. McGaughey died about the time we moved to Sunny Gables and
Mrs. McGaughey continued to live at their home place, and his sister, Miss Nina Fergusson had
come to make her home with her. Mrs. McGaughey began selling her farm into small lots, and houses were built on the property. Her subdivision was known as Hayesboro.

More and larger schools were needed, so the county bought thirty acres of land from Mr. A.E. Spotswood and erected a high school known as Isaac Litton. The school was named in honor of Judge Litton Hickman’s grandfather, Isaac Litton. The school was on the opposite side of the road from our home. The school opened with an enrollment of 265 students, and a faculty of eight, Mr. J.D. Brandon was the Principal.

A little later, Mr. Newman Cheek bought a part of the Williams farm and made a subdivision calling it “Jackson Park.” Beautiful homes were erected on nice sized lots, and families who had lived nearer the city were moving out to what they called the country.

Sometime later Dan Mills Elementary School was built on a new street which connected McAlpine Ave. and Riverwood Drive. It was located about three quarters of a mile from the Gallatin Road. With so many families moving into the community, a business section was developed on a part of the Williams property at Greenland Ave. and the Gallatin Road.

Crone and Jackson built a modern grocery store and Greenland Pharmacy was also built at Inglewood, the Logan Brothers, George, Ed and Wilbur, had a small grocery store, H.G. Hill had a grocery store next to them and Inglewood Drug. Co. was next to H.G. Hill’s store. A little later a dry cleaning establishment was added to the group of business places. Logan’s Grocery had a delivery service, and mothers and sisters traded with them all of the time. A few years later the Logan’s built a large and more modern grocery store a block further out the pike. At the time it was built it was the largest and most modern store in this section. Since we had moved into such a fast-growing community, naturally our interests expanded to include all of the projects that the community supported.

In September 1929 Albert enrolled as a third grade student at Jere Baxter School. The school was located where “Maplewood,” the school that I had attended had once stood. A modern school building had replaced the old one, and the name had been changed to Jere Baxter, in honor of the original owner of the property on which the school stood.

Miss Clara Gollithan was Albert’s teacher, and he liked her very much. Albert was an obedient and well-behaved child, and as he progressed from one grade to the next, each of his teachers was very complimentary of him. He was never a child that really enjoyed his studies, though he was an average student and always made passing grades. He was artistically inclined, and his writing tablets and books were filled with his drawings. He was always so delighted to be able to help with the making of posters or anything that required an artistic ability.

I drove Albert and Russell Spotswood to school every morning and went for them in the afternoon. They were such devoted friends and much of the time they strolled about with their arms around one another. Russell was slightly taller than Albert, and he was a rather timid child,
but he was quite talented. He played the piano well, and was a good tap dancer, consequently he appeared on many of the school’s programs. He was a great student and made excellent grades.

Bert and I both joined the Parent Teachers Association and I faithfully attended all of its meetings. While it was a worthwhile organization and accomplished much good, I always felt that too much stress was put on sending delegates to the various conventions; and in spending money in defraying their expenses—Money which should have been used in improving the school, or in giving more aid to the underprivileged children who attended the school. However, I failed to voice my opinions, which would doubtless have been in vain, for far too many of its members were only interested in what personal benefits they could derive from being a member.

Jere Baxter School was located just about two blocks from where mother lived on Greenfield Avenue. It was so convenient for the children to walk to her house, if I was not there to meet them. She always enjoyed having them, and they enjoyed playing with the children in the neighborhood. “Miss Anne” Cunningham lived across the street from mother, and she and Betty Ann were the same age, and they were the best of friends. “Miss Anne” was a charming little girl, with such airy, attractive manners. She and Betty Ann played so happily together, for they both loved their dolls. “Missie” Sadler and Helen Wakefield were two little neighbor girls who also played with them much of the time.

There were sidewalks on Greenfield as all of the children liked to skate and ride their bicycles. I took an active part in all of the work at Woodland Street Presbyterian Church. I attended the Circle and Woman’s Auxiliary meetings, and I did quite a lot of visiting among the members of the Church. So often as I attended these meetings I would leave Betty Ann with mother, and Albert and Russell would go there from school and wait for me to come for them.

As time passed we continued to improve our home, and one of the things that I wanted was a fish pond. I wanted it in the back yard near the lovely Maple tree that shaded that area. It was the first day of April that I started Uncle Milus to digging a hole, where I wanted the pool. I chose a spot in the yard where the chimney to my old home once stood. As he dug he would have to remove the foundation stones of that old chimney. While I watched Uncle Milus unearth the stones, the idea suddenly came to me that people used to hid valuables in such un-thought of places. I had even heard of pots of gold being buried, later to be unearthed by some unsuspecting member of another generation.

Being of the disposition to love to play pranks on people, I had no sooner thought of the buried pot of gold, when I rushed to the phone and called Bert, at J.B. Deeds & Son, where he was working. In an excited voice I told him that Uncle Milus had dug up a pot full of money, which had been buried in the chimney. To my delight, he immediately asked in a most excited manner, how much money there was. I told him I did not know for I hadn’t taken time to count it, but for him to hurry home and help me count it. Very emphatically he said, “well, it is all ours.” I said, “oh, yes, but you hurry on out and let’s count it,” and he promised he would be
right out. After a few minutes of more serious thought, I feared that in his excitement he might have a wreck getting home, so I called to tell him it was an April Fool’s joke. But in the meantime someone at the store had deflated his happy anticipation by reminding him that it was April the first, and he was rather chagrined by my prank.

For many years the pool was a thing of beauty, as it created a restful atmosphere. The reflections from the surrounding trees and flowers in the still mirror of water, was a lovely sight. The birds enjoyed taking baths at the edge of the water, and too, it was a place of refreshment for the thirsty dogs of the neighborhood. Another funny incident happened in connection with the pool. Dr. and Mrs. Allen Grizzard were visiting us one Sunday afternoon, and Dr. Allen was seated in a deck chair with his back turned to the pool. We were all discussing predestination, some of us believing that, “what is to be will be,” while others thought that man is a “free will agent.” Without warning, and without the slightest idea of what caused it, Dr. Allen’s chair turned upside down, and he landed in the three feet of water in the pool. Bert jumped to his rescue and pulled him out of the water. Dr. Allen was drenched from his waist down, but he came up laughing. He must have thought he was predestined to fall in, for the discussion ended at that point.

I always loved to tease Bert and play pranks on him. He was an easy prey for my unmerciful jokes, and he had such a good sense of humor, he never got mad. On another occasion, while we were living in Springfield, soon after we married, I called him where he was working, and pretended that I was a Long Distance Operator from Nashville. I waited a few seconds and then changed my voice and said I was Aunt Lady Goodlett, and wondered if he could come to Nashville that afternoon and help me make my will. Without hesitation Bert said, “Of course I’ll come, what time do you want me Aunt Lady.” Aunt Lady was Bert’s widowed Aunt, who the family thought was pretty well to do. No sooner had Bert hung up the phone, before he called me to tell me of Aunt Lady’s call and to tell me to be ready to go with him to Nashville right after lunch--I let him come home before I told him that I was the one that had called. He took the joke good naturedly and thought it was as funny as I did.

Soon after we moved to Sunny Gables, Aunt Octavia Wade asked me to become a member of the Friday Study Club. The object of the club was: “To bring together a group of women of congenial interests, for mutual improvement and social pleasure, and to increase intelligent interest in literature and in world-wide affairs.” After joining the club I found the members to be very charming, intelligent women.

The Club met the third Friday of each month, at the homes of the various members. Current events were discussed, and the members gave reviews of the books which were selected for the years study. The reviews were most interesting and were presented. After I became a member of the Friday Study Club, Sister was also asked to join. She enjoyed the social contacts and the literary study as I did, and we attended all of the meetings together.
Aunt Octavia was a charter member of the club. She was a charming and well-educated person, and she was an asset to the club. She and Uncle Laurence had one child, a son, Werner, and they were very indulgent parents. Mrs. John (Elizabeth) Kennedy, Mrs. Henry McMurray and Mrs. Herbert Luton were also charter members of the club. As the years passed circumstances caused different members to resign and new members were added. Mrs. C.C. (Margaret) Cowan joined the club about the same time I did. Margaret was such a pretty young woman with a cultured refinement and charm that was readily detected. She was such a sweet, gracious sort of person. Her refined taste was expressed in the furnishings of her attractive home, where her husband, Claude, and their three small sons, Claude Jr., John and Bobby lived.

Mrs. T.O. (Elizabeth) Morris was a young mother of a son, T.O. Jr., and a daughter, Emily. Elizabeth was a charming person, and the book reviews she gave were most interesting and well given. She had an attractive home on Anderson Lane, and it was always a pleasure for the club to meet in her home. Mrs. Perkins (Faith) Overton, I had known since my school days at Madison School. Faith was an attractive little girl then, and she had developed into such an attractive and ambitious young woman. She had a husband, “Punk,” and three small children, two boys and a girl.

Mrs. John (Rebecca) Overton, was a sister-in-law of Faith’s. With her sincere and unassuming manner, Rebecca won the love of all of the members. She and her husband had no children, and she was very fond of animals, especially cats. She spent much of her spare time in reading, consequently she added much literary depth to the club programs.

Mrs. J.D. (Wanda) Brandon, the wife of the principal at Litton High School, a charming young brunette, was a member of the club for a few years. She was quite an asset to the club. Quite suddenly her married life ended in divorce, and a few years later she died after a lingering illness.

Mrs. Clay (Mary) Hudson was a co-worker with Aunt Octavia in the Inglewood Baptist Church, and they were devoted friends. Mary was a student, and all of her work in the club was well prepared and well presented. She had married Dr. Hudson, a man several years her senior, who had a young daughter, Evelyn. It was gratifying to see how well Mary played the role of step-mother. Her interest in and her love for Evelyn was unusual.

Mrs. James (Margaret) Morris, a sister-in-law of Elizabeth Morris, was a quiet but very sweet person. She was the mother of a son Jimmy and a daughter Peggy. Mrs. Brice (Rosa) Sumner, married Margaret Morris brother. Her girlhood was spent in China, where her parents were missionaries. Rosa had a brilliant mind, but her thinking was flavored by the customs and ideas she had been surrounded with during her formative years. She contributed in a most commendable way to the club programs--Mrs. (Elizabeth) Gunter, a lovely young woman with classic features, added dignity and charm to the personnel of the club. She had no children, and
her chief interests centered about her husband, and the life they enjoyed together, on their farm at Edenwold.

Mrs. R. Z. (Maitland) Linney, the wife of a young physician who lived in Madison, was a vivacious and talented young woman. Before her marriage, Maitland had taught public speaking in Washington. She shared in a most generous manner her unusual ability of correct and pleasing enunciation in all of her readings and book reviews. She was the mother of a small son, Ronnie. Maitland continued to be an active member of the club until the serious illness of her husband, who later died after several months of suffering.

Mrs. W.R. (Aleybel?) Johnson, a pretty brunette, with a magnetic personality was a most capable member. She had no children, and her interests centered in her husband, Bill, and their attractive home on the Lebanon Road.

Mrs. Cleo (Kathryn) Miller, was a striking young red headed woman, with a most friendly manner. She was a person of strong convictions and a determined mind and she was most capable in all of her endeavors. She had four children, Jack, Jimmy, Berenice and Jean Ann. Her husband was a successful young Doctor, and together they had established a home noted for its hospitality and its high ideals.

Mrs. W.L. (Anne) Franklin, was a most stylish and well-dressed person, with a rather quiet, retiring manner. Anne’s husband Bill, and their attractive red-haired daughter, Katherine kept Anne busy, as she capably filled the role of wife and mother. She was a perfect hostess and the club members always looked forward to the meetings that were held in her attractive home.

Mrs. John (Martha) Herbert was such a sweet person with a charming manner. The book reviews she gave were so worthwhile and well presented. She had several small children and her home was most attractive with an air of comfort and charm. Martha’s sister Elizabeth Foster was a member of the club for a short time. By her quiet dignity she [is] now the love and esteem of the members.

Mrs. John (Mary) Whaley, a close friend of Martha’s, was a refined sweet young woman. The mother of three small children, Mary’s first interest centered about them, although she found time to devote to her hobby, that of reading. Her contributions to the club were valuable and stimulating.

Mrs. A. M. (Laura) Ashbaugh, a niece by marriage of Aunt Octavia’s, was a most interesting person. She had expressive brown eyes, and a smile that endeared her to all of the members. Her husband, “Ash” and her step-daughter, Marilyn, were her first concern. Laura contributed in a most commendable way to the programs to which she was assigned. Mary Meguiar (sister) was a rather timid, retiring sort of person, yet when she was on the program she gave some of the most complete and most interesting reviews that were given. She had a good
mind, and a wonderful memory, and was a grad student. Her life’s interests centered about her mother and their home.

During the years, several other people were on the membership of the club at different times, but these that I mentioned stand out in my mind as outstanding members. The Friday Study Club strengthened interests in the current literature and in current events, and through its planned study, many literary masterpieces written in the past, became more familiar to and more appreciated by the members. The Club was the means of a strong bond of love and friendship to exist among the members, which proved to be both gratifying and cherished.

Another club to which Sister and I belonged was the Gallatin Road Garden Club. I had been a member of the Madison Garden Club, but when the Gallatin Road Garden Club was organized I resigned to become a member of it. The Gallatin Road Garden Club was composed of twenty-four women who lived in the Inglewood vicinity. The meetings were held the second Monday in every month at the designated home of the members at 2 p.m. From the study of the growing and the arranging of flowers we derived a great deal of pleasure.

Sister took the work more seriously than I did, and she started raising flowers in great quantities. She went to great trouble and expense in making the arrangements that she carried to the meetings each month. She was very proficient and artistic, and won many ribbons and prizes for her outstanding arrangements.

Guest speakers on different phases of gardening were a part of each year’s program. From these qualified speakers much was learned about the growing and arranging of flowers that was essential to a successful gardener. A greater love and appreciation of flowers was gained through such a study. The membership of the club was composed of a very congenial group of women, and the social contacts were very gratifying. The 1939 yearbook lists the following women as active members of the Gallatin Road Garden Club:

**Officers for 1939**

President          Mrs. A.L. Hadley  
Vice-President     Mrs. Wilburn Hailey  
Recording Secy.    Mrs. Walton Cunningham  
Corresponding Secy. Mrs. Ray Thompson  
Treasurer          Mrs. Winfred Lanier  

**Membership**

Mrs. E.R. Adams, Mrs. Irby Bright, Mrs. Roger Burrus, Mrs. Cuyler Cloyd, Mrs. Walton Cunningham, Mrs. J.L. Dillard, Mrs. Philip Eliott, Mrs. Geo. Finegan, Mrs. Wm.
Franklin, Mrs. A.L. Hadley, Mrs. Wilburn Hailey, Mrs. Jas. T. Hayes, Mrs. Joe Johnson, Mrs. Ed Joyner, Mrs. Winfred Lanier, Mrs. Charles Lovell, Mrs. C.F. Lucas, Miss Mary Meguiar, Mrs. Cleo Miller, Mrs. Sidney Nichols, Mrs. J.L. Ramsey, Mrs. Walton Sadler, Mrs. Roy Thompson, Mrs. Mahew Jones, Mrs. Tuley.”

While I have never been primarily a “club woman,” I have always felt that the contacts made through belonging to a certain number of worthwhile clubs is necessary to one’s own growth and development. And at the same time it gives a feeling of pride to the other members of the family as the interests are shared with them.

I never neglected my family to do club work, because my family and its needs came first in my life. And I tried never to have too many outside interests so that I would overtax my strength. Bert went to great lengths to help me with any project that I was not able to accomplish along. That was true in all of my endeavors, for he derived a great sense of pride and joy in all of my undertakings.

During the years that we were getting settled in our new home Mrs. Hadley was making her home with Laura and her family at 710 N. 12th St. in East Nashville. She felt that she was needed there, since she could be with Wallace Jr. as he was growing up. Wallace was her first grandson and there seemed to be a closer relationship between him and his grandmother than with any of her other grandchildren. It was a natural and an understandable relationship, since she had been with Wallace since he was an infant.

Mrs. Hadley was happy in Laura’s home where she was surrounded by the comforts of life, and where she took her place as a member of the household. However, at various times she visited in Carrie’s and Howard’s and our home. Her visits were unpredictable in length, because she was of a restless disposition, and she was not satisfied at any one place for a great length of time. But all of her children went to see her as often as was possible.

Mrs. Hadley was a woman of strong will and by her wishes she swayed the lives of those about her. She was a devoted mother and grandmother, and she was the inspiration for many family get-togethers. And there existed a unity and devotion among the families of her children that was unusual. The size of each family had increased in the past few years, making it more difficult for all of them to get together at the same time.

Carrie and Charles Weaver had the three children, Matilda, Elizabeth and Charles Jr. It was quite a shock to the family when quite suddenly Carrie and Charles separated and Carrie brought the children back to Nashville to make her home.

Laura and Wallace had only the one child, Wallace, Jr. Howard and Aileen, had one little girl, Embry. Wade and Elizabeth now had six children, Wade, Edmund, Bill, Wena, Dick and Carrie.
Wade and Elizabeth had moved their family to Clarksville, Tennessee, and were making their home with Elizabeth’s mother and father at their home place. It made it more difficult for them to get to Nashville very often, for it was quite a journey with so many little folks.

Mrs. Hadley attended Woodland Street Presbyterian Church, and she went whenever her health and the weather permitted. She was a familiar figure as she sat in her accustomed place near the front of the Church. She was not a regular attendant at any of the other Church activities though she attended a circle and the Woman’s Auxiliary meetings when she felt inclined to do so.

Many times I have seen her sitting in her bedroom reading her Bible. Her Bible bore marks of use, and many of her favorite passages were marked. Her influence was keenly felt by all of her children and they tried to emulate her traits of character. As she grew older, with the passing of the years, she carried with dignity all of the heartaches and all of the disappointments that age is the victim of.

At 1128 Greenfield Ave., there was a continual coming and going of some of the relatives. Mother’s home was a haven for all of the kin, and there was seldom a time that some member of her family was not there.

Mother was happiest when she was surrounded by those that were bound to her by the ties of kinship. She went out very little herself, and she gained her greatest pleasure by sharing her home and herself with those she loved. Sister, too, enjoyed having company, and she did not spare herself nor her means in showing the guests a good time.

Mother’s three sisters were widows, and none of them had homes of their own, so they were free to go and come as they chose. Aunt Laura made her home in Decatur, Alabama with her daughter. Elizabeth and her husband Mack and their little girl, Betsy Jane. Though Aunt Laura was continually making visits to her other children, she was better satisfied with Elizabeth and with mother.

Aunt Lee was making her home with her daughter, Naomi, and her family in Gastonia, North Carolina, and she spent a good part of her time with Aunt Addie in Shelby, North Carolina. Aunt Addie made her home in Shelby where she still had some real estate holdings. But she too did quite a lot of visiting among her family.

It was not unusual for Aunt Laura, Aunt Lee and Aunt Addie to visit mother at the same time. The four sisters spent many happy days together. They all enjoyed sewing and piecing quilts, and as they sewed they relived so many of the experiences that they had enjoyed when they were growing up. Their lives were made richer by these visits together. In fact mother seemed restless and unhappy unless some of her sisters were with her.
There had always existed a close relationship between mother and Aunt Laura, and their widowhood had caused an even closer relationship, and Aunt Laura’s visits were more frequent than the other sisters were. As the four sisters visited and sewed together, in the course of each day the mealtime was the highlight of their combined efforts. Each of them had very definite ideas about food, their tastes did not always coincide.

Aunt Laura thought a dessert was necessary to make the noon meal complete, and she was the one that usually planned and made the dessert. Mother made the most delicious apple pie I’ve ever tasted, in fact I have never seen one made that was anything like hers. Quite often she was asked to make one for the noon meal, and with that, some of the sisters had to have a glass of sweet milk.

Aunt Addie’s weakness was coffee, and in her estimation, for it to be perfect, it had to be percolated for an exact time, not a minute longer nor a minute less. They all liked hot biscuits and butter, and the flavor of the butter caused much discussion. They were all vegetarians, but the seasoning played an important part in the conversation after they reached the table. I have never learned why so much stress was put on the food they ate, nor why they had all developed the habit of the discussion of food at mealtime; but it was a habit they all indulged in.

Mother, Aunt Laura and Aunt Addie, were all good cooks, but Aunt Lee had never given more thought than was necessary to the chore. She liked to sew, and she was happiest when she was using her hands, making clothes or fancy work. After the evening meal was over they would all gather in the living room and listen to the radio. Aunt Addie would take her seat real close to the radio, for she was very hard of hearing. Often she would read or sew rather than try to listen, because it was such an effort. She was rather sensitive on account of not being able to hear and she often seemed quite left out of much of the conversation that went on around her, for she hated to ask that any remark be repeated. She wore a hearing aid which when turned on was a great benefit to her.

All of the sisters were quite active with very alert minds. They were well informed on the current events, and they discussed very intelligently all of the questions and problems that confronted the world. They were all of medium height except Aunt Lee who was taller than the others. There probably was some family resemblance in each of them, while no two of them looked very much alike.

I thought Mother was the prettiest one, she had such classic features. They were all beginning to show definite signs of age, even though they were remarkably active. While none of them had real white hair, they each had a good bit of grey mixed in their long tresses. Lines were appearing on their faces and they walked with a more uncertain step. They were all growing old gracefully and were sweet, refined, cultured ladies.

I felt that it was such a rare privilege that my children could know and love their Grandmother’s sisters. Few days passed that the children and I did not spend a part of it visiting
with them. So often we would eat our noon meal with them, and we always felt so welcome and looked on it as a very happy occasion.

Ruth and Jeff and their daughter Mildred made several visits at different times. Their visits were always highlights, for Sister and I felt toward Ruth as a Sister, and we really felt that it was her duty to come back to Tennessee to visit us.

Jeff was a good looking man, who had spent several years in the United States Army. He bore the marks of military training in his erect and soldier-like posture. Ruth had met him during the War and after a brief courtship they had married. Soon after their marriage Jeff was sent over-seas, where he remained for about two years. While he was in France their little daughter, Mildred Lorraine Austin was born.

Since Mildred’s birth Ruth had brought her to see us on several different occasions. Her first visit was when Mildred was less than a year old, and it was at the old home place, during Father’s life. Mildred was a precious baby with a coy and winning disposition, and we all adored her.

She had developed into an attractive little girl, very much like her Mother was at her age. She did not seem to care too much for dolls, but she preferred to climb trees, ride bicycles, and play anything that called for action. Her mother often spoke of her as a “little tom boy.”

She was an independent child, and could see to her own needs, in most instances. Mildred called Sister, “Aunt Mary,” and there existed a mutual love and understanding between them.

Ruth was a very active person and at that time was holding down a most responsible position with the American Legion Auxiliary, and she also looked after her household duties, as well as seeing to the welfare of her family.

We were always so proud of Ruth and her worthy achievements. She always had so much ambition and followed it up with a determination which resulted in success in all of her undertakings in life. She made a coveted reputation for herself among the educated and worthwhile people in San Antonio, the city she went to as a young girl. In her relationship to our family she was always so loyal and true. She always spoke of Mother’s and Father’s home as her home, a fact that all of us appreciated.

Mother felt toward Ruth as she did her own daughters, and Sister and I thought of her as an older Sister. In all of our joys and sorrows we turned to Ruth for counsel. Jeff was never well after his return from military service; his poor health was due to the hardships he endured during his overseas duty during World War I.

Ruth was a very understanding wife and shielded him from as many of the harassing things of life as was possible. It was with a great deal of pleasure that the Austin family was welcomed at 1128 Greenfield Avenue.
Blanche and Mahlon Wright, and their three children, Lewis, Martha and Cullen made visits every few years and they too were always welcomed with open arms. Blanche had been like a sister to Sister and me. She was a year younger than Sister and a year older than me, so we had always been very companionable. Blanche was a happy little mother and did not worry over the responsibility of her duties.

Mahlon was a sweet, easy-to-please person, and he and Blanche made an ideal couple. She was quick in her actions and Mahlon was very deliberate and calm.

Lewis and Cullen both had red hair, but they did not look too much alike. Lewis was very much like his mother and Cullen was like his Dad in his deliberate manners.

Martha, while not as pretty a little girl as her Mother had been, looked like her and she had mannerisms like Blanche.

They were all very active children and Martha took on the ways of her brothers, as she was continually defending herself from their boisterous behavior. They were sweet, interesting children but so unlike the quiet, “play like” little girl their mother was. They all called Sister, “Aunt Mary,” but to all of them I was “Cousin Lois.” During their visits there was much coming and going, and when their visits came to an end there was such a let-down, lonely feeling for all of us.

Various other cousins and friends were continually making visits of a few days duration at 1128 Greenfield. Mother’s home was conveniently located and most comfortable and a hospitable welcome awaited all of those that cared to come -- consequently many people availed themselves of an opportunity such as Mother’s home afforded. I am grateful that my Mother was able and willing to establish and maintain such a home as long as she lived.

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All of my life I had loved and appreciated my grandmother’s rose-carved furniture and the few pieces of her china that my mother had fallen heir to. So when people started collecting antiques with which to furnish their homes, it was a natural and an enjoyable hobby that I took up.

Several of my friends also liked to collect china, glass and furniture, and we spent much time looking for these treasured antiques. Margaret Cowan, Anne Franklin and I would go together, and we would find a colored settlement and descend upon it like a pack of hungry wolves. We usually went from house to house inquiring if they possessed any old glass, china or furniture. If the occupant was reluctant to invite us in, we insisted that they let us look through their dishes to see if by chance they might have something old. If we were allowed the privilege of going through their dishes and if we discovered any old pieces we were like three excited children in a toy store. Each of us would choose what we wanted and separately we would
bargain with our colored friends for these particular items. Most of the time the colored people were nice about letting us go through their houses looking for these treasures, though we met up with a good many who refused to invite us in their homes.

We found a good many homes clean and well kept, and the occupants of these homes were usually well mannered high-class Negroes. Many homes we found to be ill kept and dirty, and furnished with things piled about. The beds would be filthy, and flies swarming through the house, and the people who lived there were usually clad in ragged, dirty clothes. In these environments we found most of the Negroes anxious to find something that we would be interested in buying. They needed money, and if they had anything old they were glad to sell it.

I have always thought the Negro race was an interesting and attractive race of people. Their dialect and their habits are unusual. Many of their homes are no more than shacks, yet they grow flowers, and seem to take a certain pride in their gardening. In the summer, their homes are usually surrounded by a profusion of flowers. They seem to be a race of people having “green thumbs,” on their porches they have countless pots, slop jars and buckets filled with all types of blooming plants. I have often placed in my own flower garden flowers that some dear old colored woman has given me.

The Negro’s home spun philosophy of life is interesting, and in our quest for treasures of the past, we met up with many interesting and original characters. For a short time, Margaret, Anne and I had an Antique Shop in my home, and we derived more pleasure than profit from our business. After we gave up the shop, Anne and I continued to scour the country for antiques. We had so many interesting and happy experiences, and we found many, many lovely pieces of china and glass, and we both were able to furnish our homes with the furniture we acquired.

We did not stick to the Negro homes for all of our finds, but we would invade the homes of the whites as well. Often we would pass an old run down house and Anne would say, “I’ll bet it is lousy with antiques.” So we would stop and I was usually the one that made the inquiry, and if I met with success in getting inside Anne would follow. Our experiences were varied and often it would have seemed to those who were not such ardent collectors a very dangerous hobby. One day we were invited into the home of a colored woman, who locked the door after our entrance. She was living alone except for a pack of vicious dogs. We soon realized her mind was somewhat affected, and with much misgivings we talked our way to the door, and as fate was with us, she unlocked the door. On another occasion we were allowed to enter a house where whiskey was being made in the back room. I realized the occupants acted queer, but I did not know the reason until we got to the car, and Anne told me she smelled whiskey.

In many instances we encountered vicious dogs, but for some reason we were never dog bitten. Though one day a big black shepherd broke the chain with which he was tied, and ran at me growling and showing his teeth. He jumped on me and he came to my shoulder he was so
tall, but he did not bite me. However my fear for dogs increased and I was more reluctant to enter a yard if I saw a dog.

Bert traveled through the country so much, and quite often he would tell me of old people that he had met who he felt sure had old things. No sooner did Anne and I hear of the places, than we would start early the next day in quest of them. Both Bert and the children shared my enthusiasm, and they too learned to love old things and appreciate the value of them.

I shall never fail to appreciate the charm of the old and beautiful things with which our ancestors furnished their homes. Modern furniture certainly meets every need in the furnishing of a home, but to me, it lacks the charm and dignity found in the furnishings of the homes of long ago.

My Hobby

My antiques that are so very dear to me did not belong to anyone on my family tree; but were collected from far and near and with each piece clings a memory dear.

My cherry secretary that is my pride was found by my husband, on a long ride; o’er rocks and ruts he carried me to see this secretary, which now belongs to me.

The cannon hall bed, which is greatly admired from the same people, was finally acquired. It has a quaint air of simple charm and it hails from a Rutherford County farm.

The cherry chest of drawers has a history which will always be mystery for the man who sold it to me, was rather quiet, don’t you see?

The walnut bureau in my room brings memories from the tomb. It belonged to a woman who died. And ‘twas sold to pay for her last ride.

Two other pieces I bought to pay the debt--for all of these bills must be met. So the cherry Jackson press and reel, to my sympathy, makes a great appeal.

The quaint little cradle of long ago, rocked many a baby to and fro, it came from an old family named Phipps, to whose interesting home I made many trips.

Three old maids lived in this home, where one day I chanced to roam. But one by one they passed away, so no more we will meet till Resurrection Day.

Collecting china and glass gives me a thrill, for there’s the old corner cupboard to fill. So many different patterns I have found as through the country I have traveled round.

I’ve a queer hobby, I must confess. But one I love, never the less. It’s a collection of many little shoes of glass and china of every type and hue.
Little brown jugs and old iron hanks? I’ve collected these, until I’m called a crank; Hens on the nest, I have them galore and alas, I could find them no more.

I’ve climbed dingy stairs, some attic to raid. Gotten in houses where liquor was made. Been chased by dogs that were vicious and bad; all because an antique I wished I had.

If you don’t believe the tales I tell, ask Anne Franklin--she knows me well; for together we have traveled far and near, collecting old things, that are to us, very dear.

Now you see it is as plain as can be, why my antiques are so dear to me. For around each treasured piece there clings a story that plays on my heart strings.

--L.M.H.

At the age of seven Betty Ann entered Jere Baxter School; Miss Marion North was her teacher. Miss North was a pretty young woman who loved her profession and she performed her duties with an understanding and a love of her pupils that was appreciated by both the children and their parents.

Betty Ann was a pretty little girl with long golden curls, she was a rather dainty and delicate looking child. She was quiet and shy, but she was always a good student. She did her work well, and her studies were easy for her. She was very neat with her work, and seemed to take a great pride in the lessons the teacher assigned.

Perhaps her clinging disposition was the result of too much pampering, but her disposition demanded love and attention, and in return she was a very affectionate child. I was never the type of mother that looked forward to the day that my children would start to school, as a time of release from some of my duties. Instead, I dreaded it, for I felt that I was giving up my babies. I had enjoyed having them with me, and I realized that it was a new epoch in their lives. But with their going, my interests in all of their undertakings never wavered.

I stood ready to be of any assistance to the, or to any endeavor their school was interested in. I attended many of the little class room plays that the children were in, and looked on with pride at the acting of my own children. I was “room mother” at various times for the rooms of both Albert and Betty Ann.

The demands on a room mother were sometimes quite taxing, but I always enjoyed my duties. The pride that my children showed as I performed these duties was ample pay for any trouble that I might have gone to. Children who do not receive the support of their parents in their school activities are to be pitied. For there is nothing that fills the heart of a child with pride more than having its parents attend their school programs. The teacher, too, no doubt, takes a greater interest in a child when they realize the parents uphold them in all of their endeavors. Far too many parents feel that their responsibility is shifted to the teacher, which is unfair to both teacher and child.
The years passed swiftly, taking both Albert and Betty Ann from grade to grade. It was during Albert’s school days at Jere Baxter that he entered a declamation contest that the County Schools sponsored. He was given as his oration the beautifully expressed eulogy, written by John Trotwood Moore;

**The Middle Basin of Tennessee**

The Middle Basin of Tennessee is the dimple of the universe. Away back in the past it was once the bed of a silver shining lake. But whether its waves boiled beneath a torrid sun, lashed into foam by Saurian battles, or whether glacial iceberg sunk their crystal pillars in its depths and lifted their diamond turret peaks to the steel cold stars of an unanswering heaven, no one will ever know. And what became of it we shall never know. Perhaps an earthquake rent its natural levees and it fled with the Cumberland or the Tennessee to the Gulf. Perhaps the mighty Mississippi brushed with his rough waves too closely to the western border of our calm lake one day, and she went with him, a willing captive to the sea. Or she may have passed out down the dark channels of some mammoth cave whose caverns have never heard the sound of human voice--we know not. All we know is, the lake was here--the lake is gone. Time is long.

The mound builders were not here then, for they have dotted its fertile basin with a thousand voiceless monuments of a voiceless age. Time is long. The lake was here--the lake is gone. But when it went it left the sweet richness of its farewell kiss upon the lips of our valleys, and the fullness of its parting tears upon the cheeks of our hills. It made the loam and the land, the spirit and the springs, the creeks and the cream of the Middle Basin of Tennessee; the blue-grass part of the State.

An animal is the product of the environment that surrounds him--the blossom of the soil upon which he lives. He is part of the sunlight and the grass, the rock and the water, the grain and the gravel, the air which he breathes, and the ant-hill which he crushes beneath his feet. Man is the highest animal. Then behold the man of the Middle Basin, the highest development of the animal creation, Jackson; Crockett; Houston; Bell; Polk; Gentry; Maury; Forrest--these and thousands of others whose names and fame are fadeless.

Years have passed and yet the Middle Basin is as rich and beautiful today, in the green dressing of autumn’s after greenness, as she was on that memorable day years ago, when Hood’s army on its march to Nashville, came thundering with thirty-five thousand men over Sand Mountain from the bloody fields around Atlanta. The Tennessee troops as a guard of honor led the advance. For days they marched among the old red hills of Georgia, the pines of North Alabama, and the black jacks of the Highland Rim, but suddenly as they wheeled in on the plateau beyond Mt. Pleasant, a beautiful picture burst on their view.
Below them like a vision, lay the borderland of the Middle Basin, a sea of green and golden--green from the trough of the land waves? Somber in the setting sun, had taken on the emerald hues of the pasture grasses--golden for the swelling hills, where rolled the woodlands were studded with the bright gold foliage of the autumn leaves nipped by the early frosts.

Farmhouses and fences, orchards and open fields, meadows and meandering streams, newly-plowed wheat fields, and rustling rows of trembling corn, all basking in the quiet glory of mellow sunlight, formed a picture so restful to the eye of the tired soldier, and so sweet and soothing to his homesick heart, that “present arms,” and a genuine rebel yell rolled from regiment to regiment, from brigade to brigade, as the splendid masterpiece of nature unfolded before them.

‘Have we struck the enemy’s picket already?’ asked the thoughtful Hood, now thoroughly aroused, and his keen eyes taking on the flash of battle.

No, General but we’ve struck God’s Country,” shouted a ragged soldier as he saluted and joined in the swelling volume of the reverberating yell.

Even the gallant Cleburn, Honor’s own soldier, the man whose matchless brigade a year before, at the retreat from Chickamauga, had stopped Grant’s whole army at Ringgold Gap, tipped a soldier’s salute to the quiet churchyard at Ashwood and expressed a wish if he fell in the coming battle, he might sleep his last sleep there. Prophetic wish! With thirteen other field officers he fell a few days afterward, around the bloody breast-works of Franklin and yielded up his life as a holocaust to his Country’s Cause.

But even war, the cloven footed curse he is could not blanch the creek of the middle basin save for a moment, and as soon as the last echo of his tread had died away, she aroused again to life, with a wreath of emerald on her brow, the blush of the clover blossoms on her cheek, the sparkle of her own bright springs in her eye, and the song of the reaper in her ears.

O, the glorious middle basin,

The rose in nature’s wreath!

With her purpling sky and her hills on high

and her blue-grass underneath

‘Tis here their sons are free –

For the fairest land,

From God’s own hand
Is the basin of Tennessee.

For several weeks I helped Albert as he practiced saying his speech. On one occasion he seemed rather discouraged and said, “Well you know I won’t win.” I told him if he took such an attitude he certainly would not win – “You have to believe you can, before you will ever win,” I said.

Finally the night came for the big event, and it was held at Turner School. Bert, mother, Sister, Betty Ann and I went, and we were all more nervous than any of the participants. We listened with much interest to all of the contestants, and finally Albert walked on the stage with an unusual poise.

He delivered his address in a most manly and convincing manner, and our hearts were filled with pride. The judges deliberated for a short time, after which Albert was presented a medal for winning the first place in the boys contest.

Our sense of pride over his victory was very evident but Albert accepted it with a sweet, unassuming manner.

Albert remained at Jere Baxter School through the eighth grade and from there he went to Isaac Litton High School.

During the school years various children’s diseases were encountered. Dr. Bunch was a handsome man, with a very friendly but a very positive manner. He was a personal friend as well as our physician. His professional calls were never too brief to take time for a friendly chat after the patient’s needs had been attended to.

He was one of the last of that era, for the doctors learned all too soon that it was easier for them to have their patients brought to their office for examination. The medical profession seems to have become strictly a profession, and in far too many instances the important quality of close friendship between patient and doctor has been overlooked.

Both children had whooping cough, mumps, chicken pox, measles, and each winter brought sieges of colds and flu.

During Betty Ann’s fifth grade she developed Scarlet Fever. When Dr. Bunch diagnosed it, we were terrified. It had always been a disease to be dreaded. So often complications developed that were so severe and often left the child with some kind of hardship. A quarantine card was placed on the house and Albert was kept at home, where he was a student at Litton. Betty Ann was given every attention and was kept in bed for a month. To our delight Albert did not take the disease, even though he remained at home.
Betty Ann was left so weak that she was not able to finish the term at school. During the summer I had Mrs. Mae Whitlow to tutor her, and in the fall she entered Dan Mills School. Miss Elouise Watkins was the principal and Mrs. Will Hall was her teacher. Dan Mills was a small school on Kennedy Ave., and each child was given more attention than was possible in a larger school. Betty Ann remained there until she finished the eighth grade and those years were some of her happiest school days.

Sometime during Albert’s boyhood he wrote a rather interesting and amusing account of his early childhood, and he described some of the incidents that made a vivid impression on his young mind. I have always prized this piece of his original writing, which is as follows:

> Not because I like it, or because my parents like it, but because it was my grandfather’s name and my father’s name before me that my name is Albert. Albert Livingston Hadley Jr. That is my name. My name is Albert. Being a fairly normal baby that name was all right. It’s a normal sort of name – without much style, however, I like style.

My restless nature dates back to when I was quite small. Practically every year we would move. Sometimes more than once a year. From the little town of Springfield, where I was born, we moved to Nashville and in our second house I must really have started living. That’s the first place I remember. It was a small house. White and neat – sitting high off the ground and looking usual.

I was three then. Three is a good age to begin living. So I was three. We had a chicken house, a garage, and a garden. We had a next door neighbor and a mail box. The next door neighbor was next door and the mail box was on the corner a block away. Around the yard was a fence. We had a front gate and side gate. The side gate was larger than the front gate because it was for automobiles and the front one was for visitors. The next door neighbor didn’t use it. She just talked over the fence to my mother. I used the gate. I didn’t like to stay at home all the time. That’s where mother and I disagreed. She thought I was too small for adventure and visiting. I would call on the neighbors. Always for tea cakes no matter what time of day it might be. I had a winning personality. I always got something whether it was tea cakes or not.

Lots of times the only thing I would get would be a spanking when I got home. By the next day I would be lonesome and away I would go again.

One day I went out the big gate. I was just going to the corner to get the mail. Mother saw me. She came after me and switched me all the way home. I stumped my toe too. I was bare footed. It hurt and I was mad so I pouted.

I had a straw hat and a dog and a string of red glass beads. I didn’t care especially for the usual child’s toys. I liked things strange. I did have an Indian suit that I liked. I think the only reason that I liked it was because of its bright feathers and yellow fringe down the
front and the tiny glass beads on the pockets. I liked to wear it. I loved color! Color and feathers! The big straw hat that I wore was a delight to my childish taste.

One day in the chicken house I filled each tiny hole of that hat with a soft white fluffy feather that had been lost by some very fine old hens. I was so proud, so elegant, so regal. I adored my new head dress as each tiny feather nodded in the breeze.

Trixi was my dog and the red beads were gay. Trixi was gay too. We had fun and wore the beads every way possible. Around my neck and on my hat, around my arms and middle, and on my feet. I loved red beads. Red glass beads. Trixi followed me everywhere and we played but one day Trixi died. Trixie had been poisoned. Poisoned. I didn’t know what that was but I thought it was a small yellow-orange colored berry sort of fruit that I had seen growing on tiny little plants by the roadside and in the meadows of my Grandfather’s farm.

My grandfather had a big farm. He had horses and cows and chickens and a cistern where water dripped from the spout of the pump and made a little puddle. This was in the backyard. By the kitchen door. Grandma made cookies for me and kept them in a clean white bag in the pantry. I loved Grandma and I loved the cookies. They were soft and round and smelly with spice and sugar and warmth.

The house was big and roomy. It had a stairway in the front hall that wound to an upstairs bedroom. It was a big, dark enchanting hall. Enchanting and scary. Enchanting when the sun came beaming in the upstairs window and lighted the red glass swinging lamp that adorned the stairwell. Scary when it was dark. Dark with strange shadows. There was a parlour too. A squarish sort of room that was musty and nice. It was the company room. Green and lush.

There was a piano where my Aunt, my maiden Aunt, who was the sister of my mother, would play with all concert splendor that she could think up. I liked the way she would play with her arms crossed at her wrists, and with both hands at once. I liked music and would listen by the hour. In this room for company my Aunt would see her beau. When he came I stayed. I liked candy and he would usually bring my Aunt candy. That’s the way beaus were then. They brought candy and sat on a little love seat all carved in roses. In the parlour there was just such a little sofa and chairs to match. It was a special room.

When Grandfather died and Grandma and my Aunt Mary were there alone we moved from the little white home where I was three to the big house on the farm. My daddy liked to farm so he did the farm. He milked the cows and pumped the water and all the other things one does on a farm.

He worked too. He had an office downtown next to a barber shop where I would go get my hair cut. When I was good and would sit still I would get some green stuff on it when
it was all over. I liked the green stuff. It was bright. Bright with colour and odor. I sat still.

When we moved to the big house I didn’t want to. I wanted to stay in my house and didn’t want my bed taken out. I cried and screamed and yelled to high heaven. But we moved and I liked it at the big house but it was cold in the winter. We hadn’t lived in the big house long when Grandma and Aunt Mary went to Florida and we three were there alone.

Daddy and Bubber and I. It was sort of lonesome then and cold and I got the pneumonia. I didn’t know what I had but I had to stay in bed all the time and had an old nurse who tried to do everything for me and I didn’t like her and I wanted mother to do things for me. I loved my mother but I didn’t like to have that old woman doing anything for me. I got awful sick and everybody got excited and Grandma came home and I got well and sat up on Christmas day.

I had a funny feeling in my legs. They stuck like with pins all in them, and when I walked I couldn’t. But I could eat and I did in front of the fire. I like to eat in front of the fire. There I sat eating Christmas dinner in front of the fire and had my toys all about me. A train, a little car to ride in and everything. It was a merry Christmas and I was well again.

Our summers were usually spent at home at Sunny Gables, since Bert was seldom given a vacation. The children enjoyed playing with the children in the neighborhood and the long summer days were filled with various activities.

The backyard was equipped with acting bars, swings, see-saws and a sand pile, and they seemed to be ample means for a group of active, happy children. Russell, Albert and Betty Ann spent hours playing with toy cars which they purchased at the dime store. They all played dolls, even though Albert and Russell were ashamed to admit it. They always used Betty Ann as an excuse for the cloths that they designed and made for her dolls. The fact was, both boys liked to design complete wardrobes for Betty Ann’s paper dolls. They were both very talented and the clothes they designed were very attractive and stylish.

A part of one summer was spent with Albert planning and directing a play in which all of the children in the neighborhood took part. Each child was given one or more speeches to learn and those that were talented were given songs to sing and Russell accompanied them on the piano. The finale to the program was a mock wedding.

Albert spent hours directing each child in their part on the program, and it was amusing to hear the comments of the various actors. At times they would resent Albert’s demands, and all of a sudden they would go home in a state of rage. Kenneth would grab Margaret by the hand and say, “Come on Sissy lets go home’” and off they would go. Before long they would return ready to start all over again.
Albert planned what each child should wear, and he went to town and purchased the material for the dresses the girls were to wear in the wedding. Mrs. Solley was gracious enough to be the dressmaker and followed Albert’s design for each. She also made the “preacher’s” outfit and the ushers and the best man’s too.

The play was to be given at night on our side porch, and the parents of the actors, and any friends that they wanted to have, were invited. A free-will offering was to be taken, which was to be divided among all of the children. The older children spent the day getting seats placed for the spectators, and stage curtains were made from sheets which were hung between the porch columns. Sister made the bouquets for the bride and her attendants, and I helped make an altar at the east end of the porch. Albert used a role of white wall paper for the aisle cloth.

At the appointed hour a large assemblage of guests arrived and the actors were dressed ready to perform. Lucile Hewgley, about three years old, was the first on the program, and she was supposed to say, “Here I stand on two little chips, who will come and kiss my sweet little lips.” She walked out and when she saw the audience she ran back in the house crying. Finally, Albert prevailed on her to go out and say it. The rest of the program went off as scheduled, and the children did well and looked so sweet.

Albert dressed as a Negro mammy and recited, “Kentucky Water Million,” which made quite a hit. Nancy sang some solos, and she and Buddy Ragan sang several duets. Each child had a recitation and then there were several group speeches. Betty Ann recited a piece to her doll that was seated in a doll high chair.

The wedding was too cute, and the participants looked like dolls dressed up. Betty Ann was the bride. Bobby Hewgley, the groom. Kenneth Solley, the best man. Buddy Ragan, the preacher; Nancy Spotswood the maid of honor; Lucile Hewgley and Margaret Solley were the brides’ maids; and Fred Dunnebache and Albert were the ushers; and Russell played the wedding march.

The friends were very complimentary of the program. Uncle Milus and Sallie came over to see it too.

A good many days in the summer the children and I would go with Bert to some surrounding town where he had to go on business. And quite often, in the late afternoon we would drive to the country with Bert as he went to see some farmer on business. We looked forward to these outings and Bert tried to plan it so that he would be able to take us with him.

It was the simple things in life that we derived so much pleasure from. Just being together was the important thing.

Bert was a most industrious person and he always arose early. In the summer he was usually at work in the yard or garden when the sun was peeping over the eastern hills. He
thought that was the prettiest part of the day. He liked animals and for years he kept a milk cow, and he seemed to enjoy the extra work that she caused. Usually he had horses and pigs on the acreage we had across the railroad.

Bert was a horse trader, and he made life interesting for himself by his continual swapping of horses, mules, dogs or anything he could exchange. He seemed to enjoy finding homes for countless dogs that his farmer friends would give him. We never knew just what would be his “find” each day. He continually brought fruits, vegetable and flowers from the country.

He loved his work and I have often heard him say that he enjoyed his work so much that every day was like a vacation. He made friends readily and his farmer friends were counted by the scores he knew and did business with.

Mary and Angus Bozeman and their pretty daughter, Mary Maxine, were some of our closest friends. I had gone to Eastland Grade School with Mary, and the friendship had been revived, as both of our families were ardent members of Woodland Street Presbyterian Church. We visited one another often, and we planned many outings and parties together. They lived on Franklin Street in East Nashville. Mary was a pretty woman with black hair and brown eyes and a lily-white complexion. She was a meticulous housekeeper and she was always well groomed, and wore becoming clothes. She dressed Mary Maxine like a doll, and she looked like one with her big blue eyes and black curls.

Angus was a man of high ideals with a very deliberate manner. His devotion to all of his duties at the church where he served as an Elder and the Sunday School Supt. was steadfast. The influence of his unassuming, quiet, devoted manner was keenly felt and respected by the entire congregation. He weighed all questions of importance that arose in the “Session Room,” and was never afraid nor unwilling to express his convictions. And he spoke with the dignity that was becoming to an officer of the Church.

He and Bert shared the same interest in the church, and they discussed freely all of the questions that arose in their church work.

Albert and Mary Maxine attended the young people’s meetings at the church and they went to many parties and dances together.

One of the first dances they attended was one that Mary Maxine invited Albert as her escort. When Albert called for her, she wore a lovely dress with a hoop skirt. There was not room for the dress on the front seat, so she sat on the back as Albert drove her to and from the dance.
The friends that we made at church were our dearest and closest friends. We all derived so much pleasure and joy from every phase of the church work. The interests of the church and those of our own home were very closely knit. We walked “hand in hand” as it were.

Each year, I belonged to one of the Circles; and each year the membership of the Circle shifted.

Because of the congeniality of a particular group of women, when the time came for us to be shifted, we decided to organize a Social Service Club where we could still do worthwhile work and be together.

Janie Pangborn (Mrs. Newell) called the group together, and had the meeting at Shelby Park. There the club was organized and the following offices were elected.

President: Mrs. Newell (Janie) Pangborn
Vice President: Mrs. Paul (LaVergne) Caldwell
Treasurer: Mrs. Carl (Rachel) Buckingham
Secretary: Mrs. H W (Esther) Lingahl

The following committees were appointed:
Telephone: Mrs. Cleo (Kathryn) Miller
Program: Mrs. A.L. (Lois) Hadley
Sewing: Mrs. Glen (Neva) Summer

Other charter members were:
Mrs. John L. (Esther) Weaver
Mrs. Floyd B. (Mae) Whitlow
Mrs. (Louise) Helwig
Mrs. A. L. (Mary) Bozeman
Mrs. George (Mary Jane) O’Callaghan

For a while the club was called the Social Service Club. Later, each member was asked to submit an appropriate name. The one that I suggested was chosen, The Meet A Need Club. It seemed to express the aim of the club, that of meeting the needs of people, in whatever walk of life they were found.
We were a group of young women with a definite purpose so we found a family whose father had deserted them. There were a mother, grandmother, and five children. We went to work in earnest and met every need of the family as they arose. We helped them for several years until they finally became self-supporting. The work the club has done through the year has been worthwhile and most gratifying.

The members of the club and their husbands became a very congenial devoted and loyal group of friends. From time to time, members have dropped out and others have been added but the purpose of the club, meeting the needs of people has always been its chief aim.

Since Bert was given few vacations, we all looked forward to all of the special holidays. The fourth of July was a day when we usually went on a picnic, or else we would go to see Wade and his family, or sometimes we would take a trip to some surrounding town.

For years, Albert and his daddy would put the American flag in the yard where they could watch it fly in the breeze, or else they would get a smaller one and put it in the front of the car as we would go on our outings.

We would begin early to make plans for Labor Day, since that was the last holiday before school started. It too meant a day of some kind of outing. The children were always given a holiday on Friday of State Fair week and that was one of the highlights of each year.

The fair was always scheduled for the latter part of September. The weather was usually crisp and cool with a definite feeling of frost in the air. Out little family went to the fair several times each year and as we neared the entrance gate, it never failed to be an exciting time for all of us.

To be among the crowd that was milling its way up the hill to the main part of the grounds was always a thrilling experience. The aroma from the various eating stands was tantalizing to the appetites of two growing children.

Hot dogs never looked nor smelled as good as they did sizzling on the open grills by the side of the entrance roadway. And the men calling through megaphones to stop and eat at their booths made one feel that it was time to eat no matter what time of day it happened to be.

The soft fluffy ice cream which was displayed as the cones were being filled from a machine made you promise yourself a treat of that sort before you left the grounds.

The candied apples were more than any normal child could resist and the souvenir booths with all sorts of jumping toys, pennants and dolls were the perfect place for children to turn loose some of the spending money they had previously been given. It was always a big decision to make to decide just which toy to purchase; but no matter which was chosen it brought happiness to the little shopper.
Always there were men selling balloons. They walked about with strings of varicolored balloons which looked like bouquets.

This was the thing that brought back memories of one of my trips to the State Fair when I was a child. I was intrigued by a beautiful red balloon and I shyly asked my father to purchase it for me but he was in too big a hurry to stop and get it. No doubt he did not notice my disappointment that I am sure was very evident. It was such a little thing to want, the price was only a dime, but the disappointment I felt has followed me through the years.

It seems rather tragic that the happiness of a day can be spoiled by not being able to purchase a bright red balloon! I am sure that father never realized how very much I wanted it, for I never mentioned it again.

After the children and I arrived at the fair, we went immediately to J.B. Deeds’ big tent where Bert was always there to welcome us with a great big happy smile. The tent was located right next to the woman’s building so it made an ideal meeting place as the children ventured off to see the many interesting displays. The tent was filled with all types of farm machinery and farmers were milling about looking at it and talking with the salesmen.

Ice water and yard sticks were J. B. Deeds’ contribution to all who passed under the tent if for no other reason than a drink of ice water it made that particular exhibit a popular gathering place.

We usually spent a short time going through the woman’s building looking at the cases of needlework, the paintings and the antique display. The building was always beautifully decorated with streamers of bright colored crepe paper artistically hung from the ceiling and balcony. Not too many things in the building appealed to the children. They looked for a while and then began to get restless to go to the midway.

The midway with all of its side shows and rides was the most popular place at the fair. We walked and walked through dust and mud as the weather determined gazing at all the sights to be seen. With whistles blowing, children screaming, barkers calling, one could scarcely hear any conversation among their group.

You found your voice keyed to the noise about you but that was part of the fun. After looking all the rides over, the children would decide which ones they wanted to ride. Russell was usually with us, and he and Albert were more venturesome than Betty Ann as they rode many of the faster and more thrilling rides then she did.

The free acts in front of the grandstand were free to all of those who could find a seat or standing room to see them. This was a part of the entertainment at the fair that we never missed. Each year, new acts were introduced and some of them were breathtaking they were so daring. A
well-known orchestra played before the opening of the free acts and at each intermission which made the program very enjoyable.

At night, the grand finale to the show was the very colorful and thundering fireworks. Betty Ann never overcame a fear of them though she always wanted to see them. Quite often we stayed to see the horse show. We all liked horses and the show was always a very spectacular and rewarding affair.

The livestock barns were nearby and each year we found time to see the prize winning animals that had been brought in from all over the state. Some of the hogs had been so well fed that they were so fat that they were scarcely able to stand on their feet to be judged. Many of the cows were so well groomed that their hair looked as if they had had permanent waves.

When the last entry came into the horse show ring, we would usually make our way out of the building. We would trudge up the steep hill to where our car was parked and we would leave the fairgrounds a very tired but very happy little family.

Halloween was the next big day on the calendar which was always looked forward to with excitement. It was not a legal holiday yet it stood for fun and all sorts of ghostly pranks. The children were often invited to Halloween parties, or else they would have one at home and invite their little friends.

When Albert was about seven years old, his expression teacher, Mrs. Fisher, had a Halloween party at her home for all of her little pupils. We dressed Albert as a tramp in some of his daddy’s clothes, hat and shoes. He realized later that we made a mistake in not getting him a costume like the other children, but nevertheless he made quite a hit at the party. Betty Ann was always afraid of the Halloween faces and ghosts that pranced around at the parties and she missed a lot of fun because she so often refused to go.

Albert and Russell had a Halloween party in the garage one year. They sent invitations to all of their classmates:

Ghosts do dance

And goblins prance

In Albert’s garage Tuesday Night

Don’t make such a fuss

But join with us

With hearts both gay and light."

Tues. 7:30 to 9:30 PM – Oct 31st
Albert and Russell hosts.

Albert and Russell, with my help, decorated the garage with leaves and cornstalks and many Jack-o-lanterns. The little guests who were about fifth graders all came dressed in costume.

Duncan Potter, a pretty little red headed, dimpled cheeked boy dressed as a little girl and he pretended to be afraid of all of the ghosts and would scream at all who came near him. It was some time before any of us recognized him to be the plump happy faced little boy that he was.

Bert dressed as a ghost and walked slowly about the yard or stood quietly looking at the guests. Even I did not know who he was and it made me feel very strange having him stand gazing so steadily at me.

A Halloween never passed that we didn’t all buy new masks for the occasion. Children in the neighborhood came by for trick-or-treat and on one occasion, we all dressed as ghosts and the house was dimly lighted with candle light from the gruesome faces of the Jack-o-lanterns.

Bert dressed as a ghost and seated himself at the dining room table which was filled with cakes, candies, and fruits. As we invited the children to the dining room for refreshments, Bert would shake hands. Bert would shake hands with them with a wet cold glove on his hand and would greet them with a ghost like voice. The children did not tarry long but were glad to get out of doors away from the ghosts. The children who came are grown now and some of them speak as one of the most unusual and frightening of their trick or treat experiences.

Thanksgiving meant several days holiday for the school children, but Bert only got one day. Our family was so small and there was no one to come home for Thanksgiving, so we seldom observed the day by cooking a big family dinner. Occasionally Mother and Sister would ask us there for lunch or an evening meal.

Quite often we would attend the church services in the morning, after which we would go to some nice place for Thanksgiving dinner, and then take a long drive in the country. Laura and Mr. Long were always so nice about asking us to their house at Thanksgiving and Christmas, as well as on other occasions. Laura was a good cook, and the food was always well prepared and the table was attractive and appropriately decorated for the special day. Mr. Long was a man of great dignity and natural refinement, and was always a most cordial host. He loved beauty, and he usually helped Laura with the table appointments. We always found great pleasure in accepting the invitations to their home.

With the coming of December came the realization that Christmas would soon be here. There was always a feeling of excitement with the passing of each day. I started the Christmas shopping early, getting gifts for Bert’s mother, my mother and sister and for various other relatives. The things that Albert and Betty Ann had expressed a desire for were usually selected.
I made the traditional fruit cake early, using the same recipe my mother had always used. It was one that Mary Lyle Wilson used in making a fruit cake for the President each year. Mrs. Wilson had been one of the most noted bakers in this part of the country.

The night before I was to bake the cake I would cut the fruits and nuts and let them stand in grape juice overnight. Bert and the children wanted to help with the chore, as they enjoyed eating some of the goodies as we prepared them.

Several days before Christmas Bert would select the Christmas tree. Many times he and Albert would go to the woods and cut it. Albert liked to decorate the tree, but all of us had a hand in the trimming of it. Some of the same ornaments were used from year to year. A little red celluloid bird, which had been given to Albert when he was a baby, was always perched on one of the branches.

Where the tree was to be placed in the house was quite a decision to be made each year. Sometimes it stood in the living room, sometimes in the dining room, and a few times it was placed in the front hall. One of the prettiest trees we ever had was a pine tree decorated with red satin bows of ribbon and icicles and colored balls.

Another year a cedar was very cheerful looking, with little yellow birds perched on the branches. Still another year found the tree standing in the corner of the living room bedecked with small Japanese fans.

Albert was very artistic, and after the tree was decorated he turned his attention to getting the rest of the house festive looking. I often said it wouldn’t seem like Christmas if it weren’t for Albert’s interest in making everything look beautiful.

It was always a thrill to wake up Christmas morning and find the ground covered in a fluffy, glistening carpet of snow. It made it seem so much more like the traditional Christmas. The children arose early, and the squealing and the hurrying as they dressed, before they went downstairs to see what Santa Claus had left, was a rather contagious mood for the rest of us. Mother and Sister arrived in time for them to see them bound down the stairs. Santa’s gifts were always in evidence under the tree and were surrounded by gaily wrapped packages. There were gifts for each of us from one another.

Bert was always so interested in my reaction to the gifts he had chosen for me. It was always hard for him to keep a secret. So many times I had to appear surprised, when really he had by some casual remark divulged his secret, soon after he had purchased the gift.

Mother and Sister would stay and eat breakfast with us, and often would spend the entire day. They were extravagant with the gifts they showered on all of us. The gifts they chose were expensive and things that each of us prized.
Christmas night or Christmas Eve night was set aside for the gathering of Bert’s family at our house. I always tried to see that it was a pretty affair, one that each member of the family looked forward to.

The remainder of the Christmas holidays was spent in excitement and gaiety, as the children enjoyed their toys, and sharing with Russell all that made them happy. Mother usually invited us for a big dinner sometime during the holidays, and we always enjoyed it, though I felt that the preparation of the meal was too much of an undertaking for Mother.

From year to year Christmas was like a bright star beckoning us on the holy, happy holiday. The stillness of Christmas night as the light from the star-studded sky shone on the earth, one felt the same wonder and magic which had been felt in Bethlehem centuries before. Christmas truly was our happiest and sweetest of all of the holidays.

New Year’s Day meant another holiday. We started each year together, observing in many ways the beginning of each year. It seemed they rolled around so fast.

February brought Valentine’s Day, and we celebrated in appropriate ways that special day. The messages of love that children gave to Bert and me bore their names at first in printed form, but as the years passed their signatures became more legible.

Bert never failed to remember me with a box of candy or flowers, accompanied by a Valentine message he had thoughtfully selected. Often he would come in with a box of candy well hidden under his coat, later to surprise me with his Valentine offering. And I was always just as thoughtful in remembering my message of love to him.

At meal time I usually surprised the family with a dessert, made of red Jell-O in heart shape, decorated with whipped cream. That was always a delight to the children.

Easter soon followed, and the Easter Bunny made his yearly rounds bringing candy eggs for the children. What a happy time they had while they searched for them! Sometimes they came in beautifully decorated Easter baskets, and that too was all that was needed to make happy-hearted children. A pot of lovely Easter Lilies was Bert’s gift to me. He was always a most thoughtful person, and my life was made richer and happier because of his attention.

Easter Sunday always found us worshipping at Woodland Street Presbyterian Church. As a rule we all had something new to wear. Perhaps not a completely new outfit; a new hat, a new tie, a new suit, or a new dress. While stress was never put on clothes, yet something new at Easter always seemed fitting to the season.

Mother Nature was bursting forth in all of her Glory! The freshness and beauty of Nature as she awakened from her long Winter’s sleep caused everyone to want to dress in keeping with the beauty that was all about them. It was Springtime – It was Resurrection time!
While April 1st was never a holiday, as a family we found much pleasure from playing pranks and April Fool’s jokes on one another. Many times the children wrapped empty boxes and placed them in the pike and then watched for some ‘sucker’ to stop and pick them up. Bert was a big tease and he was continually playing pranks on us and on his friends.

As a child I was quite a tease, and the years had not robbed me of the joy I found in playing jokes on people. It would have been difficult for me to have lived with people who were lacking in wit and humor, so that they were unable to enjoy a certain amount of fun.

Each of our birthdays was remembered with gifts. I always made birthday cakes for the children. Occasionally they each had a birthday party and invited their friends. One year when Albert was in high school I failed to make him the usual birthday cake and he told Betty Ann it didn’t seem like his birthday, because he didn’t have a cake.

On one of my birthdays, Albert went to the kitchen and with the use of a recipe and Dannie’s (our maid’s) help, he made me a cake. The cake was very disappointing to him, as it shrunk in the middle and was quite leathery to eat, but I never had a gift that I appreciated more.

There are so many happy memories connected with so many special days and so much that I appreciate about our everyday living. We lived simply, but we lived fully and happily.

The days passed, each one filed with varied activities. Bert and I were in the prime of life and we were so busy living that we did not stop to evaluate many of our opportunities and blessings.

Our children were fast reaching the adolescent age, and then all too soon they would be grown. If we had known; if we had stopped to think, we might have appreciated more fully the great and glorious happiness we were experiencing.

If we could have – if all parents could realize, what a few short years are allotted to the rearing of a family! All too soon, they are like birds, they mature and fly from the nest. We took as a matter of course the prevailing circumstances. If we could have clutched and held securely some of these precious moments of life!

In God’s Great Wisdom He has given us the wonderful power of memory, and we can store, for years to come, the beauty and the abundant joy and happiness that are lived in the Spring and Summertime of our lives.

Before we are nearly ready for it, it has become the Harvest time, when we shall garner the fruits of our lives. Be they abundant or be they scanty, “As we sow, so shall we reap.”

(Volume VII)
Changes Come

Monday, September the twentieth, nineteen hundred and thirty seven, a pretty sunshiny fall day. Our household had carried on in the usual routine. Bert, worked at J.B. Deeds & Son, and his work increased with the coming of fall, when the farmers were busy with the preparation of the ground for the fall and winter crops.

Albert, then seventeen years old, had spent the day at Litton High School where he was a sophomore. Betty Ann, eleven years old, had spent a busy day as a fifth grader in Dan Mills School. I had been at church where I was then the President of the Woman’s Auxiliary. I enjoyed the work that was necessary for the carrying out of a well-organized and planned program each month. But after each meeting I felt exhausted and looked forward to getting home where I could relax from the strain. On this particular day I stopped by Mother’s on my way home, and found her in bed not feeling at all well. She complained of her chest and arms hurting, but she refused to let a doctor be called. She thought it was indigestion and from rest she would soon feel better.

Aunt Laura Bridges, Cousin Alva Williams and Mabel Clark were there. Cousin Alva was just out of the hospital from a major operation, and she was in bed most of the time. Sister had spent a busy day, cutting flowers from her garden, to take to the State Fair the next day. She had cut buckets full of the most beautiful asters, in shades of purple and pink. And she had been making flower arrangements to enter in the Flower Show, at the Fair.

I always felt concerned over Mother whenever she gave up and went to bed. I knew that she really didn’t feel good, for she was never the type to give up unless she was sick. Mabel promised that they wouldn’t let her try to fix the evening meal, but that they would see to that, so I went on home.

I prepared our supper and after we had eaten, Bert suggested we take a ride in the country. He knew that I enjoyed riding, and he felt that it would be relaxing for me after my busy day. We had not been home from our ride long, and Russell had come over to see the children, when the phone rang, and as I answered I was stunned by Cousin Alva’s frantic cry, “My God, Lois, come quick!” I knew that something horrible had happened, and I sensed it had happened to Mother. Bert and I rushed down there to find Mother lying on the floor, where she had slumped from her chair. She had gone to the living room to listen to the radio and she was combing her hair, when she was seized with a sudden heart attack. She was gone! Without a word she had slipped from this world into the Great Beyond.

I called to her, but there was no answer--she was gone! So many thoughts rushed through my mind--sickening thoughts that carried a finality which turned life into a hopeless and darkened future. There she lay, the woman that had given me everything--even life itself. The one person to whom I could go and always find a ready response to any and all of my problems.
She had showered her love in beautiful measure on me and my children--now she was gone--how bereft, how crushed I felt.

Life, I knew, could never be the same. The home which she had made, which she shared so generously with all of those she loved, would never be the same. How could we go on without her? How would my children feel when they knew that the grandmother they adored was gone? There would be no one to take her place in their lives. They had been her crowning blessing of life, and she had lavished her love on both of them.

Bert too, was stunned and grieved. He had always admired and respected my mother, and had shown her many kindesses and attentions during our married life. My greatest concern was for Sister, and what her reaction would be when she found that Mother was gone. She and Mabel had gone to the funeral home where “Miss Mary,” Mabel’s step-mother, lay as a corpse. They drove up in a few minutes, and Sister’s grief was so great that the doctor gave her a sedative. She was so pitiful, and so heart-broken. Relatives were notified and friends and neighbors gathered who spoke in whispers and moved about silently, and the feeling of death pervaded the household.

Forrest Bridges and his family came and spent the rest of the night. Aunt Laura was stunned and we feared the shock would prove too much for her. Bert went home to the children and I spent the night there. It all seemed so strange, and it was impossible to realize that the coming of daylight would not bring an awakening from this horrible nightmare. Quite the contrary, it brought with it the duties which are so hard, and yet necessary for the carrying out of the final rites which would be an appropriate climax to the beautiful and devoted earthly life of our mother.

How hard it all was! The selection of the casket and the dress which she should wear; the planning of the funeral, which was to be at 1128 Greenfield Ave. Wednesday afternoon, September 22nd (Sister’s birthday). We wanted everything to be sweet yet simple, as she would have wanted it. Friends came with food and flowers, and with words of comfort. And yet, it all seemed so unreal. We all moved about shrouded in grief, and tears flowed freely. I went home early in the morning to tell Albert and Betty Ann what had happened. I tried to break the news gently; tho’ I think they had suspected the worst when their daddy had gone home the night before, and seemed so upset.

On Tuesday, Elizabeth Elam came from Alabama, and on Wednesday Aunts Lee and Addie came from North Carolina and Ruth Austin came from N.Y., where she was attending a conference.

We had a pall made from the asters Sister had cut to take to the Fair, and it was lovely. The floral offerings were beautiful and there were so many. There are those who think it is a waste of money to send flowers at a time like that, but I can testify to the comfort and strength it gives to the family, as they fight so gallantly to summon the faith and the courage that has been
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Theirs on other occasions. Flowers soften the blow, by their beauty, and by the fact that they are sent by those who care and sympathize. The remarks at the funeral were comforting and yet there was a finality that seemed like a wall that closed about and suffocated. How fitting the song that closed the service, “Good Night Here But Good Morning Up There.” While life was never the same, all of us had to get adjusted to the fact that Mother was gone. We missed her in everything we did, but most of all I missed the daily visits with her, and the frequent telephone conversations that we enjoyed.

We continued to go to see Sister, just as we had done when mother was there. The tenacity with which Sister clung to the way of life which she was accustomed to during mother’s lifetime, was pitiful. We tried to advise changes that would make life easier and less expensive for her, but all of our planning was in vain. She continued to live in the house alone, and struggled to keep the house and yard in good repair. Her life seemed very lonely and I continually worried over the fact that she was alone.

Even though life was changed, somehow the business of living each day, and the responsibilities that every day brought, gradually turned our interests into various directions. And life went on, even if the pattern of life was changed. That is, as God planned it, I feel sure. For man could not continually walk in the shadow of death. But the shadow lifts with the passing of time, and we are allowed again to be surrounded by sunshine, and hope springs up in the heart, even though we felt it too, had died.

The following Christmas, Sister spent in Florida visiting Blanche and Mahlon. In fact she stayed for a month or more, and while the change was good for her, it was dreadfully lonesome for us. I recall that I had Bert’s people for supper on Christmas night, and at intervals during the day, as I made preparations for their visit, I gave way to my feelings and shed many tears.

The spring and summer passed in a rather dull routine. Fall came and the days became full of various activities. School days always caused a greater number of duties. In November our lives were torn by the serious illness of Bert’s mother. She was then seventy-seven years old, and was making her home with Carrie at her home 1514 Ordway Place. She had a heart condition, and was put to bed. Some of her children were at her bedside constantly, and while her suffering was not too great, she steadily grew weaker, and it became difficult for her to get her breath. The end came during the night, and the grief of her children as they stood about in utter helplessness was heart-breaking. They had all idolized their mother, and though they were stalwart men and mature women their grief was so evident and so sincere. The funeral service was conducted from our home, on Monday morning, and her body was laid to rest in Spring Hill Cemetery, by the side of her husband. Again our household felt a great loss, and Bert’s grief was shared by all of us. With the passing of my mother-in-law, came various emotions. I missed her in so many ways--her sincere interest in Bert and his family, and her ways of showing her interest, were keenly missed.
In most any death, one finds a certain amount of regrets at one’s failure to have measured up to the duties that they failed to perform, or the extra attentions that they might have shown the deceased. I felt, very keenly, the failures that I was responsible for. I might have brought her more happiness if I had taken the time to have given more freely of my time to her needs and her pleasures. I saw her life in a different light now than I had ever seen it. The realization of her loneliness and her dependence on those she loved came as a shock to me.

The few material things which she left seemed to speak to me and remind me of the things I might have done for her. Why, why, hadn’t I been more thoughtful! She was always so concerned over all of the interests and problems of my children. Her phone calls, gifts, and cards, had all attested to her measure of interest.

How few we find in life that really care about our everyday lives. Why do we wait until it’s too late to appreciate and realize just what that interest means to our lives? We take for granted far too many of such blessings. There comes a time in each life when there are so few left who really care about our welfare.

My mother-in-law had many wonderful traits of character. She was a strong-willed woman, and she was a devoted mother and grandmother. She was always good to me, and the pattern of her life was strongly interwoven in Bert’s and my early married life. Now she was gone—and I hoped to carry with me only the memories that met the requirements of the ideal relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

The family ties seemed to weaken with the passing of Mrs. Hadley. The brothers and sisters were not drawn together as often they were during her lifetime. They became more careless in their attentions to one another. This was perhaps a natural consequence for it seems to be true in so many families. Their love for one another was as great but the unifier, the one about which their lives and their interests revolved, was gone.

Aunt Carrie Dismukes, Mrs. Hadley’s twin sister lived on a farm near Gallatin, Tennessee, since she and Uncle Dave sold their homeplace in Hadley’s Bend, to the government. After Uncle Dave’s death in June of 1922, Aunt Carrie continued to live on the farm, and her unmarried son, Dave, lived with her. Her daughter, Sue, and her husband, John Franklin lived in Gallatin; and her youngest son, Stokley, and his wife Alma, and their three children, Stokley Jr., Betty Sue and Carrie Lee, lived on a farm west of Gallatin. Aunt Carrie’s home had always been the gathering place for the large family connection.

She had three brothers who lived in Nashville. Stokley Wade, the oldest brother, was an attractive man, with a pleasant but positive disposition. He was a large, well-built man and when I first knew him his hair was beginning to turn grey. His wife, Nettie Turnley, was a native of Clarksville, Tenn. They had four children, Ednelia, William, Nettie and Susie. Ednelia died just before Bert and I married. She was about nineteen when she died, and was a young woman of unusual qualities. Aunt Nettie died of cancer soon after Ednelia’s death.
Uncle Stokley and his three children were frequent visitors of Aunt Carrie. Nettie and Susie, little girls of about nine and ten years old when their mother died, spent weeks at the time with Aunt Carrie. Levi Wade, another brother had married Lizziedene Kennedy of Nashville. They had four girls and a boy; Lizziedene; Laura; Carrie Burnett; Faith and Levi Jr. Aunt Lizziedene died during a flu epidemic in 1918 when Levi was a small child.

Uncle Lee, (as he was called), took over in an admirable manner the rearing of his children. He never re-married, but continued to guide and counsel his children until they were all grown. His was an attractive and devoted family. Laurence Wade, the youngest brother, was an old bachelor when he married Octavia Weaver. Aunt Octavia was a charming person with a very clinging disposition. Their first child, John Laurence, lived only a short time. Later another son, Weaver, was born to them.

Aunt Octavia and Uncle Laurence were very lenient, devoted parents: consequently Weaver was a highly nervous, demanding child. Aunt Carrie had four sisters, but Bert’s mother, was the only one living when Bert and I married. Laura, married J. Boyd Hayes and they had four children, Boyd, Susie, Laura and Laurence. She died when Laurence was a very small child.

Emmie married Robert Thompson and they had a daughter Laura, and a son, Matt. Susie, never married, and she died when she was a young woman. Matilda, Aunt Carrie’s twin sister, and Bert’s mother, had five children, Bert, Wade, Carrie, Laura and Howard.

Aunt Carrie’s home was typical of the old Southern plantations. The old slave quarters were still in the yard back of the house, and usually a number of capable servants lived there. Aunt Carrie supervised all of the work necessary for running her household, though she did little of the work herself. She and Mrs. Hadley looked a good bit alike, though Aunt Carrie was not as tall and was rather heavy set. They both had inquisitive dispositions, and enjoyed hearing whatever news there was circulating about. Neither of them went very much, but seemed to enjoy having their friends and relations visit them.

To be invited to Aunt Carrie’s for Sunday dinner was always a treat. The food was bountiful and the cooking and serving was done by a capable colored cook. The long table in the spacious dining room was usually surrounded by guests, mostly some of the relatives from Nashville. The hospitality and the gracious living that the guests enjoyed made Aunt Carrie’s home a wonderful rendezvous for all of the kith and kin--the large parlor heated by a fireplace, was typical of the grandeur of the homes of colonial days--a floral carpet covered the floor, and at the windows hung handsome lace curtains.

The mantelpiece held lovely French vases and brass candlesticks with crystal prisms. A square marble top table stood in the center of the room with a lovely “Gone with the Wind” coal oil lamp ready to be lighted. A what-not stood in one corner of the room, and its shelves were filled with curious and objects of art. A quaint harpsichord produced a tinkling melody at the touch of its ivory keys, yellowed from age. The rose carved sofas and chairs were comfortable
and inviting. The most modern thing in the room was a Victrola, which all of the young people enjoyed playing.

For the most part, the guests were entertained in Aunt Carrie’s bed room. If there were many guests then they were taken into the lovely old parlor. Aunt Carrie’s bedroom was also heated by a fireplace. On the mantel shelf stood a clock, which lazily ticked out the hours of each day. Two beds were in the room, one a double and the other a single bed. An old fashioned bureau stood by the side window, and there were several comfortable chairs in the room. An old fashioned wardrobe took the place of the modern chest.

Members of the family found a visit with Aunt Carrie and Dave in this bedroom to be a most enjoyable experience. Aunt Carrie was always so cordial and seemed so interested in the interests of her guests. Bert adored Aunt Carrie, so our visits were frequent and the children and I were just as eager to make these visits as Bert was.

Mrs. Hadley’s death was a great shock to Aunt Carrie and she never seemed to take the same interest in life after her death. In the summer of 1939, the year after Mrs. Hadley’s death, Aunt Carrie was taken seriously ill, and she only lived a few days. During her illness she remained at home, and when the end came she was surrounded by many relatives, who were nearest and dearest to her. Her funeral was held at Sue’s home, and her remains were brought to Spring Hill Cemetery, where she was laid to rest by the side of her devoted companion. A short time after her death, the home place was sold, and later Dave married a widow of Gallatin, and they moved to Indiana to make their home. Thus, one of the last of the lovely old homes, which had exemplified the grandeur and traditions for which the South was noted, had passed into oblivion, with the death of its queenly mistress.

In May of 1940 Albert graduated from Litton High School. The graduating exercises were held in the school auditorium, and it was the school’s ninth annual commencement, with the largest graduating class, of one hundred and twenty graduates. Bert, Betty Ann, sister and I were all there to witness this important event in Albert’s life.

The graduates looked so dignified, dressed in cap and gown, as they marched from the front of the building and took their places on the stage. The invocation was given by Rev. Rufus W. Beckett, pastor of the Inglewood Baptist Church. The greeting was given by Howard Winn, Class President. Richard Davis, gave a cello solo. The theme of the talks made by three of the class members was, “Conservation of Human Resources through Education.”

Andrew Alexander, spoke on “Health and Safety,” Mary Elizabeth Sawyer, spoke on “The Home as a Social Unit,” and George Anderson closed the discussion, his subject being “Our Government Institutions.” Geraldine Abernathy rendered a vocal solo. Mr. Ernest Chadwell, a member of the Board of Education, presented the diplomas, after which various medals were awarded. The program was closed with the singing of, “God Bless America,” followed by the benediction.
Pride filled our hearts during the exercises, but especially when Albert’s name was called and he went forward and received his diploma. It represented years of study, with a purpose, on his part, and years of interest and a happy sacrifice on Bert’s and my part.

Graduating exercises brings with it mixed emotions on the part of parents. Pride is uppermost, and a sense of satisfaction is felt, but there also comes a sudden surge of sadness, caused by the fact that the happy care-free school days are over. Life for the child must take on greater responsibilities, if a college degree is the next goal; or else, the seriousness as a life’s career must be chosen.

The Civitan Medal was presented by W.E. Fentress; the Molly Hardy Memorial Medal was presented by Mr. Otto Prater, the mathematics teacher at Litton. The Latin Medal and the D.A. R. Medals were also presented after all medals had been presented Mr. G.C. Carney, Principal of the school, arose and made quite a lengthy talk about two other medals which were to be presented: one to a boy and one to a girl. The faculty had decided that the recipients of these medals deserved recognition, for their helpfulness, devotion, courtesy, loyalty and for their outstanding work wherever they could be of help throughout the school. It was an honor that the faculty felt these two deserved. We were quite pleased when Albert was the boy chosen to receive this distinct honor, and Mary Elizabeth Sawyer, was the girl chosen. We felt that it was a coveted honor yet we felt it was one Albert justly deserved. He had given so freely and so cheerfully of himself and his time, as his services were needed in any and all of the endeavors of the teachers who asked his assistance.

It was most gratifying to feel that these qualities, so often overlooked in the awarding of scholarship medals, were recognized and rewarded. It was difficult for me to keep the tears back, my heart was so overjoyed. I felt a great sense of loss, because mother was not with us, to share in our joy and pride. It would have meant so much to her, her interest had always been so sincere and so abundant.

Sometime after Albert graduated, I found among his files an original essay that he had written May 10, 1940 entitled, “Why Not?” It seemed to express so well his own philosophy of life.

Why Not?

Why not, even though it takes a little nerve, be a person who is happy, a person who is original?

Originality is a trait or characteristic that we should all strive to obtain or develop. It is a good way to keep us thinking, to keep us alert and active in mind as well as body.
It has been said that, “variety is the spice of life,” and that is absolutely true to a certain extent. We all know how tired we would become if there was no variety in our lives. The same thing, day in and day out, would indeed be monotonous.

Why then do we allow ourselves to become tired of life, tired of our jobs, our friends, and even our surroundings? By being original, by doing things in an unusual or little different way, we can make our lives happier and much more interesting.

Life is all we have; without it we would have nothing. With it, we may have what we want. It is, therefore, up to us to make our lives what we want them to be; happy, gay and interesting; or, on the other hand; drab, dull and pensive. It is up to us; we must make the decision.

One of the best possible ways of adding zest to our daily lives is by meeting new people; not by accident, but by going out of our way to get acquainted with and know as many people as possible. Friendship is the greatest thing on earth. Without friends we would be miserable creatures.

The drab and gloomy feeling that comes over us when we begin to feel tired or uninterested in our work is a ridiculous state in which to let ourselves drift. When we begin to feel this coming on, we should get busy, think up a new idea, or even an old one; at least find a different way of handling the situation that is getting the best of us.

We often become dissatisfied with our surroundings. Our homes, our schools, even our city and state become disagreeable to us. We feel that we would like to move away and forget everything, but we can’t. The remedy? Very simple! A new outlook on life, with a dash of originality for flavor. With this prescription our homes can become more attractive, our schools more interesting, and by looking at our city and state from a new, refreshed angle, we find it fascinating and glamorous with many treasures and gems that have been over looked and gone by unseen, until we observe them with the “pleasing eye,” known as optimism.

It may take spunk and nerve, but it’s worth it. An optimist is always happy, a pessimist never! Then let us be optimists; let us be happy, let us be original, it’s up to us; why not?

World War II

War clouds had been gathering for quite some time and one could hear the low, angry rumbling in the distance, as the events took place which caused the storm to break forth in staccato-like fury on Dec. 7, 1941, at Pearl Harbor. The world was stunned! And in a matter of minutes after the sneak attack took place, the civilizations of the world were brought to the realization of the seriousness of the attack.
It could mean only one thing--war! Being of a peace-loving nature, I could not believe that the news could possibly mean such a horrible and drastic thing as war. My mind could not grasp the seriousness of the attack. Perhaps it was stupidity on my part, but up until that time I had never heard of Pearl Harbor.

I could not believe that any place so distant could possibly be of enough importance to cause our nation to declare war, and send our men and boys to a place that I had never even heard of. I thought it absurd that people felt that America would have to declare war against Japan, who had made the attack on our Navy, which was stationed in her waters. I felt that it would be unfair for our boys and young men to have to endure the ravages of war, and for those of us at home to stay where we could still have the comforts of life.

I felt that no price was too great to keep our young men out of such a horrible and devastating thing as war. No doubt, that was not intelligent thinking on my part! Still I feared that our leaders would not feel as I did, and my anxiety mounted as the hours went by. World conditions were more serious than I realized, and the events which actually plunged the world into World War II was the German invasion of Poland on Sept. 1, 1939. Previously Germany had seized Austria and Czechoslovakia. Italy had taken over Albania and Ethiopia, and Japan had taken Manchuria, and had gone to war with China.

The powerful democracies, Great Britain, France and the United States, failed to take forceful steps after each of these three conquests, for fear of starting another World War. The German invasion of Poland convinced the British and French leaders that the time to stop Hitler had come. They declared war on Germany.

In the early months of the war, Hitler’s troops swept through Poland, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. The United States was actively drawn into the war as a result of the Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on Dec. 7, 1941. The next day, the United States declared war on Japan, and a few days later on Germany and Italy.

War equipment in enormous quantities was sent to the English and to the Russians from the U.S. As the flood of weapons increased, the United States, British and Russian armed forces began to take the offensive. Regardless of my feelings in the fall of 1942, Albert had to go for his physical examination, prior to his induction into the Army.

Somehow I clung to the idea that he wouldn’t be accepted. Not because of any defect that I knew he had, but I still could not bring myself to believe he would have to go to war. I took him to the Stahlman Bldg. where he was to meet the other boys who were to go for their physical. After leaving him, I was so emotionally upset that I drove down Third Ave., a one way street, and came up Second Ave., also a one way street.

Luckily there was not a policeman in that vicinity at that time. Probably if there had been one around he would have taken pity on me, seeing what a nervous state I was in, or else he
might have thought I was driving under the influence of liquor! At any rate I reached home safely, with a constant thought of Albert, and hoping against hope that he would be rejected.

I wouldn’t have done anything to keep him out of military service like so many parents did, yet I felt that if he was rejected that would certainly be an honorable way to escape the cruelty of war. Thought I knew Albert would not have appreciated our wanting him to be favored above other boys; and Bert and I both felt that if our country was at war, it was our son’s duty to go, as much as any parent’s son. Though it is perfectly natural and normal for parents to want to shield and protect their children from dangers. And so we waited anxiously for Albert’s return from camp to learn the outcome.

He arrived early one morning saying that he had passed the physical, and had been inducted into the U.S. Army as a private. The feelings of helplessness that swept, over me, were indescribable. He had been sent home to wait fourteen days, before he would be sent to a near-by camp. That waiting period, I feel sure, must have been somewhat like the waiting period of a prisoner awaiting his execution.

The family’s thoughts and prayers revolved about Albert. While he showed little evidence of his emotions, he began to get his personal possessions in order. He went through all of his keepsakes, throwing away and discarding much that no doubt he felt would be of no more value to him.

I moved about the house, feeling very much like a death sentence had been placed on my son. I tried desperately hard not to show my emotions in his presence, but just as soon as he would leave the house on some errand, I would give way to my pent up feelings, in an outburst of tears.

His waiting period was our reconciliation period. I tried desperately to be submissive to this call of duty. There was constantly a prayer on my lips, and while I felt that war was perhaps not the way God would have solved the world problem, I honestly felt that He could protect His own under any and all conditions. It took a great deepening of my faith, and I really think by the time Albert had to go, I was one of God’s more trusting children. I had come to the place in life where I was utterly helpless. I am not sure that I trusted the wisdom of the leaders implicitly, but I trusted the promise that God had given His children, “All things work together for good to those that love God.” That was the promise I lived by--and while I believed the promise, I wondered if our love toward Him was as perfect as it should be. I felt that at times we had probably walked afar off, and perhaps we had not always put first things first--but, still I definitely put my son’s life in God’s care.

Bert was so torn by Albert’s having to go, and he could not hide his feelings as well as I did. Sister, too, was so upset, and she looked on the darkest side of the picture. She was constantly reminding me of the things which could happen. Betty Ann loved Albert devotedly--she did not break down, though her strained pent-up emotions were evident.
While we were experiencing our hardships, thousands of other families were going through the same ordeal. Some broke under the strain, and each person’s reaction was different, depending on their attitudes and their temperament. There were some who reveled in the glory and glamour of war, but usually they were the people who had no loved ones to enter the conflict. The parents of sons had little respect for the views of such people, and even friendships were strained by such so called patriotism. It was wise for people to weigh their remarks, because parents, wives and sweethearts were at the breaking point. Any careless and seemingly cold remark could set off a hot argument. Often people who did not have a loved one in the conflict could never appreciate the drastic sacrifices that were made. It was these same people who complained of the curtailment of any provisions which made life harder for them.

The events leading up to the day Albert was to leave for his military career were anything but normal. All of his friends were subject to call, and many of them went before Albert did, and many went later. Ray Carroll had come from Georgia to Nashville to work, and he and Albert had become the best of friends. Ray visited in our home so much that he felt almost like a member of our family. He was a good looking boy with an attractive personality. Ray was scared almost beyond endurance at the thought of having to go to war. He and Albert shared their problems, and there existed a very close relationship. Russell Spotswood visited us just before he left for duty, and as he left we felt as if a member of our family was leaving. His boyhood days were spent with Albert and Betty Ann, and they were more like brothers and sister.

James Pickard (Pick) was several years Albert’s senior though he too, was a very close friend. He also served for quite some time in the Army, though he never left the States. Wade Hadley’s two oldest sons Wade Jr. and Edmund were among the first to go. Wallace Long Jr. served his time in the Navy.

Blanche and Mahlon Wright’s sons Lewis and Cullen both served overseas. They were all so fine and brave, and each left with a forced smile, though I feel sure they hid within themselves a deep sense of fear and misgivings. The cream of the young manhood of America was answering their country’s call. They were going to fight for their country and for its freedom. What a price to pay!

The day Albert was to leave, dawned bright and clear, but a day never dawned in my life that seemed quite as dark, and with the same sense of misgivings and helplessness. The pent-up emotions of all of us as we steeled ourselves for his departure, that afternoon, were soul-stirring. Betty Ann went to school as usual, and as she told Albert goodbye, my heart all but burst with grief. She hugged and kissed him, and walked out of the house, never glancing back. I knew it took all of the courage she could command, to control her emotions.

Sister came out and spent the day, and Bert stayed at home too. Emma, the colored woman came out to do her usual work. How those few hours passed I do not know. There were
several last minute things Albert had to attend to and Bert rode with him as he went from place to place.

Finally, the hour came to go to the train—what a desperate moment in all of our lives! When we got to the Union Station Pick met us there. Men and boys were milling about. Some of them alone, and others surrounded by their loved ones—there they were, men from all walks of life, though it seemed for the most part, they were from homes of a lower standard of living. So many of them were rough looking and shabbily dressed. A group of Negroes formed a band and were playing on instruments, and the music which they produced was anything but harmonious. I thought what a mockery! Why should anyone try to be gay at a time like this! We stood about in painful silence, or made comments of forced bravery.

Finally the big iron gate was opened leading to the stairway and the tracks below. Strained good-byes were said, and the large assemblage of men and boys filed down the steps to board the waiting train, headed for Fort Oglethorpe, Ga. As Albert got half way down the steps, he stopped and looked back to wave a last farewell. I thought how young and fine he was, and if the Army could be made up of men and boys as fine, we surely would win the victory for which we were fighting.

I realized the boys’ bravery would not be sufficient but that we at home would have to put forth our every effort to keep their morale up. I had promised to write every day and to pray for him each day, and I knew neither the prayers nor the letters must be founded on selfishness. Slowly Bert, Sister, and I walked back to the waiting car, each one controlling as best we could the tears which flowed so freely. How lonesome, how helpless we felt; and from that moment until the close of the war our first concern and interest was news from Albert.

The first letter was written the following Saturday:

Dear Folks--

Just back from supper so will start a letter. The food is good here just as everyone has said, so I’m doing all right. We have been moving from one thing to another all day. This afternoon we were issued uniforms. You should see me—I didn’t get any khaki trousers at all. That is, I haven’t yet, they are all having to be cut down for me. Tonight I am wearing a very smart outfit of blue. Blue denim, you know, overall material. I have a jacket and the trousers with a matching hat. My shoes are lovely brown numbers that look about like steam boats. They are a bit heavy, but fit very nicely, so I’m satisfied. Nearly everyone who came yesterday has at least one complete khaki outfit.

Some are doing themselves up in mixed colors, but for me, I’m trying to be a bit individual. Right after lunch I saw I Sam Logan and he is still as excited as ever and is
working in the offices. I may see him again tonight but I don’t know. We have to go to a lecture and an Army movie. They are calling so must go now.

Love, Albert

Sunday Afternoon

I didn’t get a chance to mail this note yesterday, so will add to it. Was up this morning at six o’clock and stood in line for breakfast for a long time, but it was worth it. If I keep on eating all of these heavy meals I will soon be fat! Too soon!

Sam and I had a long walk this morning, which I enjoyed very much. The surrounding territory is beautiful. Many trees and flowers and everything so well kept. We came back and went to Church about 10:30. The service was very nice and I was surprised to find Charles Helton here. He was the tenor who was active in the Playhouse work, and other musical circles in Nashville. He sang the solo which was lovely. I didn’t get to speak to him because he got out long before I did. We aren’t having to do anything today, free to wander around as we please.

I will have to walk some because I ate far too much again. We had chicken, artichoke, candied yams, salad, rolls and gravy. For dessert we had brick ice cream and wafers. I still haven’t any dress clothes, so am still in these blue things. Nearly all the ones in our group have, but it doesn’t matter to me. You see everything here. Just as I expected, Sam really does look well in his uniform.

This afternoon I will try to write several notes. It would be nice to know what’s happening there but I suppose —. I started to say not to write, but maybe I could get a letter if you mailed it soon enough. One just never knows here. You see, some are sent out immediately after completion of exams, etc., while others are stationed or kept here several weeks. Sam, for instance, will work here in the office for about a month or maybe longer. Howard Anderson was sent out yesterday morning, and I didn’t get to see him. So that’s the way it is, I may be here less than a week or -- I don’t know.

Keep up with things there during this period and let me know all when you can.

Love to all—Albert

Monday Afternoon, Oct. 13, 1942

Dear All,
Have certainly been busy today! They keep us moving from one thing to another all of the time. We have spent the day taking tests. This morning right after breakfast we started them, and I have just finished for the day. It’s about three o’clock and we have the remainder of the day off.

The only bad luck I’ve had since getting here happened the first night. I slept with my watch on and the next morning it had stopped and hasn’t run since. I suppose that I hit it on the side of the bunk or somewhere during the night. By the way, I’m in an upper bunk. I like it right well. In the daytime, I can sit up here and be a bit out of things to write letters etc.

Everyone sits on their beds when they are indoors. There’s no place else to sit. Just as I had expected, these shoes have rubbed a blister on my heel. So today, I’m wearing two pairs of heavy socks. That should fix them! Still no uniform! They issued the alterations while we were having tests, so we didn’t get ours. I certainly hope I can get mine tomorrow. I’m getting tired of wearing these blue things--but just my luck! Really, I don’t particularly care, but I am a bit anxious to get into the others.

Tomorrow we finish all tests, exams, shots, interviews etc. After that I may be shipped anytime. So – I hope it won’t be long because I certainly would like to get settled a little bit. Here we have no place to keep things, except under our beds. All our clothes are in a large bag. I don’t like that. All in all everything is fine, and I am very well satisfied and definitely well fed. Too well, I fear. Anyway, this is the Army and I must soon start getting cleaned up and dressed to “fall out” for supper. More tomorrow, love to all, Albert.

P.S. There’s a canteen and well equipped room here that makes things more interesting.

Tuesday Afternoon, Oct. 14th

Dear All,

Today I finished my “processing.” This morning we signed our insurance papers, had an interview with a P.F.C. This was to enable them to place us. He didn’t seem too intelligent about it all, so there’s no telling what and where I’ll get.

After that we went for four shots. I heard of so many falling out that I was afraid, maybe I would, but I didn’t. It all happened so quickly, that it wasn’t bad at all. Two shots, one in each arm and a vaccination. I can dress up tonight. I was given my woolen trousers this morning. Thank goodness!
I’m having out of town guests tonight. Ray called me last night and he is coming out tonight. It will certainly be good to see him. There are quite a few people here that I have known or seen before, so I don’t really feel like a complete stranger.

Today I mailed my clothes, so be on the lookout for them. They are insured. Be sure to look in the coat pocket because I sent my keys and comb and file. I was afraid they might get lost since I have no good place to keep them. I won’t need them anyway.

I may talk to you before you get this, I don’t know. I will call you before I’m shipped, that may be tomorrow or any day thereafter. I hope everything in Nashville isn’t as dull as this mornings’ Tennessean. It was the first one I had gotten and there wasn’t a thing of local interest in it.

I will be interested to know what’s happening there, so don’t forget anything. Betsy, I saw Mr. Mac again today for a few minutes. He looks cute in his fatigue suit, you should see him. Must go now and clean up before the rush starts. I’m a bit anxious to dress up anyway, because I’m certainly tired of these things. My feet are feeling alright today.

Love to all—Albert

Naturally we were all so vitally concerned in the news that these first few letters contained. We suffered over this new way of life, and feared what the next move would mean, and were eager to know to which Camp he would be sent. The next letter brought the news.

Oct. 15, 1942

Thursday--last night was interesting. We travelled all night, slept in the day coach. Everyone making himself as comfortable as possible. It was a restless crowd. The Corporal stretched out across the seat. His back having no support. I couldn’t stand that so I sat up and slept. A bit uncomfortable but one can’t have all the luxuries of life and be in the Army too.

It was a beautiful night and I was by the window, so I enjoyed the darkened scenery between naps. About day all the boys started stirring and soon everyone was up. All of us were dirty but managed very nicely. I found the suspense of not knowing where we were headed for, very fascinating.

It kept all of us guessing and wondering. By the moon’s path I finally concluded that we were travelling North-east. After passing through Knoxville I didn’t try to think any more about where we might be headed, but only enjoyed the scenery. A gray somber light began to help in actually seeing. It was a misty sort of morning and the mountains were
but think shadows on the horizon. Along the way lights shone from the farm houses and cottages. There soon were little parades of automobile lights on the highways. Sometimes near and sometimes far; oftentimes very far below us, they wound in and out and around the hills.

It was like a magic fairyland. Before long the train stopped and we marched down the streets of Roanoke to our breakfast. One by one we filed into a very inviting little restaurant where we were served in a quiet, genteel manner. So different from what we have been having for the past few days. Colorful dishes, and bright table cloths. This, I liked very much!

After breakfast our commanding officer paraded us through town. It’s a quaint and picturesque little place, and I enjoyed the walk very much. In fact I like to walk in formation. It’s brisk and invigorating. Then back to the train where we waited impatiently for an hour or more to leave. Finally our engine came and we were off, off through the beautiful state of Virginia. Where to, we know not where--and it’s still fascinating. The hills and valleys in their Autumnal beauty take on an atmosphere of particular loveliness, as their peaks are shrouded in fleecy clouds and a gently falling rain envelopes all!

On and on and on we rode--soon after a delicious lunch on the streamliner we came to a little town, charming and old. Old houses nestled between new buildings, vine covered walls and spiring Church towers.

A swollen stream rushing madly; a very old house of stone; rough and quaint with its bricked gables, its blue painted casement windows, and poised pigeons perched on the slightly sagging slate roof. The sky still gray and moist--subdued the brilliance of the scene. Even on such a day, the second floor porch of a big yellow house is strung with new washed clothes.

Bright and colorful against the somberness of it all. Much switching of trains from one track to another--taking off and putting on coaches along the way. Across the way are little stores with front porches. An old yellow brick house with outstanding and ornate dormer windows. Trains and more trains. A troop of soldiers off, marching to their trucks.

On the edge of town an antiquated cottage hiding behind a high board fence. We left the little place backwards! For the life of us all we can’t even determine the direction. Well, that was Petersburg and now through dense woodland country, on we travel. Into Richmond--then to camp.
Friday Oct. 16

Dear All,

Just a few minutes before being called out. We got to Richmond last night after a rather tiresome trip, and came out to the camp. I am planning to call you tonight on the first possible chance. I haven’t seen a telephone and don’t know whether I will be allowed to make a long distance call or not. Anyway, just in case I don’t, this is to let you know where I am, and that I’m getting along alright.

This camp is new and about twelve miles out of Richmond, in the middle of a forest. All very crude but comfortable enough. I had an interview this morning and think I will probably get an office job. I hope so.

Other things that might interest you have happened, but I will tell you them later. I do want to get this to get in the afternoon mail. I need some towels, about two plain white bath towels, and 1 or 2 small ones. Also coat hangers, and if you can get them in, I would like my brown moccasins. Please send these as soon as possible because I can’t get these things here.

Love, Albert.

(Volume VIII)

Friday night, Oct. 16th

Dear All,

Even though I had to talk fast and didn’t give any of you a chance to say much it was certainly good to hear your voices. So much has happened in the past week. It really seems much longer than that. I suppose most of the confusion is over now and we will soon be down to real business.

We left Chattanooga on Wednesday night about 7 o’clock. The trip was rather tiresome. That night all the boys just slept any way that we could be most comfortable. It was an old coach and dirty too. I couldn’t sleep any way but sitting up. I was by the window and enjoyed the night, between naps. The Corporal who was our leader sat with me and he was really a very nice fellow.

A Nashville man who did work at General Shoe Corporation: Corporal Graham.
Knowing so many people in common made it very nice—Paul and Iggy and Harold and
Sarah and Catherine etc. Well anyway that night wasn’t too bad I didn’t think, but some of the fellows did a lot of complaining.

We had breakfast in Roanoke at a very attractive little place. Then travelled on after quite a wait at the station. We were pulled by a streamliner and ate dinner in its diner. Very superb! I enjoyed that.

The trip from that point was bad. Never have I seen so many switch tracks, old engines and the like. We were held up so long at so many places. We finally got into Richmond about—I don’t know, it must have been 8 o’clock, then into the trucks and out to the camp. It was very nice and the rest did us all lots of good.

After breakfast this morning we found that we were to move to another camp—a newer one—so into the trucks and away we went. Lights went out here! Now its morning again--

Sat.

As I was saying we were moved after breakfast yesterday to this camp. It has been raining a slow drizzling rain since before we got off the train Thursday night. This camp is in the country. Many trees, pine, oak, etc. It would just quit raining it might be very nice, but now it is terribly muddy.

The barracks are very comfortable and the food not too bad but things have been so uncertain that it has made it rather trying on us all. I haven’t minded so much but some of the men seem pretty upset about it all. I too, was a little restless yesterday, but now that I have talked with you and you know where I am, I’m not worried.

I’m just back from breakfast and too full. I ate three large hot cakes with syrup and butter, coffee and half pears. It’s getting light now but it’s a gray dim light that looks dreary. Still raining today! It keeps me busy changing clothes but I’m keeping dry.

I know you are anxious to know about the people. Well, they aren’t bad. Of course they aren’t the type people that I enjoy most, but they are all friendly, nice sort of people. Most of them are country boys and men. There are quite a few older men here. There are only two or three Nashvillians in the bunch and I don’t know them very well, but they seem to be alright.

Yesterday I met one fellow from Florida, whom I like right well. He is a musician: was in college and the Army got him. He seems a little too much upset right now, but I think when he gets adjusted he will be nice to know. He doesn’t want to do anything but play in an Army band--there’s none here yet. I think his name is James Motter, just in case you hear of him again.
Betsy, I didn’t get a corner bed but I am by a window and only three beds from the corner. It isn’t bad. In fact, I’m very well satisfied with things so far. I do hope I get an office job, and I think I will. When the Lieutenant looked over my record he didn’t ask me anything except about office work. We were called out at this point. We had exercises and drills. I like to drill, I have caught on right well--much better than I had expected.

By the way, I was right proud of myself yesterday morning. We had only been in line a few minutes and had had very few instructions when they called me out to lead as we marched about three-fourths of a mile for some blankets. They asked me if I had had any military experience before. Of course that wasn’t anything to get excited over, but it did help. After that I moved, so here I am. This letter will have to end now, I think we are about to be called.

How is Aunt Mary? This is for her too--will try to write to more people later. Until I am settled and have more time I will have to use this system. Some of you might call Pick for me and tell him that I will write the moment I have a chance.

Let me hear from you soon--Love to all, Albert. P.S. Have you heard from Frank? I don’t know whether I told you or not but Roy might come to Nashville before he leaves for the Army, and will probably stay with you. I told him to just let you know.

Sun. afternoon

Dear all,

Today is a beautiful day here and everyone feels better. Really the country here is very pretty and the entire camp looks much better this kind of weather.

This morning we were up early and had breakfast. I wrote a bit and went to the little Chapel here at 10:30. It is a very attractive little white church. I enjoyed the service very much and think I will go back tonight. There will be a song service and I will enjoy that I know.

Love to all--Albert

Tues. night Oct. 22nd

Dear Mother, Dad, and Bettsy,

I have been working in the office all day today, and I like it. Of course I haven’t been assigned to any special duties yet. I’ve been filing, checking lists etc. which I like very
much. I wouldn’t mind doing that sort of thing all the time. Your cards from Clarksville came today; and I enjoyed them. When the mail comes into the office I can usually get mine then. I haven’t heard from anyone except you yet.

I don’t think I told you about my clothes, did I? I have two pairs of wool pants, two cotton ones, two wool shirts, two cotton ones, a coat, that is, dress coat, an over coat, socks, underwear, handkerchiefs, three ties, two pairs of shoes, one of which I haven’t worn yet, and other equipment. A mess kit, sort of a pan and lid affair with a cup and knife, fork, and spoon. I am due a raincoat and field jacket. Will get them in a few days, I think.

I enjoyed your letters yesterday too. It’s good to hear the news, we are so cut off from the outside world here, and will be for about two weeks yet. Was glad to get the card from Joe. I must write him soon. You asked about my feet. They are alright now.

I can hardly write there is so much talking going on here. I wish we had a reading room--must go now and get ready for bed.

Love to all--Albert

Wed. Oct. 23

Hello everybody,

Here I am again rushing as usual. I’ve just come back from supper and will go back to work in a few minutes. I’ve been typing today! Imagine that!

Enjoyed all of your letters today--I will have to read them again later. I read them in such a hurry--had a nice one from Pick, and Bettsy, yours came today from Oglethorpe. One from Aunt Mary and mother’s and daddy’s.

Lights go out at 9, but it has been later than that when I get to bed. Mine is the first bed (in the corner) as you come in and the lights are kept on in the shower room, so I have been having my shower and things after the others are in bed, of course, because I’ve been working at night.

I didn’t know anyone before I came and few since. My Commanding Officer is a Richmond man, I can’t even remember his name now. You see, I am away from my group, more or less all day. That is, as long as I get to stay in the office.

Ray left today, I suppose. I hope that he didn’t feel too badly about it. I haven’t heard from him since I got here. I hope I do soon.

Love to all--Albert
Friday night, Oct. 24th

Dear all,

This is the first time I’ve had time to stop since Sunday. I just got back from supper, and don’t have to work tonight. Your letters came today and made me glad all over. I’m always so glad to hear what you all are doing. I also got a letter from Suzy and one from Charles.

Suzy’s was a nice long one and she insists that I call her cousins the first chance I get. I will, but I don’t know how soon.

I think Charles is planning or rather expecting to be sent overseas before very long--says he tries not to think about it, but feels that it really won’t be very long. I hope he doesn’t. I haven’t heard from Roy, neither have I heard from Frank. I too, wonder what has happened to him.

Honestly I can hardly write--you see we have no writing room here--only our barrack and that, at this time of night is a bit noisy and not at all private. I certainly miss having a little privacy, but that too, is the Army, and is no doubt good for me.

Everyone seems to think I am stationed at an Airbase. In a way I am, but really we are several miles from the airport, and are in the country, more or less. You see, we are the Engineering Force of the Army--build roads, bridges, airports, etc. Really lay the foundation for real work. There is, of course, a Camouflage Corps here, I don’t know just where, but if I should be taken out of the office I would find out more about it and could probably get into that. I don’t know whether it would be the wise thing to do now or not, as things stand. I don’t think so--I want to stay where they need me. I’m not worrying about it one bit because, as ever, I feel that they know more about it all than I do--Albert.

P.S. In re-reading I find that my explanation of this place is still not clear--we don’t build those things here, this is a training center.

Sat. night, Oct. 25th

Dear all,

Saturday night and all is well. Today has been a busy day and I am a bit tired. There were a few definite steps of progress made in the office today. Steps toward organization, and I feel better. They assigned special duties to us and I feel that I will be able to work better now. Of course I don’t understand much about how it is all carried out, but I don’t think it will take me long. There are so many reports to be gotten out each day, and so
many records to keep, and all of that sort of thing. Really I think I will enjoy it. You see, what they do is train the new men to learn to do the work, and later on the older ones will probably be sent to other new camps to start the work there. Then when our time comes we will probably do the same thing.

At the present it is hard for me to think of myself doing that, but everyone was a beginner once, I suppose. So I know that I can too. This all sounds very good, but in the Army one never knows. I do hope that this will last, and I can stay one and eventually be of real importance and even the little jobs have to be done well and are vital to the whole--so now I feel that I am doing my part.

I had several nice letters today; yours of course, and one from Charles, a clever card with note written on back from Aunt Elizabeth, and a very nice letter from Mr. Bozeman. I was surprised to get it – I haven’t even had a chance to write to them, I will write to them and the Caldwells tomorrow. Don’t forget to say something to him about it. It was indeed a very good letter.

That supper you had Wednesday night when Cousin Hilliard was there sounded delicious. Wish I could have been there.

The food here is good and I am eating like a horse. I can’t understand it. We have so much starchy food and vegetables – three times a day. Real down to earth, hearty meals. It will be good to sit down to a civilized meal again.

I have learned that there really is an art to eating, that many people have not yet learned. I’m not letting that bother me though. I hope that when I get a chance to get into town I can find some smart, rather quiet place where I can once more sit down and order a sandwich. That is what my diet really lacks.

I’m so glad Aunt Octavia got to make the trip. I know that she needed it and deserves it too. I wish that all of you could come to Virginia; it is such a beautiful trip, and I would live to see Richmond with you.

I suppose we will be allowed to leave the post next week, I don’t know, so I will probably go into the city.

You asked how many soldiers are here – That I don’t know. You see, the whole thing is so divided up. There are so many battalions and they are divided into companies. First though, there are regiments.

The whole thing, I suppose, is a regiment, then it is divided into battalions, then into companies. I work in the 1st Battalion Headquarters.
We have records of all of our men who are divided into four companies. Headquarters A, B, and C. I am a clerk for Co. A, but actually am in Co. B.

There are several hundred men, I guess, in each company. So you can judge from that – provided that I have made it all clear. So much for that!

I was so glad you wrote to Charles, he really did appreciate it. I told you that he will probably be sent overseas before long, didn’t I?

I wonder where Ray is tonight. I hope that he has gotten back home. I do hope that he comes to Nashville during his fourteen days.

I don’t know if I will write to you tomorrow or not. I want to be outside some if it is a pretty day, but do have a few letters that I must write.

Remember now that these letters are to Aunt Mary too, it’s just impossible to write as many as I would like to – so this system will have to do for the present.

Love to All---

Albert

Interesting excerpts from his next few letters:

Wed. Night Oct 29th

Dear All – How glad I am to not be working tonight!

I didn’t get in until after ten last night. I wouldn’t have been so tired but I had another “shot” yesterday and wasn’t feeling my best. I always thought that I was somewhat of a baby about shots etc., but now I don’t!

You have never heard such complaining and carrying on as some of these “big tough fellows” do. My arm is a little sore today, but I feel alright.

Had a letter from Ray yesterday, and was so glad to hear from him. He reports back on Nov. 5th. I hope he will like it.

I found a map of Richmond today in a phone book. It looks interesting. A number of museums and Art Galleries, etc. Mixed in with all the other attractions of a strange city.

Had an interesting letter from Pick this morning. Have you had him out yet?
We didn’t get much work done at the office this morning. Everyone had to stand inspection. There was some Colonel down from Washington, and he went over the entire place. Seems silly to have us work ourselves to death to get work out on time, then stop the entire business for half a day for something like that.

Sunday Afternoon

Yesterday afternoon I got a pass to leave this place until 6:30 Monday morning. I didn’t ask for that long, but got it anyway.

I worked for a little while last night, then one of the fellows in the office and I went downtown. I had to get a haircut and wanted to do some shopping. We couldn’t get a chair for so long, that it was after nine when we got out, so didn’t get to shop any. I wasn’t ready to come back but this fellow was afraid to stay any later. I think he was afraid of the big city – and it made me mad. I like the looks of Richmond and certainly wasn’t ready to come back quite then!

I’m planning to go back in today, but of course it’s raining a little. I hope it clears up in a little while. Will go to church and have dinner. I don’t think I will call anyone today, because I want to wait until I can get my clothes in a little better order.”

And thus the days were filled as Albert spent the first few weeks as a soldier.

No doubt he had experienced greater inconvenience and had to endure more physical and mental anxiety than those of us at home did.

Our emotions were based on uncertainty and constant fear, but his letters came so regularly and in all of his new experiences he always seemed to look on the bright side. This attitude was typical of Albert’s philosophy of life, as he accepted without complaint this new way of life.

His letters to his family were so different from so many of the letters that the boys wrote home. So many continually complained of the hardships, which made it even harder for those at home to be brave.

Albert I think, tried to take it all in the spirit of a good Soldier and for that we were constantly grateful.

He was getting adjusted to military life even though it was so foreign to the way he had planned to spend the early years of his life.

The first letter Albert wrote in November was to Betty Ann, and it was an interesting letter telling of his first sight-seeing trip to Richmond:
This morning early it was raining and messy but it cleared off, so I went into town!

It seemed a little strange being back in civilization again –

Richmond is a very interesting town. The houses are quaint and grand all at the same time. Would certainly love to be turned loose with one of them to fix.

Nearly all of them are simple and formal, many of them three stories high. The old iron fences, the double doors, high windows, urns and old benches, horse-head hitching posts and occasionally a black moor one, fascinate me.

The very old and famous West Franklin Street is beautiful and I walked way out, enjoying it all very much.

I stopped and asked two very nice looking ladies about one of the museums here and found it was a little out of the way to try to go today.

They told me about a private home that is recommended by the U.S.O. center here, where the lady takes soldiers in for the week-end. I saw the place and it is very nice and in the same block with many antique, gift and art shops, all in a row. Each displaying their wares in the windows.

They are all in old houses and the whole thing is Arty. Saw several things that I would love to have. I really do think it would be much nicer to stay in a home like that for a week-end than at the “Y” or some other such place.

All this took place this afternoon. This morning before Church time I walked in the down town district and found the window displays to be very colorful and original. They are doing things up for Christmas here already!

Are they there? It seems awfully soon for that to me.

Makes me feel that I’ve been out of civilian life an awfully long time. It was summer when I left.

I went to the Second Presbyterian Church. It is right pretty, but not just what I like.

They had a new pastor just starting today, and he was wonderful. He reminded me very much of Dr. Hill in his style. He was very sincere and simple, with much poise and personality.

I ate dinner at a very attractive tea room. It was very much like some of the places at home, and the people in there were very attractive. They were at Church too.
So many smartly dressed women, and dignified, gray haired men. I enjoyed seeing them. There are very few nice looking civilians on the street however, and I get so tired of seeing men in uniform.

I didn’t call Carrie Burnette’s or Suzy’s cousin either today. I want to wait until I can get me one of the Garrison Caps. You know, one with a bill. Will probably get one this week. This little old thing that I’m wearing looks so silly, and has drawn up a bit and sits too high on my head, a few degrees. Well anyway, I will call them all later. I wanted to be alone today anyway. I can see more that way.

I found several really smart shops. Decorators, I know, but they didn’t have a sign out. Well I came back “home” before dark. I was bit tired and didn’t have anything else to do.

Well, congratulations, honey, I knew you could make the honor roll. Now do that every month.

I know Mother and Daddy are proud of you. I am.

Letter writing is such a problem at times. Right now I’m sitting in the middle of my bunk with the paper on my rolled comforter. It isn’t a red satin one, but it is khaki and very warm and nice.

Bettsy, your style of letter writing is very good. I always enjoy them. Your style is original and unstilted, and your composition is free and easy.

Give my love to all the folks and be good to yourself.

Privately.

Albert

Wed. 5th (Nov)

Had a card from Mr. and Mrs. L.G. Anderson and one from Cousin Suzy, and yours too Daddy, and was glad to get them.

Another letter from Charles tonight and he sounds so up-set. Some of the boys were shipped or moved (he didn’t make it clear) last Sat., and he feels that his time is very near.
Ray leaves tomorrow! How I would love to see him tonight. I hope he isn’t too nervous over it all, but I’m afraid he is. I’ll let you know when I hear from him again. There’s no telling where he will be. I hope it is warm he hates the cold so much.

It’s rather cold here now. Not too cold but definitely brisk!

Sun. Afternoon Nov 9th

Dear All –

This is the most peaceful day that I’ve spent since I’ve been in the Army.

Outside is gray and cool, but it is warm and pleasant in here. You see, I’m in charge of Quarters at the company office today. There was a little work to do this morning, but now things are quiet and I’m all alone.

Alone with a desk, a radio, my magazines and writing equipment.

It was certainly good to hear familiar voices from home this morning. I was sitting here and who should I hear but the well-known and familiar voice of Martha Gillespie.

Yes, it was only by means of radio, but even that was exciting.

It was the weekly program on which she appears. Also it was good hearing Jud Collins, Beasley Smith, and all the other Nashvillians.

I was surprised to hear form Aunt Lee, Friday. Her letter was just as cute as it could be, and she wrote all around the edges.

With the money Aunt Mary sent me for my birthday I bought a Garrison Cap in town last night. It really looks very good I think. almost like an Officer!

I went directly from work into town so I could eat supper there instead of here. I went back to the quiet and colorful little place where I ate dinner last Sunday.

As for drilling, until yesterday I hadn’t done one thing except work inside. They are beginning to give us practice with the guns and I really enjoyed yesterday’s workout, very much. Of course we didn’t shoot them, in fact, they are new guns and have never been loaded.

Everyone has to have this. Knowing how to shoot is important to one in the Army, you know.
I hadn’t expected to like that sort of thing, but found it very interesting! Maybe because I didn’t have any trouble aiming and getting the right position. I will probably have a week or so of this drill work. That is, half a day – until noon, then I go to the office.

Tell Mrs. Cunningham (Mrs. Oliver Cunningham) how much I appreciated her asking about me. You know she is one of my favorite people around town. Just what a lady her age should be. I will send her, and Mrs. Anderson, too, a card soon. It’s nice to be remembered by them.

Really Bettsy, I can’t realize, or should I say, visualize you working! It’s a smart idea and I see no reason why you shouldn’t, if you want to. Let me know how it all comes out.

Love to all,

Albert

Tues. Night Nov. 10th

Tonight I’m twenty-one, tomorrow I’ll be twenty-two! I wonder if I’ll feel any older.

While I was at the Post Exchange I bought myself a good looking brown leather wallet with the $1.00 Uncle Milus sent me. It has slides inside for snapshots, and I’m waiting for all of yours.

Aunt Mary sent me one of the loveliest cards that I’ve ever seen. It came today and I’m glad.

Has a greeting letter from Russell and the delicious box of cakes you sent. I think that is an ideal way to send birthday cake to one in the Army. The select few who have eaten any, all thought it delicious. Thank you so very much. I guess I would have felt a little funny without birthday cake from home, after all.

I had the cleverest letter from Rick today that I ever had in my life. He called it a pill box letter. It was done on a [tele-type] machine and was rolled up in a little round green box with name tag attached. It was lot of fun but it took ages to wind it all back up again. You see, it was done one word right after the other on a long, narrow strip. Bound for him to do something different!

Sam is still at Oglethorpe and has heard from Howard Anderson who is at Camp Lee, Va., not so very far from here.

Maybe I can see him sometime.
Nov. 11, 1942

Well, here I am again and full-fledged 22!

This has been a rather busy day.

There has been so much going on in the office. When the mail came at noon I was delighted to get the card and money from you. I shall buy something I need and can enjoy too.

Had a note today from a woman in Richmond. A Mrs. Edwin D. Grant, to whom Mrs. Tucker had written giving her my name and address. She says they are members of Second Presbyterian Church. That’s where I went when I was in town.

It is really a very nice note and I appreciate it very much.

If I get to go to town Sunday I will try to see them.

Such things make one feel good, even though one doesn’t really know the sender.

This has indeed been a different sort of birthday for me, but as you know, I like having things different.

I have so much to be thankful for, and I am, at least I try to be. I guess we never realize and appreciate all of our blessings – we have so many.

I’ve always thought and said, that life is just what we make it, and being in the Army hasn’t changed me a bit.

In fact, every day I realize more and more that those who are the happiest and those who get the most out of life are those who see the light through the darkness, the good instead of the bad, and those who are aware of, and trust in their Maker for Faith and Guidance.

No, this isn’t to be an essay on Philosophy of Life or any such thing, just suppose it is that old urge to write of something about which I really know very little. Just my own ideas.

With much love to each of you – good-night.

Albert

Thurs. Nov. 14

Dear All –
I won’t get a chance to write any more until Monday. I am leaving here tomorrow with my company to go to Fort Eustis, to the firing range there.

Everyone has to go once a year, somewhere for rifle marksmanship.

I know I probably won’t even hit the target because I haven’t had as much drill as the other fellows. They have been telling me all along that I would go with another company a little later on, but Lt. Musgrove decided today for me to on now.”

Tuesday Night

Dear All –

Tent City was rather interesting. I say Tent City because that’s really what the rifle range was.

There were many small tents arranged in orderly fashion at one end of a very large cleared area, and at the other end was the firing line and the targets. It was nearly dark when we got there on Friday.

So we rapidly made our beds, which were cots, and started a fire. Each tent had a small stove. The night was clear but cold, and the wind blew hard. Having taken all of my cover and using my heavy coat for cover, I kept very warm that night.

Saturday we were all up very early and the star-studded sky was clear and the weather cold.

We lined up for breakfast which was served us in our own mess kits.

Then back to the tent to eat.

Eating by candle light in a tent was fascinating – rather like gypsies – even tho’ most of the fellows were complaining about the food and conditions. Of course, neither were they the way I like them, but what more could one expect? It was rather fun, even at that.

Next came the purpose of our trip – the rifle practice. I was one of the ones who went into the target [pits] first. Pulling targets, even though cold and hard work, wasn’t too bad. I guess I just must have been in a good mood!

My time came to fire, in the afternoon.

Knowing nothing about the rifle, I took my place on the line. Each man had a coach, so it wasn’t bad.
My first shot was a bull’s eye! At 200 yards too.

Well, we practiced and my score wasn’t very good, even though I did make several bull’s eyes.

Came Sunday and the same routine. Everything had been fine up to that point. But while we were all down practicing one of the tents caught fire. Before anyone could get there it was almost gone. I didn’t even get there till it was all over – you know me and fires!

Practice Sunday was all right, and I did some better, still making a few bulls-eyes.

The day was wonderful. Not a cloud all day, and the sun shone brightly. The trees around were breath-taking. Bright reds and yellows and chartreuse mixed in with the dark feathery green of the giant pines – but I dreaded night. I knew I wouldn’t be able to sleep. Well, I didn’t.

I went on guard at 10 o’clock and walked up and down in the stillness of tent city, until 1 o’clock.

I enjoyed it.

The moon was beautiful, the stars were out and all the tents were in fanciful shadows. The wind was still and there was little danger by now. Anyway I checked the fire at one o’clock, and went to sleep until morning.

Monday was warm and still and everyone was excited because this was the day for finals.

I had done better each time I tried, so thought perhaps my score would be good. It wasn’t bad, and I’m satisfied.

We got in late that night and cleaned up. Went to bed, got up and started on schedule again today.

Work has piled up at the office so am working tonight – must go in a minute.

Will write in more detail later, must go now –

Love to All,

Albert’”

Thanksgiving Morning

Nov. 27th, 1942
Good morning: –

Just a note before I go to work to wish you all a very pleasant and happy Thanksgiving. I’ll have to work at least a little while today, and really don’t mind. We may be off for a while this afternoon, and if so I may go into town for dinner, then again I may not.

It’s night now – I had to stop and start my day. I really thought I had more time. Anyway I do hope the day for you was a happy one. It was just another day for me. That is, for the most part.

I worked all morning and went to class this afternoon. They are now sending me to the Gas School for two weeks.

Why they chose me, I don’t know. It’s rather interesting, we learn all about the different kinds of gases, their effects, and how to guard against their dangerous effects. We all have gas masks and we make experiments.

As far as knowing for myself it’s very good, and I like it – but I hope I won’t have to teach it.

Maybe my grades won’t be good enough for that.

When we, those from our Company, came back from class the Regimental parade was on the drill field. It was quite a sight to see the formation of so many soldiers, and to stop and think that they are the fellows with whom one lives and works, it really means something.

Today has been beautifully warm and bright.

Those of the men who are married and whose wives are in town were invited to bring them to dinner tonight.

I started to go to town for mine but decided not to. Now I’m glad I didn’t.

Everything was done in high style. Every man had to be dressed for dinner in his best uniform, and we were given special dining room instructions.

It really was amusing to note the reaction that a special event had on these men, who are generally so free and careless at meal time.

The tables were loaded with food, and attractively done at that.

There were table cloths and really the entire place looked very festive.
When we filed in, there was a silence that fell over the room that was the most peculiar thing I had ever seen.

Part of it was caused by a sudden attack of home-sickness that some of them got when they saw it all, particularly the men and their wives at the head table and part of it was caused by the knowledge that this was a rather “special” meal and the fear of doing something wrong, made many of them ill at ease.

Some ate very little, others a great deal. For myself, I ate like a horse, and feel far too full even now, several hours later.

After all of this, Motter and I went to the PX and started to the show.

I decided to go to church. I went over but found not a service, but several gathered around the piano singing and playing. Not anything planned. They just happened in and the crowd grew.

Now back to the writing room to you.

I’ve wondered all day what you have been doing. my mail today was quite heavy and all the news was good. Your letter of Monday and one from Martha.

A letter from Bob Taylor in which I learned that Jim Bailey is now in the army and a letter from Charles saying that he had just been given a furlough for several days and was going to surprise his family by walking in on them.

I’d be afraid to do that. My family would probably not be at home.

Aunt Mary’s letter and card both came and they were appreciated and enjoyed exceedingly.

At last, a letter from Roy. I had just about given up all hope. He was still at the canter when he wrote but was expecting to go at any time. I’ll be glad when he’s settled.

Also, I’m glad to hear that you Mother write to him real often. He appreciates your letters so much far more that he does mine, I think

Keep them going.

Tonight I feel creative but nothing to create, so I’ll just go to bed.

Love to all,

Albert
Tues. morning December 2\textsuperscript{nd}

A letter from Dr. A.L. Currie, pastor of Second Presbyterian Church, 5\textsuperscript{th} and Main Sts., Richmond, VA, dated Nov. 24, 1942. was as follows:


Mr. A.L. Hadley  
4601 Gallatin Rd.  
Nashville, Tenn  

Dear Mr. Hadley,  

I am writing to let you know that Albert Hadley came to this church and worshiped with us on Sunday No. 22\textsuperscript{nd}.  

All our people were delighted to have him. We hope that as long as he is stationed here, he will make the church his church home.  

If you have any suggestions regarding a way in which we can be of greater service to him, please do not hesitate to command us.  

With kindest regards, I am sincerely,  

A.L. Currie

Tuesday morning December 2\textsuperscript{nd}

Dear all, at least I will start this but may have to wait until tonight to finish it.

I was glad to be at church Sunday because Dr. Currie was installed and it was a very interesting and impressive service.

After church, I walked over to the capital and enjoyed wondering over the grounds.

It is quite a handsome building and is on a hill.

The skyline of Richmond from it is something! Old towers, church steeples, quaint buildings, all mixed in with the modern simple structures of today.

I had dinner at Daley's a little place on Broad Street which is quite famous for its distinguished clientele.
The walls are hung with autographed photographs of famous people actors, actresses, authors, musicians etc. It was fun there. There were lots of people, and the food was good.

I sat at a table with three other boys one of whom was just back from Nashville after a six weeks course there in in engineering or something of that sort. He too will soon be in the army.

In the afternoon, I met Matter and Kimble and we three went to the Valentine Museum. It was a very interesting place and a group of local musicians gave a concert from four until five.

The old house, completely furnished, is wonderful. You would all love it. There are so many beautiful things there. I want to go back one Sunday and spend all my time in the house rather than the museum part. Too, the old garden is one of the most restful and peaceful places to be found anywhere.

Sure enough, it is night again!

Living from one thing to another all the time makes the days pass as quickly and still everything is not done.

Back now to Sunday afternoon.

After visiting the museum, I left Matter and Kimble and called Suzy’s cousins and went out there about seven thirty.

Before that though, I had supper with a rather interesting fellow from Camp Lee. He will graduate next week and will then be a Second Lieutenant.

We ate at an awfully attractive place in the basement of the John Marshall Hotel.

It was done like the patio of some Spanish villa and it was lots of fun. The people were a sight too.

Service men, all the way from Privates to Generals, I suppose were there, and the ladies with them were done up ala vogue. the food too was good, but I suppose anything would have been.

Then the Steigars. They met me at the bus line and I had a very nice little visit with them. They are very cordial and hospitable people and it was nice meeting them.

They want me to come for dinner next Sunday, and if I can, I will. I’ve to let them know by Saturday night.

Well then, home before too late ready for another week.
Last night, I went to town for my watch but it wasn’t ready. I won’t get it until next week.

I had a perfectly marvelous time in “Tharlkeimers”. This is one of the largest and finest stores here. Some of their displays are dramatic, no end, and I loved them.

Tonight after I came in from the gas school, which by the way is far more interesting than I had expected, I washed a few clothes, cleaned myself up and put on your birthday present to me. A new pair of shoes. I got them in town Saturday night. They are like my suede English shoes only in leather. I like them very much but am having to break them in gradually.

I came here to the chapel to write and some poor home-sick artist came up. We had been talking for about an hour. He has a number of photographs of his paintings, which are quite good being modern.

Also pictures of his wife about whom he talked at length. He did most of the talking. I think it helped him.

It’s hard to see one hate this life so very much, to be so unhappy, but I suppose being so temperamental and sensitive, as he doubtless is, would make one that way.

I did enjoy talking with him and hope that I’ll see him again sometimes.

Another fellow just came up and asked if I would please help him fill out, or rather write for him, the information necessary for his family allotment.

You know, that’s really what I like about it here, or I should say the Army, for I’m sure it’s the same everywhere, but meeting people, and talking with them, sharing ideas no matter how different, and all that sort of thing, to me, means far more than one might realize.

It’s interesting the approach people make.

Being able to write means a lot here. That seems strange, but it’s true. Some very nice fellows can’t write. The one just up was neat, polite, spoke well, and very pleasant, but he couldn’t write.

At times, it’s very amusing, but I try not to show it.

I address lots of cards and letters, and several times I’ve written letters for them, and once or twice, I wrote word for word, the simplest, most pathetic, most awkward love letters you’ve ever heard. They try so hard to say on people the things they feel but don’t seem to realize that it can be just as one would talk. They stammer for words and are confused, any little subtle hint as to sentence construction of word usage make them very happy.
Well, so much for that. So is the life in the Army.

Here, I’ve gone on and on about me and here as us and we, all the time interested most in you and there, and what you are doing.

I had a letter today from Cousin Ruth and one from Russell I was glad to learn that Learon is a Lieutenant and Mildred gets to live nearby.

Russell won’t go home for Christmas, but Mrs. Spatsword, Aunt Bessie, and Buford will go there. I think that’s nice.

As for me getting home, that I don’t know. The way they are working these furloughs, the guys never know until the day they are to leave. That is, definitely. They have a good idea, but can’t be certain. Mine, I feel sure will be near Christmas. Perhaps between Christmas and New Year’s. Maybe sooner, may be later.

I’ll just have to wire when I leave here, but I’ll let you know more definite later.

Love to all,

Albert.

Tues. night Dec. 9th

Dear all,

Back a few days now. I had told Mrs. Steigar I thought I would be there at one for dinner on Sunday.

I wasn’t expecting to have to work long, if at all, but some special information had to be gotten for the finance company, and it really took quite some time.

It was nearly 11:30 when I left the office and it’s far from here the Steigar house.

Fortunately, I made good connections and got there at two minutes before the hour.

Besides Mr. and Mrs. Steigar and Alma, there was also a brother of his there who was very interesting.

He is in some way connected with the Government and travels extensively all over the world. He lives in Washington and was just down for the weekend.

The dinner was superb and the table beautifully appointed. The cloth embroidered linen, was creamy white and he silver goblets and the fruit designed china looked elegant on it.
We had delicious food, fried chicken southern style and all the things that go with it. I do mean All. There was so much and all so good. When Alma and I took her uncle to the station in the afternoon, we went from there to many places of real interest. Soldier’s Memorial Museums, statues and the like.

We drove around town a little and down to the “Poe Shrine”. It is a very quaint and very old little house. In fact the oldest in Richmond. In it are millions of things all connected in some way with the man himself” Upstairs in a little room are man prints hung around the walls and each is taken from some passage of his work.

I want to go back and really study the place.

There’s so much that I have forgotten about him, his life and writings. that is if I ever knew it. I can’t quite recall.

The stuffed black raven which adorned a spot of honor here, I found very amusing and a bit whimsical. I liked it.

From there, on to St. John’s Church the one from which Patrick Henry made his “Liberty or Death” oration and I saw the exact spot where he stood.

On the way over of course we went by scores of undoubtedly the most interesting places. Down on the street by Poe’s shrine were numbers of little shops their windows crammed with things, very much like Mr. O’Brien’s. I want to go back so bad I don’t know what to do. If I could only get a day off during the week. It had gotten late so we went back to the house and in a little while I left.

I went on in and had a bite to eat, then walked around enjoying the windows. They are Magnificent! Miller Rhodes are done exceedingly well. Each one is a Christmas scene of Old Virginia. The costumes and settings and displays are the most beautiful I have ever seen. The jewelry store where my watch is has a whimsical little black-moor in each window, all done up in fine silks and sashes and gold slippers and fine jewelry. Makes me want to do my Christmas cards again this year, but suppose my black-moor is wearing a uniform this year too!

My first Christmas package came today! What should it be but a gigantic 5 lb. box of candy from those at Cain–Sloans. It made me get the spirit sure enough, what with all the snow we had yesterday. Enclosed was a card signed by everybody in that department, and John Sloan and Miss Hayes, and all. I certainly do appreciate it, and I wish you could see how nice it’s fixed up.

Bettsy in your letter I remember that you asked if I ever ride in a jeep. Yes, I do have occasion to some. Sunday morning for instance, I did when I went over to the finance office. Of course, I did when I went over to the finance office. Of Course, I had a driver
and the funniest thing happened. We were driving along and passed some boys in another company, and as we went by they stood at attention and saluted. They thought I was an officer. Well, I just laughed right out loud. Even now it’s funny and does me worlds of good. Conceited I suppose.

But that’s not the first time, once before some timid young fellow who had evidently just come in, did a beautiful arm movement salute as I went to work. Of course I didn’t return it, but just spoke to him very friendly like, for I know how he must have felt when he realized his mistake.

But we all make mistakes and mine right now is sitting up too late, but every time I come here something happens. Tonight were sung Christmas songs and I may get to do the décor for the church for Christmas!

Well all for now, but with love to all,

Albert

Thursday Evening, Dec 11th

Oh dear, here it is just ten o’clock and I’ve been on the go since long before sunrise. I started moving this morning right after breakfast. You see, I’m now in Co A; which is just up the street from where I’ve been, but since I’m their Co. clerk I have to live there too. I don’t mind so much but the other place was a bit more convenient. Where I am now I share a room with one of the Sergeants. Its private – but I’d rather be in a room with fifty than be with one whom I don’t know so well. We will no doubt get along fine, he really seems to be very nice person, but I’m not excited over the idea – but the privacy is nice.

Honestly, I’m getting so behind on everything, except my work. I work like a Trojan all day so that I can keep my records in order, then when night comes I want to relax, therefore don’t do the things I should. I’m behind with my letters, my laundry and everything.

Wed. Dec. 17

Dear All --

Here I am at the office long before day break. Outside is very dark and rainy. After a very busy day yesterday getting out the pay roll applications for the month of Dec. I went to town last night, hoping to get my shopping done. Arriving late, of course I found all to the stores to be closed, and not a single thing could I get. I don’t know what I’m going to do.
I talked with the Sgt. again last night about my furlough and he has put my name on the list to leave here on the 24th. I won’t know until the latter part of this week whether that can go through or not. Even then I can’t be sure until I’m actually on the train. Will let you know more later.

Well, here I am still at the office, long after sundown. In fact, it’s quite late again. I’ve been so busy all day that I didn’t even have time to get this letter in the mail.

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Of course I am excited over the thought of coming, but nothing is definite here so I won’t let myself be too high spirited. You mustn’t either for, as you know, in the Army anything can happen. I just keep hoping, and that’s all.

Last night when I went to the Chapel to address my cards there were two boys there making theirs. Both very interesting fellows. One did window displays at Macy’s in New York, the other one was a decorator with Baker Furniture Co. – one of the finest in America. He, himself, was quite nice, but which was all the nicer he has had some dealings with friend Pahlman, and says he’s a wonderful person. Also has done work for William Crandall and thinks him very good and quite exacting.

Well, only to prove, one never knows whom one will meet in the Service.

Love to all –
Albert

Dear All –

Just to think of a week from tonight is most exciting – but still I’m not sure.

Today has been rather hectic. I’ve never seen so many things to do, and I’ve been on the go all day, from early till late (now). I came back tonight to catch up a few loose ends and still there is work to be done, but I can’t do it all now.

Just finished a note to Ray, which I started this morning, and I asked him to come to Nashville during Christmas, if possible. I hope he can make it, but that too, I doubt.

It’s very cold and windy here tonight and I dread the walk to the barrack. That’s the only thing I don’t like about my new home, it’s so far away from everything, otherwise it’s very nice; and the Sergeant is really quite a nice fellow, since I’ve gotten to know him a little better. He’s from Chattanooga.

Albert
Saturday Night Dec. 20th

Christmas Gift!

By the time you get this it will almost be Christmas. I wonder what we’ll be doing this time next week.

I’m still hoping that I’ll get to come next week, but I’m still not sure. If things go through I’ll leave here the night of the twenty-third and get there sometime Christmas Eve. I’ll either phone or wire as soon as I find out.

If I do get to come I think it would be nice to have people out either Christmas night or Sunday night. Perhaps Christmas, I guess it will be rather hard for people to get places though with gas as it is.

Anyway, I’ll leave it all up to you, whatever you think best. If Ray should get to come it would probably be over the week-end, but we can’t count on that either. It would be fun though.

By the way, don’t forget to have lots of candles. My room here is quite nice, but no candles!

Love to all,
Albert

Monday Dec. 22nd

Dear All –

Today is clear and beautiful with snow covering everything. It is very cold and it looks as if it all might last quite a while.

Not sure yet whether I can leave here this week or not, will probably find out tonight. If I can I’m going to try to get my ticket in town tonight.

Had several nice cards and letters today, and a package from Pick. The Steigars wrote on their card asking me to come to their house for Christmas.

The Grants insist that I stay with them provided my furlough doesn’t go through.

I’m rushing to leave the office now so will stop – hope I get there by time or a little later than this does.
Love to all,
Albert

P.S. I am getting my furlough with the next group. Don’t know just which day yet – probably Wed. Didn’t get to go to town tonight. The Commanding Officer didn’t come back to sign the pass. Don’t know what Santa will be able to bring you now!

A –

The news we most wanted to hear came in the form of a telegram.

Dec. 23

A.L. Hadley
4601 Gallatin Rd.

Am leaving here today at 1:55 There tomorrow about 1:00. Train through Louisville.
Check time. Albert

The household was in a state of high expectancy. Last minute chores were done, so that everything was in readiness.

The train was several hours later in arriving than was scheduled. In the afternoon Bert went to Woodland St. Church to Mr. Ernest Parker’s funeral. Mr. Parker had been in failing health for several months, and while his death was expected, the Church felt a great loss. Mr. Parker had for many years been an active and devoted member of the Church –

Betty Anne and I were busy with preparations for Albert’s homecoming.

Sister went to the station with us, and we were so anxious to see how Albert would look in his uniform –

Three months previously he had left home, just a care-free boy, and now he was returning a full-fledged United States Soldier. Our hearts were filled with pride as we waited for our Soldier to return to us to spend the Christmas holidays –

Even before he arrived there was that helpless feeling that flashed through our minds – the feeling of sadness at the realization that all too soon we would have to let him go back into Army life again.

The train was crowded with Service men, many of whom got off of the train in Nashville.

Albert finally emerged from the milling crowd, carrying his Army bag, and his overcoat thrown over his arm. He looked well, and we all thought the uniform was most becoming. Our
greetings were sincere and never before had we experienced such a surge of gratitude at the privilege of having him spend the holidays at home.

It would have indeed been a miserable Christmas for all of us if he had not been given the furlough. We tried to crowd into that short vacation everything possible to make it a happy occasion. It was disappointing that Ray was not able to get to Nashville, though we had all doubted that it would be possible.

The days passed son hurriedly, as pleasant days always do. All too soon, it was time for him to return to Camp.

The future seemed uncertain, so the good-byes were said with the realization that it might be his last home coming before he would be shipped overseas. The training which he had been given at Richmond, we knew, was in preparation for overseas duty.

With heavy hearts we returned home after seeing Albert board the train for his return to Richmond. We felt helpless and bewildered, and our only means of comfort was through Prayer.

We tried to strengthen our Faith so that we would have courage it would take to see us all through the long siege ahead.


Dear all – Time to relax – honestly I’ve certainly been busy since I got back. My work piled up so high that I still don’t see my way out. I suppose I’ll get to work all day tomorrow, though, because I can’t go to town.

O, yes, I have a week-end pass from tonight, but my clothes didn’t come back from the cleaners – I might have known that would happen.

I don’t want to work tomorrow, neither do I want to stay around this place all day, but I’m afraid that’s what I’ll do – O, well, what’s one more day!

This time last week was so wonderful honestly, it seems like years since then. I’ve been enjoying your letters so much.

You know I’ve hardly had any time at all to do anything. There’s been right much confusion around here this week any way –

We’ve all been transferred. That is, the Cadre has been selected and the rest of us are now in the 861st Eng. Avn. Battalion, instead of 924 Eng. Avn. Regt. Same company, same quarters and everything but we are just a new organization.
Most all of the fellows feel that there will soon be some change made, of course no one really knows, and I don’t hardly think so, still one never knows.

You can tell they mean business though. I hope we go South if we do have to leave Richmond, or at least some place with a little nicer climate. I don’t like to think of leaving here though, Richmond is so nice.

It is very quiet here, Mother, of course, is away tonight, and I have the room all to myself. I’ve been reading the book of poems, and they are very good. I love poetry.

I should be writing letters but as you can see I’m really in no mood to make sense.

Everything is so jumbled up.

I hate to write like this, so think I’ll stop.

With love to you all –
Albert

Jan. 5th 1943
Monday Night Past 10:00

Dear all –

Just to say hello at the end of a rather uneventful but busy day.

Even tonight I’ve been working, and am ready to leave here now – a bit tired.

Now I’m a Corporal and I don’t feel a bit different except that I hate the idea of sewing my stripes on.

Still I have so much work to do, but hope to get caught up this week, then I’ll have a little time I hope.

Just wanted you to know the news.

Love to all –
Albert

Monday Night Jan. 13, 1943

Dear All –
I know how positively ridiculous it sounds to say that I’ve worked every minute since I’ve been back, but you know that really is true almost.

I have never in my life been in such a mad rush and what’s more I don’t see much slowing up of things for quite some time.

Everything has to be done before we move and that I don’t suppose is too far off –

My daily schedule has been thus, (Just to give you an idea) Sleep until the last minute before breakfast, up and dress and rush to the mess hall, then back here to redress for work, then up to the orderly room rushing like mad until noon. Sometimes so busy I almost forget to eat, then to lunch and after a breathing spell and a minute to read my mail, then back to work at the same tempo until supper. The same thing again, then back to work and stay until at least nine thirty every time.

Only one night did I take off to see a movie.

Maybe this explains just why I haven’t been writing regularly. A few luxurious moments of spare time have been spent in scribbling a few lines to you and a select few –

So much happens all the time and I would love to be able to tell you all about all of it, but that is impossible because as I only try to live from one day to another, so often the happenings of yesterday are but mere memories, and even the people whom I meet and would enjoy knowing just have to pass by, as do the hours of the day.

I told you of last week-end. Well that was taken selfishly but after a week here I feel that I really need to be away from this, so away I went.

Another week and then last week-end. It was quite surprising to me too.

Robert Fergusson, one of the fellows here whom I’ve liked but really have had no time to know. Of course we’d be together some in the office and around at the PX, and Chapel, etc., but I had never thought of him asking me to go home with him for a week-end. One night while I was working he came over and asked me if I could – Of course I could give him no answer because of too much work, and really thought very little about it. On Friday I had the payroll to get out but Fergusson said that he would wait until I finished it if I would go. So I got permission from Lt. Menowaski and Lt. Crews and everything was all set.

Those things are terrible to do, so at about 10:30 Friday night I finished. Ferg and I got a ride to town with one of the other fellows from the office and caught a bus to Washington, had early breakfast there, then on to Pennsylvania. It was a delightful trip.

Of course you know me wide awake and enjoying all phases of it, while nearly everyone else slept.
We got to Lancaster, Saturday morning, and the entire day was spent going from one place to another.

You know it was awfully interesting there. The people are so different. In the afternoon we went down to the market where the Amish and Mennonites were, and they are positively quaint!

The Fergersons live in one of these charming old red brick town house sort of places, right on the street. It is small but spacious. There are millions of the most fascinating houses, all old and atmospheric.

Ferg has lots of friends and they are all lots of fun. Saturday night we had dinner at home with the family and it was feast and fun. Then onto a party with friends. In late.

Sunday we had late breakfast, then to church.

The church is magnificent, and the service was quite lovely. It rather reminded me of our church on the inside, only more so. More formal, more elegant, older and larger.

Sunday dinner, then around a place or two, then we rode over to (some little town) with friends who were going over to put on a church play – They were scads of fun, and we were sorry that we could not stay to see the play, but we had to catch our train back here. We did, and made very good time.

We were in Washington long enough for sandwiches and coffee and for me to have called Cousin Ava, could I have thought of her name. I hate being so stupid.

I left in such a hurry, and really so unexpectedly that I forgot all about getting it, and you might know I’d never remember it. What is it? I’d never find it now in all of those letters.

We got a bit of sleep on the train, and besides we got in Richmond about one, so we took a cab (with some other fellow) out and I got in bed around two, and haven’t felt tired at all. Not even at this late hour. Yes, I had to work again tonight.

I would have called tonight but I couldn’t get away.

The only part about the trip that I didn’t like was that Ferg was telling everyone it was his last trip home for the duration.

I thought it was all a little bad, because for after all we can’t be sure. Just to be different I argued that we aren’t going over, but he tells everyone we are. It was right much fun having a different opinion.

Seriously though, there will be some sort of move before very long, but I still am saying that we won’t go across, but we might and if we do it will certainly be an interesting
chapter for my book. Well, you know I don’t worry about things like that because there’s nothing any of us can do and none of us knows any way.

I hope we stay here long enough for us to have a little spare time. I want very much to see Williamsburg and Washington.

Each can be done in a week-end. Not thoroughly of course, but you’d be surprised how much I can see in one day. Then, too, I want very much to spend one weekend with Ray.

Really that’s what I’d rather have done this week but Ferg being a Staff Sgt. he had some influence in getting me away this week-end, otherwise I’d have had to work on Sunday and that would have been too much.

Before I went I really wasn’t too crazy about the idea, but I’m glad I went, but I do want to see Ray. By the way, Mother, he can’t understand why you never write to him and I haven’t had time to tell him that you’ve been ill.

Howard Anderson is no longer at Camp Lee. I had a note from him today and unless I’m badly mistaken he’s just before going overseas – Of course he couldn’t say too much.

Yes, all the people we visited last weekend were friends of his. I must call them soon – Isn’t it terrible not to be able to do the things one really ought to do. You have no idea.

Well, of course, as usual, my letter has been about me and what I’m doing, but you know how much I enjoy hearing from each of you, and what you do from day to day is vital to my contentment here.

Even though it is impossible for me to write every day I do want to and do every chance.

Please don’t think badly of me, for really you know how I enjoy telling you all the news of interest here.

Yes, I’ve had a letter from Suzy and she told me about her trip. I still can’t realize that she’s being serious. As Ray might say, “Is she? Well, time will tell.”

Please see Aunt Lady and tell her why I don’t write and Aunt Laura too. I should have written to her ages ago, after the supper she had. And if you write to Cousin Ruth thank her for me (temporarily) for the picture folder. I will write at my first chance.

Now Aunt Mary don’t you go getting any funny ideas, because you know this letter is to you just as much as to anyone else, and I know you are reading it. I enjoyed your letter and the one from Mildred that you enclosed. Have you heard from Charlie since he left?

Give my best regards to everyone and for your selves –

Love to all –
Albert

Monday Jan. 28, 1943

Dear All –

Morning at seven – and it looks as though this is to be a traditional Monday. Blue and gloomy. It looked cloudy when I went out to breakfast – but it’s still too dark to tell.

Yesterday I got my Morning Reports out early and went into town for Church. It was a magnificent service – one of the best sermons I’ve heard in a long time. Dr. Currie is such a fine person.

I had dinner alone then walked over to the “John Marshall House” but it’s closed on week-ends due to lack of heat – so then I did the usual window shopping which I always enjoy.

It was a gloriously beautiful day and Spring was in the air.

Not only in the windows but here and there a proud head was wearing a fluff of veil and a flower or two, a twist of ribbon and a dash of straw. Ah! Spring!

Later I called at the Muhlemans and she insisted that I come out. A friend of Howard’s was there, a Frenchman stationed at Camp Lee. I think I told you that Howard has been transferred. Well, anyway, I went out and Mr. M. as I shall call him, for I can’t remember his name, and couldn’t spell it if I could, was preparing supper with the help and admiration of all – he was making a favorite French dish – onion soup, which had a dab of everything in it –, and was quite good.

He was a lot of fun and the Muhlemans are delightful, so the evening was very pleasant. Later on they drove him to the bus station, and I left them in town on back here.

Aunt Mary I asked if there is any relation to Dr. Rutland but evidently not, they didn’t know it if so.

I bought the Feb. House and Garden and read it right after dinner so I left it at the Muhlemans not that I don’t want it, but can’t keep it here anyway.

Be sure to get one for the files there. Notice particularly the cover, the fantastic dining room (full page) by Lord & Taylor, and too the yellow and green room. The dining room is too, too, don’t you think?

I’m glad that you liked the Richmond or Virginian Book, I thought it was a nice one to have.
I’m going to get my watch tonight (I think). I feel, too, that I’ve been patient long enough, from Nov. 17, 1942.

Now it’s nearly time to work so will be on my way.

Love to all –
Albert

Wednesday Night

Dear All –

I hate to write with a pencil, but I left my pen at the office. Today has been one of those icy days, everything gleaming like glass, and all like a gigantic fairyland. Perfectly beautiful but terribly cold.

I’m afraid we’re beginning another busy session day and night.

Just as I have gotten things caught up and can work sensibly, a thousand more forms are to be filled out, a million new entries to be made, and more forms and more entries. I do hope we can get the weekend off, but it would be just my luck to have something to keep me from going to Raleigh.

Still, we don’t know when or when or where we are to be sent. It can’t be much longer, but still, we can hardly leave with so much work to be done, all of it on a day’s notice if necessary. That’s the way with things in the army.

I must get some things packed and mailed home. I have so much that I couldn’t take should we go over and if we only move to another camp. There are things I really don’t need and things I’d rather not have to care for. I don’t know when I’ll get to it, but I must before long. Yes, the pajamas did come.

I’ve thought about calling you every night this week, but something has come up every time.

I didn’t think you’d be there Sunday, I started to call then. Tonight, of course, you were at the church and I at work, so there we go.

I enjoyed your letters toady and one from Mrs. Tucker, that one certainly had lots of church news.

Of course you noted that Suzy rated in a very subtle way. Makes me feel sort of funny having all my friends be officers and me a mere corporal. I suppose my military ambition doesn’t go far enough.
Mother, you asked in one letter if I would like for you to come to Richmond before I leave. Of course I would. The only trouble is that maybe I couldn’t even be off at night and that would be terrible.

I do wish I knew that we all to be here several weeks longer, then I’d know better what to say as things are now, we may even be kept here on Sunday too so you see your trip and visit may be more disappointing to both of us than we can know.

Valentine! I can hardly realize nearly time for them.

Imagine shopping for valentines! How wonderful – I wish I could. I don’t know what I’d do without you to remind me of important days well in advance. I really mean it – you know it seems a little silly maybe but I’d like to have a list of when things are – such as birthdays – yours and anyone’s I should remember – holidays – special days etc. or anything you think I might like to remember.

Even tho it is very late and I should be tired I’m not – I should be in bed but I’m not – but had better get there.

You should have seen me get up and dress this morning. I didn’t wake up until I heard the fellows going to breakfast. I jumped out of bed and into my clothes and rushed madly to the hall for a cup of coffee and a little toast. All quite maddening but just the way I go all day anyway so why shouldn’t it start that way too.

Love to all,

Albert

P.S. Please excuse two kinds of paper, but the first gave out.

Speaking of paper reminds me, Don’t you think my room needs doing over this spring – as you want it done.

At least new paper and a border. Well, more of that later.

I wish I could forget things like that but I can’t – I’m wild with ideas. Wild ideas too! But it’s lots of fun. Just like living in two worlds – this one – and my own.

A
The next letter was mailed Feb. 2, 1943

Monday night.

Dear all,

Another weekly report – as to speak. It seems that Monday night is always just the right time to write long letters, for the happenings of the weekend are always better on Monday Night than any other night thereafter. I didn’t know that Ray had told you that we were to meet for the weekend. I was planning to call you from Raleigh and let Ray talk too. Well, we did put the call in yesterday afternoon only to find out that it would be delayed for two or three hours – by which time I was on my way back to Richmond. We were both terribly sorry for it would have been fun – sort of like a family reunion.

I enjoyed seeing Ray and we really spent the day talking about everything and everybody.

One of the funniest things was that he had gotten a card from a Mary Meguiar in Nashville and wanted to know if I’d ever heard of her. When I told him Aunt Mary, he was too funny, but said after all he had known her only as Aunt Mary and couldn’t understand why she signed it that way any way.

But you know Ray – always the last word.

There were three other fellows from camp with him and they were lots of fun. I don’t remember their names, but were from Boston, New York and somewhere.

After a rather long trip on Saturday night and sitting up a bit too late, we didn’t go to church. I wanted to very much, for there really were some very lovely looking old churches there, but Ray didn’t feel that he could stay awake, so we didn’t go. We had late breakfast at a little place then talked and gossiped more then went out to a very smart mirrored walled restaurant for dinner.

The three fellows were very much fun and it was quite a lively group. It was a beautiful day and we took a long walking tour of the city which was very disappointing.

The place is the nearest nothing, to be the state capital, of any place I’ve ever seen. It’s spacious and clean but has no interest whatsoever.

The capital itself wasn’t too great and the houses are nothing as far as architecture is concerned. I really didn’t see anything that I really liked and that is unusual. As I said, there are really some wonderful churches – some small and quaint, others large and impressive – and so many of them. In every direction, you see some sort of tower or steeple rising majestically above the other buildings. Seeing Raleigh really makes me appreciate the atmosphere and interest of Nashville and Richmond all the more.
But the city wasn’t the purpose of the journey, so it wasn’t all in vain.

Ray has gained some and looks quite well. His hair has grown some, but still is far too short. He probably looks the part far more than I for he has conformed to all the rules and regulations, and looks like all the other soldiers, and I with my hair long and nearly all my clothes my own, and all that sort of thing – but he would too if he could – if they weren’t so strict there.

I really think he’s enjoying it all very much, and just as he said he would do he lets no one (except his real superiors) take one bit of advantage of him and I think he tells them where to get off if they don’t do to suit him. Someday, he will meet his match if he isn’t careful, I’m afraid.

So far, he is really getting along beautifully, and not making too many enemies.

As for me, in this outfit, I prefer to be the rather elusive quiet type and make no enemies. I don’t think I have anyway.

I’m never surprised at anything anymore, but the goings on in the Suzy – David affair as at times almost breathtaking. One never knows what they will be doing next.

It sounds just like David, leading a convoy of planes across the great Pacific!

Then there’s the little matter of the Bolton – Kemper wedding. Of course, that’s no surprise, but I hadn’t expected it right now.

And Dorothy Tucker and the Reverend. Well personally, I think that’s not bad. I suppose he is a man with a promising future and Dorothy really is rather interesting when you know her. Much more than some of the more popular ones, I think.

Well, it seems that Nashville is not lacking in socialite news. Nashvillians really get around.

I hope you see the play at the playhouse. I’d like to hear how it is doing this season without the able assistance of Kittrell, Taylor, and Hadley. It would be fun to step in on opening night and see who’s who.

Had a nice letter from Gene today. You asked for his address.

Cpl. Gene Kittrell

4091 346 Bomb Group

504 Bomb Squadron

Army Air Base
Salinas, Kans.

I think it would be nice if you would write him a note, he always asks about all of you in his letters.

Oh dear, I’ve rambled on and on for pages, so had better stop. I can’t think of anything else right now without a lot of effort, and you know I think effort in letter writing spoils the fun, so until another spell of freedom and thought,

Love to all,

P.S. It’s eleven o’clock E.W.T. Albert

Letters arrived every day, and we detected a restlessness and an insecurity in Albert’s attitude as the military plans showed definite signs of over-seas duty. Our attitudes were keyed to his reactions, and we felt a greater tenseness as the days passed.

Sunday Evening.

Dear All –

With a guilty conscience I have had a very luxurious day. I should have been working. I’ve known it all the time, but after working so much at night I just didn’t go down this morning. I wasn’t told to go, I was really free as far as duty is concerned, but really there’s so much to do. It is terribly cold here – and after nearly freezing while catching buses and things into town this morning I finally got to church. Had a brief chat with Mrs. Grant afterwards and their son left two weeks ago. He’s in the Air Corps – stationed at Miami Beach, Florida, quartered in a hotel room formerly rating $25.00 per day a-la-Deeds. Sounds wonderful, but I’m satisfied with my little room on the second floor of barrack #2. Well not exactly satisfied but awfully thankful! Tonight I’m alone, Joe’s in Washington with his mother.

I had lunch at “White’s” in single splendor, but was highly entertained by the white haired old dowager at the little table next to me who was certainly doing her part by making the boys feel at home by leading a most rambling conversation. Everything from maid troubles to the local U.S.O. Really, she was quite nice, but it always amuses me to see how excited and interested these people “seem” in what “we’re” doing. If civilization would do away with all its false-faces and make believe prides, and all its pseudo-reserve, censor much of Emily Post’s “Blue Book of Social Usage,” during times of Peace, and practice the friendly congeniality and natural human interests that spring forth with the horrors of war and are cast so lavishly on all “Service Men,” then with
such freedom and ease one could know his fellow man better and in so doing become better himself. It’s a mad idea perhaps, but I think not. I think it works.

If in civilian life a discriminating sociality rushed up to one all smiles and friendliness, eyes sparkling because of it, with the words, “Could we take you home with us for dinner?” One would be frightened half out of his wits and would probably be seen still running at sundown. But – in the service its “different!” One learns to be either delighted or terribly sorry of some previous engagement, either real or make-believe. A uniform doesn’t always change ones inner spirits and always one doesn’t want to go home with a total stranger for a “simple little dinner.” A dinner which usually turns out to be something fabulously rich, and far too much of everything.”

Food, conversation and people. The general idea is good though I’m not quite sure yet just who it is that is benefitted by such acts. Whether it actually is the Service Man or the hosts themselves who have, for years, wanted to be themselves and enjoy and share with someone else the things they have.

This started as a letter, or at least, that was my intention but instead, again I’ve done another chapter or essay on just what, I don’t know-- If I were writing by candlelight, by this time the lovely taper would be a pool of clear liquid, still flaming, but sputtering, which would mean the end of another day.

Love to All.

Albert

Wednesday Evening

Dear All –

Like some weird painting by Salvador Dali, I feel tonight apart, detached and in endless space, where I alone move and oversee the goings on of the people and things that surround me. It’s all like a mad dream. Everybody and everything so out of usual routine and place. How wonderful it would be to feel settled, this turmoil drives one insane. I come in and Van has his rifle torn down into a million pieces, spread all over everything and he has gone somewhere.

I left. I went back to the office, to the PX, to the Chapel, for a walk, then finally back here. Things still messy but the gun stored away. I’m really in no writing mood but perhaps I won’t get to write much longer before a spell of absence de voyage. I hope that we have one more week-end here. I don’t know why—but I do. Rather attached to the place, I suppose.
Give my best regards to Sir Coco—wish I had a dog, the officers can. Sounds awfully cute. Suppose he’ll be almost grown before I can start teaching him his good manners tho!

Well for tonight with love to you all.

Albert.

Friday Evening

Dear All—

It’s frightfully late but here I come anyway. After a very full day I finally am settling down for the night. Friday night—that means tomorrow is Saturday and I don’t like that. Inspection day and as usual all my shoes are very muddy and things not in a very good general condition; but that I can hardly help. I usually solve the problem by dumping everything into my barracks bag, and that’s that. Out of sight out of mind, as far as they are concerned.

Thank goodness I never have to stand inspection for often times my hair is a trifle long and my clothes aren’t quite up to the minute like they would be if I only had more time to care for them. It isn’t at all unusual for me to feel like the soldier did when the Captain asked him why he wasn’t standing at attention during an inspection, and he said, “I am sir, it just my clothes, that are at ease.”

Well for tonight this will be all, but tomorrow perhaps another such document – until then

Love to All,

Albert

The disturbing and uncertain news from Albert, caused Betty Ann and me to plan a weekend visit to Richmond. We took a bus out of Nashville at noon on Thursday, and got to Richmond the following afternoon. Albert met us, and he looked so nice in his uniform. How happy we three were to be together again!

We got a nice room in a home several miles out from the city. Albert was able to stay with us until bed time that night. We slept late Saturday morning, then we went into town and visited the various department stores, and for the first time rode escalators. Albert met us around noon, though he feared he would not be given a pass to come into town.
On Sunday he was able to leave camp and met us in time for church services at the Presbyterian Church where Dr. Currey was pastor. In the afternoon we visited many of the places of interest in Richmond. Just as Albert had told us, we found the city to be most charming. Late in the afternoon Albert went with us to our room and we visited for quite a long time. The tenseness was great as we all said, “good-by.” The uncertainty that lay ahead was like a great poll which seemed to smother all plans for the future. What the future held in store, -- who could say?

Again our faith was being tested and somehow it seemed to have taken wings and left us as helpless individuals, swayed by the tormenting horrors that were so prevalent in our war-torn world. Like wild beasts, who had remained free to go and come as they pleased, when suddenly they found themselves behind the closed doors of an iron cage. We realized that nothing we could do or say would free us from the world conditions which existed. So, like Soldiers, we must all face them!

It seems strange that man, as frail as he is, can live through such grief and anxiety, and remain a normal human being. Needless to say, there were many who didn’t. They broke under the terrific strain, and many at home lost their lives, before the war came to a close.

While it was a great privilege to be able to visit Albert, I realized that he had a big job to do, and the uncertainty of getting passes and trying to entertain his people, added a greater strain to his already overworked and overburdened mind and body. So as we traveled toward home on Monday morning, I determined that from then on my contribution would be contacts through letters and telephone conversations.

Thursday Evening, March 1943

Dear Bettsy –

We’ve just had a blackout. You should have been here. The darkness was beautiful and was spread all over Richmond. What do you know? Hope I’ll soon be hearing from you. I don’t know one bit of news – just work and more work and time to write a note or two once in a while.

How’s school now? Did your excuse work when you got back, -- if not tell them to see me. It certainly was fun having you and Mother here last week-end. I only wish that you could have stayed longer, and I had more time.

Must run to bed, but this is just to say good-night.

Love

Albert
Tuesday Evening (Mailed Mar. 10)

Dear All –

An elegant paper and with the pencil, imagine that, comes this tonight. I’ve really kept busy all day, even this morning, when I scribbled that note to you I was busy, waiting for the morning reports to be submitted for completion. Tonight I’ve washed clothes, gotten my rifle, taken things to the cleaners, and lots of little things. Now I’m back at the office to write. And without the pictures! I forgot them. I was certainly glad to get them even thought I am sorry that they’re all me, and not more of you. They are clear and unusually good, aren’t they? Of course, I know I must look like that—honestly—I’m sorry. I couldn’t help laughing a little at the one of Bettsy and me at the fountain. I like that one awfully well. Too bad about the wrinkles—the only thing bad about it. The camera must have jumped up on that one of you on the steps; Mother, for I really thought that I’d gotten such a good exposure. I’m terribly disappointed. Now for me, there’s only one where I look like I’d like to look, and that’s the one in the Valentine garden, without my hat and glasses, but that’s a bit “out of uniform,” so to speak. I think that’s the one that I want several of. Then the one coming out of the Capitol door I think must be how I usually look when seen in public. All the tall vertical lines certainly make me look truly like a “little Corporal.” O, Well, not that looks really matter in this show anyway—more of a character part, the kind where you really aren’t yourself at all.

Sunday I didn’t get through with my work here in time to go to church so I went into town. Had coffee and toast about eleven thirty, then took a bus out through the suburbs, past the country club and back again. Back in town once more, I ate dinner at a little place called, “The Nook,” A nice little place, gay and friendly. Then by the club, and stopped in to hear a young man (civilian) play the piano for the men the service. I stayed there rather long, then walked around a little while, and rested at the Richmond, and then had supper with an awfully nice young man, a LT. in plain clothes, and a student at the Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

After a while, before too late, and the rush hour, I came back here. It wasn’t such a nice day as last Sunday was, which proves company makes the day. Seems that suddenly my mind’s gone blank and I can’t think of more to write so, to-night good-night and

Love to All,

Albert.
P.S. About 4 of those pictures (the one that is Daddy’s favorite, and mine too) Soon? The hitching post looks good too, doesn’t it? My eyes seem to be getting better—might even stop wearing glasses!

Sunday Evening

Mar. 15

Dear All—

Today has been so gloriously beautiful. A perfectly beautiful spring day—but a little cold. It rained yesterday morning and until almost night, it was a rude day. I felt sorry for the fellows leaving at six o’clock in the morning for the rifle range. I didn’t have to go because of the work here to be done. Seems that I escape everything except work, doesn’t it? That isn’t bad so I shan’t complain. Last night I was exhausted and completely disgusted with this set up and all about it. After a good night’s sleep and up at nine this morning I’ve felt fine again and have worked all day finishing the payroll. With only a few minor corrections it will go on the Sergeant’s desk in the morning. I do hate to have to work on Sunday but when it has to be done, it has to be done. Next week-end I might go to Washington, since we’re getting passes again. I don’t know yet but if thinks work out I’ll send you a card from “ye Olde Capitol.”

Seems all I do is plan, and nothing even works out, but you know me, the planning is fun.

Love to All,

Albert

Monday Evening

March 23, 1943

Dear All—

The lights of Washington were exciting as we drove in about ten Saturday night. The bus was crowded, and as usual the crowd was sleepy and dull—but not this one! Just like a starry-eyed brat I gleamed and thought how wonderful New York must be.

In the heart of a strange and busy city at ten at night—a feeling rather out of this world; and somewhat like a dream. I rushed to the hotel and met Gilbert who was waiting and was about to think that I wouldn’t make it. But I did.
After washing some of the excitement (and dirt) off my face, we walked over to the apartment of a friend of Gilbert’s. A ballet dancer who was having sort of a party. Just people and music and lots of conversation. People coming and going. Artists, musicians, newspapermen, and all such people. The hostess, a small dark woman was exotic in red and chartreuse stripes. The red matched an old chest of drawers that was a knock out, against pale gray walls. It was an old place and fun. Lots of things—paintings by her sister. Portraits of lots of people, all with a foreign feeling and some were bright with costumes. Ernestine, that’s her name and she’s very like Elizabeth Combs, and Gilbert did a real show—exhibition dancing and everyone enjoyed it. They are both good. Gilbert and I left a little early and got a good sleep until about nine on Sunday.

I had wanted to go to the Presidents Church but we met Ernestine and she went around town with us, looking very much like Vogue, in leopard coat and hat and mustard wool jersey dress and gloves. We took a long walk out to the Lincoln Memorial, seeing much as we went.

The White House is lovely and very much more residential looking than I had expected—rather like a Belle Meade Mansion. We saw the Washington Monument and all sorts of important buildings. Everything is so massive and classic. We took a bus back into town, sightseeing all the while (especially me). By this time it was past noon and nearly time for Gilbert’s train. He had to get back to camp to go on duty. Guard duty at five.

Realizing now that I’d had nothing to eat, La Ernestine and I went into a nearby restaurant. She’s a rather interesting person, having traveled extensively she knows worlds of famous and near famous people. Especially in the world of art and theatre. I, quite anxious by now to be no longer bothered, we took a bus across town, and she was at home.

I being “on my own” at last, I phoned Cousin Ana, and of course she didn’t know me at first. Then she insisted that I come out. I did. They live in a beautiful apartment building in a rather elegant part of the city. I stayed much longer than I had expected, but enjoyed them both so much. They insisted on having me come for a week-end with them—promising that I could go to the Presidents church. Cousin K.P. (nice name) is now a cabinet member since his promotion, and they told me about going to the reception at the White House not long ago. Of course really very matter of fact, but you know cousin Ana, and I love it. By the way, he is now Assistant Post Master General, I think it is. I have the newspaper clipping which I will send.

Cousin Ana was (or seemed) so disappointed to know that, you had been here and didn’t come on to Washington to see her, or at least let her know and she would have come down. It would have been nice for you to have gone up. It isn’t far.
When I left there I went directly to the Station; and ate at the Service Men’s Club before train time. A crowded train into Richmond and here at ten thirty. I like to go places but I hate to travel.

Today, a church letter from Mrs. Tucker and your letter, both I enjoyed. I got a big laugh out of the Army letter and Aunt Mary’s reaction. It makes me proud, and at the same time a bit insignificant to know the wonderful things that Sam Logan is doing. He is certainly one fine person – one of the nicest people I’ve ever known. I know Mrs. Logan is proud of him. I am and I know that everyone who knows him is too. Yes, Mrs. Beasley is quite a personality. Lots of fun. I’m surprised to know that Bobby Cowan is going into service.

Dr. Crabb’s book, “Supper at the Maxwell House” sounds like it should be good. He must like to eat. He’s very right—in the traveling that I’ve done I too would certainly say that the homes around Nashville are as pretty and fine as can be found. What is lovelier than the Branham House, the foster home, Dr. Burch’s, the fine old homes in Belle Meade and near Franklin.

I would love to be at home for Easter and the “all day” meeting at church, but am, afraid such is out right now. By the way, please check my blank church envelopes and let me know how many there are. Or better still find out from Mr. Harris how much I lack of paying my pledge—please right away.

Still I haven’t heard from Ray and I would love to so much. I wonder where he is? That’s what I hate so completely about this war is that we have to be lost from one another sometimes and nothing could be much worse.

I hope he gets my mail.

Do you write to him? Just little notes must help so much. All of these pages, and I’d love to go on and on, but it’s late and I’m sleepy, so good-night.

Love

Albert

Wednesday Evening

Mar 25

Dear All –

Last night I wrote a number of letters, trying to get caught up so you were neglected. Not that you really missed anything because nothing has happened. I had a note from Bob
Taylor and he’s now at Camp Lee, just twenty five miles from here. If nothing happens, we will meet in town Sunday. Bob is so much fun – I’m glad he is so near.

So butter and lard are rationed too. I know that you must be put out terribly by all this. I do wish that all of that wasn’t necessary – and sometimes really wonder.

Today I heard from Suzy. Poor child, she’s so tired of school and is anxious to be out. She’s really working awfully hard and I’m afraid it isn’t agreeing with her.

I’m sorry that Daddy and I won’t get to be at the meeting Sunday. Maybe it can be worked so that he can be, but I’m afraid that I’m stuck in Virginia this weekend. Would love to be there. It’s always been one of the high lights of the year, rather like Christmas and the fair but – oh, well, maybe next year – that won’t be long. Not the way time is so swiftly rushing. I have never seen anything like it.

It would be nice to have a little place in the country, but I don’t know. If that’s what you’d like then I suppose that’s what you should try to get.

Every day I realize more and more that people should try to do the things that make them and others the happiest. Free civilian life, where one can do so greatly as one pleases. A life that isn’t restricted to the rules of the majority, but each life is individual and each individual a personality. That’s the wonderful thing about this life. When it’s all over, there will be such an appreciation of life and all the things that have before been considered every day occurrences and common place facts. So many little things. Nothing too big or important. Just things that one isn’t hurt by doing without, but things that make life more real and genuine.

Again, I suppose I have ideas too big.” Here I go talking in circles, so why not stop while the stopping is good.

Love to All,

Albert

(Vol X)

Wednesday Evening

Postmarked Apr. 1, 1943

Dear All –
Moon and stars! A beautiful sight. O, no! Not tonight’s moon and stars, but last night’s – held over until early morning for us to see as we went to breakfast at four thirty. You see we went to the Rifle Range today and left before day.

All day has been clear and the sunshine bright and I have an early spring glow of red. Quite noticeable too.

It was nice being away from the office and my score this time was much better, 45 out of a possible 60 – about average, so I’m beginning to very much think that I can do anything that I have to. The country is beautifully fresh and brilliant with fresh blossoms. Red bud and plum and apple, peach and cherry and jonquils and Forsythia, and all sorts of things. Of course there’s always the dark green pines that makes a background of dignity.

Last night I saw a movie and no letters what-so-ever. Just not much of a writing mood this season. Really have been busy and it seems that I’ll never get caught up with everything.

Must go now and clean my shoes from today’s trip, wash some clothes, and me, and get some sleep. Now nine thirty so you know -

Love to all and I’ll try to write more later.

Albert

P.S. Do see “Cabin in the Sky” if you possibly can. Think that you’ll like it. All Negroes, and rather like Green Pastures.

Friday at Five

Dear All –

I’ve written several letters and torn up as many. Just can’t get in a writing mood for the life of me. It’s like being in one of those feverish dreams where everything happens and you feel that you really aren’t there at all. Everyone is busy, changes are taking place all the time and it’s all confusing. There’s lots of work that I have to do and so much before Monday. With the exception of the dusty wind it has been beautiful here.

No coats, and have been enjoying the sunshine – just such a lazy sort of mood – but the Army is no place for moods and laziness, so I’d better get to work now. Will probably be calling you in a day or so –

Love to All,
Albert

Mother I like the poem very much. A beautiful thought and well expressed. No matter what you might gather from this letter or any that may follow, by no means must you discuss them to anyone! I’m fine, working, nothing new and that’s all.

The poem which he mentioned is as follows:

Spring of 1943
‘Tis early spring of nineteen hundred forty three
The birds still sing, because they’re free
Flowers bloom and gardens grow
God’ great love for mortals shows.
But as the flowers bloom, and the birdies sing
Many hearts are broken by the battles ring,
Brave men are giving their life and all
That a God given freedom may not fall.
Father in Heaven, hasten the day when war shall end
And free from this awful hell, our boys and men
Let not a single life be lost in vain
Thou knowest all – so we ask Thee to reign.
Mar 30, 1943--Lois M. Hadley
Dedicated to the men and boys at war.

My letter which accompanied the poem was written when my heart was torn by anxiety, and is as follows:

Sunday April 6, 1943

Dearest Albert –
Wish I could hear from you this morning, and know just what you are doing. I know things must be very upsetting under conditions like that but keep hold of yourself and don’t let any of it get you too upset. Remember that no matter what you have to do you don’t have to do it alone. Keep close to our Heavenly Father. He will give you the strength and courage to do your duty. We wonder why all of this horrible war has come upon us – and I don’t know why but I do believe that some plan of His is being worked out for it is touching too many heartstrings not to bring us all closer to Him. No matter where you are or what you have to go through, remember I am praying for you. Just wish I could take your place, how happy I would be if I could. But please pray earnestly to have the strength and courage to face anything, and I know He will guide you.

I think we cause most of our troubles by living on our own strength, and not asking Him to help us. I am guilty of that indifference or neglect toward Him lots of times I know, and I don’t mean to be.

If you should have to leave the United States, don’t worry about our reaction. This is our war too, and our fight seems to be on the home front, and we will put up our best fight.

It will be hard, but we will take it, and my weapon will be my faith. You must pray for us too, that our strength and courage will be increased daily. But please don’t worry about us, for you have enough to do without that.

I am sorry you tore the letters up, send them on and say just what you feel like saying. I am proud of you and know that you will do your part. Have you heard from Ray? We’ll be so glad when we can hear.

Someday this war will be over, and we will have learned to put a truer value on things in this life, and I hope we can build a better world after the war.

Write as often as you can, and call whenever you feel like it. Try to let your faith reach out to the boys about you that need it, for without that faith their fear must be horrible. Courage is fear that has said its prayers.

I love my precious boy more than I can express.

God bless you and keep you.

Mother

Monday Night – Apr. 6, 1943

Dear All –
It’s so horribly late that I really shouldn’t be writing at all – it’s midnight.

I’ve just finished work and I really don’t feel the least bit tired. Still I have much to do, but am not worrying about it one bit. I do all I can and that’s that.

I have a box about half packed ready to send home, just waiting for time to finish it. It’s really quite large but not an awful lot in it. Just things I want to keep – but can’t use in the Army ……..

Wish that I could be home for Easter but am afraid that I won’t be able to make it. You know, I’m not at all worried over the “new” status – just in case you’re interested, in fact the excitement of it all is a bit stimulating and I’ll be rather glad to know just what is to take place.

I must run now but will write more later, I promise.

Love to All,

Albert

The next letter written Apr. 8, 1943 was all decorated around the edges in turning worlds and stars and hanging ribbons – quite unusual and attractive.

Wednesday

Dear All –

No, this isn’t a Christmas card and I’m not insane – just can’t decide whether this is all a nightmare, a dream or what.

I’ve been so madly busy lately and hardly time to get anything done for myself. I got the package off today and that’s a relief; but still I have so many things to get in order. I find it terribly hard to work with all the excitement going on. You know me – like to be in on all that’s going on. But day and night, night and day here in the office, getting everything caught up and records in order.

Your letters of Sunday came today and I was so glad to hear what you were doing. Wish I had more time to write to everyone but am afraid that that will have to wait.

There’s one thing I’ve meant to tell you. Please don’t worry about this indefinite situation. I will keep you up to date just as much as possible all the time and I’ll depend on you to keep all rather quiet until I can let you know positively and at that time you will
have to send my address to different people. I think we will only be allowed three address cards at first. But I’ll let you know. The important thing is for you not to get excited and do a lot of useless worrying. We’re perhaps just going to another camp anyway. You hear so many wild rumors here that one just doesn’t know what to think. Consequently I don’t let it bother me one way or the other. Just that I hope I shan’t have to run to catch the truck when it leaves.

Will try to write a note in the morning – until then,

Love to All,

Albert

Monday Evening Apr. 13th

Dear All –

Well, well, another week and still all is well – and in Richmond.

Honestly sometimes I think we’re all insane – but I suppose there won’t be much sanity until some other day.

I went into church yesterday. Ferguson was going with me but couldn’t get ready in time so came in a little late. It was a very good sermon and we both enjoyed it. I didn’t see the Grants there.

We had dinner at the Richmond and met Rupert later. We spent some time at the Club and walked around. Passed Miller Rhodes “buggy” windows several times. They’re wonderful! Just perfect for my country place.

There were lots of people at the Club, and we stayed until nearly six and then decided to go out to the Jefferson for supper. Well we did. It was a bit early when we got there so we didn’t go in to eat yet. Fox, one of the fellows here, was sitting in one of the many spacious lobbies at a piano as we went through so we decided we’d get him to play. He’s quite good and can play most anything at all. Fox is small and dark and intelligent, but stutters terribly. It takes him forever to say anything and just loves to talk, and does all the time.

Well while he was playing some past middle aged lady comes over and is very talkative and joins right in the fun. She reminded me of Aunt Ada in a way and a bit of Nancy Rice Anderson, you know, somewhat of a show off. Well, she was loads of fun and adored singing, (with a voice about as cracked as an antique cup). After an hour or so we decided we’d better eat, so we stated the fact and no more had we uttered the words than
did we have an invitation to have supper with her at the Country Club. We all practically
broke our necks jumping at the opportunity. Her car was outside so out we went. With a
personality like Aunt Ada and Nancy Rice Anderson and driving like Mrs. McGaughey it
was quite a trip – lots of fun.

She is a Mrs. Phillips – Lilly Phillips, one of a family of thirteen children, all with flowery
names, Daisy, Pansy, Rose, etc. She has traveled extensively and knows about every
place. She has three sons, one in the Navy, one in the Air Corps and one a professor in
some college in Virginia. She has some “pass-time” job which keeps her busy being the
Executive Secty of the Confederation of Virginia Women’s Club, or some such thing.
Horrible hours 10 to 3 five days a week with an office right in the hotel – she lives there
too.

The Club is very lovely – reminds me somewhat of the Belle Meade but not as attractive
inside. The dining room is very attractive and on Sunday might supper is served buffet
style. I’ve never seen so much food and one just “simply must” have a little of each thing,
all sorts of crab meat and lobster, fancy salads and ham, fresh pineapple and raw
vegetables and hot dishes and spoon bread – well I had a dab of this and a little of that
and “yes, I must have that” until honestly I might just as well have had Chop Suey or any
conglomeration for everything was sort of run together.

I expected the beautiful fresh tulips in the center of the table to just give up and wilt right
down to their last inch of stem most any minute, for Mrs. Phillips going at full blast with
one story right after another and Fax trying so terribly hard to say so much and being
just too, too polite and Ferguson more excited over the fact that there were two Brigadier
Generals and one some other sort of General and a Colonel sitting just across the way,
and Parr just couldn’t decide which to be the most interested in – the Club, Mrs. Phillips,
the offices or the food, and I enjoying it all, decided to be a good listener and just eating
found myself finished and sipping ice water for before the others had cleared their plates.

Of course we must go back for more, just anything at all; but I really didn’t want any
more, thank you. The coffee ice cream for dessert was superb, and it was really.

It’s not every day that one gets to be so royally entertained and we did enjoy it. Never-
the-less, being a guest in uniform doesn’t exactly appeal to me – especially when it’s so
obvious that you’re a guest because of the uniform. I could just hear people saying,
“Well there’s Mrs. Phillips with some soldiers tonight. Four of them poor fellows just
never get to do anything.”

Well not quite like that I suppose, but anyway I know it’s the idea. I’ve heard it too often,
and I certainly don’t like to be the object of any such ------ O, well, you’ll I probably not
understand and just think I’m ungrateful when I’m not at all—quite the opposite. We’ll
just call it “foolish” and stop with that. I am terribly sorry about Dudley. It’s such a
shame that those thinks happen, but a highway is no place for a dog.

I enjoyed your letters today and the four leaf clover and the little book from Aunt Lady
and everything.

O yes, and the lilac that was in Saturday’s letter; it was so fragrant. I adore lilacs and all
such spring flowers. I adore Spring. It’s beautiful here too. Away from the camp
especially where things are.

It’s late again! Won’t I ever learn to go to bed? I doubt it. Just an old night owl but I love
it. Too bad they let me have my way in the Army, don’t you think? Its rather nice being
able to do pretty much as one pleases in the Army. Lucky me. Had better go now – really
– before it gets too late.

Love to All,

Albert

Wednesday Evening

(Postmarked Apr. 24th)

Dear All—

I know I promised this, but do you know I still don’t know anything to write. I’m in one of
those las moods again I suppose.

I saw an awfully silly movie tonight and went to the Chapel for a while – just talked to
some of the fellows, and now it’s time to get to bed. Isn’t that something?

No, I’m not working any more at night unless I just have to. For a while anyway. I’m fed
up with too much work, still I feel lost with nothing to do.

I had an awfully cute note from Mrs. Phillips today. She’s the woman who had us to
supper Sunday night a week ago. Just thanking “me” for a “thank you” note. Very
original and Easter greetings too.

Had a card the other day from Russell and he was having a holiday in New Orleans.
Weldon Brown is in the Navy now and is stationed at Williamsburg. Next door neighbor.

Charles spent last week-end in Memphis and seemed to be enjoying the luxury of the
Peabody Hotel no end. Can’t blame him.
Was there myself about this time last year. My, my, seems more like “years.”

Haven’t heard from Suzy in quite a while and Kitty hasn’t written in well over a month. She heard about Cynthia and gave up!

All these cars! It really sounds wonderful. Extremely luxurious for times like these, to say the least.

Are you really getting rid of all the dogs except Sir Cocoa? And the horse, I wish I could ride again – think it would be good for my excessive weight. I’ve gained, really I have, but I don’t care about not gaining, except for the looks of myself.

Such rambling, such rambling. I’ve never felt more unconnected. Should go to bed – it’s a little early and I won’t sleep until later.

Last night I completely “re-did” my little place in “Peacock Alley” – you know, the little brick house in the alley out by Ward-Belmont.

It’s a little place, sort of French and lots of fun. Maybe I’ll get to have my Easter Sunday Coffee Party there next year. You must come – really you must. Of course if it’s crowded you may sit on the floor on a cushion – but it will be Chartreuse velvet; one so I’m sure you won’t mind. And the little black mantel will be loaded with Easter lilies, reflected in the plate glass mirror above it, and lots of candles everywhere – and the tiny grand piano. Well someone will play -- I declare if those “two dachshunds” don’t stay from under my feet I’ll go insane.

Another fantasy –but fun.

All for now – must run

Love to All,

Albert

Friday Evening

Dear All –

Another day gone, and a beautiful one too. A perfect “Good Friday”. There are to be services tonight at the chapel and I would love to go, but, of all nights I’m in charge of Quarters here so can’t go out. This is one of those jobs that one gets about once every two weeks, so really I shouldn’t complain. I’m not.
When the follows here in the office get a package it’s a regular holiday, but when one gets two at one time you can just imagine the excitement. “Sweets to the sweet”, that’s what I always say. Seriously, though it is delicious and we are all enjoying it.

Honestly do wish that I could be there for Sunday, but this is War and one doesn’t always get what one wants in time of war you know. Much activity has taken place since the above paragraph was written; and now everything is terribly quiet and I can hardly stand the slow peck of this machine so think that I shall take to the pen again, if you will pardon me.

When everyone is moving around and there’s some noise it doesn’t sound so bad, abut with just one or two here and they quiet, this thing sounds more like a locomotive than a type writer.

My train of thought has been completely broken now—so all anew!

The dress parade on the drill field was beautiful this afternoon. I watched it from here. I’m always thankful that I’m not in them for it would kill me to get out of step and spoil the unity. However I like to parade and would love to be in there if I had the practice, which it certainly takes. With the sunshine and a sort of haze it all looked as lovely and as glamorous as if it had been a movie, and “Old Glory” was certainly floating overhead. Beautiful!

Last night I saw a marvelous movie. A very deep and dramatic thing called, “Hangmen Also Die” German propaganda all the way through.

Fergerson’s mother, Daisy, sent me a lovely Easter card today. I’m glad that I had sent her one of my gay, little numbers. She has remembered me on all special days since I was there.

Tomorrow will be another day, and I will write again.

Love to you all –

Albert

Sunday Evening

Easter 1943

My dears –

’Tis the end of a beautiful day! The sun has been bright and warm and all creation speaks of Spring and a season of new life and beauty. A perfect Easter Day.
I rather hated to have to stay indoors all day – but there was important work to be done, so I couldn’t get out. I did leave the office long enough this morning to attend the services at the Chapel. In a way I was glad that we were all kept in today, because it did make that service impressive.

The Chapel looked beautiful. Against the dark red hangings in the background, huge white gladioli in gold containers flanked the Cross and burning white candles. Formal but yet so simple.

I thought of all of you and wished too, that I could be there. I thought again, and realized how far-flung everyone is, and how thankful we all should be that we still have the right to worship and glorify the Lord our God who is ever with us wherever we might be.

Your Easter cards came yesterday – I like them very much. The purple bunny rabbits are so much a part of Easter; just can’t help being a child about such thinks.

I hope you went to see Aunt Lady today. I must write to her. I don’t get much writing done these days thought. Should do better.

By-the-way, speaking of writing, if you should not get mail from me in a few days don’t become alarmed or worried. I’ll be all right and will write as much as possible, as soon and as often as possible. O, yes, and if you should receive my new address by card, please for goodness sake give it to people who write to me so that my mailing address will be changed by everyone as soon as possible. Pick will get a card and Ray. Others, the news will have to be spread by you and you and you. Should send you a list for I may not get to myself. So much for that.

O, it’s all right about the flowers for Suzy, I just thought perhaps it would be nice – or maybe I should – after all I’ve been sending them for several years, and we are still friends – but of course there really is no need in her getting too many flowers. She can’t wear them all.

The party for tonight sounded interesting and I hope it’s worked out. I should think, though that entertaining would be rather difficult with rationing as it is. But fun, and that’s what one needs you know.

Well now, it’s no longer Easter and tomorrow has become to-day and I’m one of the first up to see it. Had better go though and get some rest for this will probably be a very busy day. Really I’m in such a talkative mood I hate to quit. (I seem to get that way late at night) but I must!

Love to All,

Albert
P.S. Enclosed – A couple of poems done by two fellows here. Right nice – perhaps you’ll think so too!

The Army Lines

I have stood in line for tickets
at a stage or picture show
And stood in many bread lines
When I ran short on dough.

II

It’s the same here in the Army
ever since the day I came
even after many many months
these long lines are the same.

III

I stood in line for breakfast
Got up at half past four
And the line at the mess hall
Was two hundred yards outside the door.

IV

Then came rifle inspection
that really was a time
I stood in line for hours
and they never even glanced at mine.

V

Then to get my dinner
I really had to fight
by the time I got to it
I had lost my appetite.

VI
Then I went to get my mail
And had to buck the Fordham line
When I finally got the letter
the damn thing wasn’t mine.

VII
When it came time for monthly pay
the line I didn’t mind
but when I looked upon the book
I found I was Red lined.

VIII
I was first in line for supper
at least it seemed that way
but I was sunk, for on my “Bunk”
was where my mess kit lay.

IX
When we line up to be shipped
Whether its near or far
I know where my stall will be
in the baggage car.

X
Someday, when I’m in Boston
A Cop should tell me, “Git in Line”
I know I’ll break his back politely
And gladly serve my time.

PFE, Robert Stuart.

A Photograph of You

When the evening shadows gather
After all my work is through
I can’t keep my eyes from straying
To a photograph of you.

There it rests upon my table
Just the way you looked that day
Ah! It seems it was but yesterday
When first I heard you say –

Words of Love that made me happy
And made all my dreams come true
But …. tonight I’m all alone with
Just a Photograph of You.

For one day our country called you
And you bravely answered, “Here”
Oh – I’m proud of you – My Soldier
Yet I brush away a tear.
‘Cause I miss your cheery whistle
Miss your footstep on the stairs
Miss your strong arms and your kisses
That can banish all my cares.

Then I wonder if you’re lonely –
Yes … I know you miss me, too
While I sit here dreaming – gazing
At that photograph of you.

So I tiptoe to my window
Kneel and wish upon a star
As I pray to god to keep you safe
No matter where you are.

Thus my heart is ever with you
While I wait the long days through
And the dearest of my treasures
Is that photograph of you.

When the years have told their story
And the world once more is free
I’ll be waiting for you, darling –
There will still be – You and me.

Sgt. Guastonferri and Corp. Maynard

A V. Mail letter from Pvt. Ray Carroll dated Apr. 29, 1943 was most welcome –
Dear Mrs. Hadley and Betty:

No doubt I am your sole North African correspondent unless Albert has now an APO. I have intended to write you of my whereabouts for some time but you can realize, through Albert, how uncertain Army life is. As one fellow put it, “I don’t know where I am, where I’m going or what I’m going to do, and that all I do know that I am here safely.” Although I am allowed to say some more than this, there is so much I would like to say and many vivid experiences to relate when we once take up where we left off.

First of all, there is plenty, if not too much, water. And I don’t swim. Nevertheless I enjoyed the cruise over. No bad luck at all, and that is something I’ll always be grateful for, especially since all soldiers aren’t that lucky. Although my shorthand has become “stale” during the months I did not use it, I am delighted that I’m doing the same sort of work I did in Nashville.

In some ways I have been very fortunate even though I am over. In so many words it’s hard to tell the decided change that comes over one on the “other” side. To say that I’ll never “gripe” about anything in the good old 48 again is putting it mild. And strangely I am more satisfied here than while I was in camp at Fort Bragg. True, I am hundreds, even thousands of miles further away from home, but I didn’t get leave when in camp, and, too, I seem more a part of this thing now. I am stationed on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea and you’ve never seen such a beautiful sight. The view is beautiful.

French and Arabs are predominant here, and I’ve acquired quite a few friends with my vocabulary of six French words. They are most hospitable, especially with food. Ten and twelve courses wind up a meal. And you remember how I ate at your house. They do love to entertain American soldiers. I was introduced “socially” by a few of the office force here, who have been around long enough to speak French very well. My friends range from socialites to bartenders. Considering the shortage of much variety of foods, eating is still my favorite pastime, since the French can do wonders with a few eggs and a little spaghetti. Wine is the drink here. Some coffee. Some Coffee!

I’ve only received one letter from the States in three months, but am expecting a good bit soon, and will be delighted to stay up nights reading it. I hope there is one from you. I hope that life isn’t too unpleasant for you since Albert has been away, and I should imagine that even Albert and I wouldn’t be satisfied at home until the war is over. Do write me soon.

Ray
Like a mighty earthquake, war had scattered our young men to the four corners of the world. Some had it harder than others. The men who were on the firing line were the ones who experienced the greatest number of casualties. The bombs fell. Many young men perished, many wounded, others luckily escaped. War is no respecter of person!

During all of these trying times our family tried to live as normal lives as possible. Bert’s work kept him occupied, Betty Ann’s school days at Litton filled her time, and while many social affairs were curtailed I was busy with my homework and church work. Sister displayed a great sense of restlessness, and her constant concern for Albert’s safety was so evident.

The enthusiasm for all of our activities was not as forceful as it would have been if our minds and hearts had not been so strained by constant fear.

**Impressions and Realities**

How could anything as small as a post card bring news which was so disturbing, and yet so secretive. The name of a soldier, and a new address—that and nothing more! It was mailed from the War Department in New York on May 8, 1943.

Cpl. Albert L. Hadley, Jr.—3432970

Co A


APO No. 3683

C/O Postmaster New York, N.Y.

Code address is AMGIBO-Platform

Signed—Albert L. Hadley, Jr.

The days dragged on and no word. Where, oh, where had he gone? How would he react to the change? So many unanswered questions filled our minds.

On Sunday night, May 23, about 11 o’clock, we were awakened from sleep by the ringing of the phone.

Operator said—“Mr. A. L. Hadley, please. A postal telegram.”

Arrived overseas safely. All is well. Don’t worry. Letter follows. Albert
What excitement, what gratitude we felt, to know that Albert had landed safely. It was almost morning before we were finally relaxed enough to get any more sleep.

In a few days a V. mail letter came, which described the trip over to England, and it was so different from the way we had pictured it, came May 27th. The date had been censored.

Dear All,

*It would be indeed difficult, in fact impossible for me to tell you just where I am. Somewhere on the Atlantic. It may be just as difficult for you to realize this fact as it is for me. It is however, a realization that is beautiful, exciting and dramatic. Everything has been quite peaceful, but at the same time exciting!* I can’t put into words my feeling and emotions. *Everything is far superior to anything I ever had dreamed of under such conditions. The ship itself is very large, and even though it is a bit crowded it still has the atmosphere of the magnificent luxury liner that it once was. I wish that I could go into more detail and really tell you all that I would like to tell you, but that will have to wait. I’ve been spending most of my time on deck—I love the ocean—the vigor and force—the vast beauty—the ever-changing colours and fanciful patterns of the foam and sprays and waves. It’s glorious! One has really never lived until one has seen the sea. The trip has really been a holiday, for I have had very few duties and those were pleasant ones. I’ve met a number of interesting people and that, of course, you know, I love, and that’s really what makes any trip a success. Too, I am excited over the fact that the place where we shall dock is a place I’ve always dreamed of going—under certainly different circumstances—but even this way has many advantages. I shall cable you as soon as we arrive, and you mustn’t worry. Bettsy I know you are wondering if I have been sea-sick, not at all. In fact I find the sensation thrilling. I sincerely hope that you all are well, and surely I shall be glad when your letters catch us. Give my best regards to everyone for this will be the only letter that I shall write now, until later—*

*Love to all, Albert*

During the time that Albert had left the States and the postal telegram arrived I spent many hours at my desk, pouring out my thoughts on paper. The following letter was written which expressed my feelings and my imaginations.

*Yes, I climbed on the ship the night you left the United States, I knew you didn’t see me, but I was there. I watched you walk aboard the deck of the ship, carrying the large pack on your back. I couldn’t help but wonder what was running through your mind. You seemed to be very much in earnest, like you had some big job to do that you rather*
dreaded, but knew you must do before you could really relax and enjoy life again. There were many men clad in khaki that boarded the ship when you did. Some of them were reckless looking, didn’t seem to care what was ahead of them. There were a good many that climbed aboard and gazed ahead, with a wistful look at the Statue of Liberty. They seemed to look upon her as a mother who would protect them, and who they hated very much to leave. Still there were a few strong, robust looking men and boys that had fear in their faces, their eyes were wild with it.

There was quite a lot of confusion before we finally left the harbor. But I couldn’t keep my eyes off of you, to see what your reaction was. You moved about slowly, as if in deep thought; but there was courage stamped on your face. It was yet early, before day break, and as the sun came up in all of its glory, I saw you leaning against the rail gazing at it. You knew your God was in His Heaven watching over you. When time for breakfast came you ate scantily of the food, as did all of the men. After breakfast you went to the office which was equipped with the familiar materials that you had been accustomed to at Richmond.

So all day long you tried to work and concentrate on the work which ordinarily was not too hard for you to do. After hours, which seemed more like days, passed, darkness stole over the deep waters.

The movement of the ship and the churning of the waters nauseated you. I tried to comfort you, but you didn’t seem to hear. After a few days you seemed to get more used to the new mode of travel, but all the while you had an uneasy expression on your face, I didn’t ask, for I knew what you were thinking of.

I, too, had lived in torment, for fear the worst might happen. And so the days have passed, except for the night of the storm when I jumped straight up in bed, and thought I saw the ship almost sinking, and to find it was only dream.

The nights have been long, each one seems like an eternity. At first the great expanse of water is obscured by the heavy blackness, but later the moon has made a lovely pattern of light. I have found you each night seated in a deck chair enjoying the moonlight and gazing at the many stars in the heavens. You have looked for and found the beautiful, even on the mission of war.

I have been so thankful that as a child you learned to appreciate the beautiful in life and nature. It has proved to be a source of comfort and satisfaction to you, in the most trying experience of your life.

Eight days have we been traveling!
Is that land we see in the distance? Why don’t you speak to me? Where is this ship carrying you? Do you know?

I sit here wondering—I am on the ship—and yet, I don’t seem to hear any of you men speak. You all move about quietly, as if caged, walking up and down, just waiting to be freed.

Look! In the distance there is land—trees! Where is it, what is it? The men see it, and a strange joy spreads over their countenances. They know this dreaded voyage is almost ended.

Do tell me what country it is! I am wild with excitement!

England! How nice, and yet we know the bombs do fall in England. But surely he will escape, surely he won’t have to die. He loves the beautiful too well, he loves life, and most of all he loves peace. And yet, he wants to do his part in bringing peace which the hearts of thousands crave. He wants to help make men free again, to enjoy life as he always has.

Father in Heaven, guide him, show him his duty, help him to be brave, don’t let him hate, and please don’t let him see the horrors of real war. Let him do his part, but please care for him and bring him back to the ones who love him so, when the world is free.

Mother

Obviously each person had their own reaction to over-seas duty as is proven by an Observation written by Cp. Roy Carroll which he sent to me in July of 1943.

Ray’s Guide to the Atlantic

This is written for those fellows who will one day land in a Northern camp awaiting “P” Day for a Port of Embarkation and who won’t know what it’s all about until its done and over with. This, of course, is one of those “One Man’s Opinion” things, but at the same time that it won’t help you a darn bit, it’s a little more than latrine rumors. If you are among those that are unfortunate enough to have just finished basic training, not having seen your family during that time, living just for the day when you will be sent away from that God-forsaken replacement center to be assigned to an outfit so you can get that long-awaited, and worked for furlough—only to be called to the orderly room two days before you finish the basic to be told that you are to be examined to see if you’re fit for over-seas duty, just hold on, get a TS slip from our officer and have a 30 minute talk with your chaplain==Because it is T…S…
No amount of issue of new equipment—gasmask ointment, steel helmets and what not will convince you that this is really happening to you. You will think that this is purely not for overseas but probably for maneuvers some place. No one can convince you otherwise, and for a few days, your mind will be running around in circles wondering what’s really going to happen to you, although you’ve been definitely told that you were headed for a strange and new world with different methods of living. You’ll be unhappy because you won’t get to go with the buddies you’ve made during your basic. You’ll be so stunned that you won’t eat and will spend all the money you have, and more calling your family that something is brewing—you don’t know what, but that you don’t like the smell of things. You will never know sicker homesickness than this, and will get so tired of figuring out what’s taking place that you’ll give up, say let happen what will, and wonder how you’ll ever live through it all. All this will take place the first two days.

Of course, the most important moment of it all if when the officer gives you the orders, train tickets and instructions, all sealed in an envelope and tells you dare not open it until you get to the ticket window at the station. It’s good to open it the minute you get out of the sight in order that, what fainting is to be done won’t occur at the ticket window and if you don’t like the place you’re to be sent is a good time to do an AWOL job. This is the time that you find out that instead of going on maneuvers or to a camp closer home, you realize that maybe they weren’t kidding after all and that you might, at that, being shipped over. Don’t give up hope here though—the train may have a wreck and you might be lucky enough to have an arm or a leg broken. If there aren’t too many of you—as was our case—you will get a Pullman and money to eat good food on the train. At this point it is well to forget what it’s all about and live like an officer on the trip because you will never know such luxury again once you get off the train. By all means let the porter take your barracks bag as you will carry them with you, and live out of them for who knows how long.

The camp that you have arrived at could hardly be called a camp. No streets, no sidewalks, cloudy weather, snow, dark and dismal—everything right in line with your feelings. The first thing you will want to do is run to a telephone and tell your people where you are and for them to please came and get you. Calling is OK, but they have a rule that says you are restricted—can’t tell them where you are, what you’re doing, where you think you’ll go or when. You can tell them who is calling. Luckily, and this won’t happen often, I had a good friend who was with us and his family lived only three miles from the camp. He was overjoyed to be this near home, and of course went AWOL the first night. Through his sister my family learned where I was and as much as I could tell them about myself. Living in this hole isn’t killing until you are quarantined with measles. It invariably happens.

You, by this time, want to see your family so badly, that AWOL enters your mind and after all, being in the guard house might make you miss the boat. You’ll change clothing
and equipment day in and day out, winding up with four pairs of pants and no shorts. No drilling nor formation to stand, no work to do—just sitting around awaiting the fateful day, wondering what you’ve done to be treated so. Going AWOL is very fashionable at one of these camps. For three days there were no officers to handle us, but they finally returned from absence without leave. Get out of the camp as much as possible—pay no mind to the penalty of AWOL—because if you stick around you’ll be put on KP for irritating a first sergeant. You’ll never know another thrill equal to that of seeing your family for the first time in months and right before departing for overseas. Quarantine or no quarantine get out of the camp somehow. Don’t do as I did—walk them to the service club and talk with them for a couple hours there where nothing can be said. No need of writing letters until you land again because you’ll have at least six different addresses and there’s no need writing nothing today and changing it to nothing tomorrow, because you can’t say a thing.

When you board the ship and are slung into a rat hole to live during the voyage, now is a good time to hide some place and have a good cry because you will be so sick the second day out that you’ll have to wait in line to lose those beans you had for breakfast. The food will be terrible on the boat—that is, if you get feeling well enough to walk to the mess hall. It is suggested that all “throwing-up” be done right beside your hammock as once you get to the latrine you are certainly stuck there for the entire day.

For the first few days you are so seasick that you don’t want to look at the water. It isn’t too bad here in the rat hole, just 600 to a room, 4 high in hammocks. You will probably get a good suntan coming over, read more murder mysteries than you ever thought were written, and with an occasional submarine scare to brighten up a day you manage to live, but sure wish you knew where you were going. If you come to Africa you will be given a booklet telling what and when to do it, but don’t even read it. Do the reverse it says when you get there. If you get this book you are coming to Africa. I thought they were trying to mix us up by telling us about Africa, but on seeing the Rock of Gibraltar there wasn’t much doubt left.

Land will be the most welcome sight you ever gazed upon and the thought of getting some good food—say a steak or hamburger—will thrill you. Ha, Ha, Ha. I still haven’t had anything like steak. If you aren’t assigned to a regular outfit you will go to a replacement depot for from two weeks to two months. If in a regular outfit you’ll go straight to work. I’ve written you about the fifteen days I spent at the replacement depot when I first landed here.

Once landed you won’t want to go through all that again except taking the trip back and will then set in to getting accustomed to this new world. Plenty of work, yes, but what the heck do you expect—a French villa along with a trip over that didn’t cost you a cent!
Once you’ll get to see movies dated the year 1, make a few friends with the natives, start eating things you never thought of, write letters continuously—along with winning a war. Won’t hear from home for about three months and get awfully blue sometimes, but won’t think it is too bad because you know once you get back on the boat you’ll be headed for civilian life again.

Below are ten things that to get along with people in Africa, you must do. To not do them, consult the MP’s.

1. Don’t drink too much wine.
2. Don’t pester the women (in daytime).
3. Shake everybody’s hand you see.
4. Learn a few words of French at least.
5. Eat anything and everything they put on the table.
6. Paris MUST be wonderful.
7. Germany, no good.
8. To heck with the Arabs.
9. Give me chewing gum and chocolate candy.
10. And be very generous with your cigarettes.

A most welcome V-mail letter arrived, postmarked—

_Pvt. Ray Carroll_

_No 808 APO 750_

_C/O Postmaster, New York, N.Y._

_May 5, 1943_

_Dear Mrs. Hadley,_

_At last! Two letters from you dated March 6\textsuperscript{th}, with Albert’s picture, and March 23. Even if two months old, it made me very happy to hear from you. I have written to you several times and certainly hope that you’ve received them by this time._
I hope that I have some more letters from you soon. The two I received were sent to the address I used even before I left the States. I realize that the mail service is under a hard strain but sometimes I think they must be out to lunch.

In my other letters I have told you all I can, but in case you did not get them I’ll repeat my set-up. First of all, there is plenty of water. Luckily, we had very nice weather every day of the trip and best of all, no trouble whatsoever.

I’m still not grateful enough even for that, because it could certainly have been the other way around. Even when I reached North Africa I was so tanned that I felt quite at home seeing the dark skinned people. No, I had no inkling of where I was going even when I wrote you. I had long since decided not to think about such things in the army.

Strangely, I am really more satisfied here than I was at Fort Bragg. Of course it’s much further from home, but as I didn’t get leave there, I don’t know what a furlough is. I am doing practically the same work that I did in Nashville, and with being more settled, I am satisfied as well as could be expected. From the office, we have a beautiful view of the Mediterranean Sea. I live on the side of a little mountain which is in walking distance of my work, and it’s really more unlike the Army than anything I’ve had. French and Arabs are predominant here. With my vocabulary of six French words I have acquired a goodly number of friends. Hardly a week passes that I, and several of the boys here in the office, who speak French very well, are invited out to dinner. They love to entertain American soldiers, and of course, have no trouble in getting us fellows to visit them. Although there is no big variety of foods here, they do a lot with a few eggs, carrots and spaghetti. Their dinners are finished only after ten courses. Wine is the only drink here, and the coffee, what they have, is terrible.

There are lots of beautiful churches and cathedrals and a person wouldn’t need antique shops here, as most everything is so old and beautiful, that you could fill a truck with just the things that you’d like to take back. They have no value. Even a few American cigarettes or gum would get most anything you want. Even to shoe shines from small Arab boys.

I’m glad that you’re doing Red Cross work. They are doing a magnificent job here of entertaining and helping soldiers of all countries. I eat at the Red Cross most every day, and am always thinking that it’s money from home that makes it possible. I’ve been reading some about the coal strike. It’s too bad that we still have people that can’t seem to get the importance of letting such trivial things go and really get down to the business of finishing this war. I imagine that spring has really come to Nashville by this time. We’re having that season here, and although I understand that it will get awfully hot, most of the year is very pleasant. I don’t mind the heat at all.
I’ll cease for this time and will write again soon. I certainly appreciate your interest in writing me, and my best regards to your family.

As ever, Ray

As we heard from each of the boys that we knew who were in the service, it was with a great deal of gratitude to learn that they were well and accepting their duties in a courageous way. The anguish which they had experienced as they were inducted into a branch of the service, was soul-stirring, and to know that they had become real soldiers and were willing to make the sacrifice to protect the country which we all loved, filled our hearts with pride.

Cpl. Albert Hadley

Co. Engr. Avn. Bn. APO 644

C/O Postmaster New York, N.Y.

May 26, 1943

Dear All,

Just a note to say “hello” and let you know that all is well. I’m enclosing a rather rugged sketch of impressions of London. I hope that you are all well and enjoying the summer season. It’s wonderful here. I will write more later.

Love to all,

Albert

The cold gray shafts of sun light that came down in the Liverpool St. Station in London were just as dramatic as any lightning effect I have seen in the movies. I thought of the many times that I had sat in dark red plush cinema houses watching Garbo and Crawford and Gable and Barrymore, and many other stars of the film world play the part on this exciting set. The crowd was apart from me and I almost felt as some great actor myself: London, 1943, the largest city in the world and certainly the most cosmopolitan—and the most exciting thing about it all was the fact that I was there: I had come with two friends—very unexpectedly—for I hadn’t intended coming at all—but there I was! Up steps and across bridge and up more steps and across more bridges. A network of walkways suspended in air above the railways.
On to the streets and fresh, beautiful sunlight. What had been just hums and muted sounds and rackets now became realities. We were in London. Fast moving vehicles—trucks and motor cars—bicycles and taxi cabs. All went hurrying about in the streets. People, millions, of them, scurrying in all directions going to just as many different places perhaps, and each in a greater hurry than any of the other nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine others. We paused, gasped and took a deep breath before jumping into the mad whirlpool to find our way to Piccadilly. Tall, old building with ornate tops—wonderful old architecture—rose up like great walls all around; and now and then the curved narrow streets spread out to make room for a little part. A bit of grass—perhaps a tree and a lovely old statue, or maybe a fountain, green with moss. Suddenly, just as they widen, so they close, again to become narrow little streets with nothing more than a mere margin on either side for a walkway. Now and the, quite frequently in fact, were dead buildings. Mere skeletons, the crumbled facades and weak retaining walls—standing almost as monuments to the many killed by the German blitzkriegs, and as a reminder of what England and the world were fighting against—and from. Tall and elegant under a black silk hat, and a bit dashing, in his morning coat with silver buttons, was Anthony Eden. Something about him just seemed to make one tinge with a sort of excitement. Yes, we met him on the street. After we had walked many blocks in the generally direction of Piccadilly, we finally took a bus—a two storied one, with blue eyes painting on the upstairs front, one of the most amusing sights in all London. We whizzed along on the wrong side, well the left-hand side of the streets and soon were there. Piccadilly Circus! Ah, what a place where peoples from every land seem to come and go, forming a colorful, passing pageant of the magnificent human race. One of the most fascinating spots in the world.

We went to the American Red Cross. Ivarters—a luxurious old hotel now doing its part by playing host to thousands of service people in London, resident and on holiday. There, I, by chance met Professor Doggitt, formerly of Peabody College, now an officer in the Red Cross and stationed there as some sort of director.

My chief aim for the day, earlier had been to get my hair cut. One thing I truly hate to do. One is so at the barber’s mercy—it’s always so uncertain what the outcome might be. I had been looking everywhere for the traditional “candy stick” barber pole, or even just a plain sign—none could be found. Barbers are called hairdressers in England and have no such signs. It was a spiral staircase that led to this salon. At the top were large, brass knobbed, double doors, very grand—and elegant. I stood for a moment, wondering then I pushed one of them open and walked into a largish sort of room, centered a green velvet pouf; and all around hung gold framed mirrors reflecting sparkling bottles of lotions and tonics. The place had an air of Victorian n grandeur—in the modern barber shop manner, but definitely Victorian. No sooner had I stepped over the threshold then I was attended by an extremely talkative little Englishman, supposedly of the upper-class
hairdresser’s circles who prattled on and on about innumerable things which really didn’t interest me in the least—but to carry out The Good Neighbor Policy, I had to contribute my share toward a truly brilliant conversation. I hate being talked to, and having to talk, in a barber shop or English Salon.

The job was well done and final. With a brush and whiff of some odorous powder that nearly suffocated me, the little gentleman pronounced the job finished. Not yet too certain of the spending of English money, particularly making change hastily, I found it a bit difficult to figure the customary ten percent tip, “ten percent of “one and six.” It was beyond me. Trying not to show my ignorance I nonchalantly handed him half a crown, waiting of course, for my change. Not at all sure what it might be. The little coin which was returned to me, I graciously handed to him for his tip. I did stop on the stairway though, to figure the transaction. The shilling tip was rather much, nearly as much as the job itself, but everyone must learn! Back to the club for lunch with two friends, one a Chinese, the other one from Mississippi. The lunch was good and the conversation spiced with colorful tales of a great city. They had been to China town looking for a cousin or some relative whom they couldn’t find, but spent much time searching and seeing much in that part of London.

After lunch I left the others—to see the city alone—the parts a tour might not cover. They met with a guide, an elderly gentleman as spry as a mouse. They went to the Tower of London where kings and queens and lords and ladies were imprisoned and beheaded along with the common peoples a century or so ago. They saw other places too. I saw places too—different kinds of places though, a little art gallery down on a narrow street. There were artists and would-be artists and admirers all wandering around. There was a girl, a tall slender girl with yellow hair. She was an artist. Her eyes were blue—light skyblue. She was selling a sketch she had done. She was a beautiful colour scheme. There were a number of paintings. Most of them I didn’t care for—but one—one was fascinating. It was called, “Death.” I don’t think a painting has to be called anything to be good, but this one was called “Death,” and it was good, red and black, weird, gleaming, black, bright, but red.

All along the streets are shops, little shops and big shops. Some shops upstairs and some down. I went in one of them—a big one with exquisite things, fine pieces of antiques and objects d’art. Ah! Nostalgia mood! I like London.

There were two dogs, one a large beige French poodle on a bright blue leash—the other one was sleek and black, but on no leash at all. They romped round and round until their plump little master became the hub of their revolving spiral,—until they were haunted aboard a blue-eyed bus! Two giant dogs on a blue eyed bus!
I stopped in a Kodak House to see a friend. John Halloran, formerly of the New York theater, and radio, now in the Royal Australian Air Force. He’s a delightful person, and is able to enjoy a mad social life in London besides doing an amazing amount of war work. At four had tea, the English always have tea, in a place where there were lots of people and a magician, sort of a floor show entertainment at tea time. It was lively there. I met a fellow from Michigan who knows London. He likes it too. We had marvelous fun just talking, and dinner, we had dinner together, and he told me much about London.

I met the fellows from camp again and we took the subway to the station. We went running like mad up steps and down steps, escalators and passageways – all far below the streets – and the trains were fast and furious.

We had almost an hour to spare. Some Englishman told us about a place. A place that would be good for a laugh or two. It was a black sort of thing. A pub called “Dirty Dick’s,” and all that the name implies. Covered with dust, black looking, like coal dust, cobwebs draped from the ceiling, old hats up on the beams, various ridiculous signs and scores of things hanging all around. Across one side near the steps was the bar – long and crowded and apparently holding up a number of the “Smart Set” of the underworld. Sitting around little tables were others, the same sort – and women – and dim lights rather warming the damp, musty atmosphere.

The English certainly have a sense of humor – but, we made our exit laughing!

The next several letters from Albert told quite interesting accounts of his impressions and his experience in London.

June 2, 1943

It doesn’t seem like June at all, but it is. Time goes by so hurriedly, and there’s always so much to do. I feel much better now that you’ve gotten the cable. By this time you no doubt know where I am. I went to London again the other day and had a most interesting trip. I toured the city, seeing so many wonderful places. Hyde Park, Buckingham Palace, (and the changing of the guards, this was quite a pageant), Westminster Abbey, No. 10 Downing St., Big Ben, Cleopatra’s Needle and so many other wonderful places. Of course I did a bit of “shop-hounding” and found several things I’d like to get. I do hope I can collect a few things while I’m here.

June 10, 1943
I’ve been to London again, and really had a wonderful time. Besides spending much time in the now dim and gloomy St. Paul’s, which even its present state is magnificent. I visited the shops of several famous London decorators. They were grand! I was greatly disappointed to find that Elsie de [Wolfe], now Lady [Mendl], has closed her place here. I had so wanted to go there, even though the vivacious lady herself, as I knew, is now in the States. New York or San Francisco. The most luxurious and fascinating place I went was to Mrs. Shields, where I was met at the door by the small and stately woman herself. She was perfectly charming, elderly and smartly dressed in dark blue crepe and monkey fur set off by an exquisitely mounted sapphire. The place was like a fairy land of white and gold and crystal and pale strong colours, and a profusion of giant, exotic flowers. White walls and floors and rugs and handsome old furniture – all superb. Mirrored walls and white satin draperies. Everything in perfect taste and so extremely smart. Shields and Rogers, two real decorators! I went to a number of other places that were beautifully done and had lots of fun just looking; but there were so many things that I wanted to buy. Well, enough for that.

July 14, 1943

I really haven’t much time for writing but am terribly anxious to tell you about ‘My Day’ in London. I think I told you about the time I got into the small branch office of Constance Spry – well, yesterday I decided to see the big shop. I went out near noon and found it, white and distinctive on one of London’s most aristocratic streets. It’s not a terribly large place but so very distinctive. After enjoying the elegance of the windows, which were filled with all sorts of white and colourful flowers, and rare, unusual vases, containers, and [objet d’art] I went inside. It was white a bit old and worn but beautiful. Flowers and statues and vases. Plaster and iron and glass furniture, mirrors and painted things and draperies. All sophisticated and grand! Not new and gaudy but old subdued things that were lovely.

For years, we Americans have thought of the British as being perhaps unfriendly, cold and formal. I don’t feel that to be true at all. Everyone I’ve met has been very cordial – but to go on. The salespeople were very nice and seemed very glad for me to see the shop. While I was talking to one of them, and had mentioned Mrs. Spry’s lecture in Nashville, none other than the small, distinctive lady herself came out! First of all I was impressed by her smart simplicity. She was wearing a small black figured mustard coloured dress, under a very plain black coat. Her hat was large and deep (but not too), and even though it wasn’t the colour of the dress it was becoming because it was an interesting texture, rather maze coloured straw. Her shoes were low black suede wedges and her jewelry was much and big antique stuff that was wonderful. Not beads and neck pieces, just rings – and all in very good taste – even though I may make it sound horrible.
She is really a very charming person. We talked for quite a long while and she seemed very pleased to have brought to mind memories of her stay in Nashville. She remembered the lecture and the people, a famous old house with a white column façade, the Hermitage – a particularly lovely portrait of a young man in a blue uniform. One of the old family portraits belonging to Mrs. Dudley, if I’m not mistaken. Also Miss Florence Jay was one of the people she asked about – and when I left she sent her best regards to Nashville!

Had a good, long letter from Pickard yesterday – so now he’s in the Navy! He really just seemed to be making the best of an unwelcomed situation. I’m sure though that when he becomes accustomed to it all he will like it.

July 20, 1943

Our first publication of the G.I. Glimpse, our battalion paper, came out Sunday and we have started working on this week’s edition now. I am enclosing a copy of it which you might enjoy. All plans and expectations are for it to grow and to become better and better all along. It’s really lots of fun working on it – and it creates more interest within the organization. We are searching now for new talent people who can write – artists, reporters, poets, humorists, journalists and the like. It’s surprising the interest people take, once they get started.

Monday Evening

5 July 1943

England

Dear All –

This will have to be but a note – for I’m writing it from beside a little pool – out where it’s quiet and away from everything – and it’s getting dark.

It was a strange sort of feeling spending the 4th of July in London, but really quite nice. All the clubs were open and there was much going on. I really slept very late (until about 8:30) and had a nice slow breakfast! I didn’t go to the service at St. Paul’s or Westminster Abbey, or any of the still glorious places of worship. Instead, I chose to go to St. James Cathedral – practically a shell of a place almost in complete ruins, but standing rather symbolic. The little South Aisle which has been restored is where the services are held. Of course it’s crude and in miserable repair, but it’s so very expressive of the time. It has, though, been fixed up nicely. The pews, the altars and wall hanging
and pictures – all taken from the main part of the building. The service was beautiful – in such a simple sort of way, and I was the only American there. I was glad that I went there, for I really believe that it’s now one of the places that so many people don’t see, and certainly don’t get to attend the services.

After having lunch at the Club and having visited around there for a while with people I’ve grown to know and enjoy. I then called on Mr. Bacchus, Joe’s friend. He was wonderful fun and we had lots of fun talking about things of common interest, and people we both know – ones from Nashville, friends of Joe’s and Pickard’s whom I’ve either met or known of. Mr. Bacchus himself, is a very interesting man, being Metro Goldwyn Mayer’s make-up artist for their studios here. He runs several exclusive and successful shops in London, and has a house in Oxford where he usually spends his summers.

After I left then I took the subway to the Piccadilly Club and stayed around until about six-thirty when I meet John Halloran for dinner. John was in a wonderful mood and excited over a new show that he’s writing. It’s a musical and he’s already done all the songs and when the other is finished it will go into production here in London, then perhaps be sent to New York. After dinner we walked miles, across town to the station where I got my train back to camp. Tonight we had a movie, “Yankee Doodle Dandy,” which was very good – and explains my reason for being so late about writing this.

It’s a little past eleven, and almost dark, so I shall have to go in now. Will write to you later on.

Love to All,

Albert

Sunday Evening
8 August 1943
England

Dear All –

Here I go again, leading with my pen again – and this time hoping to get more done than a mere note. After getting so many letters all at one time the other day, I really have a lot to write about now. The things that I’ve been doing have been the usual routine sort, but keeping me terrible busy. We got the paper out this afternoon and now comes a little breathing spell. My other work is accumulating on my desk and I will try to catch that up tomorrow before starting next week’s “Glimpse.”
For the past few days I’ve been in one of my fatal “creative” moods, and have done some pretty high styled re-decoration planning for my first post-war project. Paint and glass and rich modern textiles in the living room – sparkling colours for the dining room. Betsy’s room to “grow-up” etc. etc. So you’d better start preparing for a change of things in our world of tomorrow. “World of Tomorrow,” that’s an interesting thought. It will all be so strange and changed too, our pattern of living will be different – our interests will have changed – our speed and spheres of motivation will have increased – there will be more work to do – more to accomplish but that’s our world of tomorrow, for which we plan and build and dream today.

I must go now it’s grown quite late – so until another time.

Love to All,

Albert

An interesting letter from Cpl. Ray Carroll dated July 12, 1943, who was stationed in Africa tells of a different aspect of war, and the conditions found in that part of the world

Dear Mrs. Hadley –

Haven’t been hearing from you as frequently as I’d like. Suppose you are busy with housekeeping and church duties. The mail has been terrible for the past couple of weeks, and after three days pass the fellows really begin griping about not getting letters. However as a rule it is not bad and much faster than they had in the last war anyway. I heard from Albert for the first time this week since he has been over and he seems to really be enjoying England – especially London.

I wonder if you people are as glad to hear the invasion of Europe has finally begun, as we soldiers over here are. Of course, there’s lots to be done yet, and many long dreadful months ahead, but with the start of it – it picks up our spirit and makes it seem that it certainly won’t be as long as it has been at any rate. Sometimes I wonder just what I would do if I were part of a combat unit. Boys that I have talked to that have returned from Tunis and [Bizerte] talk of the thing merely as just a job that had to be done, and I think that such an attitude is remarkable because it really is an awful thing. I really haven’t been to enough “tough spots” to make a statement and am certainly not asking for an opportunity. Of course, none of us are over here for pleasure although some of us do have things better than others. Take me, of course, to the different phases of work that it takes to run an Army and one is dependent upon the other and all have to be worked together for the same purpose.
I had a lengthy conversation with a Spanish family today at lunch (interpreted by their son, who speaks fairly good English). Things were in a terrible state here before the Americans came in November. Hunger, politics, and war. These people are deeply grateful for everything that we from America have given them. Every bite of food, every drop of milk and every piece of clothing. They need every thing that can possibly be spared and before this I really didn’t grasp the necessity of land-lease, but it is a wonderful thing. If some Americans didn’t have cars, plenty of clothes and a nice home — not to mention the big amount of food that they can have — I don’t believe they could “take it” nearly as heroically as the people here. It seems so strange not to see stores lined with canned goods (unheard of here), filling stations, drug stores, clothing stores with something in them and a cheerful bunch of people rushing around town, shopping and really enjoying buying themselves something also.

My first day here in this city was the most disappointing one I’ve had here. I had been stationed about six miles from the city and I had expected to have a good steak dinner the first thing — only to eat a little spaghetti and hard French bread. Above all I would like to see these people I eat with quite often, sit down to a real American meal. They have some good food, but about one 1/100 the variety of food that we have at home. There is nothing American that they won’t eat and I dare say that I’ve not met a one that wouldn’t like to go to America.

It takes being in a foreign country to realize that America is the most powerful nation in the world. The papers here are always filled with news from Washington. Our forces here are much greater than any, and there’s that feeling of friendliness among Americans and the natives here that isn’t seen with any other nationalities. Every American soldier a “Johnnie” proves that point.

Looking out of the window from the office here I see a wedding ceremony coming up one street, and a funeral passing along another. Both are in buggies. The wedding consists of ten carriages each driven by an elderly man. In the first there are the bridesmaids and probably the bride’s small brother and sister. The bride is in a separate carriage from the groom, and she looks very lovely with her white net dress and veil. The groom has on a tux and is in the carriage with his mother and father. One carriage is completely filled with flowers. The city hall or court house is right opposite my office, and they have stopped there. Traffic is tied up but everyone is patient as the elderly men step down to open the doors. All of the bridesmaids go to the flower filled carriage and each gets a bouquet of white lilies and roses. Very pretty. They stayed in the court house some five minutes and out again and are off down the street with the galloping horses stepping very jauntily.

The funerals here are most often without carriages. Four men carry the casket, and the people attending, including the family, usually walk behind the casket in columns of
fours. Crying is never seen and there is always one wreath. People in the procession are usually even talking, and really there’s more sacredness about a wedding than a funeral.

I hope you won’t be tired of all this blah-blah, so I’ll get back to my work. Write me as often as you possibly have time and tell me all the local news. It’s getting terribly hot here, but we have found a small nice beach on the Mediterranean and usually get out there at least once a week. More recent movies are coming from home and it’s always good to see them. Give all your family my regards and tell Mr. Hadley that I certainly don’t drink this wine. I got a big kick out of Albert’s letter. He said that his father had mentioned my telling about how these people like their wine weak and wondering if I would take up the habit.

As ever,

Ray

A letter from Russell Spotswood stationed at Keesler Field, Mississippi, postmarked August 25, 1942, tells of how he likes Army life and what his duties are. He was one of the first of Albert’s friends who was inducted into service.

Tuesday, Morning 7:25

Dear Mrs. Hadley –

Just a note to let you know I received your card and appreciated your note very much. I started to work yesterday as a draftsman and have been made permanent party at Keesler Field. I think I will like my work fine. Everyone is very nice and considerate. I didn’t like Keesler Field at first but now realize it could be a lot worse and too, I could have been sent a lot further from home. I find Army life isn’t so bad at all, but would like to see some home folks every once in a while. I really enjoy getting mail from home.

Pick gave me the names of friends of his family in Biloxi. I stopped to see them and they are really very nice. They invited me to come to church and dinner next Sunday. So you see it’s nice to know that you have friends in town you can see.

I guess Albert will be leaving before long. Am sure he will like it. I find it very interesting and am sure he will too. Am anxious to know what branch he will get in.

Sincerely,

Russell
Interesting letters from James Pickard ("Pick as we always called him), tell of his life in the Navy. The first one was postmarked August 27, 1943.

James S. Pickard AS

Company 986 – U.S.N.T.S.

Naval Training Station

Great Lakes, Ill.

Dear Hadleys –

Feel quite ashamed of myself over the way I haven’t written – and I have enjoyed your letters so much and appreciate your thinking of me.

The fact is we have a great deal of lost time, waiting – being rushed from point to point, only to stand or maybe sit, and wait. I suppose that is no new story To you, however I don’t think Albert had a great deal of it when he first went into the Army.

The Navy is somewhat different, in the beginning – we have at least one lecture every day, usually two or more, some drilling – with and without rifles. All companies have one week of K.P. duty. I came out very well on that, will tell you about it when I get home. Then a week of Regimental duties, ours starts tomorrow – don’t know what I’ll draw on that?

Our training is about over. We have one more “must” Field Rifle practice – think that is tomorrow or Saturday. Will depend on the weather. We have had a rainy week. Poured all day today.

There’s a lot to write about up here, yet in a way it doesn’t seem very interesting. Will just wait and tell you about it. I need a part of Albert’s imagination! The grounds and main buildings are beautiful. Our barracks are not bad – all alike of course, and we sleep on double decker bunks. Mine a top one, very comfortable. Hate to think of hammocks later – they have already been issued – So?

As to my future – well, nothing for sure as yet. I am listed as an electrician – get that! – but it’s the Navy way – so all may end well. Have asked for some schooling but doubt I’ll rate it – several different factors determine that. Won’t know anything for sure until just before leaving. Have hopes.

And speaking of leaving – We are scheduled to depart Sept. 7th. Oh Happy Day!! and I am coming direct to Nashville – then home – maybe – Talked with the folks the other night and they are going to drive over – I may go back with them for a day or so. Few things to see to over there, but it won’t take long. Will only have nine days in all.
Have had two good letters from Albert and he certainly seems to be enjoying London – Am so glad for him, the best field our forces are in, I think – however Joe seems to be having a very good time of it in North Africa. And Albert writes that Ray is rather enjoying there too. I’d still take England.

I must close and write the boys a note – am much behind in all my correspondence, certainly miss the ole type writer. Looking forward to seeing you before much longer.

Please remember me to Miss Mary.

Sincerely,

Pick

Pick’s next letter was postmarked October 4, 1943 and was sent from Lafayette, Indiana.

Sunday Afternoon

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Hadley

Betty Ann and Miss Mary –

Quite a formal opening isn’t it? But it’s really me. I just wanted to include all the family.

Well it finally happened – I’ve landed in an institution – but somehow I got in one of learning. Am at Purdue University taking an electrical course and learning about things I never heard of in all my time with “Mother Bell.” Much theory and such, to say nothing of math.

It’s really a tough course and for me too much too fast –don’t know how I’m going to come out with it, ’tis already a struggle. But the building, and grounds are beautiful so I am enjoying the surroundings and atmosphere any way.

We arrived here a week ago last Thursday after a hectic stay in O.G.A. Packed most of the time thinking any day or hour we’d be shipped out, and to keep us from growing too restless we were sent over to the mess halls and put on K.P. duty. What a life!

Of course we arrived here with much confusion and didn’t get settled down until about Tuesday. Once you get set though the Navy can certainly dish best a full program. Up and exercising at 6:30 every morning, from then on until five that afternoon, a busy day, mostly in classes, one period gym – am sure you know how I like that chow and a rest period till 7:20 – then to studies until ten o’clock, lights out at ten thirty. So you see how much time we have to call our own. Well that about covers school and life in general for me. We have weekend liberties to go into town and it’s very nice to get away for a while,
but I always seem to leave so much undone I feel guilty in leaving. Maybe I’ll get caught up before it’s all over.

I haven’t heard from Albert in ages, but can’t say a word as it’s been quite a while since I’ve written, but tonight is the night - am going to write him tonight – Joe too – have had several good letters from him lately.

Am afraid this epistle is a bit on the dull side, but so far things have not been too lively or particularly interesting in my nautical life. I still have hopes though.

So in closing want to tell you again how wonderful it was being out and with all of you while in Nashville. It’s friends like you that make all this struggle and these long separations worthwhile and inspire us to keep on, so that we may return to the warmth of old friendships and take life up again with a new spirit of love and confidence. Know that whenever I think of home and good days gone by, it’s always with thoughts of you.

Sincerely,

Pick

We appreciated very much a letter from Edmund Hadley, (the second son of wade and Elizabeth Hadley) who was in the South Pacific with the Marine Corps. We realized that his duties carried him on dangerous missions and we lived in constant fear for his safety.

P.F.C. Edmund D. Hadley

Batt. F.A.A. Arty. Grp.

9th Def. Bn. F.M.F.

c/o Fleet Post Office

San Francisco, Cal.

Nov. 28

Dear Aunt Lois,

I received your very nice letter day before yesterday. I can’t express in words how pleased I was to get a letter from you. The pictures were nice too. Albert looks like a real soldier. Betty Ann and Wena sure are two pretty girls. It’s hard to realize that they are young ladies now, just like it’s hard for you to realize that Albert and I are old enough to do what we are doing.
I wish there was something I could send for Christmas, but I can’t even get Christmas cards.

I am getting along fine. Tell Uncle Bert and Betty Ann hello. I can’t write much due to strict censorship.

Here’s to you, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Love,

Ed

Letters from Albert continued to be interesting as he told of what he was doing and the places of interest which he visited in London.

August 28, 1943

Dear All –

If you could see me now! We’re having a gas drill and everyone is wearing his gas mask — after all of these months of contact with this device, somehow I still feel like Mickey Mouse with it on.

I had a pleasant day in London Thursday. All day I wandered what you were doing and wished that I could peek in at the birthday celebration. I hope that all was lots of fun.

It was raining that day – off and on – so I decided it would be wise to go somewhere where I could be inside. I went to the Victoria and Albert Museum and stayed for hours. It is a mammoth place and filled with treasures of the art world. Much has been taken way for safe keeping for the duration but still there remains much of great interest.

When I left there I walked to the shop of the harp-maker and went in to talk to the gentlemen who run it. They were nice men. A bit quaint and right much like two characters from a book. Such extreme individuals in their talented way. They were enthusiastic conversationalists and were eager to know about America. They showed me their collection of harps and other extremely old musical instruments.

A painted harpsicord dating back several hundred years, several spinet pianos – Regency and Victorian. All lovely old things. Truthfully I think they thought that I was something from the “bug house” when I told them that I wanted a harp, an old, old one, and that I really didn’t care whether it played or not. Of course I tried to explain that I wanted it mostly for a decorative piece – but I don’t think they quite understood. Never-the-less
they assured me that I could get one (in such a condition) and it shouldn’t be too expensive either.

Love to All,
Albert

12 August 1943

Dear Mother –

Col. Parr (one of the clerks here) and I spent last Tuesday in London. As I told you in the “v-mail” note last night, nothing of outstanding interest happened but we enjoyed just sort of milling around seeing the sights. We went to the Cinema and enjoyed “Dee Barry Was A Lady.” even though it was very light and even a bit silly.

On a narrow zig-zag little street just off Kingsway is “The Old Curiosity Shop” made famous by Charles Dickens. It’s old and weather beaten and quaint – and quite small. The shop lady was quiet and friendly and half apologetic for the emptiness of the place. There was really very little there. Some not too good souvenir plates and mugs and bric-a-brac. Nothing that I cared for at all except some very clever figure silhouettes of Dickens and Shakespeare characters.

We walked out on the new Waterloo Bridge and got a view of London from there. We saw the beautiful Egyptian Obelisk, “Cleopatra’s Needle” standing tall and stately by the river side. It is flanked on either side by huge bronze Sphinx that have tarnished and weathered beautifully. An English gentleman in old tweeds told us in a most interesting manner, the detailed history and significance of this monument. It really was wonderful – but you well know my weakness for Egyptian art.

Above some shops and studios – up winding stairs we had dinner at an Indian Restaurant. It was colorful and picturesque. The Walls were busy with rich draperies and tapestries. Murals of romantic India, created an atmosphere of space and realism, and real palm trees fluttered gently from an outside breeze. Old dimly lighted lanterns hung from arches of simulated stone and flowers bloomed from niches. But the dinner! Served by real Indians in tunics, bright sashes and tall turbans – was superb. There’s no need to tell you what it all was – but it was good. (Truthfully I don’t know.) So was the day in London – and I didn’t get to see a single person I know there.

Love,
Albert
18 August 1943

Dear All –

I spent yesterday in London and in a section of town that was new to me. Jermyn Street and that vicinity – which is really what I’d been wanting to find. It is more or less the art center where there are scores of galleries, studios and shops of all the arts.

I met Mr. Sawkins, the editor of “The Artist Magazine”, and found him to be a very interesting gentleman of about sixty. He was most hospitable and talked on and on about the art of London – war – this one and the last one – people, places, and things of interest and gave me a beautiful copy of his annual publication. I’m glad that you sent me his address, and will you thank Miss Margaret Boyles for me. I may not get to write to her.

At English Teat Time, which is about five-thirty (or most any time for that matter) I met Mr. Bacchus and we went to “The White Room.” A very smart place. White and crimson with crystal chandeliers and plate glass mirrored walls – and in a satin draped bay window a man played popular music on a grand piano. All very lush and lovely. Mr. Bacchus had plans for the early evening so our visit was short.

Love to all,

Albert

24 August 1943

Dear All –

Early morning with sunlight and mist spread softly over the landscape, making all the world seem ready to break from a silence caused by night, into a spasmodic play of light and color and life.

Activity –

Another day, and all is well. Low clouds, dark and vigorous rise and seem to vanish into little pools of the brightest heaven-blue, a colour that just sort of lifts one from whatever mood one might be in to something grand and glorious. The sun raising its crimson head shrouded in a veil of light gold mist and making a play of light on the green foliage that ranges from strong finest green and emerald to the pale chartreuse of young plant life. One can’t write things like this – they never sound the way the look. I guess that’s because they aren’t supposed to – but by the beauty of it all one can’t help but be impressed.
So starts another day – I always get up enjoying the beauty of early morning – something I scarcely knew of before my days of military life. There’s just naturally something different about the English skies – clouds and colours and lights – it’s true.

I’ve had several letters from Cpl. Carrol in the past few days and it’s certainly good to hear from him. Has he told you anything about the book he’s writing? “A Guide to the Atlantic.” I know absolutely nothing about it, but it sounds interesting.

Will probably go to London tomorrow night – seems that I always head that way when I get a pass.

Love to all,

Albert

Sept. 4, 1943

“Saturday and in the midst of much, much work – but because I haven’t gotten a chance to write for several days . I’ll take these few minutes to say hello!

I’ve been on the go for the last few days and still am starting with my pass Wednesday night I haven’t stopped since. I spent Thursday in London and again enjoyed getting around. The highlight of the day was my purchase of the pair of urns about which I told you some time ago. My better judgement told me that maybe I shouldn’t but I couldn’t resist them – you know how it is! Perhaps they aren’t too fine but very good and at price that was amazing. Only 35 shillings for the pair! Now getting them home is another question. They are heavy and will be hard to pack (you should have seen me wagging those things all the way from London here). I’ve just decided how nice they may look on the altar with flowers in them – and if they do we may use them here for a while before I ship them.

There’s been a general moving around of companies here and that of course has been a problem. But at last we are getting settled again and chaos and confusion will soon be overcome.

Sorry there’s no more news now but the [“Glimpse”?] will be out tomorrow and I shall send you a copy of it (a wonderful substitute for letter writing)”

13 September 1943

Dear All-
The beginning of another week and all is bright and good. It certainly doesn’t take them long to roll around.

I can hardly realize that summer is nearly over – it just doesn’t seem possible. There’s one thing certain, it’s been the coolest summer I’ve ever spent. I can’t think of more than three or four days when the temperature was high enough to make one the least bit uncomfortable.

I love the English climate.

In front of an old vacant house near to Victoria and Albert Museum there is a pair of reclining lions, beautifully formed and small – and I know that I could get them for almost nothing. In one shop I know there’s a very small, painted Italian chest that isn’t expensive – all of this and others too, and all I’ve gotten is a pair of urns and they’re in the bottom of my barracks bag!

Love,

Albert

15 October 1943

Dear All –

This idea of writing by lantern and lamp light isn’t too wonderful, but at the end of the day when all the work is done I must write.

Yesterday’s mail was good and I had seen letters from you and one V- letter. All the news I was glad to hear who Peggy Lynn is. You had mentioned getting the gold pins for her in a V – letter that I got last month and I tried terribly hard to think who in the world she might be. Yes, I know that is a proud family and I know that the proud papa is anxious to be back in Texas.

I spent an enjoyable day in London on Tuesday, last. I saw a very good show “Lattie Dundee”. It was really a knock out; a dramatic thing, neither too heavy nor too light. I had dinner with Baccus and a Wade Thomas from Nashville who’s been here over a year. He and Joe, I think, came here together.

He was very nice and it was good to see someone to talk about people and things and places there. He knows many of the people there and we had quite a time talking about what’s happening.

Tomorrow is the day to do concentrated work on the G. I. G., and we will get it out on Sunday.
I promise that the next letter will be better than this attempt.

So ‘til later –

Love,

Albert

21 September 1943

Dear All –

It’s Tuesday morning and all is well. It seems that time does go by so quickly.

Tomorrow I will have been in the Army one year. It really doesn’t seem possible – but as I think back over the things that have happened – the experiences – the problems and the pleasures – then I suppose it does seem like a year.

A year of rich experiences, never to be forgotten.

Reviewing your “V” letters from the first of September: Betsy I hope that you have become accustomed to your new educational schedule – and that you, Mr. Frown, Janie Bell and Mrs. Clark are not having a free-for-all yet. Now that school has started give my best regards to everyone.

The bit that you wrote about Aunt Lady didn’t tell too much but from what I gathered she must have had another of her spells. I do hope that she’s better.

How are the Millers? It certainly is good that they get to visit Nashville so often. Did Major Miller come with the family? No doubt you had Pickard out while he was there. How does he look in his uniform? Do you think he’s liking the Navy any better now? I had a wonderfully long letter from him yesterday written before his furlough started, and naturally he was quite excited. Who wouldn’t be?

Suppose that by the time I get my “furlough” the new administration building, designed by Keehle, for the airport, to take care of transoceanic transportation will be complete, and you can meet me there!

From the picture in the paper it looked very wonderful.

Each month I am saving a few pounds (English money) so that by the time the war is over and the day of discharge is at hand, I will have a nice little sum saved up and can arrive in Nashville by plane. If the war lasts long enough I may get to fly a long, long distance – if not – then just from Knoxville, Chattanooga or Memphis.
I’m flying home!

Until it gets so dark I can’t see, I read each night. I’m reading the life of Mendelsohn now and find it terribly interesting. Knowing the life of these composers seem to make all their music have more meaning.

It would be wonderful if one could have an album of records and as you read, listen to each composition as it is composed.

I’m in one of writive moods and could go on and on but suppose this is enough for now –

Love to all,

Albert

October 11, 1943

Dear All –

England now is all that I ever imagined – A thick fog covers everything and is damp and much warmer than it’s been for several days.

As you can see the paper did come off the press this week, so now we start collecting news items for the next issue. It really keeps one ever on the alert.

Now that there is so little time to write during the day I seem to get very little letter writing done at all.

Our mail has been very slight, in fact I don’t think that I’ve had more than four letters in the past week. They’re on the way though and probably just held up at some depot.

I had a rather interesting experience Saturday – I had a detail of men to leave here Saturday morning and go to a little village about as far away as Springfield from Nashville, to pick up some supplies for the local Red Cross Club.

It was a beautiful day and the ride through the country was delightful – rolling, plowed fields of rich brown earth – each separated by dark green hedge rows, coloured here and there with turning leaves of red, and yellow and bright chartreuse. Nestling in a clump of trees a little white washed cottage covered with a vine turned flaming red by the brisk autumn days.

The door way of another house, a great formal house, English Regency, of dark gray stone, was surrounded by a vine-like tree that was laden with bright orange berries. Hills and horizons all misty blue in the sunlight – and along the roads we passed many horse drawn carts of harvest.
We went to an Italian Prisoner of War Camp to get the supplies and I was very glad for I had often wondered what such a camp was like.

It was very nice – not very large and they all seemed busy and content. We saw two of the Italian Officers and they looked quite smart in their uniforms.

When we returned to the Club and delivered the goods it was past noon. As we were unloading the truck the director came out and talked quite a while and invited us to lunch with him. He was a most interesting person having travelled extensively both in the States and in this half of the world.

In fact this is the fifth time here, and he’s rather young too.

Well that’s the story in brief- not too important, but a change from my usual routine, so I found it most pleasant.

Love to all,

Albert

16 October 1943

Dear All –

I’m in charge of Quarters at Bn. Hdq. tonight and had hoped to get much letter writing done but again I blame conditions.

We have no lights here and all the lanterns are without oil. With determination I refuse to be overcome by such a trifle! So with fountain pen in one hand, flashlight in the other I proceed to glide my thoughts across the lines! And what is more, I hope that you shall truly appreciate this fine document and perhaps you too, will find a bit of humor in the situation.

Humor, Ah yes, without a sense of humor where would we be? Especially in the Army.

I often think of one of the last things Bob Taylor said to me just before I left Nashville and that was “Albert, remember your sense of humor, never lose it, for as long as you have it you will be all right.”

I’d never particularly thought of that before, but since then I have, scores of times, and do honestly think he’s right. Gracious how did I get started on that?

Well anyway – O yes, I had a V-letter from Bob the other day, I suppose I should call him Lt. Taylor now, anyway he’s still stationed in Arizona, I think it is, I don’t remember at the present, and seems to be getting along quite nicely.
When I stop to think that this is Saturday night and that another week has gone by it seems impossible. Time goes by at a terrific speed – it will be Thanksgiving before you know it. By-the-way when is Thanksgiving this year? With all the canning and preserving that you folks have been doing all summer I can well imagine the feast you probably will have.

Word has gotten around that we’re to have turkey, which excites everyone. Personally it doesn’t matter to me whether we have turkey or not, I’d just as soon have a Rupert salad and good black coffee from Cross Keys, or some such place. O, well! (Had to stop here)

Later: Much later; in fact it’s two days later but I think that I’ll just fold this up and send it along. I really have had no time since that night to write and there’s no particular news any way. I will get around to writing that long promised letter one of these days (I hope) but for right now the best I can do is this and the G. I. G..

Love to all,

Albert

P. S. This mail situation is getting to be definitely unfunny. OO, well, I wouldn’t have time to answer them anyway. 18 October 1943

Drastic Changes

Like a sedate, aristocratic lady, October entered with her thirty-one days packed with various cosmetics her most important being her paint brush and the assorted touches of bright colors.

Her artistry was suspect, as she flung colors over the far flung hills and the peaceful valleys, transforming them into scenes of unsurpassable beauty. Usually October days are tranquil, nostalgic days. Days when harvesting is done, when preparation is made for more severe weather. A time for remembering, and a time for planning.

But with the suspense and the anxiety brought on by the uncertainties of war, October 1943 was different. Beauty, all too often, was replaced by fear. A fear that gripped hearts, like a ferocious animal, killing the instincts which are deepened by the beauties of nature.

For days we had not heard from Albert. We felt certain that something had happened to prevent him from writing. The distance which separated us, and the complete lack of communication was like an unsurmountable wall which gave us a feeling of utter helplessness.

The days and nights seemed endless as we waited so impatiently for news – news that we feared might not be good. We, like thousands of others, tried to be brave.
We did accept God’s promise, “All things work together for good to those that love the Lord.” Did our lives measure up to the amount of love required? Was our faith deep enough? There were so many questions! And yet, we did trust our Heavenly Father – We placed Albert in His loving care.

A letter dated October 29, 1943 finally arrived. The news was most distressing though not surprising. For we had known that the living conditions in England were anything but adequate for the crisp, cold and damp weather that October had brought.

Dear All –

I’ve just finished a delicious lunch and now feel like doing a letter or two. Also another birthday present from you is further inspiration. Still looking gay and fresh, the red, white and blue package containing the tie and handkerchiefs arrived – a few days early, but I opened them anyway. The tie is just the thing I had been hoping for because my others were beginning to become a little dull.

The handkerchiefs are wonderful. I always like nice handkerchiefs. The only question is now, when will I be able to use them? Or hadn’t I told you anything about it?

Well, it’s really nothing to get excited about, but I knew you would if I told you sooner.

The fact is, I came to the hospital a week ago yesterday. I was really pretty sick with a cold and rather high fever.

Just another of my periodical spells of flu, only this time I had pneumonia. Now don’t get excited. It’s really nothing. In no time at all my temperature was all right and I was beginning to feel much better. All the doctors and nurses are wonderful, and I am really getting good care. I have a room all to myself and all I do is just lie here and read and write and rest, am eating like a horse.

The only trouble is that I’m terribly weak.

The doctor has been very considerate and candid about the whole thing – and he tells me that a rather extensive rest will be necessary before I can go back to work.

This of course, isn’t very pleasant news, but there’s nothing to do but make the best of it.

This morning I opened the box that I told you was marked “Christmas Package” – the candy from Mitchells – and of course found the card inside saying that it too was for my birthday. I have passed it around here to the nurses and doctors and some of the fellows and have certainly been enjoying it. Nothing like “good” candy for a change.
Some of the fellows from the battalion come in from time to time, and it's always good to see them and learn what's going on back in camp – always something!

Please now don't worry about me. I assure you that I am getting along all right and that I will let you know what takes place from day to day. Thanking you again and again for the gifts for my birthday.

Love to all,

Albert

While we were grateful to be able to hear, the thought of Albert’s being sick in bed in the hospital for an indefinite time caused us all to be so very concerned. The ocean that separated us seemed ever more vast, and the distance and circumstances were prohibitive.

Letters arrived regularly from Albert and he seemed to be taking his illness courageously, like a true soldier. We tried not to seem too upset as we wrote him each day, even though our hearts were torn by anxiety.

A letter dated December 29, 1943 brought much encouragement to all of his loved ones, and it said in part:

32nd General Hospital
29 December 1943

Dear, Mrs. Hadley –

It is my impression that your son had a pneumonia which has been slow to resolve, and which will eventually heal completely. We have not felt justified to allow him out of bed until X-ray findings have disappeared even though he feels well, and we find no clinical evidence of infection.

I am sure that you will be glad to hear that your son has been a very cooperative, cheerful, and appreciative patient, and that we are very glad to do anything possible to speed his recovery.

Sincerely,

Paul J. Fouts – Major MC
Naturally we all felt better after getting the letter from Maj. Fouts. Still as long as Albert remained in the hospital we realized he was not well and we were deeply concerned.

His friends were so nice about writing us and keeping us informed of his condition.

England, 19th Nov 1943

My dear Mrs. Hadley,

You don’t know me and perhaps have never heard of me, but I feel as though I know you very well, as I heard so much about you from Albert.

Since Albert was transferred to the hospital I have been meaning to write you but thought it best to wait until you heard from him.

Words are inadequate to tell you how sorry I am concerning Albert’s illness, but I am most confident that he will be well soon, be up and about again.

I was at the hospital to see him several times (before he left here) and he seemed to be feeling quite well and was taking it all like a real trooper that he is. The last time I saw him was about two weeks ago and he was in quite high spirits, which pleased me immensely, and I felt so much better to know he was taking it so well.

I was up on Sunday and the following Thursday I went again, but was about two hours late, as he had been transferred to another place that morning. I learned of his new place, but not by location so far.

I'm still in the dark as to where he is but hope soon to find out as I want to see him before he leaves again.

My furlough is in the first part of December and I intend on locating him it it’s the last thing I do.

Ever since I met him in Richmond, I have been telling myself how lucky I was to have such a grand friend as Albert. We always did have so much fun and even there in the office. And what a different place this is without him, surely is dull. I sincerely do miss him, as so do the others.

I feel as though I owe him so much that I can never repay him, as he coached me so much on the small amount of writing I do, especially on the “G. I. Glimpse,” he and I were the sole composers of it, except for a few extra articles.

We always had a lot of fun on the “The Dear Fanny” column, which was Albert’s idea, writing of places we ever heard of, let alone seeing the places.
His illness came as quite a shock to me as I was in London at the time. You can just imagine how I felt when I returned to discover he was in the hospital and certainly I didn’t waste any time in asking for the morning off, and luckily enough got it. I took care of all of his personal belonging that I could.

He has no doubt told you all about his urns he bought in London. I have them now and will send them to you as soon as I can find a good sturdy box for packing.

Albert wanted me to be positive to get them to you; so though I’d better let you know that I hadn’t left the country with them. They are partly brass and partly marble and will break quite easily, not too large, but large enough to not fit the ordinary box we see around. I finally got one a few days ago and the urns shall be on their way very shortly, do don’t worry about them.

Wish I had more recent news of Albert but you know how this censorship business is. We all got a letter from him a few days ago and he was no doubt trying to tell us where he was, but it was censored. In case I forget I will tell you now, that in the box with the urns will be a small rock of Albert’s.

It’s one he found for a paper weight and quite unusual, resembles a frog or something. He wants to keep this as a souvenir of the exquisite English countryside (?) Hope you all are well and have a most Merry Christmas. Do let me know if you receive the urns in good condition. I shall do my utmost in packing them securely.

Best wishes to all---

Rupert Parr

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November 11, 1943

Dear All—

I’m glad to be able to start a letter without saying today has been as usual, for indeed it hasn’t.

The idea of spending one’s birthday in a hospital “somewhere in England” certainly isn’t too pleasant a one. Contrary to the idea today has been very pleasant!

As the nurses came into my room this morning, each was prompt and radiant with a “Happy Birthday.” I was really quite surprised, for not only had I almost forgotten that today was my birthday, but I certainly didn’t expect them to even know. I think one of them found out the first day I was here.
I was lazy this morning so didn’t get cleaned up and ready to start the day until almost noon. It was a bright morning and I enjoyed doing nothing. Not that I ever do any more than read or write or draw—the simple sort of things that one in bed can do—but this morning it was nice doing nothing.

This afternoon I was busying myself with a bit of writing when Miss Hyde of the Red Cross came in with an urn full of things and “Happy Birthday!” She brought me all sorts of art materials. All kinds of paper—big sheets—white and colored and wonderful textures.

An excellent box of watercolors, some poster paints, a box of Terrachrome crayons, several boxes of modeling clay, a book of short stories and a big chocolate bar!

Can you imagine my surprise? Honestly I was overcome and delighted. I see right now where I’ll have no dull moments. Miss Hyde is really a very interesting young woman who before she started doing Red Cross work had a position in Cincinnati. Her home however is in New Jersey, and she was telling me today about an old farm house she bought up in the mountains for $1600.00! Of course by the time she had worlds of fun fixing it and doing it over, it cost a little over a thousand. I was amazed, and terribly interested in hearing the way she furnished and decorated.

She stops in nearly every day and I always enjoy her visits. She reminds me somewhat of Huldah Cheek Sharp.

I’ve spent the rest of the day and on into tonight modeling a head out of blue clay—remembering painters in a lecture I heard once by Puryeer Mimms. Of course mine’s not a masterpiece but following the rules of a man who knows it doesn’t look too bad sitting on my metal G.I. mirror!

At least you can tell it’s of a human!

I haven’t forgotten the gifts you sent for my birthday. Still I am enjoying all of them—incidentally, I wore the new tie when I came to this hospital, but I don’t think anyone saw it I was so done up in blankets.

I’ve been intending to tell you—or rather ask you. Do you think that I should give Suzy anything for Christmas? If you do you select something, perhaps flowers, put one of my cards in the package and send it. Of course, I suppose she had rather get something from England, but I am sending nothing from here. I’ve gotten nothing, have no way of getting it, and I don’t think I’ll have a chance to anytime very soon. Some of you will attend to my shopping this year, won’t you please?

I’m all wound up and could go on for hours but if I do this will never go Air Mail.
I should learn to slow down and write a little smaller but I’m afraid that if I slow
down this pen might not write at all—besides it’s no fun going slow.

Love to all,
Albert

November 15, 1943
Dear All—

It’s the same old story—another day that I have spent making posters for the Red Cross.
It’s fun having something to do for Christmas, and will all the plans that are being made
all should be very bright here during “the week.” I’ll tell you about it as it all happens.

Our crèche is progressing very nicely, and I do think that it will be very lovely once it is
finished. I had a nice letter from Sgt McIntyre at noon today. He’s awfully nice about
writing and it is certainly good to be able to keep up with them there.

After being in for two months that seems almost like another world. The time has
certainly passed quickly. It seems impossible. I’m feeling all right, but am still in bed. It’s
better this way.

Am anxious to hear what you all are doing.

Love,
Albert

November 19, 1943
Friday
Dear Mrs. Hadley,

I hardly know how to start this letter, but I did want to write to you about Al. I presume
that you have heard from him, that he is not with the 861st any longer.

I think probably that I felt the loss more than anybody. He worked for me, but I don’t
mean that kind of a loss though I miss him more as an older brother would. He was very
easy to get along with, a smiling personality that convinced a Yank that his conception of
the people below the Mason Dixon line was quite false.
He spoke of you very often and although I have never had the pleasure of meeting you, I am looking forward to that occasion after this affair is over and once more resuming my friendship with Al. As the present we are corresponding but I find letter writing a poor substitute for personal conversation. I don’t think you should be too worried about him. In his last letter to me he said he was coming along in fine style.

All the boys in the office wish to be remembered to you. Like you, we are all hoping and praying for Al’s speedy recovery.

Sincerely,

John McIntyre

32 General Hospital
Nov. 22, 1943

Dear All—

When one stops to think, the difference between here and there is pretty much. I don’t know why but the notion just struck me that as I sit here writing this, it isn’t night at all where you are, but mid-afternoon. Monday mid-afternoon, and the things you are likely to be doing—nice bit of thought.

This day started out very pleasant. For breakfast I had two fresh eggs! A rare treat, such an extravagant luxury. Strange how once I thought so lightly of a mere fried egg—and today, how with each tiny bit I felt that indeed I was eating food for a King—like sparkling champagne and rich caviar—a rare occasion—celebration!

Then as morning went on—fresh clean sheets—cool and almost linen-like, so nice to touch.

And then for a few short minutes an open window. A breath of all outside, a part of living world.

Today I was lost in “The Book of Talbot,” and felt sorry that I’d said it wasn’t a good book.

I slept for a while too, completely out of this world—“resting,” but was awakened and was weighed. I’ve gained another pound.

Cyril came in to talk with me tonight. It’s nice to have him come. Good to talk with someone. Since he’s gone I can hear the radio—music, familiar things—old and beautiful, so pleasant as I write.
My only regret is, that I have no real news, so again until tomorrow.

Love to all—Albert

A letter which I wrote Albert, dated Tuesday, Nov 23rd, about 9 a.m., was so typical of my words and my thoughts as the days passed. My mind and heart were constantly hovering at his bedside.

Well, “Hello!” May I come in? It is grand to see you, and you do look good with all of those white blankets.

This is a real cozy room, and you look very comfortable-like. I brought you these yellow chrysanthemums I bought at Jays, and I got this brown pottery bowl from Cain-Sloan’s. I’ll put them over here on the table, and when you look at them you will think the sunshine is making you a visit.

And I want to fill this moon and star fruit stand (which you’ve always liked) with this nice fruit. I’ll put it on this table by your bed, so you can reach over and help yourself. And do eat plenty of it, for they say, “an apple a day will keep the doctor away.”

Just before I came I went to Mill’s Book Store and selected this book for you—“How to Win Friends and Influence People,” by Dale Carnegie. Thought while you are resting you might learn some new ways to influence the doctors and nurses to come a-running at your beck and call.

And I just couldn’t resist getting this attractive box of candy from Candyland. I’ll put it here on your bed, but please don’t eat too much of it, and make yourself worse. If you do I’ll be sorry I brought it.

And here are scores of Get-Well wishes sent by most everyone—I’ll just put them here on the bed and after I’ve gone you can enjoy looking at them.

I know you are surprised that I would fly over to see you but I didn’t mind it at all, for I did want to see you so much. It is strange what changes come over people, but then this war has changed most everything.

But I’m so glad you are getting along all right, but you must still be very careful. Everything is moving along as usual at home, and everyone sent their love and said they’re pulling for you.

I must go now, but will be back tomorrow. Mind the nurses and the doctor, and remember I love you!
Bye-bye,

Mother

Time moved slowly on, the days grew shorter, and there was a tranquility in the beauties of Nature, which was so different from the turmoil and the insecure feeling caused by the horrors of war. For many, war had not really touched their lives in a special nor tragic way, while thousands of others felt so keenly the pangs and sorrows caused by the conflicts of war.

Thanksgiving Day 1943 brought with it mixed emotions—and yet, in the midst of war, as true Americans, we all had much to be grateful for.

A letter written on Thanksgiving Day by our soldier who was a patient in a hospital in England, made us thankful that his heart was still filled with gratitude and thanksgiving for the blessings of life—

V-mail

32nd General Hospital

25 November 1943

Dear All—

Turkey Day in EYO and we really had it too!!

This has been a nice day. Different in so many ways from the average Thanksgiving—even much different from last year. I’ll never forget that banquet we had, the response of those men—so new to the Army and how much they all realized it. Today has been different and I dare say that I shall never forget it. Perhaps this period more than that day, but maybe today. This morning was bright and I was feeling well. I finished the Book of Talbot which really was most beautiful and an inspiration. My dinner was bountiful and pleasant to see, served to me on the usual white tray which I hold in my lap, or rather across my knees.

Turkey, dressing, cranberry sauce, (superb) pie, and all the rest. Without even my wildest imagination I felt it all quite festive. I thought too, how strange to celebrate this day in the mother-land. The land from which them came to make America. I’ve wondered too, how you and all America has spent this day. Even though Cyril and others have been in to talk, I have thought much today and am content—because I am truly thankful!

Love,
Albert

28 November 1943

Dear All—

You are probably just getting out of Church, or having dinner at home or maybe somewhere else. I can’t be too sure, but I know that it’s about that time. It will soon be night here. I’ve just finished supper and I’m watching the glorious end of a dream day. It has been raining and misty and dull, one of those lazy days again!

Cyril has spent the afternoon with me—talking, and really each of us more or less trying to keep things lively enough that the other didn’t fall asleep. He’s good company and I always enjoy having him in to talk to.

Across a rooftop I can see the bent and web-like branches of some age old trees, patterned high against the sky. All day I’ve watched them as they’ve changed their colour from a dark green in morning, really almost black, to a light and strong bright green in the afternoon. Suddenly becoming bright and golden as the setting sun breaks through the clouds and lights the, for a moment, exquisite jewels of Nature! Then suddenly, just as they were made to glow, they are gently wrapped in night.

Love,

Albert

Dec 4, 1943

England

Dear All—

As I opened your letter written on the morning of Sunday, November 14, and read of aunt Lady’s death it wasn’t a feeling of surprise or shock, but rather a feeling of emptiness. To realize that she no longer suffers—that she is at rest in Him, whose trust her entire life was given, is a beautiful thought, really, but too it hurts to realize that she no longer lives as we, upon this earth, but only through us can all she stood for live. Ah, yes, she was only human, she had her faults, but above them all she rose to represent the true, the good, and the beautiful. These are the things that will live long after her—and the memory of her will live with us forever. I’m very glad that you sent the bouquet for me, for it is exactly as I would have done had I been there.
There was a number of letters in last night’s mail and I was glad to get them.

I know that all the family was glad to see Wade when he was there. I suppose he had a lot to tell. I had a letter from Ray last night after so long a time—but since it was only written July 1st you can imagine how much news there was in it.

Love to all

Albert

7 December 1943

Dear All—

Two letters from Mother, one from Dad and one from Aunt Mary together with a letter from Gene in India, which was very interesting and one from Lt. Gardner, who is at Military Govt School in Michigan made up this evening’s mail.

Today, as usual, has gone by in its own simple way and I’ve read and talked to people and written a letter or two—and daydreamed a little too. I have lots of time for that now—it’s almost amazing how many things one will thing of in a day’s time—when one stops to think about it. I’ve been reading a book today describing all the charm and beauty of Oxford. One of the nurses brought it for me to read. We aren’t very far from there, in fact I came through there on my way here. I didn’t get to see much, but I did see Oxford, if that means anything.

Dec 9th

I was awake later than usual last night “batting the breeze” (that’s Army slang) with some of the fellows. We got to comparing notes on our trip across. Theirs all more recent than my own—and from what I can gather I had more fun than anybody.

Consequently I slept late this morning, that is, I went back to sleep after having that most unwelcomed meal called breakfast at six. Once aroused I spent the morning peddling around with wash cloth, and face towel, shaving cream and razor blades, soap suds and hot water. At last beauty! Well!

I’ve spend the afternoon reading a year old copy of Good Housekeeping, from, I started to say cover to cover, but it has no cover, It’s pretty good anyway and even if it is old (I’m not sure of its age) it’s all new to me. There were no letters for me yesterday or today but I did get a package from the Bredges family. I think it’s candy too.
I’m having wonderful fun guessing what’s in all the boxes I have piled under my bed. You know it’s really a good thing I have a room to myself. I have accumulated so many things. When people come in sometimes I think it’s out of sheer curiosity, as to what has been moved in.

Just wait until I make my own Christmas tree of bright colored paper and their eyes will pop right out! I see no point in being dull even if I am all done up in fine white blankets; and doing almost nothing but resting.

Christmas is Christmas and I’m not going to miss one little thing. I’ve always heard there’s nothing like the Yuletide in the Mother Country—well, there certainly isn’t!

I feel terribly wicked tonight. I think I’ll stay up until ten o’clock, and could write on and on as you can see, about nothing, but no,—I will stop right here.

P.S. Need I tell you I’m feeling all right?

Saturday (Two weeks ‘til Christmas)

I’m one of those super deluxe moods again, not knowing where to stop one thing and start another. Sometimes I think that the Army hasn’t done one thing for me, that is, hasn’t changed me a bit—then I know of course it has. But as far as still being wide awake when night comes I’m still the same. All day today I’ve just been rather lazy, enjoying the brightness of the sun and the briskness of it when I had the window open but just let night come! I have a million and one things I want to do and don’t know where to start. So instead I write a letter or two and call it a day.

Miss Hyde was in this afternoon making plans for Christmas. She brought some young fellow from another ward who is an artist and is to help with the trappings of the season. We’re going to make a “Nativity Scene” for the Chapel and I am to do some border sketches on bright paper for the Red Cross Christmas week program which is to be just wonderful. All sorts of outside talent coming and everything.

All of it is most interesting, but quite much work too. No, I won’t do too much.

Right now I have started making big letters cut from colored paper to be strung across one of the nurses’ huts inside. From what I gather it is somewhat the gathering place for their friendly get togethers. They tell me about the parties they have there, and they must be fun. Oh yes, the letters will of course spell “Merry Christmas.” (Same to you.) Also I’m making big gold stars for the tops of all the Christmas trees in the hospital. One in each ward. They are simple to make and I’ll paint the backs of them red and green. Don’t you think that sounds mad! Well more about all this later. From the sound of this one
would never know that this is in the Army and that there is a War—but I’m not going to let a little thing like that stop me.

Pistol Packing Mama! Isn’t that the craziest thing you’ve ever heard? They’re doing it over the wireless now. How can that be No 1 on the “Hit Parade?”

The evening mail hasn’t come in yet, but I haven’t gotten any for the last couple of days, so I’ve just stopped expecting until some more comes flying in.

I know absolutely no news. The outside world is practically like another world and all I know of it is what little invades this world of mine—white blankets and temperatures. I do have white blankets but no temperature as far as I know, but still that little stick of crystal glass is stuck in my mouth regularly—just so I won’t forget that I am in the hospital, I think. Too bad my days aren’t as full and interesting as Eleanor’s, but I rather like my days best and hope you aren’t too bored with it all.

Love-

Dec 18th 1943

Dear All—

Just a few lines tonight to say “hello.” I’ve really been dabbling around all day—first one thing and then another. I just turned over my weeks work to the Red Cross and feel free to start something else now. Next will be to get the crèche done. It’s coming along nicely but slowly.

One of the fellows cut some holly today in a nearby forest and brought some in to me. Here on my little table in a bright red container it looks rather decorative. Real English Holly!

Cyril left today and I certainly did hate to see him go but know too he’s very happy. That’s what I don’t like about the Army—you meet people, get to know them and like them. Then suddenly, Bang, they’re gone.

Dec 19th

The end of another Sunday and I’ve been busy all day.

Tonight about five I had my window open and everything was quiet. I could hear the bells ringing clear and soft and sounded old. A prelude to Christmas and a wonderful way for
closing an unusually bright and beautiful day—and now as I write, and the radio broadcasts that inspiring tune of our two nations—America and God Bless the King.

So I end this letter and close the day.

Love to all,

Albert

It was good to receive a most interesting letter from Sgt Gene Kittrell written from India.

India

Dec 19, 1943

Dear Mrs. Hadley,

Thank you so much for your very thoughtful Christmas card. I am so pleased that you thought about me. I am distressed to hear about Albert. Do hope that he is all right now. Please let me know. I wrote to him once since arriving here, but have not received an answer yet. I am well, being adequately fed and still happy as a big sunflower about the whole thing. In spite of its dread consequences, there is still something thrilling about this war, the way it has picked men up—sort of scooped them up from their ordinary tasks, and swept them as if by magic carpet to story book places. What tales we are going to hear, when we are all together again and start to fan the breeze. Before landing here my experience with India was limited almost altogether with reading a tome called, “Our Journey Around the World” by a couple of missionaries as I recall. It was profusely illustrated with engravings from the original photographs, and was picked up for me by some ambitious member of my family when I was wading through geography. I think it must have cost about a dollar (mold and cobwebs at no extra cost).

This country continues to be amazing, amusing, and more often than not confusing.

I wish that you could see the giant size Poinsettia trees, making great splashes of Christmas red against the green—just full of giant size blooms, a constant reminder that Santa Clause time is really at hand. Poinsettias grow wild here, as do orchids and many of our highly cultivated flowers. Fancy having a regular flower shop right in one’s own back yard? Isn’t the very thought intriguing? When you write to Albert, please give him my new address and ask him to write to me when has a bit of time.

Thanking you again for being so sweet and remembering me at Christmas time. And very best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all of you, and the hope that
next year we shall be celebrating together, not only a Merry Christmas, but a Victorious one as well.

I am sincerely,

Gene

(Volume XI)

Christmas was coming! In my imagination I made a visit to the hospital, which in a letter sent to Albert describes:

Dec. 9th, Thursday

Well, Good-morning! And how are you feeling today? You are not surprised by my visit, are you? You know I come every chance I have to chat with you.

Thought I’d better come over and fix up your room for Christmas. Those last flowers I brought you have lost their sunshine, so let’s throw them away. I want to put this Christmas tree over here in the corner where you can look at it all of the time. It was right hard to find enough decorations for it, everything is so scarce – but I managed to.

I’m going to put this “Star of Hope” right in the tip-top – so you can look at it shine, and can borrow some of its rays for your own use. Now I’m going to string these lights over it – this really is a job for me, for you’ve always done it for me.

Well, anyway, I’m going to show you what I can do! I got these different kinds of little bulbs, one of Santa Claus, four darling little angels, some bells, birds and the dearest little “Fairy.” He’s going to help make you well and strong! Now for the icicles, and I really brought plenty, for I want this tree to be the prettiest one that was ever decorated. Now, doesn’t it look lovely? You couldn’t have done better yourself, - now could you?

Now don’t look – for this is a surprise! Listen! Do you hear it? I got this music box that I’ve placed under the tree and with one winding it will play all of the lovely Christmas carols! Shut your eyes and you can imagine you are in some big church listening to a choir singing on Christmas morning.

Now for the presents – so many folks have sent you gifts and I’m going to pile them under the tree, and you are not to open them until Christmas. Do you hear? How do you like the tree – right good for an amateur, don’t you think?

I went to Jay’s and got these big red candles, and I’m going to put them over here on the dresser. And I’m going to pile this lovely holly all around them. Do you like that?
Isn’t this a lovely pot of Poinsettias? I told Mrs. Cade I wanted the prettiest thing she had – and it’s done up in this lovely green paper and red frilly bows. She took it out of the window for me to bring to you – now wasn’t she nice? I’m going to put it on the table by your bed.

Oh yes, I want to hang this lovely holly wreath and candle in the window. You get the nurse to light this candle for you every evening when the shadows begin to fall.

I almost forgot some of the sweetest things I brought – these little angel candles that I’m going to put on the table by the Poinsettias, where you can light them yourself. Do you like the way I’ve fixed you up for Christmas? I hope you do, and I hope the picture will be so real that you in your fancy can really see it and enjoy it.

I’m hanging this walking cane of candy on the head of your bed, and if the nurses are not good to you, you can crack them over the head with it. But I hope you won’t need to use it.

Merry Christmas, darling.

Mother will be thinking of you!

Quite an unusual play entitled, “The Letter on Wrinkled Paper,” was written by Albert two days before Christmas. It showed so plainly the courageous spirit with which he was able to enjoy the holidays even as a patient in a hospital so far from home.

A One Act Play

By Jon Albert

“The Letter On Wrinkled Paper”

Time: Midafternoon in December, two days before Christmas.

Place: An Army hospital room

Where: In England

Scene: The room of a young American soldier, a rest-cure patient.

The day is clear and bright. Large restless birds are heard fluttering and squawking and calling in the big trees just across the green, drowned occasionally by the roaring motors of giant airplanes overhead.

The room itself is small, clean smelling and light.
A little black stove burns faithfully in its corner of the room. On a small table beside the bed is a can painted red and filled with holly – the only reminder of the season besides a number of unopened parcels stacked in somewhat of a heap in a corner behind the bed, and a peppermint “candy cane” which is also on the little table.

As the scene opens we find the boy propped up in bed, his white blankets tucked so around him that he almost appears to be floating on clouds. He has a small lap board and a pen, his glasses perched down his nose a bit are focused on the board. He is writing.

23 December, 1943

Dear All –

As I start this letter I am reminded first of this time last year. It was just about now that I left Richmond to come home for the holidays. It was such a ghastly trip and so slow. I remember it well. It was fun too, everyone was in such spirits.

(The door opens and a tall, slender dark skinned fellow dressed in white comes in to punch the fire in the stove and goes out again, closing the door behind him).

Arriving home on Christmas Eve night was fun. It was exciting.

I had been away three months and there was so much to talk about. I guess those first months of military life seem most strange. I remember now, how I felt then. It had been October when I'd left and returning Christmas. Of course it wasn’t like Currier and Ives print, “Home for Christmas” but it was the same idea – modern version. That was a Merry Christmas 1942. This is 1943.

(A slender nurse in sand and white uniform comes in followed by a tall, blue-eyed boy. The nurse sticks a gleaming thermometer in the patient’s mouth and hands him a small package tied with red ribbons. A rare, exquisite perfumed soap – easily detected though not opened but placed beside the holly on the table. The room is filled with the sweet spring time odor of carnations).

A year has passed – much has happened since I left Nashville that day late in December. Now it’s December again – it’s Christmas again, and even though things will be different in so many ways, this time these still will be the universal spirit – somewhat as a tie – one part of the world to another.

I fear I’m rambling. Nevertheless, even if things aren’t ideal they could be worse, always.

Personally I’m expecting to have a very gay and glamorous time myself. I might just as well do it right for I certainly don’t expect to spend another yuletide in the hospital.
We finally finished the Crèche yesterday, and it was taken last night to the Red Cross hut. Miss Hyde is planning to take some picture of it. So maybe you will be able to see it. The box itself is about two and a half feet high with a gold star in the gable of the roof. Inside on an elevated platform of steps sits the Mother Mary looking into the crib at the tiny white baby wrapped in pale blue clay drapers. The Mother is done in two shades of blue, white and pink-salmon. At her feet is a tiny wooly lamb – white. On lower levels and surrounding them are the gaily clad figures of a king and wisemen, a shepherd and people. The background is of dark green richly folded draperies pulled back easily from the center, revealing a bit of red lining and an old gold panel which makes a warm background for the Mother and Child. The rough texture and faded old color of the floor covering makes a good fail for the whole thing – thus the picture is complete. Only the figures are of clay, the props are real.

Today I’ve done nothing except read. Miss Hyde came in this afternoon and took all the things I’ve done since I’ve been here. I think they’re having some sort of exhibit on Christmas Day, the things I had certainly weren’t worth “showing off” but she insisted. And so to help a good cause, I consented and let them go—all boldly signed of course, “Jon!” I really don’t care.

I’ve had no mail today but yesterday a wonderfully long letter from Suzy and a package from Kitty, and one from Pickard which was sent for him by A. Bacchus of London!

I’ve opened it already (I shouldn’t have, but I did!) It’s a beautiful gleaming silver letter opener with a stitched black leather handle, all very simple but beautiful and smart.

Were the peanuts you sent home grown? Last night one of the boys in the ward roasted them until the shells were very dark and they were superb. Hot!

I haven’t gotten a House and Garden for two months. Have you quit sending them?

It’s chow time. I hear the rattling of the dishes down the hall, so will end this now, wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and all good luck and happiness in the New Year.

Love to all,

Albert

The boy re-reads the letter, disgusted. Folds it and then reaches over and closes the window. Another day gone by. Curtain!

Dec. 24, 1943
England

Dear All,

Just a note to say hello! I couldn’t possibly concentrate on a very long letter for certainly this ward is brimming with Christmas Spirit. The halls are busy with people, (nurses, ward boys, patients, and all) humming and whistling and even singing. The radio is with carols and chimes and poetry.

This morning I arranged my holiday décor. I used the sparkling red quills Aunt Mary sent me, and thrust them in with the holly I had, radiating, as it were, from the center. The cylinder container is in a bold stripe of blue, chartreuse and purple tied with a ribbon of red! Gay, what?

I have a peppermint candy cane and a table just loaded with presents—all beautifully wrapped and sparkling.

People have been stopping in on their way to church (six-thirty) so, it was a little while ago that I started this.

I have the “Mrs. Stevens” candy open since it had no wrappings. but the heavy paper. It’s certainly both beautiful and good. Your letters, Aunt Mary’s included, of the 5th, 6th and 8th came today and Daddy’s Picture Remembrance Card. I was really quite surprised and impressed. Was it made this year? It’s really very good. I almost thought I was upstairs looking out!

We’re planning to hear the president’s speech tonight—the carol singers will be around and I have an idea there will be much going on until late. I’m ready for it for I did nothing but rest all afternoon so now I’m feeling very fine indeed.

Would love to be there with you tonight or even just look in on the fun you’re having. Do you still believe in Santa Claus? I do!

Love to all,

Albert

Dec. 25, 1943

Dear All,

At last “the” day has come and now almost gone. It has been such a very nice day too, with everyone joining in the spirit of things. The people here have been indeed wonderful to me.
I opened all my packages right after breakfast and it was such fun. They all looked so pretty and the gifts all are things I’m proud of and appreciate. I’ve had them out all day for people to see and enjoy with me. We had a good dinner in the middle of the day—turkey, dressing, green peas, mince pie, etc., which was certainly good. Needless to say we all thought much of “the folks at Home” and certainly have hoped “they” are finding the day a happy one. Will write with more details of all later—feeling fine and

Love to all,

Albert

Dec. 27, 1943

Dear All,

Now for one of those two day letters—yesterday and today. It’s really a three day letter for there is still lots to tell about Christmas. Of course I gave you the general idea but to tell you about the gifts—well, that’s something else.

Really I got so many nice things, far more than would be expected in the ETO; and was so glad that I waited to open them all at once.

I hardly know where to start, thanking you for all the things that you sent. Of course all the candy etc. has been and is being enjoyed. The fruitcakes both arrived in good condition. The smaller one is now but a delicious memory, the other one is still a delicious anticipation. The box of a surprising assortment of things was indeed a treasure chest—all the way from cough drops to the two red candles. Of course I don’t know whose idea it was to casually put in the book, “How to Speak Good English,” but indeed it was a good brainstorm. I need something to help me check my constant inclination to copy the speech of our English cousins. The book of poetry is very nice and I have been enjoying it. The tie, handkerchiefs and socks and the tie Aunt Mary sent me of course are waiting anxiously for that “happy day.” Not to mention each other item you sent.

Then of course there were all the things that Aunt Mary sent. The box of caramels, which was very wonderful and attractive and we enjoyed a few days before Christmas and the big box of candy, all kind, which still is another pleasant anticipation, along with a box of Mexican Pecan Candy from Cousin Ruth, Mildred and family. Also the salted nuts, a rare treat in the ETO; canteen soap, the smart black ever sharp, the photo files—on and on.
Suzy’s packages looked very smart in bright patriotic colors. She sent two small tin buckets (with tape on them) filled with homemade candy, some soap and a miniature chess board, which is really quite nice, and lots of fun.

Adelaide’s gift from Jensen & Jack was a very smart and gleaming silver lighter. I was really surprised. Kitty sent me a carton of Luckies; you might know Pick would be different. He had Anthony select something for me and send it from London. It is a very good looking, eight inch letter opener of silver with a black stitched leather handle, very nice and simple.

The Bridges sent a box of Belle Camp chocolates, Wallace and Ruth a carton of Chesterfields. Mrs. Lanier, the subscription to Readers Digest.

Lt. Scarborough (here) gave me a bar of some very fine soap. Lt. Marshall, incidentally, who is from Tenn. and Texas, gave me a miniature checker board. Rather like the chess board Suzy sent.

The Red Cross of course had a box for each of the patients—so you see—it was really an occasion.

I’ve been having a lot of company and every time a few people come in this little room and starting talking and nibbling it seems like a party.

Christmas night there were six or eight crowded in and stayed late, singing carols and old familiar songs. It was lots of fun but I certainly slept late yesterday, in fact I did practically nothing else all day.

Mrs. Anthony, ARC director here, came in for a little while yesterday afternoon and I enjoyed her visit very much.

I had thought that last night would be quiet and maybe even dull, so decided that I would enjoy my solitude in the light of a bright red candle (notice I said a bright red candle, I’m saving the other one for tonight). I wasn’t alone very long until some of the fellows came in and the inspecting night nurse came in for a few minutes, and the nurse on duty and so with candy and nuts and all it was lots of fun. Of course I insisted they turn the lights on for fear they’d think I’d gone nuts sitting here in the light of the bright red candle, and the dancing fire of the little black stove in the corner, but no, they all liked it that way—and of course I didn’t care!

Well, so you see how things go. Now today has been as quiet as a mouse in church, but I have an idea that everything will come to life when it’s night again.

Mother, your letter of the 12th of December came today, and very newsy too.
I hope that you did have the family there for supper Christmas night. After all one shouldn’t let a little thing like a war knock a very pleasant tradition like that in the head. The night is always so much fun.

I hope that the flowers from Joys arrived on time and in Bee-youtiful condition, yours and Aunt Mary’s and that you ordered Suzy.

Well, enough of this foolishness so Happy New Year and love to all.

Albert

For Albert’s family Christmas 1943 was different from any we had ever spent. Ordinarily it was a happy day, where each one of us took part in the preparations for the holidays. Decorating the tree and making the house festive looking, getting all excited over Santa’s visit, and the family get-togethers. For us and countless others this particular Christmas a day of remembering, with a deep sense of loneliness, and a day filled with suspense and anxiety.

Our house was not as festive looking as usual, though there were some decorations. A pot of red poinsettias which Albert had sent from Joys, sat on the piano—that was the highlight of our decorations. Its beauty silently spoke to our hearts of the abiding love of our soldier who was spending his first Christmas away from home, in a hospital far away.

January 1, 1944

Dear All,

I must say I certainly don’t think this is a very fine way to be starting the New Year. Writing a V-mail but it’s faster and at present there are no air mail stamps. I have certainly been lazy today. I slept until almost noon and then wrote a letter to Cousin Ruth, etc., then did nothing all afternoon until time for chow. Just resting from last night’s party. The fellows came in about nine o’clock, brought the radio and a long table which was put across the foot of the bed. We had turkey sandwiches, coffee, chocolates and Mexican nut candy. We kept things lively and on the go until the stroke of midnight. All, mind you, was by the light of my other red candles. Well we felt just as elegant as anything sitting here (there were about six fellows crowded in the room and in bed). When we heard Big Ben chime forth we all set our watches, that is those that were off the beam, and listened to the New Year arrival and greeting in London—followed of course, by the first news broadcast of 1944! All simple but fun.

Now it’s most night again and after my day of laziness I feel like doing it all over again, but won’t.
Love,
Albert

An interesting letter from Sgt. John McIntyre and a post receipt on the letter written by Chaplain Dryden were greatly appreciated by Albert’s family

February 11, 1944

England

Dear Mrs. Hadley,

I received your letter of Dec. 14th some time ago and I do want to apologize for not answering sooner. I could say I had been very busy, then I keep thinking of that old saying, “If you want anything done give it to a busy man,” so you see my conscience would bother me.

I have been hearing from Al quite regularly and in his last letter he said he had been transferred to another hospital, still in England though. I don’t know what your reactions are to his letters but personally, I think they are very encouraging, and I am looking forward to his return to our unit in the near future.

We go on from day to day hoping that the end of this war will be this year. I think we are very near the end but like all things we will have to wait; and see. Our stay so far in England has been fairly enjoyable. The fact that we were able to come to a place that is so full of places and things to see helps pass the time away. I know that I for one have gained a better view of the English people and I realize the handicaps they are working under.

I appreciated very much your invitation to visit Nashville after I get back home and I promise to get down there. Al used to kid me about coming down. He thought it might be a little too warm for me. We have had a pleasant winter so far, not very cold and that suits me fine! We have moved out into tents and at best they aren’t too warm.

We have our troubles every now and then getting fuel, but as you know the engineers just take it in stride.

I hope you forgive me for not answering your letter sooner and if you find the time to write another I am sure I will do much better.

Sincerely,

John
At the bottom of the page Chaplain Dryden wrote a note.

Dear Mrs. Hadley,

While censoring this letter I realized that I didn’t answer your letter concerning your son. At the time of receiving your letter I had no definite information, so waited. I preceded to lose the address.

I can’t say, not knowing the seriousness of his case what the future holds. I know that he is under the care of a nationally known doctor who is an expert on the chest. I feel we have everything to make us optimistic.

Albert is a fine fellow, a son to be proud of. His work on our paper was exceptional—a real clean living ideal American boy.

Excuse the note.

Chaplain Dryden

Another letter which we appreciated was from Anthony Bacchus.

15 Roland House
South Kensington
London S.W.I.
21-3-44

Dear Mrs. Hadley,

Joe Cuthbert was visiting me last week when he mentioned that he had heard from you, and mentioned that Albert had told you of my visit to him. I would have written to you before concerning Albert but thought he himself would give you a clearer view of affairs than I. Though knowing your son he certainly wouldn’t care to worry you unduly. I think by the time this reaches you Albert should be safely back home, and I know that will be better than all the letters and explaining.

I am so sorry that I never saw more of Hadley while in hospital, but always the distances were against me, but would like for you to know how much I and many others enjoyed knowing him. His charming ways and courtly manners were a constant joy to us, as we
had been at times disappointed in others from the other side, and he did you and America proudly. I do hope his health will not be impaired too long, but feel sure with the sunshine can easily get in your part of the hemisphere and will be his old self again.

I look forward to hearing from him soon, and trust my assumption is correct, that he will be with you before this letter.

I trust you and the rest of the family keep well and hope that this slaughter and misery will soon end.

My kindest regards to you all.

Sincerely,

Anthony Bacchus

A New Chapter

The coveted news finally arrived and it would be impossible to describe our elation. Just knowing Albert was back in the States, gave us a feeling of security and hope which had been difficult to feel while he was so far away.

10 March 1944

New York

Dear All,

Just a note to say hello and to let you know that I’m back in the United States. Arrived today after a very long but pleasant trip, and am at present on Staten Island where I will be for only a few days.

Our crossing was very nice but lacked the adventure and excitement that I experienced going over. But, I suppose one can’t expect thrilling excitement, especially when one is traveling as a patient. The trip was, however, far from dull. But more details later.

I’m terribly anxious to hear from you but there’s no need for you to write to me here, but I will let you know where and when I’m finally settled for complete recovery in some other hospital.

Love to all,

Albert
16 March 1944

Dear All,

Just as any other time in the Army all sorts of rumors are spread here, and from day to day one keeps thinking that certainly he will leave next. So has been my case. I felt sure that I would be away from here before this—many of the fellows who came in as I did have gone—but I’m still waiting for the right train. I will certainly be glad when I’m settled.

I have done no writing because it has seemed so useless since I can’t give a return address. Too, I’ve actually been in no mood to write. Nothing seems to make sense. If I knew that I were to be here permanently I would be completely satisfied. It’s really a very wonderful hospital. It’s like Paradise after living so long in buildings that now seem primitive.

We are adequately supplied with reading material and I have been putting in plenty of time so occupied.

The food is extremely good, not at all like the Army, and I’ve gained about three pounds since I’ve been here. I’ve even started drinking milk regularly every day, and when it’s cold it’s very good. I still like coffee.

Last night there were two girls here to sing and play. They were lots of fun and helped to pass the evening.

At last I’ve gotten to read Ilka Chase’s new book, “In Bed We Cry,” which I enjoyed but not so much as “Past Imperfect.” Coming across I read Betty Smith’s “A Tree Grows in Brooklyn” which I think is wonderful, a real example of beauty in down to earth life. Perhaps a sort of mixed beauty, never the less real.

As a matter of form I will proceed to tell you how I am getting along, then I will stop for certainly I will be out of here in a few days and who knows I may be sent to Nashville!

We are given much freedom here and have never once been told to stay in bed. If I didn’t know that it is all right for me to be up and about I would feel uneasy. Due to the fact that Captain Scurry told me before I left England that I was able and don’t hesitate whenever I want to. I go to the dining room for meals and stay up a little between meals, but am still taking it easy and not doing too much. I feel quite well but am afraid that this sort of life for six months has made me lazy. Extremely so.

Enough of this, so until later—and hoping to see you.
Love to all,

Albert

March 1944

Dear All,

I’m going to try to call you a little later on today, but just in case I don’t get to—here goes a letter!

I left New York via hospital train Friday afternoon and arrived here at Kennedy General Hospital, Memphis, Tenn. today at noon. I had rather expected to be sent to the hospital there in Nashville, but this is just another move in the Army.

Of course I’m anxious to see all of you and for that reason would like to be there, but this place is almost too good to be true. At last I’m again in a room to myself and a private bath! We got here just before lunch, or rather I would say dinner—chicken dinner at that. Honestly I’m expecting to be awakened any minute to find it’s all a dream and If I do I’ll certainly be in a terrible mood.

Right now though, I’m feeling fine. The Major was in for a few minutes right after we came in and he seems to be an awfully nice person. Major Gallagher I think his name is. After dinner I went right away for an X-ray, a rather long walk too, and I found that I didn’t get a bit tired. It’s wonderful how quickly I’ve gotten my strength back. When I returned, I retired to my private bath to give myself the once over. I felt like a tramp as a result of the trip. It was, however, a very comfortable journey and the personnel in charge pleasant.

Just as at every other hospital for the new few days I suppose that I’ll have all sorts of check-ups to verify all reports and records sent with me. Everything has been sent. Since mine is a pulmonary case I am now in an isolation ward, or rather all of us who came in are isolated until said check-ups are made.

What you will want to know about coming down. I don’t know, but as much as I’d like to see all of you, I don’t think it would be advisable quite yet. Perhaps one of you would like to come down in the next day or so—that being the case, fine. Rules and regulations being what they are that’s all I can suggest now.

Lots of love to all,

Albert
20 March, 1944

Welcome sweet springtime. We greet thee with joy! Tra-la-la, tra-la! It hasn’t been very springy here today, but never the less the season has arrived, so welcome spring!

I wanted to call you last night but found that there’s no public phone in this part of the building, so I’ll just have to wait.

I’ve spent this day trying to get out a few letters telling people that I’m back and that I want to hear from them.

This morning one of the R.C. Gray Ladies was in and brought an old but interesting copy of House and Garden. Also this morning an R. C. social worker stopped in to see if there was anything that I needed. There wasn’t but she being a graduate of Ward Belmont, a short story writer, and familiar with a number of interesting Nashvillians was a most enjoyable visitor.

This afternoon just after I had gotten up from a good long nap, two women of the R. C. personnel came in. One of them was Mrs. Spain from Nashville whom I’ve known casually for quite some time. She’s of the theatrical set, a good friend of Albertine’s and knows everybody. I enjoyed seeing her very much and hearing all of the current news and gossip. She’s doing special work here in preparation for overseas duty.

Well that’s a pretty good summary of the day’s activity. So far I have had no exams and have yet to hear from the X-ray. It really doesn’t matter too much because I can tell that I’m getting on all right and I’m feeling much better.

Mother if you should decide to come down I don’t know that you’d be able to contact me, but through the Red Cross here in the hospital.

It’s nearly meal time so will stop, but again tomorrow.

Love,

Albert

March 25, 1944

Dear All,

You have no idea how much it meant having you visit me even if the time you were here did pass much too rapidly; and after you had gone I realized how much there was (or
rather is) to talk about that none of us even mentioned. The flowers, the fruit, candy, magazines etc., I appreciate very much and have been enjoying today.

My appetite seems to have picked up a bit after that “ordeal” this morning! As usual I’m spending the day writing mostly. The mail this afternoon brought letters from Suzy and Adelaide and Lt. Hogan, and yours of the 19th of January.

Pickard’s letter that came while you were here had little or no news, merely a note saying that he was glad that I’m back in the States and in Memphis. Today has been beautiful, but they say it’s turning a little colder outside tonight. I hope that we don’t have any more winter but it’s quite likely that we will.

I hope that you had a good trip home and weren’t too tired from your journey. Sir Coco was glad for you to be back, especially glad to get out of the basement, and I can’t say that I blame him.

Two ladies came in tonight with a big bunch of flowers they had gathered from their yard and said they wanted to share them with those here in the hospital. They thought my flowers were very pretty and gave me about half a dozen big jonquils to put with them. It really brightens them up and the contrasting colors are very good. I thought it was awfully nice of them to do something like that. I think that they must live near here. Anyway they were very informed and friendly about it and one appreciates such gestures.

I hope that your day at church will be very pleasant I will be thinking about all that’s going on. Tell everyone hello for me.

Love to all,

Albert

April 7, 1944

Dear All,

The night of Good Friday, Easter Season, 1944

I remember this day last year how strange and distant it seems now, so different from this—my life these days. The days, the weeks, the months all so full and busy with importance seem to slip by rather hurriedly, and in no time at all it’s a year!

I’m sorry to disappoint you but I’m afraid that little party I’d planned for Easter this year at No. 4 Peacock Alley will have to be postponed! I’m sure that you all are terribly disappointed, and will miss sitting on the floor on chartreus velvet cushions immensely,
but one really shouldn’t make plans so far ahead, should one? At least not to the extent of inviting the guests!

The food would have been suspect; and the flowers and the music and the people (groping around in the candlelight, stumbling all over everything, spilling tea down the back of the honor guest, and upsetting a tray of soft, mushy, open faced sandwiches a la M. R. M. right in the middle of the floor, making a complete mess of the white fur rug. To say nothing of the long string of real pears that someone no doubt would be wearing until their chain broke and they all ran down into the very intricate works of my red and gold piano, making the soloist sound like a ten piece, third rate orchestra.) On second thought maybe it’s just as well that I couldn’t have that party; but next year my dears, I’m planning one even better! You will come won’t you?

As you have no doubt guessed, I really have no news no nothing, so this is—as is quite apparent—a product of the devil’s workshop, a completely vacuum filled mind.

I did rather keep on the alert today about two and again at seven, but really wasn’t surprised when you didn’t show up, but as I’ve said before—one never knows.

Love to all,

Albert

While Albert was in the hospital in Memphis we made two trips to see him.

The first trip sister went with us, and the four of us were so excited, yet there was a feeling of uncertainty—for not having seen Albert we wondered if there could be any trouble that he had kept from us. When we finally arrived in his room at the hospital, with our hearts beating with excitement, there never was a more sincere nor a greater feeling of gratitude when he greeted us in such a delighted and happy attitude. It was a time we had all been praying for, and now the soldier we all adored, was back in the States. What a wonderful day it was!

Of course we could tell he was not as full of energy as usual, and he had lost some weight, but after both of our visits we felt that time and the proper rest would be the means of his return to normal health. Our visits were rather short since visiting hours had to be observed. We all felt so grateful that he was back in the States, and had made the trip without any difficulty.

On April 15, 1944 he was released from the hospital in Memphis to Veterans Administration Hospital in Outwood, Kentucky. We were sorry he could not have been placed nearer Nashville, but we realized that we could go to Kentucky to visit him as long as we could get gas to make the trip in the car. Since gas had been rationed during the war, it was not always available, which had caused less travel at home, as well as to other parts of the country.
Excerpts from the letter he wrote of his trip to the hospital seem quite typical of life in the army.

Dear All,

It’s twenty minutes past five and I’m here and settled back in bed for a couple of weeks of examinations, etc. The same old routine over and over, only this time it will be final, I hope. This time is not isolation, but back in a ward full of people

I miss my own room, the little freedom I had in Memphis. All I can say at present is that this looks like a very nice hospital, but it’s Veteran, and I don’t like that. I had an interview with the doctor in charge, a Major, and he seems very nice. Very thorough and lets one know what’s what, which of course I like. I’m very comfortably situated and no doubt I will get used to this sort of set-up again in no time.

Kennedy was a dream, but believe me, getting away from there was a perfect nightmare. I never had as much trouble trying to get a decent outfit together in my life. I told you what happened to my clothes. Fortunately I had an extra pair of trousers, which I finally got pressed successfully and the shirt you brought of course was all right, and the shoes didn’t have a squeak after all, and my cap arrived all right yesterday. But oh, that blouse! My blouse didn’t come from the cleaners until late yesterday afternoon, and what a perfect mess. Just as wrinkled as tissue paper, and the same note attached, (will not press). You see they processed the clothes in the hospital before we left England, and the chemicals ruined the fabric.

I thought perhaps a good steam job would get them out so I hung it in the bathroom and turned the hot shower on and let it steam for an hour or more, and then one of the W.A.A.C.’s tried to iron it out for me. Well, her efforts were great but the results only fair, so she decided that another steam job would certainly do the trick after such a pressing. So back to the shower it went for about ten minutes of the most vigorous steaming you ever saw. It came out with all of its original wrinkles and then some! It was both funny and pitiful. How could I travel with a coat like that? She took it home with her to a decent ironing board and brought it back about ten thirty, once more in a fair condition, the very best.

Up at five this morning, dressed and ready to leave, in all my finery at five thirty. My attendant was late and we just made the train by a few minutes. When I got on the train my blouse and I felt fine and the rest of the trip my shirt really looked nice and was accented rather favorable by an English woven tie. Of course my trousers were a little too short for low cut shoes, but not bad, even if the creases did have a tendency to run down the sides of my legs, rather than the front center.
We had seats in the Pullman and breakfast and lunch on the train. Consequently a very pleasant trip even if the attendant was one of those poor souls who cannot read and could scarcely sign his name. I feel sorry for people like that but why do they assign such people the job of escorting patients and attending to all the details?

In such haste he came off without meal tickets, not knowing what station we were leaving from, or very little else, for that matter. It ended up that I was having to do all the work of having meal vouchers made out on the train and checking all the details of the trip. Of course such things are no trouble but the idea is enough! When we got here (incidentally this place is at Dawson Springs, Ky.) I even had to help him make the necessary arrangements for the remainder of his trip.

We pulled into the really country little place about 1:45 and were met by a hospital car. Bag and baggage I arrived here and was put through the paces of millions of questions again.

Really the hospital and grounds are very attractive but—oh, well, I don’t intend staying here forever, but seeing some of these old men wandering around it isn’t very inviting and adds wonderfully to my illusions of an old soldier’s home!

Love,

Albert

May 11, 1944

Dear All,

Today is important. Every day is important, but today is special. Today is your birthday, Daddy, and a beautiful day it is too. Here’s every good wish for today and every day that follows.

I remember a year ago. It was your birthday and far away a huge ship slipped silently through the deep, calm waters of a mountain bordered channel. The sun was bright, and the air was cold, fresh and invigorating. As the ship plowed the water its passengers gazed with excitement and joy at the supreme beauty of the land. Immediately along the shores were scattered, what seemed to be, tiny miniature villages; white and gray and pale, blue houses with red roofs. Little farms placed here and there on the hillsides, and snow peaked mountains far away, made the back-drop.

It was like a dream, a dream of some quiet, peaceful fairyland—scope, of an unreal world. Noisy white seagulls played fearlessly and friendly around the ship. Their graceful
forms against a sky of intense blue, smeared with white fleece clouds, dramatized the scene.

The voyage over, and hearing anchors dropped into the deep to stay a proud transport of warriors. The jabbering thousands moving about on her open decks—from stem to stem and from port to starboard, drinking, as it were, the beauty and the splendor.

To the left and across the bay was an age-old castle, stone and sturdy, resting amidst green pastures and plowed fields, separated by neat clipped hedges of wet green. And the backdrop still, mauve mountains capped with snow.

That was a dramatic entrance—the beginning of a new and unpredicted life. It was the 11th of May 1943, a year ago, your birthday, and I was there.

In the morning mail I had letters from Aunts Lee and Addie, and one from Lt. Cupp in England; the stationery came too, and as you can see, I’m using it.

This morning I read an interesting article in the May issue of Better Homes and Gardens. It was written by a designer whose style I admire, T. H. Rofjohn Gibbins. Its entitled “Goodbye Mr. Chippendale”, and I think you’ll find it amusing reading, even if you don’t agree with him.

It’s luncheon time at Outwood, so until tomorrow,

Love to all,

Albert

May 14, 1944

Dear All,

It was certainly good to talk to all of you. Wonderful invention, the telephone!

Seems that I’m one of those people with a year ago today complex, any way I can’t help but think how different today is from Mother’s Day of last year.

On Saturday night the boat was hot and stuffy and everyone was kept inside due to blackout regulations. There was a young C.A.A.F. Sgt on duty at one of the outside doors and a group of us got to talking, and he was talking of his experiences in Canada. He wasn’t a Canadian, but a Bostonian who had joined the C.A.A.F., a nice sort of fellow and interesting. It grew late and fellows were stretched out on the floors sleeping. The Sgt and I talked on and on, and it was very late. I finally tried to sleep a little but it was too
hot. Then Tom and I, his name was Tom McConn, sat on the stairs and talked the rest of the night. I remember well the conversation.

He was a tail-gunner, and I remember how I felt when he talked so calmly, and matter of fact, about his very slim chance of even coming back. He expected to be killed. To me that sort of attitude was bad, but to him it seemed very natural. We didn’t talk about that much; instead we talked about ourselves and what we had done. He was an artist and his father owned a big furniture house in Boston.

Just before dawn, that 0-hour on the ocean, we went out on deck. It was still and there was no one about. The rolling and roaring of the wild sea was loud and made the lack of other sounds more apparent.

We stood by the rail, silently because there didn’t seem to be anything important enough to talk about. As the pale light faded through a heavy cloudy sky there seemed a bewildering calm in spite of the great force, so much of nothing except sky and sea that there appeared to be calmness. The water that had been almost black seemed to fade with the sky, and all was a panorama of blues, deep rolling blues of the ocean and gray misty blue of the sky.

I turned and looked at Tom and thought how well he fit the color scheme. His eyes, as he gazed out beyond where one could see, were the cold slate blue of the heavy clouds, and his uniform the color of the deep. As we stood there a new day was silently born, but not without excitement.

The blues faded to grays and when we walked high on the upper deck. The colors of the great gray ship and the sky and the sea seemed almost one. It was windy and cold and still furious up so high, the rocking of the ship was more noticeable, and as we walked along there was a great sensation of excitement and thrill that I couldn’t hold back. It was a gray, gloomy day in the mid-Atlantic, but it was a beautiful and vigorous day that was inspiring.

Well, that was a year ago today, Mother’s Day 1943.

Love to all,

Albert

May 30, 1944

Good Evening All,
Let’s see what’s new. The big flag has wavered about in the hot summer breeze today at half-mast. To honor our valiant men who have courageously given their lives for their country; to remind those of us who have given so little, that a terrific price has and is being paid for the future security of civilization, and to inspire us to so live that we may in some small way be rightfully entitled to the freedom that we are privileged to joy.

My another year see the realization of the “world peace” for which those men fought

Love to all,
Albert

June 6, 1944

D Day

Dear All,

I was awakened by the startling and electrifying news this morning of the start of the great liberation of France, and all of Europe. It’s difficult to realize that the day so long anticipated has finally arrived.

It’s difficult for us there to fully realize what it means. The direct news from that theater of war, as broadcast, is thrilling and horrifying and makes us more aware of the reality of war. It makes me, personally, feel very helpless and far away from that which is all important on this day. It makes me experience a mixture of strange emotions and mental pictures of what might have been if I could have been there, been there for the world’s greatest show.

The time is now. On this day following Allied Victory in Rome our forces, our men, men we know, our friends, push into France on the road to Berlin and victory!

The time is now, the time for prayer and faith.

Love to all,
Albert

July 27. 1944

I really got a big laugh at your story of the Jeep. I can just imagine you riding to church in a Jeep!
O, those crazy Hadleys!

Certainly nothing dull about them.

Adelaide seems to have a wonderful time in New York. She saw so much of interest including nearly all of the really good shows.

When I’m not thinking or hearing about New York, I have no desire to go there, but the sounds of those two words instill music to my ears! Turn up the volume, I can hardly hear it!

Today has been as usual and that’s not unusual. I’ve done the same old things including Suzy’s purse. I should get it finished by Saturday.

Am sorry to stop now, so till tomorrow – Au revoir,

Albert.
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