

This Is My Life

By

B. Davis Evans

Steve,
This is my copy (very worn)
of Dad's history. But I have the
original and can make more if
glad you want one. Dad would be
happy - Love,
Pat

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by B. Davis Evans

Paraphrasing Nephi of old, I too was born of goodly parents. Thomas and Priscilla Evans and David and Mary Davis were early pioneers to Spanish Fork. They were my grandparents. My father, Joseph J. Evans was a hard-working, descent man, and no kinder or more humble woman ever lived than my mother, Margaret Davis Evans.

I was born in a humble, adobe, three-room home, located at 511 East Center Street in Spanish Fork, Utah, December 28, 1911. Eleven brothers and sisters preceeded me. My parents lost three of their twelve children in infancy.

I was three years old when the original home was remodeled. I remember well the throes of getting settled in the large bungalow. It still stands on that site and is now the property of my nephew, Joseph J. Ream.

In the remodeling, three bedrooms were built on the top level, and there were two bedrooms on the ground floor. The home had a roughed-in bathroom and a porch along the complete south side of the house plus another section of porch on the west. Indoor water and bathroom facilities were not part of the dwelling until I was in the ninth grade.

I don't recall of my three older sisters, Maggie, Mary Ann and Farrel living at home as they had married or relocated to jobs elsewhere. I arrived when my mother was 45 years old and dad was 48; they always seemed old to me.

I was nearly seven months old before my father saw me as he was employed by the State of Utah as a Road Building Supervisor in Washington County, where the prisoners from the State Prison were put to building roads in that rugged country. For seven years J.J. supervised over one hundred convicts on the projects,

so when I was born, my name was decided on via mail. My father's nephew, James Little, lived in Washington County, and dad learned to respect him very much, so when it came time to name his last child, he suggest "Bud", which was anickname borne by James Little. I became Bud Davis Evans on May 5, 1912. My name and a blessing was given to me by William D. Holt, a cousin.

"When the house remodeling was completed, my older brothers and sisters, who were still at home, laid claim on the three upstairs bedrooms. Joe, the eldest, claimed the south room. Daisy the north and Minnie the west. Lew, Mildred and I had no specific rooms; we slept with whom would have us. Joe only used his room for a few years because in 1917, he was called to serve in World War I, and following the war he was married to Dale Beck. Lew and I fell heir to what was ever after known as Joe's room.

SCHOOLING

My education had its beginning in The Snell School, a one-room, brick building that stood on the corner of 500 East Center Street, directly across the street from my home. The first and second grades were taught there by one teacher, Margaret Bearnson. I was five years old when the school year began; my sixth birthday coming in December, therefore, I shouldn't have begun school until the following year. My mother gave me a birthday party and invited all my school friends, and being the person that she was, she even invited the teacher, who learned that I had just turned six. She reported my situation to the district office, and by January 1, 1918, I was a school drop-out.

The Snell School was closed that year, and the following year, I began first grade legitimately in the Central School. Who became my teacher? Margaret Bearnson, a bitter, green-eyed, red-headed

woman. She wielded a yardstick like a buckineer used his sword. I hated and feared her and school; I learned nothing that year.

Second grade was a reverse situation; it was taught by a little, meek woman who rarely moved off her duff. I was so unimpressed by her, I can't even remember her name.

Cleo Pearce taught me in the third grade. I was a non-reader, and I suffered because of it, but Cleo did much in teaching us to perform--pantomimes, improvisations of the Nursery Rhymes etc. I learned to read because I wanted to know what those little acts were all about. Cleo only lasted one year; I learned later that the school board decided she taught frills, not the three R's, therefore, she was fired. I think her big trouble was she came into the school system too soon, and educators didn't understand that a kid could learn by performing. Miss Pearce taught me to love school, inspired me to learn and instilled in me a desire to entertain. She gave me my first opportunity to act; I was the spider that frightened Miss Muffit.

Norma Ferguson Larsen was my fourth grade teacher.(at this writing, she is still alive) She made school interesting by promising to read to us the final half-hour of each day if she had no trouble with us during the day. She chose good kid stories; we heard all the Oz books, Alice in Wonderland, a few Tarzan books plus many others that winter.

It was in the fourth grade that I fell in love--Faun Jones was a beautiful, dark girl whose father was a good friend to my father. One night while the Joneses were visiting at our home, our fathers pledged their support that Faun and I would marry when we arrived at marriagable ages. I decided that my destiny was settled; all I had to do was relax and wait, but Faun died that winter of

pneumonia. I was desolate; I decided I'd be a bachelor.

Fifth grade was a nightmare. Jemima Hales, a tacatarn, quick-tempered, old woman was my teacher. I never ceased to be afraid of her, therefore, I learded very little that year. One day I was engaged in a bit of playful activity with my Geography book standing up on my desk to shield Mrs. Hales from seeing what I was doing. My book stood upside down. (even then I wasn't too smart.) She arrived suddenly at my dest, picked up the book, turned it around, but when I grinned up at her, she took the book in her boney hands and hit me savagely on the head. I grinned the second time, and she banged me again, knocking the front of my head against the hard desk top. By the time she'd hit me four or five times, I ceased to grin. I had a egg-sized knot on my forehead and a sore spot on the rear of my head.

By the time I was eleven years old, I was able to work on my father's farm, and year after year I worked late in the fall, getting a late start in school; I seemed to never completely catch up with the class.

W.W. McCallister taught me in the sixth grade. He was a good man, but his arithmetic teaching discouraged me as November was a poor time to start school.

For a number of years, my father raised sugar cane from which we made our own malasses. We also did custom work until late in the fall so I was prevented from gaining my potential as a student

During my six years at the Central School, the complete student body lined up on the large cement areas that spread out from each of the main entrances. We'd mark time to piano music as produced by Ernest Whitwood, then we'd march into the school thence into our assigned classrooms. . The routine was a daily experience

regardless of weather.

In the seventh grade, held at the Thurber School, Leslie Cornaby was my homeroom teacher. It was his first year of teaching. Others who taught me there were, Leo Hales, Hub Tuttle, Wm. C. Beckstrom and Winona Thomas Frandsen.

September, 1928, I was numbered among the first students to enter the new Spanish Fork Junior High School at 200 East 100 North. The building wasn't quite finished so deep into the year, craftsmen continued to disturb our concentration with their sawing, hammering and pipe fitting.

I don't remember much about that eighth grade year except it was a time for growing into manhood, suffering from radical body changes, but I survived.

My ninth grade year was not a happy one. I was able to do a man's work on the farm, therefore, I did so. We contracted the baling and hauling of 100 tons of hay. It was to be delivered to freight cars at the Union Pacific Depot, located west of town. Our hay wagons were drawn by horses and two trips per wagon in a twelve hour day was a good day's work. We carried the bales, each weighing 90 to 100 pounds, deep into those box cars and piled them high above our heads as the car filled up. That year I began school in December; I failed to catch up with the class. English was the only class in which I kept abreast with my fellow students. Maude Johnson was my teacher. Wallace Brockbank was principal, and he knew who was qualified to enter high school. I was numbered among the 20 or so students who did not graduate from the ninth grade. I figured it was the end of my life as classmates moved on, but it really was the beginning. I had been associating with bums who all quit that year. I was the only failing student to

repeat the ninth grade, but I realized Mr. Brockbank meant business so I settled down, becoming friends to such boys as Francis Rowe, Bill Beckstrom, Dick Manwaring and others. I won the lead in the school operetta that year, "Miss Cherryblossom." My leading lady was Leah Nelson. Of all the plays, musicals and operettas I participated in during the following years, "Miss Cherryblossom" was the only one in which I won the girl.

HIGH SCHOOL

I enjoyed my high school days, remaining fast friends with the boys mentioned above. Fay Jensen Buttle was my drama teacher; she used me in a number of plays and operettas. One of the best parts I'd won up to that time was that of Bos'n Bill the Sailor in the operetta "The Hermit of Hawaii." F.J. Faux was our music man, and he did much for me.

Spanish Fork High School produced its first original opera during my senior year. "Estraleta" it was called. I wrote the words to a number of the songs, I also wrote the words and music to one. I knew very little about notes. I'd hum my song to a nice girl, Roberta Wilde, whom I dated rather regularly. She would write down the music. Eldon Richardson and I played the pair of comedians in the show. We acted opposite Lois Tippetts and Doris Huff.

I was elected class president that year. My nearest competition was Preston Hughes. I was also president of "The Mask Club," a drama organization founded by Ada Anderson, a first year drama teacher that year.

My Father seldom took any interest in school activities, but for some reason he attended a night meeting of the Mask Club when I won the presidency. I'll never forget his elation, not because I became president, but because I'd won the position over Dr. Hughes' boy, Preston. Preston was my nearest competitor for both

positions.

I was graduated from high school in the spring of 1931. I shall never forget my having to give the Address of Welcome speech. I believe that was the happiest incident of my mother's life unless she was happier at my birth, but I am unable to remember that event.

COLLEGE

During my high school days, I thought that I'd like to become a veterinarian, so when school started in the fall of 1931, depression time, my mother sold a calf, and with the money I was able to pay my first quarter's tuition.

My attendance at Brigham Young University was so interrupted during the next few years because of lack of money and missing quarters of school, my pre-med course became a bore, and the classes I took for fun became my favorites; prior to the end of my Sophomore year, I'd shifted my major to theatre with an English minor. Dr. and Katheryn Pardoe were my favorite teachers, and I had the privilege of playing in numerous roles; I either played a comic or a villain. Probably the best role I played was Mr. Snobson in the play, "Fashions," or "Festi" the clown in Shakespear's Twelfth Night.

I took private drama lessons from Mrs. Pardoe. I had to find and cut a three-act play to 55 minutes, impersonating at least nine characters. I read it for the college Mask Club. It was a play titled "The Butter and Egg Man," a light comedy. During the following years, I read the play in public about fifty times.

I attended the Y using various ways of getting there: I carried passengers in various types of broken down cars. I exchanged

rides, and during the year 1934-35, I lived on campus in my father's camp wagon, a homemade structure, ugly, unpainted and mounted on an iron wheeled haywagon. The year was the bleakest of my college years. David Prior and I stayed together, and we didn't have enough money to attend the ten cent matinee dances so we'd find ways of sneaking in to save those dimes. I recall Dave having no shirts; he wore a muffler under his zipper jacket practically all year.

Following my mission, 1936-38, Byron Geslison existed in the same wagon. There once was a grove of trees, "Raymond Grove," located in the vicinity of where the Wilkinson Center now stands. We parked our wagon in that grove. A little flowing well bubbled away there, and deep in the trees stood a privy. We had all the conveniences of home.

I was graduated from the B.Y.U. in the spring of 1940. It had taken me nine years to obtain my B.A. Degree. Since that time I have garnered enough hours for a Master's Degree, but I lacked my thesis.

I can honestly say I never knew a student who obtained a college degree on less money than I, unless it was David Prior.

MY WORLD OF WORK

I moved into the world of work at the age of five; my sister, Minnie was attending the Brigham Young University, and to get the necessary funds, she contracted the thinning of sugar beets from a neighbor, John Warner Sr. She hired my sister Mildered and me plus a few neighborhood kids to help. I recall my first day on the job; I lay down in the field and cried because it was only 11:00 a.m. I wanted noon to be there. Min held me in her arms and assured me that noon would come soon.

Every spring for many years I'd work for farmers, thinning beets in the spring and topping and loading them in the fall.

My father and grandfather had homesteaded 170 acres of ground high on the east bench. Dry grain was raised. I rather enjoyed the planting and harvesting, but the Strawberry Water Project came to the valley and we bought or tried to buy in on a goodly share of it. A mortgage hung over that ranch from that day until we lost the water but retained the land. From a very early age until I obtained my degree, I was constantly reminded of the poverty connected with farming.

Dad worked for many years for the State Road Commission as a supervisor. My brother Joe ran the farm assisted by Lew and me. Dad sacrificed all he made from the state in paying toward that mortgage, and all the extra earnings from the farm went in that direction. Any money spent for schooling or other frills had to be earned off the ranch by working for farmers, canning factory work and during my college days, I worked some falls at the Spanish Fork Sugar Factory. I worked swing shift and attended school mornings and early afternoons. I learned to study on the job.

I was married on August 16, 1939. I had one more year of schooling. My eldest son, Joe, was born near the date of my graduation.

I was unable to obtain a teaching position during my first year out of school, therefore, I sold furniture for Taylor Brothers Furniture Company in Spanish Fork for one year. We lived frugally; times were hard.

I obtained my first teaching position in Murray, Utah, 1941. My contract read \$950 per year. I worked evenings for the J. C.

Penney Company at Murray. I earned fifty cents per hour. On Sundays, I worked at a Standard Oil Service Station. I suppose the reason I've never dealt with the company is because I'm reminded of those hard times.

My teaching was difficult as I taught Civics, English and Drama to students ranging from the seventh to the twelfth grades. We presented two plays that year, "Watta a Life," and "The Haunted Hotel."

I was teaching at Murray when World War II broke out. (1941) Many of my senior male students were later killed in the conflict.

When contract signing time came, I informed the Superintendent that I'd return if I could make \$1200 per year, but he said Murray could not afford me, therefore, I obtained a job at a Remington Arms Plant, located on Redwood Road west of Salt Lake City. I supervised seven women who operated stations around a machine that made 35 millimeter machine gun bullets. I was not happy in my work, but I made almost triple the money I'd have made at teaching.

We purchased a home in Murray for \$3300 on Boxelder Street. We were quite content. During the 18 months we lived there, Eunice and Carol Richardson lived with us part of the time. Eunice was obtaining a business education and Carol worked.

The Japanese were being moved inland from the West Coast and one of their relocation camps came to Utah. It was known as Topaz, located about 16 miles west of Delta. I passed my test for Civil Service and became a teacher there. I couldn't earn \$1200 per year for teaching white students, but I received \$3500 plus many benefits for teaching Japanese.

I learned a great deal that year, 1942-43; none of my students had ever performed before, and I found many talented actors and actresses among the Japanese. We worked and taught in those drafty, unheated shacks. Many times in mid-winter I'd assemble my classes around the pot-bellied stove in order to keep warm. I was always amazed as to how badly the Japanese people were treated, yet they, especially the students, complained very little.

Gas was rationed, and Gina developed hives from the desert dust so we had to come into Salt Lake City quite often for medical reasons. We supplimented our gas with kerosine and before spring, I'd burned up a good Oldsmobile engine , but we saved money on gas that was unobtainable.

In the late summer of 1943, I realized that the camp would close soon so I began looking for a new position. I was offered a contract at Tooele, Utah and at Spanish Fork. Webo District paid less money, yet I wanted to come home, therefore, I signed an \$1800 contract and began my teaching here in the Spanish Fork Junior High School. We rented an apartment in the Jones Bowen home for a few months then we purchased the Elmer Bearnson home at 800 East 200 South. We lived there for two years then we purchased a lot at 445 East Center Street from W. E. Brockbank. I began building in the spring of 1947, giving myself the summer to complete the home. I began the construction in June, doing practically all the work myself. We moved in an unfinished house in October. The lot house and carpeting cost a total of \$5,500 the same amount we derived from the sale of the Bearnson home.

One of the sad experiences of my life took place that year: Dad had given me 40 acres of land, one fourth of the ranch, and

because of the debts hanging over us due to such things as the purchasing of the Bearnson home, doctor bills, hospital bills on my first born child, I mortgaged my 40 acres to my brother Lew. I took a city lot he owned for the acreage and sold the lot for \$1400 with the understanding that when I was financially able, I'd pay him the \$1400, but my sister, Mildred Ream was his guardian because he had been injured in an accident a few years earlier. I was foolish not having a contract of some kind, but I was too trusting. When I was able to repay the debt, she hesitated.

"Wait until you're better fixed," she said.

Lew died suddenly, and the land was in her name. I tried again to pay her off but she claimed she couldn't remember any agreement, so after her death in 1979, all her property became the property of her two children, Sharon Meyer and Joseph J. Ream. Loosing my birthright in such a stupid manner reminds me of the Bible story of Esau, trading his birthright to his brother for a mess of porridge.

I taught in the Spanish Fork Junior High School for two years. E.E. Knudsen was my principal for one year and Rulon Nelson Sr. the second year. I was transferred to the Spanish Fork High School in 1946 where I spent the remaining years of my teaching. 1946 to 1961 were spent in the old building; 1961 to 1976 in the new building.

During these years, I led my students to win 14 Regional, first-place drama trophies and six State Sweepstakes Trophies. I believe the most satisfied time of my teaching was when we beat out Highland High School for a Sweepstakes Trophy. Highland had 3300 students in its student body; we had 750.

During my years of teaching, I directed 75 three-act plays and more one-act plays than I care to remember plus 25 operettas and musicals. The modern musicals produced on our new stage, that I had the privilege of helping design, were Oklahoma on two occasions, South Pacific on two occasions, Music Man, Carousel, Carnival, Camelot, Hello Dolly, (I played Gildersleve.) Fiddler on the Roof, Annie Get Your Gun, George M, Bye Bye, Birdie, Sound of Music, Flower Drum Song. Brigadoon, My Fair Lady, 13 Daughters, The Nicado and others. In 1974 our one act play, "Afraid of the Dark," won the best play in state competition. Don Walker won the Best Actor Award.

I ended my teaching career in 1976. I'd done my thing in the old school at 400 South Main from 1946 to 1961, then I had the joy of helping to plan the big stage, my teaching room and the Little Theatre in the new high school. Even after 15 years there, I'd have changed very few things; I loved it all.

I might mention here that when we did "Oklahoma" the second time, my daughter, Patricia played the lead. (Laurie). It was with love and gratitude that the production moved forward. She had spent a great deal of time with me at musical rehearsals, then as a senior, she was my leading lady.

J. Angus Christensen was my principal from 1946 to 1970. I taught under J. Rulon Nelson Jr. from 1970 to 1976.

I feel sorry for people who work at uninteresting jobs. I couldn't imagine a working world outside the pleasant atmosphere of a high school drama department. I still enjoy good musical and dramatic productions, but I have no desire to participate; my ambitions have turned toward the world of creative writing. I've decided that people can find satisfaction in all types of labor. If not the world would indeed be a dreary place.

I left teaching with mixed emotions. I could have taught one more year as my 65th birthday came in December, but the district gave \$3700 to teachers who retired one year early, so with my retirement and social security that allowed \$200 to Patricia for being a full-time student at BYU, it would have cost me money to have taught my final year.

MY WORLD OF WRITING

Virginia began writing for state, county and local newspapers during the 60's. She was responsible for a column in the Spanish Fork Press. It carried the title "Around the Town." ~~In 1966, she~~
~~My wife had a hysterectomy and I substituted in~~
~~accompanied my sister Mildred on one of her many tours, so for two~~
~~her column~~
~~weeks the column became my responsibility. For some reason I can't~~
~~recall, the column in The Press became mine so from that day in~~
~~1966 to the time of this writing, January, 1985, . I have written~~
~~it weekly. In 1971, J.C. Henderson, Editor, saddled me with the~~
~~writing of a weekly editorial. I was also the Athletic Reporter~~
~~and sold advertising for a number of years. These many assignments~~
~~became rather hectic during my final years of teaching, but~~
~~after my retirement, my work with the paper has been enjoyable.~~

~~I have sold a few magazine articles; a short story, "The Iron Rod," received honorable mention in the Writer's Digest Short Story Contest. If I'd have kept my rejection slips from magazines, such as Reader's Digest, Red Book, Good Housekeeping etc., I'd have had enough to have papered the wall around my bathtub where I do a great deal of my writing..~~

Presently I'm trying to develop a novel, an outgrowth from an original short sotry, "The Lady and the Tomb." I have faith that I shall succeed.

When I began writing for the Press, a friend, William Ross Fillmore, began putting my articles, columns etc. in a scrap-book. He lived to be over 90 years old. He instructed his children that at his death I was to get the book. Mr. Fillmore died in July, 1982. His last entry in the book was one week prior to his death. I have been keeping the scrap-book current since his death, but one can easily determine where that neat, meticulous man left off and I began. I have over 1500 entries in the book.

MY WORLD AS A MISSIONARY

The depression period of 1936 came to pass. I'd received a call to fill a mission for the LDS church during the early winter of 1935, therefore I didn't attend school but worked at every job available and saved all the money I could. I received \$175.00 in donations at my farewell. This was a good sum for a missionary at that time.

When I left for Florida in April, 1936, I had nearly \$400.00 in the bank plus my way paid by my Seventies Quorum. I traveled by train to my field of labor. I instructed my sister, Mildred to send me only the money I needed. I spent 24 months out there and never received more than \$20.00 per month, except for gifts at Christmas time.

But the night Dad, Mildred, Vivienne Taylor, Mar Johnson, Dick Hanwaring and George Hawkins saw me off at the Denver and Rio Grande station in Provo, our farm horses broke into our granary and ate wheat that had absorbed poison from the granary floor. Dad had previously stored weed poisoning there when he worked for the State Road Commission. Five horses died that night. My mission money

was used to purchase horses in order that Dad could continue farming. I wasn't told about this tragedy until my mission was over. My sister, Daisy, provided most of the money to keep me out there. I was reminded of it many times, and I finally got the truth out of my brother, Lew. Daisy was paid back many years later when some farm ground was sold.

Sixteen of my 24 mission months were spent in Miami, Florida. I enjoyed the work and the country, although I was disappointed in the lazy companions with whom I labored on occasions. My first companion was Harold Chase of Salt Lake City. He enjoyed moving pictures much more than he did tracting; he'd sometimes go to town at 10 a.m., and I'd never see him until night; three-four shows in one day wasn't out of the ordinary. He was my senior companion, and at times he'd send me around a block while he pretended to cover the next one, but I saw him many times headed back to our quarters to spend time in bed or what have you.

Even as a fresh missionary, I had my own investigator list. I knew it was against the rules of the mission to travel alone, but I decided time waste was the worse of the two evils.

I'd only been in the field a few weeks, and one early morning I approached a very nice home. I rang the bell, and a man, holding a glass of pink stuff in his hand, answered. When I explained my purpose for being there, he invited me in.

"I've been wanting to talk to one of you Mormons for a long time," he said as he ushered me into a large living room where five other people sat sipping the pink stuff. "Go ahead, tell us about Mormonism; that's a man's religion. How many wives do you have?" he questioned.

Each one of the drunks, men and women, took turns at making fun of me, giving me no chance whatever to answer any questions. I finally stumbled out of the place, seated myself on a curb down the street and took a half hour to regain my composure, and I swore I'd go back to that home some day when I was better prepared, but 18 months later, strange people had moved there and I enjoyed my visit with them.

It was on occasions such as the one mentioned above when I needed an experienced companion.

One day while traveling alone, I found a little lady, Annie Jericoat, who had lost a son in World War I. He had died without baptism and her minister gave her no hope for his redemption, but when I told her of our temple work, she became interested; she read everything I could furnish her. She also got her neighbor, Sister Kanaga, interested; they were both baptized one year later. Sister Kanaga later became Relief Society President of the Miami Branch and Sister Jericoat became enthusiastic about genealogy. She visited us at our home in Ocan on two occasions. She was doing temple work in the Salt Lake temple.

I'm sorry to say that after two years in the church, Sister Kanaga left it because her husband made it difficult for her to attend. I had the privilege of baptizing many converts, but these two ladies were my favorites.

We tried to get permission to hold park meetings in Miami's Byscane Park where President Roosevelt had been shot at only a few months earlier. We finally succeeded. We held a couple of meetings on Saturday nights. On both occasions we had visiting Elders with us, but on this particular night the following happened:

(Diary quote) Saturday, May 30, 1936. We had dinner at the Cunninghams after which we walked up town to hold our regular, Saturday evening park meeting, but Elder Chase refused to participate. He has no guts." (end of quote)

We returned to our quarters, and I was determined to get transferred; I wanted a companion who liked doing missionary work as well as I.

(Diary Quote) January 9, 1936, "I tracted and visited my investigators. Elder Chase tended to his movie duties. In the evening we held a play practice." (end of quote)

Our Southern States Mission Conference was held at Atlanta, Georgia. I had my clothing packed. I'd already written President LeGrand Richards that I wanted a transfer anywhere he could use me. Elder Chase knew he was going to return to Miami, but as luck had it, Chase was sent deep into the country area near Jacksonville, and I returned to Miami. I had the job of organizing his stuff and sending it to him.

I had many good companions after that. Such names as Elder Furr of Arizona, Elder Bodell of Salt Lake City Elder Redd of Blanding come to mind.

My labors took me from Miami to Fort Lauderdale, to Orlando thence to Jacksonville. I had directed a three act play, "Aaron Slick From Pankin Crick," in the Miami Branch, using a dozen members in the cast. It went over well; we presented it at the church two nights and were called by clubs of the area to present it at club houses. It was a good means of getting investigators and giving people, who had never had a part in a play, some stage experience.

Orlando, Florida, was a town that had been overworked by missionaries.

Elder Bodell and I labored day after day, and the number one comment we received from people was: "I've talked to your missionaries many times before. Don't you people ever give up?"

I decided to put on my old play again, "Aaron Slick." a new church had just been completed and having the use of a good stage and a member to do a good job of advertising, it went over well; we were able to get more investigators from three presentations than we had in six weeks of tracting.

I was assigned to go to Jacksonville, Florida. This large city had three branches within the city limits. I had been assigned to get a drama program going so I decided to present "The Coming of Elijah," a pageant. A play was to take place on the main stage, back of a screen were the spirits in prison, they who had died without being taught the gospel. In the pit was a chorus. I assigned the play to one branch, the prison to another and the chorus to still another. Each had its own director. Some nights I had rehearsals going on in three different buildings. I'd travel via bicycle, getting to all three before the evening was over. We all came to one place for the final rehearsal. It was a large high school with all the equipment necessary for such a mammoth production. The pageant was successful, not only getting good audiences, but people learned that they could do something dramatic, and we had many inactive members get interested by having parts in the show.

The production became known throughout the mission and we received many notes of congratulations.

During my stay in Jacksonville, I was a loner, assigned to no particular companion. I worked with the boys already stationed there, but most of my time was taken up with productions.

Due to my discouraging experiences during the first of my mission, I had a feeling that my testimony wasn't as strong as it should be, therefore my constant prayer consisted of pleading to be truly converted to the work. I now go back to a point in time just prior to my being separated from Elder Chase:

One day Chase became ill so he remained in bed all day, and was still confined there as night came. About 11 p.m., I heard a voice calling at my bedroom window: "Elda Evans, Elda Evans." I recognized the voice of that of Julius Neubeck, Branch President, a man as good and as kind as any one I've ever met.

"I'm here," I answered.

"Sister Russell is very ill in the hospital; she desires administration. Will you all come with me."

I was in Brother Neubeck's car in a matter of minutes, speeding toward a hospital. When we entered the room of Sister Russell, I decided I'd never seen anyone suffer as much as she was doing. Two nurses were holding her in bed, and she was screaming horribly. I was to anoint. I did so while her head was tossing in all directions. Brother Neubeck then sealed the anointing. He seemed to talk to God as though they were brothers. He spoke thus:

"Now looka heah God, this is a good woman who needs yo help, and we Eldas are pleading with you all to come to her aid. You know as well as we do that her family needs her, our Branch needs her, so do something now, Dear Lord. etc. etc.."

During this blessing which I felt was a bit sacreligious, Sister Russell was calming down, and by the time the good man said amen, she was resting peacefully. The two nurses stood on each side of the bed in a state of amazement. Brother Neubeck went about his business

of putting his little bottle of oil in his brief case. He seemed so unconcerned about what had just happened as though he had seen such healings numerous times. I realized only too late that I should have obtained the names of the two nurses. I may have had two more investigators, but I was amazed as they were.

As I rode back to my quarters, I knew God had answered my prayers. This experience was the first in a long series of events to help me strengthen my testimony.

While in Orlanda, Elder Lynan Bodell and I decided to do some country work, so leaving our wallets at home, we traveled deep into the country. A map had revealed that a small town, Groveland, was located 50 miles out. Late afternoon found us in the place. Seventeen baptized members lived there. We went to the home of a Brother Rich, one of the few names we'd found on the church records of Groveland. Brother Rich was ill. He had been working as a prunner of orange trees, and his right arm became paralyzed. He hadn't worked for a number of days; poverty stalked his humble home where he lived with his wife and five young children.

When we introduced ourselves, he immediately asked for administration. I sealed the anointing and promised him that from that moment on he'd commence to get well. We arranged for a cottage meeting that night in his home then we went throughout the town inviting all who cared to come to a Mormon cottage meeting. When we arrived back at the Rich home, just prior to supper time, Brother Rich was assisting his wife prepare the meal. He claimed his arm, that had been useless for a week, was healed, and he planned to return to work the following day.

The Rich home was filled with people that night. It seemed that even good news travels as many had heard of the healing of Brother Rich, and they came to see him move about

Elder Bodell and I preached late into the evening, and we enjoyed a session of questions and answers. A lovely lady, a sister-in-law of Brother Rich asked for baptism; she had been converted many years earlier, but no one with authority to baptize had come to the area. She was working deep in the country, picking tomatoes, and she was leaving after the meeting for the plantation where she boarded. It was only four miles out so I asked her if there were any ponds or lakes in the area.

"There's one in the center of the patch in which I'm picking," she happily answered.

"We'll be at the patch at noon so take along some clothing for your baptism, because you'll be soaking wet when we finish with you," I said.

Following the directions written on a paper, the following morning we walked along the sandy road and arrived at the tomato patch as the crew was breaking for lunch. Mrs. Rich was happy to see us arrive, and while she shed her overalls and getting into her white clothing, Elder Bodell searched out a pair of overalls in an old shed. He baptized Sister Rich in the pond. This was his first experience of baptizing in the mission field, and he was made very happy. Sister Rich sat on a tomato box while I confirmed her a member of the church. We obtained all the information necessary from her to send to headquarters to prove that she was truly a member then we went on our way.

We only spent five days in the area, sleeping in a different bed each night, never missing a meal but going a long time between some of them. It was a trip on which I encountered many species of bedbugs. I wrote a poem on my experiences with them. It, "Bedbugs" is found in the poetry section of this history.

We were glad to get back into Orlando and get the first good meal we'd had in nearly a week. The Groveland people seemed to eat grits,

greese, corn bread, chitlins and bacon occasionally for every meal.

I regret I didn't ask to be transferred into Groveland. I'm sure we could have organized a branch in a few weeks of labor. We had four men worthy of holding the Priesthood, and that was a good start, but I was sent to Jacksonville. I've always regretted my ignoring the prompting of the Spirit to return to the fertile field of Groveland.

I'll not relate my many other faith promoting experiences as it will make this history too long, and no one realizes more than I that people dislike reading long histories.

Refell Erickson a Provo boy, was being released from his mission when I arrived there. He remained in Miami and worked in a Jewelry Store for two years. When I received by release, we came home together, accompanied by a California Elder, Wilford Fischer. We pooled our come-home-money, and in Refell's car, we came to Utah by way of the East Coast to New York City thence into Canada back in the U.S. at Detroit thence to Chicago where an April snow bound us there for a week. We came home by way of the old Mormon Trail, commencing at Nauvoo, Ill.

At this writing, Refell lives in Salt Lake City. He became a very good business man and is now retired. He was my Best Man at my wedding, and I gave my third boy his name, Michael Refell Evans

MY CHURCH WORLD

When I reached the age of accountability, I was baptized a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The font was located next to the old coal furnace in the basement of the original first ward church. I was baptized by Leslie Cornaby and confirmed by his father, H. S. Cornaby.

The old building was very inconvenient, having only two classrooms. Sunday School claasses were scattered in all corners of the chapel, in the foyer and some in a little wooden structure that stood at the rear of the main building.

The thing I remember most about church in my early youth was the sacrament; the partaking of the bread was no problem, but the water was a disease carrying activity; the deacons carried a metal goblet with two large side handles. A complete row of worshippers drank from the cup as it came along. It seemed we all tried to place our lips over near the handle to keep from getting someone elses germs. Many male members had full beards that practically filled the goblet, but if we partook of the water, we had to run a chance of catching a contagious disease. The church made a good move when it did away with those community mugs. Many lives have been saved since the custom of individual paper cups became the way to go.

In 1929 the ward was divided and the Fifth Ward was born. It was made up of all the territory in the south east section of town, from 400 East and 200 North Streets. Construction began on the stable, beautiful wardhouse in 1929. It was dedicated in 1938. We the people built it in nine long years. We used portions of it prior to its dedication by President Heber J. Grant.

The Snell School, mentioned earlier in this history was razed by our ward and the bricks from it were used as liners for the new chapel.

Following my return from the mission field, my ward and stake put me to work immediately as a Sunday School Teacher, Stake Drama Director, and before a year had passed I was sustained as Ward Clerk in the Fifth Ward Bishopric. This job didn't last long as we moved to Murray, Utah where I had obtained a teaching position at Murray High School. We lived in Murray for two years and my church work was neglected as I worked on Sunday for Standard Oil in order to keep the wolf from the door.

When we returned to Spanish Fork in 1943, I was again sustained as

Stake Drama Director, Sunday School Teacher etc. In 1946, my old friend, Byron T. Geslison, became Bishop of the Fifth Ward; he chose me as his Second Counselor which position I retained for the following nine years, during which time we purchased a 60-acre farm, planted about 100 cherry trees around the church and on a city lot owned by the ward, plus the building of a residence on a lot next to the church as an investment. It was summer and I mixed all the hod and carried the hod and brick to the bricklayer; it was practically donation labor.

Following my release from the bishopric in late 1950, I became a Counselor to Harold Holley in the Sunday School. He moved to American Fork, and I became Superintendent. I also taught the High Priests of the ward. Following my release from the Sunday School, I continued teaching the High Priests for nearly 20 years. I was relieved of the job when I moved to my present location, First Ward, where I'm an assistant teacher of the High Priests.

MY WORLD OF WOMEN

During the intervening years from my Sophomore year in high school and my mission call, I dated many girls. I'd even been accused of going steady with some. Roberta Wilde, Cleo Jensen, LaRue Thomas were some, but the one who interested me most was a Payson girl, Vivienne Taylor, a red headed, green-eyed, lovely girl. Depression had kept me from dating her as much as I desired, yet I went out with her more than any other girl. It was she who accompanied me to my mission farewell. It was she who wept at the station when I departed. It was she whom I asked to wait for me. She wrote to me regularly, yet it was she who wrote me the Dear John letter after I'd been in the field about one and one half years.

Vivienne became the wife of William Greer of Lake Shore who later became a General in the U.S. Air Force, and he was also cited as a war hero. I've seen Vivienne once since I said good bye that night in April 1936. This meeting was at the viewing of her mother-in-law.

VIRGINIA

While laboring as a missionary in Orlando, Florida, I met a jovial Elder, Andrew Cooley of Salt Lake City. We became very friendly even though I knew him only a short time prior to his release, but one day in July, 1938, after my return to Utah, I received a letter from Andy. He invited me to come to Salt Lake City and be a guest in his home during Pioneer Days. He also promised to line me up with a date, a young lady who lived next door to him. He told me her name was Virginia Lloyd, and she was 20 years old; actually she was 18, but Andy knew that I at 26 would refuse to date a girl ~~eight~~⁸ years my junior. At any rate, I accepted his invitation.. I met Virginia as she made her way from the State Street bus. to her home on Gregson Avenue, approximately 3100 South Main Street. She was a beautiful, mature girl.. My first sight of her still remains clearly in my mind; her long blond hair hung neatly over her shoulders, and she wore a black skirt with a white blouse.

During the three days of the celebration, I dated the blond neighbor girl. I suppose it was love at first sight, but I was frightened of her. She seemed to be a sheltered, tender city girl that made her an unlikely wife for a country boy who had worked nearly all the days of his life for the meager income that was mine.

During the next year, we dated occasionally, but my transportation was borderline, and money was always a problem, so our courtship was

not an outstanding romance, but we did have good times. We generally group dated with missionary pals, A.E. Bell and his girl, Mona Richards, Ray Erickson and Olive Winder, Andy Cooley and Edna Daniels plus many others.

Early in 1939, I made a surprise visit to Gina's home. She blushed heavily when she saw me, but ushered me into the kitchen for privacy, and in a lady like manner informed me that she had become engaged to a newly returned missionary, Clarence Larson, whom she'd known prior to his going into the field. She was flashing a beautiful diamond to prove her statement. It was my turn to be embarrassed; it was a long walk from that kitchen through the living room and out the front door. I bid good-bye to her parents and rushed out into the night where my good friend, Blaine Johnson, waited in his car. His date arranged for me to go with her girl friend so the trip wasn't entirely wasted.

During the days that followed a heaviness filled my heart, but I decided I couldn't blame her. It was I who was at fault in neglecting to call her occasionally, but my eight hours per day at the Spanish Fork Sugar Factory plus the carrying of a full load at the DRY cut well my courting time.

The 1939 surprise trip must have stirred up that old feeling in Gina; her next letter informed me that her engagement was broken; we began dating regularly.

Depression still stalked the land and neither any of my friends or I had a car that could be trusted. I recall a Willys car, owned by ReTall Erickson, that ran well down hill, but when it tackled the the hills on Salt Lake's East side, getting to the home of Olive Winder, all aboard, except the driver had to get out and push the clunker onto Highland Drive.

Regardless of depression, old cars and another year in school for me, we set the date of our marriage for August 16, 1939, and were

men and wife with President Nicholas G. Smith performing the ceremony. A reception was held in the Jensen Reception Center in Salt Lake City that same night. I have regretted the fact that we didn't hold a second one in Spanish Fork as many friends were unable to come to the Salt Lake affair.

I'm unable to remember when I found out Gina's real age, but by the time I did, it didn't matter that she'd turned 19 in May of 1939, and I'd been 27 since December of 1938.

Gina was employed by the Intermountain Theatres, so we made big plans; she would continue to work, and I'd finish my final year of school; but we soon realized the best of plans don't always materialize, especially on the rough waters of matrimony. My wife became pregnant, and she suffered a least eight months of morning sickness. The illness didn't stop in the morning; it lasted all day. She discontinued working and lived at home while I lived, (existed) in my camper wagon at Provo. We saw each other on weekends.

Following one of the most difficult years of my life, I finally obtained my B.S. degree. I had a major in Theatre and Education and a minor in English. The same week of my graduation, my son, Joseph Lloyd Evans was born. I nearly lost his mother; she not only had a difficult time carrying him, but she went through hell with the delivery. A Dr. Openshaw, a friend of the Lloyd family, was crude, ignorant, non-attentive man. Following the hard birth, Gina hemorrhaged, and we were unable to find the doctor for nearly 24 hours; by that time she had lost so much blood, a transfusion was necessary, but she had a rare type of blood, and the LDS Hospital had no blood bank at that time, therefore, we had to locate donors. It was Sunday so I raced my ancient car to the old Miller Ward

on 33rd South, rushed into Gina's old class and had all 17 girls and boys go to the hospital for a blood test; one person, Harold Chase, my old Mission Companion and a visitor at the ward, carried Gina's blood type, so with his blood and the blood of Gina's mother, Mary Lloyd, we were able to save Gina's life.

After many days of confinement in the hospital, we were allowed to bring the mother and child home. Joe was an eight-month baby, yet he progressed well.

✓ Gina and I had no more children for eleven years as we were warned by numerous doctors that a second pregnancy would kill her, but Dr. Milo Moody took exception ~~to~~ their decisions and assured us that she could successfully carry a child so on October 3, 1950, David John Evans was born; Michael Refell Evans followed on June 25, 1952 and Patricia Elaine Sharon Evans, our only girl, was born July 5, 1956.

Gina started having migraine headaches around the time of David's birth. They continued for many years, but came to a sudden stop a few years ago. She is now burdened with arthritis, January, 1985.

Last August we celebrated the 46th anniversary of our marriage. Gina has been a good wife, and I've been content in my marriage. I've always been proud to introduce her as my wife.

Virginia Lloyd Evans had one of the kindest, loving fathers I've ever known. Joseph Lloyd, a dedicated worker at the Salt Lake Tribune serving as Superintendent of the mailing room, but her mother, Mary Johnson Lloyd, was irradic. When she decided to be kind she couldn't be beat, but her temper drove us away from her at other times. I had a feeling that Gina did not belong to her because there was no resemblance between them. I obtained a clue from an old lady in a rest home, where my sister Daisy worked, that the Lloyd children had all been adopted. I spent every spare moment in research, and finally found in the records of the Salt Lake County General Hospital in a du

basement, room that my wife was not a Lloyd; she had been born to a Zina Hansen Carr on or about May 24, 1920. Zina was 26 when I found this material, and I hesitated telling her for a few weeks, but tell her I did. It was a shock to her, but many of her suspicions were realized. We never rested until we found her real mother, Zina Hansen Carr. There were a series of circumstances I'll not relat here. We found that Zina was born and reared in Mroni, Utah, Sanpete County of polignist parents. She had been married twice; a Mr. Tuttle was her first husband from whom she had one son, Nelson Tuttle, who lived in California. She married Vasco Carr later ~~and her mother and father were~~ living in Salt Lake City where she ran a milinary shop. She died as the result of a needle she'd swalled working its way into her system; childbirth helped but it was not the complete cause of her death.

When we realized that Gina had relatives in Sanpete County, neither of us was content until we'd searched them out. We found her Uncle Oscar. It was he who gave us the information on Zina's marriages and death. His wife and he had considered taking the child into their home, but they had had a baby girl about the same age as Gina and with a large family besides, they permitted the child to be adopted. We also found that my wife had an Uncle Joe, who lived in California. She also had numerous cousins living hither and thither. Mary Aagaard of Salem is the best know to us.

The Hansens were all stalwart people, and my wife seemed content in knowing something of the stock from whence she came..

At this date, January 22, 1935, we have not found any information about her father, Vasco Carr. Some day Gine may have a desire to do some research on the man wh deserted her mother, but now she isn't interested.

MY MOTHER, MARGARET DAVIS EVANS

Maggie Evans carried the sweetest spirit of anyone I've ever known. (My lovely daughter, Patricia and my sister Minnie inherited many of her attributes.) I've never known a night that was too long, no task too hard, nor was any person too insignificant for her to give of herself that their burdens might be lightened. The marriages of my sisters Maggie, May and Fay were burdened with illnesses of ailing husbands. My mother suffered along with those girls. I knew as I was the youngest in the family, yet old enough to witness her travail.

I think she loved me more than anyone ever has; she considered me a special gift from God as I was born when she was 45 years old when I was born. She supported me in all my activities. I can't recall of a parent's day at school when she was not numbered among those present, or if I performed on a program, she sat beaming near the front of the auditorium.

When I was about ten years old, I was afflicted with a disease; I had severe pains in my spine and was unable to walk upright. I hobbled around like a little, old, crippled man. Our family doctor treated me, but his medicine did not good; I grew steadily worse. Mother had me sleeping in the room next to hers where I could find her easily in the night. I awakened prior to daybreak on one occasion; my body wracked with pain. I crawled through the connecting . . . screaming for my "Ma.". She had me in her arms in a moment, and placed me on her bed. She held me close to her and uttered the most fervent prayer I've ever heard. . . seemed she was talking directly to God as

though He were there in the room, and I felt in my boyish heart she was getting through to Him. In a matter of minutes, the pain left my body, and I fell asleep with her arm under my head. I remained in that position till morning, and when I arose, I was able to stand upright, free from pain. I've always thought that the goodness and faith of my mother did what doctors, medicine and priesthood administration could not do.

Under the section "My World of School," I mentioned that I played the leading role in the Ninth Grade Operetta, "Miss Cherryblossom." My beautiful mother attended the first performance, and was very elated about my singing and acting. Following the second performance, she congratulated me for doing a better job than I had done the first night.

"I didn't see you there," I said.

"I stood outside under that large tree. I could see and hear the show."

"Why didn't you come in? Surely you had fifty cents."

"Yes, I had fifty cents, but I didn't want people to see me there twice; they would think I was showing off because my boy played the lead," she said humbly.

Yes, that was my mom, and that's why I wanted to buy the old homestead when I had the opportunity in the early eighties. I felt that the spirit of my mother may still pervade the atmosphere, but I was wrong. I soon realized that it's only in one's memory that one can bring back the past. It was my mother that gave that house the power it had over me, but when we moved there, we found the rooms small and dark, and the place was impossible to heat comfortably, therefore we lived there for less than two years then moved to our present location, a good home we'd purchased many years earlier but kept it as a rental.

MY CIVIC WORLD

I'm sure I could have served my city more politically, but my work as a teacher of Theater, church and family obligations, consumed so much time, I didn't seek an office of any kind. After coming to Spanish Fork, I became a member of the Junior Chamber of Commerce; I was chairman of many committees, including the Christmas Committee. We had to practically dominate one issue of the Spanish Fork Press with our year's activities report, hold an auction for the raising of money to help needy people and deliver food and cash to them who otherwise would not have a Merry Christmas.

That year, 1943, I was nominated to be the recipient of the DSA, Distinguished Service Award. I came in second. Farrell Olson, another school teacher, was chosen. I was satisfied that he won because he died about two years later. I was unable to be nominated again for that honor because I'd passed my 33rd year of living.

I didn't remain a member of the Jaycees many years because the smoking was so heavy during our meetings, I had to have a special suit of clothing in which to attend; I'd be accused of being a smoker at school if I wore that suit on the job. It was an established fact that only one member out of ten did all the work; the others attended for the comradeship and food and a place to get away from their families for a few hours. The Jaycee organization died out recently. I suppose it failed because of the reasons I've listed above.

I became a member of the Spanish Fork Kiwanis Club in 1946, and have been active since except for a few years when my living responsibilities became too heavy. I served as Vice President

for one year during the fifties, President in 1976 and Lt. Governor of District I in 1981. District I consisted of all the clubs from Price to Lehi. I visited each of the ten clubs twice during the year and was instrumental in organizing The Golden K Club in Provo. It is at this writing the most active club in the district. I received the honor of being chosen as a Distinguished Lt. Governor. No one was more surprised than I because during that year I suffered from I was confined in the Utah Valley Hospital for many days. I'd had my gall bladder removed a few years earlier but the bums had job.

MY WORLD OF HORSES

With our ranch and with Dad needing horses to do road work, at times we had a dozen of them available. I always had one among them I claimed. I was in the sixth grade when Maud, a little mustang came into my life. She was a beautiful animal but had never been completely broken to ride; one could lope along on her for a short distance then she buck. Such a buck threw me on the hard road and I sustained a broken wrist, which was the only bone I've ever broken except my nose that has had it four or five times.

Jeff was a jumper, kind and easy to ride. I was the envy of many friends because I could clear a four foot fence bareback. I was funny I didn't break my neck; I jumped him continually. He died after one short year. It was one of the few times in my life I remember of crying openly.

Rowdy was a sleigh horse and also easy to ride. I called him my sleigh horse because he'd been taught to pivot, stand and

turn while the other horse went around him, thus spinning the bob sled round and round. Rowdy and I were in demand for bob sleighing; I think he pulled every available bob sleigh in town. I was always glad to see winter come because I had a horse built for winter and white as the snow. A horse of lesser character kicked Rowdy on the leg breaking it, and we had to shoot him.

Slim had been a race horse in his younger days. During my teens, I'd race anyone who wanted a race. I was never beaten except once; that's when I ran him with a handicap. We had a neighbor rancher who had a race horse of sorts. He continually wanted to pit his horse against mine. I never seemed to have time while on the farm, but on the this occasion we had a shortage of horses one spring so it was necessary to break Slim to work in a harness. I hated to see this done; he reminded me of a member of the royalty working along side the court jester. At any rate, I was harrowing some wheat ground one spring when along came the man next farm asking for a race. I'd been working Slim for half a day and he was tired and sweating, yet I accepted the challenge. We were soon out on the county road. We decided that an intersect-one quarter mile down the road would be the finish line. I told the guy I'd leave Slim in his harness to give his horse a better chance.

We made the run; I was beaten by a length. I realized what a fool I'd been to give my horse a handicap, but as horses do after a race, Slim wanted more and kept turning as I reined him in. Suddenly a tug came free from his back and wrapped around his hind legs--We went down. The last thing I remembered was

having a horse on me. Luckily his haims missed pearcing my body, but when I came to I was lying on the bed we had in

in a tent. My brother, Joe was standing over me.

"How did I get here?" I queried.

"I carried you," he answered.

It was hard for me to imagine his carrying me across a 40-acre field; I was almost as heavy as he.

I rested in the tent for a while. Joe caught Slim and hitched him to our buggy, and I drove home alone, a distance of four miles. It was good Slim knew the way because during most of the trip I lay on the seat, knowing little of times passage.

Pete was an ancient horse when he came to us. I'd walk toward him, bridle in hand, and he'd put back his ears, bare his teeth and charge. I was always ready with the bridle reins to cut him over the nose. He'd stop and allow me to bridle him. I used this brown shaggy horse to deliver milk to a few customers we had in town. Gallon tin buckets were used as milk containers. Some customers would retain the buckets for a few days, and I'd have four or five to tote home at a time.

One day I was riding past a hitching post on 100 North just east of Main Street. I saw a beautiful bridle hanging there. Some horse had scrubbed it off. I took it as it was much nicer than the one Pete wore, I sported the bridle for a few days but on one occasion I was riding past the hitching post and my nephew, younger than I by a few years, was riding back of me on the bare-backed Pete. At the point where I'd found the bridle, a man big enough to eat hay, stepped our way.

"Hold up, kid," he said. "Where did you get that bridle?"

"Right there," I said, pointing to the hitching rail.

"It's mine. My horse scrubbed it off and went home without me.

I walked to my home in Lake Shore."

"Ok, It's yours I guess," I said. "But how do I get my horse and us home?"

"I have a rope in the truck. You can have it."

I put the rope on Pete's neck, fastened a loop around his nose and we started up 100 North treet with my nephew and I holding onto four or five gallon buckets. Pete was at least 25 years old and a bit stiff in the knees. Rattling buckets always made him nervous. On that day he was especially so, having two kids aboard and wearing a strange bridle. He suddenly bolted; Vernon dropped a bucket in his attempt to put his arms about my waist. He may as well have dropped a fire cracker under the horse for away we went. The loop fell off Pete's nose, another bucket dropped, and another and another. I was pulling on a rope that was having no control over the flying steed, who had a track record of falling down. We neared Fifth East Street where I knew Pete would turn toward home.

"I'm gonna jump." said Vern.

"No!" I screamed. "You'll kill yourself." I dug my fingers into his leg.

We made the turn safely but another obstacle loomed ahead; my father had recently built a large plank gate to our corral, and I wasn't sure how Pete was going to handle it. The dumb brute made an effort to jump. He wasn't a Jeff; he missed going over the gate by many inches. There was the crashing of lumber, the falling of a horse and the diving of two boys to the ground. Luckily, the manure in our corral was deep and soft so our fall was broken.

Pete never recovered from that experience; he died soon after. I shed no tears at his departure.

Mike was a 1200 pound horse that one could ride as well as use for heavy work. I drove him and his mat , Pat on a coal wagon one fall when Joe and I hauled our winter's coal out of Starvation Canyon from the Christopherson Coal Mine. On our return trips we always camped at old Tucker, an open spot 30 miles up Spanish Fork Canyon.

At times there were seven or eight outfits camped there. One night we were all sitting around a camp fire when a coal hauler said he had a horse that could outpull any horse his weight in the group. Mike was in his weight so I like a big shot took his challenge because I'd seen Mike pull; he gave his all.

We decided that daybreak would be the time for the match. We'd pull on the largest load of coal there. At daybreak, Joe awakened me and said that my competitor had been warming up his horse for an hour; he'd been pulling logs all over the place.

I hurriedly dressed, hitched up Mike, road him around a bit to at least get the kinks out of his joints and my coal-hauling friend returned to camp with his sweating, dun horse. We flipped to determine who pulled first. I lost; I was first to go.

You have such pulling matches by hitching a team to a wagon but the pulling horse is chained to the load via his end of the doubletree. I clucked to my team and Pat moved forward, but as soon as Mike felt the weight, he refused to settle down and pull. I tried half dozen times and finally moved my team away. The dun settled against his collar, lowered his body, lifted and pulled like I'd seen Mike do many times, but the dun moved the load a few feet..I lost \$5.00.

Joe said: "You never pull a horse cold turkey; you must get him warmed up."

"Why didn't you tell me?"

"I wanted you to learn a lesson; five dollars was not too high a price for what you learned today."

It was a good lesson; I've never done anything since that day without having a good deal of practice prior to the event. Not all the knowledge one acquires is obtained in classrooms or from books. The open sky and the hard ground are great teachers .

MY WORLD ON THE ROUGH SIDE

A constant problem that has stalked my path through life has been the use of rough language. From early childhood I was exposed and associated with hard working, tough talking, evil living men whom we hired to help on our 160 acre hay and grain ranch. I've often wondered why dad and Joe hired such individuals who could naturally be an influence on young boys. I suppose they were the only ones available for part-time work; real gentlemen had steady jobs. At any rate, I learned to swear early, and I suppose I'll fight the habit until this old tongue stiffens.

My lessons in sex were taught me by some of the roughest characters I've ever known, a divorced man, an old batch and a married man who explained all his intimate activities with his wife. These three came back summer after summer and taught me a about sex in the curdest of languages. They'd answer any questions I'd ask.

In the late summer of 1934, I realized I wouldn't be able to to return to school so Dick Manwaring and I thumbed our way to Las Angeles. The driver who took us into the big city said he knew the city well and would take us to an inexpensive, rooming house. The place did look good. We were tired and it was midnight, so for \$2.50 we rented a room for a week,

Grandpa had at the 1st He went to L.A. to get work or to the old Sugar Factory
 when we emerged onto the street come morning, we found we were living in a negro section. The only white man around was the manager of our rooming house. We couldn't walk a block without being accosted by black prostitutes, but our bed and room were clean so remained there from October to late December

The first place we rustled for work was Hollywood. A Micky Rooney movie was being cast at Columbia, and they wanted numerous highschool age extras. We stayed in line four hours, and when we arrived at the casting window, it was time to close shop, so back we went the second day and after hours of waiting we did get interviewed. We left the phone number of our abode, knowing that with the thousands of applications we'd never get called

Dick and I finally obtained jobs washing dishes at small restaurants at \$1.00 per day plus two meals. We did manage to save on those meager wages, but Christmas Day, 1934 found us in the L. A. freight yards, preparing to mount a freight train that was going east. I'll not take space to describe some of the derelicts that had found their way into one cattle car. Straw and dry manure covered the floor, and as the train moved eastward into the high country, it became very cold and bum after bum disappeared from sight by burrowing his way under the floor covering. I wasn't to follow
 grew between the slats.
 of the car, Dick and I were glad to

A TOUCH OF THE POET

I was a junior in high school before I even made an effort to write poetry. I wrote at it then because our teacher, Mr. Christiansen, taught a unit of it. His final assignment was to turn in a poem of 16 lines or more . So under pressure I wrote my first. He read the poems he thought were best to the class, and a vote was taken for the best girl poem and best boy poem. Phyllis Peterson won for the girls. I won for the boys. I still recall the masterpiece. If my poem was the best, you can imagine what some of the others were like.

THE CRANE

By Bud Evans

One day while walking down a lane
I saw a bird they call the crane.
He had a neck about three foot four,
A neck like that I saw ne'er before.

He looked at me with a glassy stare,
As if I had no business there.
He didn't like me; I was sure of that,
And in my surprise I reached for my gat.

I leveled it on the big bird's head,
Fired shell after shell till the thing fell dead.
I loaded his carcass upon my back,
And carried him back to my old shack.

I had him stuffed and until this day
He stands in my kitchen, a great display
He looks at me from morn till night
as if to say: "You fixed me right."

Over the years I've written a few hundred poems, thanks to my old nine-fingered-school-teacher, who forced a bit of poetry talent out of me. We called him Nine Fingers because he had lost the forefinger of his left hand, and when he sat at his desk thinking, he put that stub to his nose; he looked, all the world, like the missing finger end was up his nose, penetrating his brain..

As I stated earlier, I wrote words to songs for the school opera but I'll not take space for them. I dedicated the following poem to my mother shortly after her death. I was 21.

MY MOTHER

By Bud Evans

Of all the pleasant memories crowded in my mind
 The memory of my mother is the dearest I can find.
 In my imagination, I can see her now
 Her pleasant eyes, her sunny smile, gray hair upon her brow.
 I see her by the fireplace in her favorite rocking chair
 Gazing into space as she dreams and ponder there.
 The snows of many winters lay lightly on her now.
 The rearing of us children has caused that wrinkled brow.
 I think I hear her calling: "Son, are you home?"
 I stir, my dream world's shattered I'm sitting here alone.
 Perchance she now is waiting in a golden rocking chair;
 She'll call and say: "Is that you, son, when I enter in
 up there."

Many missionary experiences brought out a touch of the poet. Bedbugs hide around the seams of mattresses during the day, but when one's body warms up the mattress, the miserable insects begin to crawl. Some individuals become amune to them but others such as I suffer the torments of hell because of them

The Groveland trip found us in six different beds in six nights, and each bed seemed to have its share of bedbugs, and we hitch hiked back into Orlando on the seventh day, I wrote the following poem between rides:

BEDBUGS

I lie here gazing blankly at the ceiling all the night.
I know not what the matter is, but I can't sleep a nite.
By George, there's something crawling up and down my back;
I wonder if that's what's making sleeping seem so lack.

The varmet has a brother that o'er my chest doth roam,
A sister and a that strayed away from home.
I'm leaving here quite pronto, 'fore they carry me away
I'm now sitting in the corner, wishing it were day.

The bed looks like a battlefield; a bloody war was fought th
And I feel worse, I'll bet by far than the last stand of Cust
The dawn's now slowly breaking; I'm stretched out on the floor,
More tired by a dern sight than I was the night before.
Slowly I pack my stick grip to travel on my way,
And I that God will lead the closing of this day
To a bed where bugs are scarcer and not so glad to see
A poor traveling Mormon Elder who is as tired as me.

OLD GLORY

Only a few years ago our flag was being mistreated in many ways. I entered a home in Spanish Fork and saw an American Flag being used as a room divider. It hung there soiled and ragged, having been used for a towel on which people dried their hands. That experience prompted me to write the following poem:

I shall scribble a poem for my readers today.

Please understand what I have to say.

Old Glory flies high over village and city,

But how some of us treat her, Oh God! what a pity.

She's draped over windows to keep out the storms.

I've seen her on trash heaps on pig pens and barns.

She's being used for all things from a rug to a rag.

Even costumes are made from our beautiful flag.

She waves for all things that I want her to be,

But she's belittled by people like you and like me.

When I pledge her allegiance, I love it all;

Whether she's right or wrong, I'll respond to her call.

I stand ten feet tall when I honor her name,

But my insides turn cold when she's brought down in shame.

Have you seen smoking tobacco rolled in a small flag?

Or "Old Glory" dishonored being used as a rag?

I don't understand why it gets worse all the time,

And who is there to stand up and call it a crime?

God Bless you Old Glory, fly on night and day

May more patriotic Americans be counted I pray.

You stand for our mountains, blue skies up above,
Our forests and farmlands and lakes that we love,
Our productive cities and calm little towns.
Where e'er we live, our freedom aboutnds.

We even have freedom way up in the sky,
Where jundreds of thousands of airplanes fly,
And the railroads and highways stretch from sea to sea,
And there's no one to question not you or not me.

So they who don't like it, this land of our own,
We should ship them to Russia and let 'em call that place home.
So he who belittles the flag of our choice
Should relocate to a land with a dictator's voice.

RESOLUTIONS OF '83

I made ten resolutions at the beginning of this year.
June has come and I'm discontent; kept few of them I fear.
To file my stuff was number; I'd not misplace a thing.
Yet here I stand; my list is lost and it is only spring.

To not misplace was number one, not swear was number two,
But dam it all, I've broken them both. What am I gonna do?
Control by temper was number three as I do recall.
I misplaced, I swore, I lost my cool, beat my head against
the wall.

I can't remember the following three, but I know that number 7
was to buckle down, be a better boy, prepare myself for heaven.
But doing a check upon myself, I find to my chagrin
I haven't changed in '83; I don't think I'll get in.

The Pearly Gates won't open wide ; I'll stand outside that door.
If I can wait just one more, I'll be better in '84.
I can't recall the next one, but I do remember nine;
It has to do with not wasting valuable, God-given time.

Yet here I set a writin' a goofy little jingle
When I could be a doin' things that would cause my blood to tingle.
Like writing about the U.S. A. and thanking God above
For all the things that I enjoy in this country that I love.

In number ten, I pledged to please the boss that we have here.
Doing well, he's only worked me o'er a dozen times this year.
I hope with your resolutions you all have more success
Than this poor Editorial Writer, old B. Davises.

After watching a few thousand suffer from stage fright, I
penned the following poem on the subject:

STAGEFRIGHT
(With apologies to Joyce Kilmer)

I think that I shall never see
A guy who's half as scared as me.
I stand behind this podium
In this vast auditorium.
10,000 beady eyes I see,
Staring strangely up at me.
I gasp for breath, no breath is there
All I do is stand and stare.
My mouth is dry, my palms are wet,
Who'd ever dream that I'd forget
The facts I found through study spent
Have organized and done gone went.
A single sound comes from my throat;
It's high and shrill, so sharp a note.
I can't believe that this I,
To scared to live and cannot die.
A thought or two I do complete;
I weakly fall into my seat.

After having the joy of rearing a girl, I was shocked to the
realization on day that a man named Tracy Frandsen loved her almost
as much as I. My reason for the following poem:

PATRICIA

When God gave me a little girl, the thought came to me
that day
That someone was rearing a boy somewhere, who would one
take her away.

My blood ran cold at the very thought of her leaving our abode,
Yet I knew in my heart that it's God's great plan, written in
the code.

My thoughts were constantly troubled; who could there possibly be
Who could rear a son to marry my gal and be half as pure as she?

As she grew up, I wanted to be a witness to all she did,
Her first step, her first word, her first dance
Her first beau, a young lady, no longer a kid.

I observed her body develop, doing cartwheels one after another.
I marveled, 'twas a thing I never could do; neither could her mother.
Football games didn't turn me on; I cared not for the slaughter.
But I never missed a crumby one; I had a cheerleader daughter.

It's a gambler's chance a father takes; it gets right good and scary,
When his daughter goes out into the world to find her a Tom, Dick
or Harry.

A dad realizes the meaning of pride when his little girl grows tall,
And he watches her rise above the crowd to be admired by all.

The years have come and the years have gone, yet never a moment was

mine
When I regretted God's gift to me, my little girl divine.

One day out of the land of "G" a stalward youth did roam,
And said: "I love your daughter, Sir. May I have her for my own?"

The time had come, I realized, someone had reared a son,
Who was fulfilling the holy plan, and was taking my lovely one.
God bless you both as you go your way. May your days on the earth
be long,

And may they be pleasant as upward you climb, may there be in your
hearts a song.

I wrote the following when the last of my children learned that I was Santa Claus.

IT'S CHRISTMAS MORNING

It's now Christmas morning; it's a quarter past one.
I stroll through my house, not having much fun.
My teenagers are home and each safe in his bed,
but memories of past Christmases dance through my head.
My tree stands majestically here in the room,
But for reasons apparent, I feel waves of deep gloom;
No bikes, dolls or toys are under the tree,
Only presents for big kids are all I can see.
I make no pretense about Santa Claus anymore,
For all of them know he walks in our front door.
And he's not dressed in red from his head to his toes,
But he's bald, has no white beard and has a big nose.
For many Christmases past I followed toy assembly directions,
With those accompanying instructions I made poor connections.
But you know right this minute, I'd like just once more
to wrestle with with some assemblage on my living room floor..
I'd like to lie to my kids when daylight appears
That the presents were brought by St. Nick and his deers.
But all must grow older with time in its flight,
Yet I miss being younger on Santa Claus night.
I stroll out on the porch; the night's clear quiet and cold.
I find I chill easily now that I'm getting old.
I think back when I pulled my kids on sleds back of my car.
They've cars of their own now and drive too fast and too far.
I'm back in my comfortable living room bright,
And I'm not at all sure I like this Christmas night.
No youngsters will cry when daylight doth appear;

An Elder was leaving the mission field, and in my tribute to him, I read an original poem. I enlarged on his weaknesses and strong points---rather cute, it was. After that, practically every Elder with whom I'd labored asked me to write them a poem. Over the next 12 months, I must have written 15 poems; most of them went back to Utah to be read as part of homecoming speeches.

I have not included any of those poems here as only I know these boys of whom I wrote..

Upon arriving home, April 1938, a Seminary teacher asked me to write a poem pertaining to neighborliness as his students were holding cottage meetings throughout the area with the theme..."Be a Good Neighbor."

NEIGHBORS

BY BUD EVANS

John and I were neighbors; I lived by him for years.
We experienced good as well as bad time, times of sorrow
times of tears.

Wherever he and I would meet each other, "Hello John,"
I would say.

"Hi there, Bill," would be his answer in a friendly sort of
way.

He and I grew old together. His kids always played with mine.
His wife always chummed with my wife; our friendship grew
along with time.

When the kids would get to scrappin', and things seemed to
go astray, John would come to me a smilin'

And it would be: "Hello John." "Hi there, Bill, in an understanding sort of way.

Happy was the day for me when John's son came courtin' Nan.
Willing was I to give consent, when Dan asked me for her hand
John and I walked down the isle of the church that day;
I looked at him. He looked at me, and about all we could say
was: "Hello John," "Hi there, Bill," in a happy sort of way.

'Twas not long after Nan was married that my good wife passed
away.

The first to ring my doorbell was Neighbor John from down the
way.

He sat there beside me, our hearts were filled with grief
He put his horney hand in mine, our words were rather brief:
"Hello John," "Hi there, Bill," in a sorrowful sort of way

One morning, just as dawn was breakin', John's boy, Mike, came
by my gate.

"Da 's askin' for you, Bill You better come 'fore it's
too late

I hurried to his bedside He lay there quiet and still.
"Hello John," I said to him, "Hi there, Old Friend, Bill."

We didn't say much after that, but with his hand in mine,
He left this world for a better place where I hope we'll meet
sometime.

I hope that we'll be neighbors over there some day,
And we can meet each other in that same familiar way:
"Hello John," "Hi there, Bill," in a spiritual sort of way

On another occasion while traveling, we stayed at the home of a millionaire on Daytona Beach. A Mormon family was summer caretakers, and we missionaries could always depend on having a bed waiting for us there. Elder Shepherd and I slept well on this particular night. Our rooms were beach level, about 100 yards from the ocean. The house was built in a U shape. The kitchen was at the peak, the living room second and the bedrooms on the ground floor. We were awakened early by our hostess, calling from the kitchen. Her voice came over the innercom: "Elders, I think the beach."

Without being fully dressed, Shepherd and I were running toward the sea. We saw the body of a woman. We thought at first it was that of a frail teenage girl, but on closer examination, we realized she had no teeth, and each angry breaker turned the body half over, then she would flatten out as the breaker subsided.

The good sister had placed a call into the Daytona Police; they and I stood guard until they arrived, and the memory of the dead body being buffeted by the ocean will linger in my mind as long as I live.

The headlines of the Daytona Times that night read: "Mormon Elders Find Body on Beach."

The police detained us in Daytona for three days until they found out who the lady was. She had learned from a doctor that she had cancer and had jumped in the ocean from a pier a mile west of our lodgings. The Gulf Stream had carried her to our door and the tide had brought her onto the beach.

When I again hit the road, I wrote the following poem between rides:

OH MIGHTY SEA

Oh mighty sea, why roarest thou?
Why froth and splash and foam?
Have you secrets that you long to tell
That all night long you moan?

You always seem so restless;
Your agony seems severe
Do those who sleep on your briney deep
Make you behave so queer?

Dotting your floor are the hulls of ships
That once caressed your waves.
They were sturdy and strong in days now gone;
You've found for them their graves.

If you could speak oh Mighty Sea,
What horrible tales you'd relate
Of pirates bold in days of old
And their lust for pieces-of-eight.

You'd probably tell of wars that were waged
Upon your heaving crest,
Of sailors brave, how their lives they gave;
Now their bones in your depths doth rest

You've taken the lives of innocent babes.
You've separated husbands and wives.
No wonder you moan and you ponder alone
You horrible beast in disguise

MY MOTHER

Of all the pleasant memories crowded in my mind,

The memory of my mother is the dearest I can find.

In my imagination I can see her now--Her loving eyes-her
pleasant smile

Grey hair upon her brow.

I see her by the fireside in her favorite rocking chair

Gazing into space As she dreams and ponders there.

The snows of many winters Lay lightly on her now

The rearing of us children has caused her wrinkled brow.

I think I hear her calling-saying, "Son, are you home?"

I stir-my dream world shattered. I'm sitting here alone.

Perchance she now is waiting In a golden rocking chair
and she'll call and say, "Is that you, son, as I enter in
up there."

B. Davis Evans

THE LADY AND THE TOMB

Fiction -- Approx. 6,200 words

THE LADY AND THE TOMB

by

I remained standing with my back to the door after closing it. Cynthia moved quickly to the old, round table that stood in the center of the room, then she turned to face me. Her black rain-coat was pulled high about her neck, and the belt was drawn tightly around her slender waist. Her wet face and hair glistened in the dull light of the room. I could hardly believe she was standing only a few feet away from me. Oh God, how many times during the past few years had I longed to be alone again with her. Her auburn hair, blue eyes and

delicate skin had not changed with the years. Now as a mature woman, she was more beautiful than ever before.

The same magnetic power that had controlled me from the first day I met her, drew me again toward the only woman I had ever really wanted. Suddenly, we were in each other's arms, and our lips met in a warm and tender kiss. Her face was cool from the rain, and I could smell the fresh fragrance that had always accompanied her. Holding her body close to mine, I whispered the words that I had wanted to say for so long:

"I love you. I've always loved you."

"There's never been anyone but you, Johnny," she murmured. "For eight years I've dreamed of holding you like this."

"I'm glad you came, Cynthia," I returned softly. "I'll remember this night as long as I live."

Slowly she moved from my embrace and slumped on the old couch. "Johnny, I don't want to hurt you any more than I already have." She buried her face in her hands and wept.

From my experience as a doctor, I knew that a gentle cry was the best remedy for the calming effect needed, so I held her in my arms and gradually her sobbing subsided.

"What's wrong, Cynthia?" I asked. "What's bothering you?"

"Everything's wrong," she began. "I'm so unhappy. Ronald drinks continually, and he goes away for days at a time. He neglects the business, and he's aged thirty years in the eight we've been married. I had to talk to someone, and you're the only person I really trust. What shall I do, Johnny?"

I wanted to tell her what to do. I wanted to tell her to forget all her ties in Holley Dale and come to New York with me, but I realized how futile such a step would be. "God, in his great wisdom, will care for you," I finally answered. "He will not abandon you or permit you to carry such burdens forever." I lovingly pulled her from the couch and embraced her again. "Come on, my love, I'll take you home now."

The rain had stopped, and the clean smell of a newly washed world was everywhere. As we picked our way between the puddles of water and headed toward my car, Cynthia clung to my arm and pressed her cheek against the fabric of my jacket. I couldn't remember when I'd been happier, or when the world had seemed more beautiful.

As we drove up the hill toward her home, she sat very close to me and rested her head on my shoulder. Not a word was spoken as she nestled closely and clung to me like a frightened child. As we neared the gates, I saw them standing open.

"The gates haven't been closed since Dad died," Cynthia said. "I want the world to see behind those walls and enjoy the beauty that was so long hidden from everyone."

I stopped the car a short distance from the house, and we sat motionless looking out into the rain-soaked world. The magnificent mansion towered up into the black night.

"What a great hospital it would make," I said.

"You can have it anytime you it," Cynthia replied

promptly. "I hate the place, and Ronald doesn't care a thing about it." She reached over and kissed me lightly. "Good night, my darling," she whispered. "I have to go now."

"Cynthia, I'll be at the Village Inn at one o'clock tomorrow," I informed her. "Will you meet me there? I'll think over what you've told me, and maybe I'll be able to help you."

Gratefully, she smiled her acceptance, looked into my eyes for a long moment, and then she was gone. She hurried toward the house, her quick footsteps resounding on the gravel walk, her coat clinging snugly to her beautiful form. She was swallowed up by the darkness, and again I was alone -- alone and lonely as I had been for so long. I drove slowly toward the gate, but I abruptly came to a stop as my eyes rested on the small stone room, the Wainwright Tomb. Vines clung tenaciously to its walls as though they were determined to hide the horror of the place from the world. A bat flew out of the night, cutting a zigzag pattern toward me.

It missed my car by inches and disappeared as it had appeared, crazily and alone. I thought of Willard Wainwright lying rigid in his prepared surroundings, then suddenly I muttered: "Willard T. Wainwright, I hope your soul is burning in Hell. You cast a shadow on my youth and it remains with me as I grow old."

Returning home, I was aware of the sweet fragrance of Cynthia's perfume that lingered heavily in the air, and my drab world was filled with the presence of her. I love you, Cynthia, I thought. I want you more than life itself. I dropped facedown on the weary, old couch. Half-consciously, my mind drifted back over the years, and I was a child again in the same humble house, surrounded by the same furniture and knickknacks that my mother cherished and cared for. It was morning and my father was leaving for work, carrying his shiny, bent lunch pail. He was trudging up the steep road which led to the Wainwright estate, a hilltop mansion surrounded by a massive rock wall. My father was the gardner of the rolling acres of lawn, spotted with shrubbed and flower bed areas.

Many times I had watched him disappear through the mammoth iron gates. I longed to accompany him into the forbidden territory; however, my presence there was forbidden because Willard Wainwright, owner of the estate, co-owner of the huge textile mill that stood at the edge of town and landlord of many of the town's residences, had given orders that no children were allowed inside the estate's walls.

"I shall take you onto the estate when you are twelve-years-old," my father promised.

I anxiously waited for the years to pass. Time after time I watched the Wainwright carriage lumber down the hill, with Mr. Wainwright sitting in the rear seat somberly looking ahead. His black team and equally black driver seemed to cast a spell over the entire countryside. Long after they had rolled on, a foreboding lingered. I developed a strong dislike for Willard Wainwright.

May, 1908, I passed my twelfth birthday, and the event of my life was at hand. Mother packed an extra sandwich in the old shiny pail, and with my spirits high,

I accompanied my father up the steep hill. He unlocked the massive iron gates, and they noisily swung open, permitting me to step onto the forbidden territory. Breathlessly, I gazed at the sight; acres of rolling lawn spread out before me. Sundry flower and shrub beds sporadically dotted the panorama. On the highest point of ground stood the most beautiful palatial mansion I had ever seen. The grounds seemed to fall away from the house in all directions. I stood and drank in the beauty before me.

"Quite a spread, isn't it, Johnny boy?" commented my father.

"Oh, Father, it's more beautiful than I imagined it would be," I answered, my eyes scanning the giant chimneys, high gables and columned porches.

"You're now standing on one of the oldest and most valuable estates in New England," he added. "The Wainwrights even bury their dead within these walls."

"I'd like to see the place. Where is it?"

I turned my gaze in the direction my father was

looking and saw a low, stone building nearly hidden among the shrubs and vines.

The ancient door complained on its hinges as it squeaked open, and I followed my father into the cool dimness. I stood transfixed for a moment while my eyes grew accustomed to the darkness. As the murky interior took form before me, my heart felt as though it were grasped by icy fingers. A row of vaults on a low ledge lined the walls. Each one had the occupant's name, birthdate and death date boldly engraved on its marble side. Against the rear wall was an open vault, inside of which was a beautiful mahogany casket. Engraved on the vault's side was the name Willard T. Wainwright, born July 10, 1863. No date of death was given.

"This is Mr. Wainwright's burial place." My father's voice seemed almost reverent. "He's had it prepared for him, even before his death. Someday I'll tell you why he's had it made ready."

I stood silent for a long moment, trying desperately to fathom the man's thinking. Then my eyes drifted to the

next vault. I read the inscription: "Carolyn Weaver Wainwright, born June 6, 1868; died April 3, 1901." I could remember her, the beautiful mistress of the Wainwright mansion who had died only a few years before.

I was bursting with curiosity as we left the tomb, but I knew that I would learn the mystery of the Wainwright vault only when my father decided to reveal it to me. I squinted into the brilliant sunlight as I waited for him to lock the door to the lonely room.

The day moved pleasantly forward. My father was busily moving the green bedding plants from the large greenhouse and placing them in the many flower beds. Religiously I assisted him with every task, for I wanted to secure the right to come again to the hilltop estate. I enjoyed working in the rich brown earth; the smell of the New England spring, the chirping of the birds and the babbling water nearby made me quite content. Suddenly, I was aware of someone's presence. A sweet fragrance first attracted my attention, and upon raising my eyes, I saw the most beautiful girl I had ever seen. She was about my

age, and her dark brown hair hung loosely on her shoulders as her blue eyes smiled down at me. Her trim, lovely figure was clad in a dainty plaid dress.

"Your name is Johnny?" she asked.

"Yes." My voice sounded high and uncontrolled.

"How do you know my name?" I managed to squeak.

"Your father has mentioned you to me many times. I feel I know you very well."

My father had told me of Cynthia Wainwright, but I never dreamed of her being so beautiful. I stood awkwardly in her presence, doing my best to think of something appropriate to say when, to my relief, my father came from the greenhouse, pushing a wheelbarrow loaded with young, green shoots.

"I see you two have met," he greeted, smiling at me. "Cynthia, me lass, why don't you show Johnny about the place?"

"I'd like that," she replied.

I had always been uncomfortable in the presence of girls, but somehow Cynthia was different. I soon felt at

ease as I walked beside her along the path. She seemed to sense my boyish backwardness as she chatted merrily. I found she didn't attend public school as I did; she attended a private boarding school. She was only six months younger than I, but our worlds were very distant.

As we strolled along the finely graveled path toward the house, I became aware of my large ugly shoes, my crudely-cut hair and shabby clothing. I felt as though I wanted to impress Cynthia Wainwright more than I wanted anything in the world. We visited the carriage house, the stables and interesting corners of the estate. My morning was filled with experiences beyond my expectations. Only when Cynthia mentioned her mother did she seem a bit depressed.

"I can remember very little of my mother," she said. "She died when I was quite young. She lies in the family tomb near the gate, but I never go near there because I get lonely and cry when I'm near her."

Cynthia's mentioning of the tomb cast a heaviness on me. Once again, I saw the open vault and the massive

lid which hovered above it.

Ellen, the Wainwright's housekeeper, was a large, bosomy woman. Her hair was iron gray, and her kindly brown eyes radiated the warmth of a great heart. Since the death of her husband and children, her life had been devoted to managing the household and governing Cynthia.

Ellen insisted that I have dinner with them. Her friendly way and rollicking sense of humor soon put me at ease, and before the meal was over I felt very much at home. As Cynthia and I were leaving the kitchen, she pulled me aside and whispered, "Come again, Johnny. Cynthia gets very lonely."

"Thank you, Miss Ellen," I replied. "I shall come again. I like it here."

The afternoon sped hurriedly on. As we walked through the many rooms of the mansion, I saw priceless paintings, plush furnishings and a totally immaculately kept interior. As the shadows of late afternoon began creeping upon us, Cynthia and I strolled hand in hand toward

the gate. I had experienced the most wonderful day of my life. That morning I was just a twelve-year-old boy, but by evening I was a twelve-year-old boy in love.

"Please come again, Johnny," she pleaded.

"I'll be back as often as my father will allow," I answered sincerely.

My father was waiting for me at the gate, and together we walked down the hill. The little town of Holley Dale was spread out below us, baked in the afternoon sun. Far to the north was the Carter-Wainwright Textile Mill, the source of income for nearly all of the town's residents. Mr. Carter, Willard Wainwright's partner, had a son, Ronald, who was two years older than I. He attended public school, but I only knew him from a distance. His wealthy father was a mill owner; my father, a humble gardner.

"Did you enjoy yourself?" my father asked.

"I did," I returned. "May I come with you again?"

"Yes, I'll take you with me whenever I'm positive Mr. Wainwright is out of town, such as he is today. I'm

not sure why he forbids children on the estate, but it's such a shame. Cynthia is so lonely. I believe she's happier away at school than at home."

Following supper that evening, I walked out into the bright moonlight. The yellow disc seemed to hang in the sky as though especially for me. I wondered if Cynthia was looking at it, too. I glanced toward the estate. The huge rock wall shone in the light, and suddenly a strange power drew me toward the hilltop. I was being drawn hastily up the road toward the iron gates as though I had no control over my feet. Breathlessly, I arrived and peered through the iron bars. The landscape lay calm and quiet, bathed in the moonlight. A light burned from Cynthia's room on the second floor of the house, and I could see her moving about. Merely seeing her from so great a distance made me feel as though my jaunt up the hill had been worthwhile.

As I drew my eyes away, my attention was diverted to the vine-covered room wherein a heavy vault lid hung suspended above an open casket. I shivered and turned,

frantically running down the hill to my home.

I spent other days at the Wainwright estate, and they were as pleasant as the first. However, they were limited, as my father took no chance on Mr. Wainwright seeing me there. Cynthia and Ellen were always happy to have me visit, and before summer was over, I regarded the hilltop house as my second home.

With fall came school and Cynthia's absence from home. My occasional trips to the estate were not as fascinating as when Cynthia was there to enjoy the day with me.

Swiftly the years passed, and I grew more fond of the brown-haired girl. In August, 1914, I was a senior in high school. A long, hot summer of hard work was ending, and another season of school was ready to commence. I had been elected class president in the spring, and I looked forward to my new responsibilities.

I arrived early to my Literature class and chose a seat midway to the rear. As I was settling in, someone sat in the double seat beside me. I thought it was my

best friend, Jim McGuire, but suddenly a soft voice said:
"Hello, Johnny."

I spun around as though I had been pushed and faced Cynthia. Everyone and everything ceased to exist as we looked at each other.

"Daddy has given his permission for me to attend public school for my senior year," she whispered.

"That's great!" I exclaimed, unaware that the teacher was looking sternly at me. "Our get acquainted dance is Friday. Would you go with me?"

"I was hoping you'd ask me," she returned, smiling. "Daddy will be out of town for a few days, so you may call for me at home."

I was unaware of what took place during Literature that day. Cynthia's nearness was all that mattered to me.

The next few days passed rapidly. The bright spot of each day was Miss Eggertson's Literature class; not that Miss Eggertson made anything special out of literature, but because of Cynthia's presence beside me. The bleak classroom seemed brighter, and even the works of Shakespeare

took on more meaning.

On Friday, Jim managed to borrow his father's automobile, one of the few automobiles in town at that time. It wheezed and groaned as it traveled up the hill to Cynthia's home. Ellen answered the door and invited me in, seating me in the parlor.

"Johnny," she said, sitting down next to me, "I like you very much, and I'm sure you will be a great man someday, but I must tell you something. Mr. Wainwright is determined that Cynthia will marry Ronald Carter. In that way, the ownership of the Carter-Wainwright Mill will be kept in the families."

I was stunned for a moment. "Isn't there such a thing as love in his plans?" I finally asked. "Doesn't Cynthia have a say in the matter?"

"Mr. Wainwright is very peculiar in some ways," Ellen said. "I sincerely hope that you win Cynthia. You are worth a dozen Ronald Carters."

I held Cynthia's hand as we sat nestled together in

the rear seat of the car. I wanted so much to make her a part of my future, but I realized the odds were great. I was not even sure that Willard Wainwright knew of my existence, and I worried that if he found out about my feelings for his daughter, my father's position would be in jeopardy.

To most of the students at Holley Dale High, the first dance of the year was not the greatest thing in the world, but I wouldn't have traded places with anyone that night. It was over too soon, and Jim grumbled occasionally as his car groaned up the hill for the second time that night. I walked Cynthia to her door and kissed her tenderly.

"Will I see you again before school on Monday?" she asked quietly.

"I don't know," I replied. "I just don't know."

As I entered my house, I discovered my father seated in his reading chair in the darkness. "Up a bit late, aren't you, Dad?"

"I couldn't sleep, Johnny. I want to talk to you."

"What's the matter?" I inquired seriously.

"Johnny, you like Cynthia, don't you?"

"Yes."

"I don't want to see you get hurt, son. She likes you, too, but please realize how impossible it is," he said pleadingly.

"It's not entirely impossible, Dad," I answered confidently. "I plan on being a doctor, and I'll make myself worthy of her. She'll wait for me."

He drew silently on his pipe for a moment, then he slowly tapped the ashes from his pipe and carefully laid it on the table beside him. "Son, I'm going to tell you something about the Wainwright family, but you must promise never to tell another living soul."

"I promise, Dad, but what's the big, dark secret?" I asked curiously. "It couldn't be all that bad."

"Johnny, there is a malady inherent in Willard Wainwright's family," he began. "It may be called a sleeping sickness. There have been members of his family who have slept so soundly and quietly, with the heart beating so

slowly that it has been impossible to determine whether they were alive or dead. Rumor has it that some have been buried, only to awaken later in the confines of a grave.

"Mr. Wainwright lives in mortal fear of such a thing happening to him. He has confided in me, and I alone know his secret. He had me wire the casket you saw in the tomb with a small button which is connected to several bells located in various places about the estate. If he awakens, following his burial, he needs but push the button and help will come. He plans to reveal this secret to one other person besides me, and he will be the man who marries Cynthia. Mr. Wainwright is determined that Ronald Carter will be that man."

My father was silent. We both sat and gazed into the dying embers on the grate. No sound disturbed our thoughts except the ticking of the ancient clock on the wall. I could think of no questions. Finally, I rose and placed a hand on his shoulder. Then I turned and retired to my small, comfortable bedroom.

The year progressed, and between my schoolwork and my parttime job at the village grocery store, I kept my mind busy. I lived for my Literature class and the few stolen moments with Cynthia.

Spring came again to the valley and with it came graduation. Commencement ceremonies were scheduled to be held in the ancient high school auditorium. That evening the room was filled to capacity. The boys in their new suits and the girls in their frilly dresses marched slowly from the rear of the hall to the stage. Following the march, it was my responsibility as class president to deliver the Address of Welcome and announce the program to follow.

I stood and surveyed the sea of faces before me. Willard Wainwright was sitting stiffly among the townspeople. This was the only civic function I had ever seen him attend. Ellen was sitting beside him, smiling and radiant, with her eyes always on Cynthia. My father and mother smiled up at me. My mother seemed younger, and her large brown eyes seemed to radiate the power I needed.

Dad, in his Sunday clothes, was a bit uncomfortable, yet pride shown from his face.

Following the exercises, the strains of the dance orchestra filled the old gymnasium, and I ventured out onto the dance floor to find Cynthia. Without my asking her, she came into my arms, and silently we danced. Her soft cheek resting against mine, I guided her from the throng into the shadows of a corridor. Her lips were too inviting to resist, and I tenderly kissed her. She snuggled close to me, and we danced in the shadows.

"I'm going to miss you, Johnny," she whispered.
"Daddy is taking me to Europe for the summer."

I stopped and looked down at her. "I love you," I said.

"I love you, too," she answered, the tears welling up in her eyes.

We clung to each other for a moment, and when we returned to reality, Ellen was standing near us. "Come, Cynthia," she gently commanded. "Your father is looking for you."

Tomb /

Cynthia looked at me for a moment, fighting to hold back the tears. "I'll write to you," she said.

Soon she was gone, and I was alone in the dark schoolhouse corridor. As she walked into the light of the gymnasium, she stopped momentarily and looked back. The memory of her standing there looking back into the blackness was a picture I carried in my mind for many years.

The giant city of New York seemed cold and unfriendly, but with my medical studies at Columbia University consuming nearly all my time, the years passed quickly. My correspondence with Cynthia continued, yet she never mentioned our future together, and neither did I.

Then on June 10, 1917, I returned to my quarters, lonely and tired. A letter awaited me. I recognized Cynthia's handwriting, and I made myself comfortable in the confines of my large reading chair to spend a few moments with her.

"Dear Johnny:

I have enjoyed writing to you for four long years, and I have looked forward to receiving your letters, but now I'm writing my last letter to you. I regret to tell you, Johnny, I became the wife of Ronald Carter last week. Daddy has been set on my marriage to Ronald for many years. I fought off the idea for so long, but lately he has become very insistent. I respect Ronald very much. He is an intelligent man, and I'm sure he'll be able to manage the business now that his father is gone, and Daddy plans to retire soon. I'm satisfied he will be a good husband.

I shall always remember you, Johnny.

Good-bye,

Cynthia."

The letter blurred before my eyes, and I sat and contemplated the futility of the situation. My dream world was crumbling around me, and there was nothing to do but

look out into the night from my desolate room.

America had been at war with Germany for several months, and I knew that my services would soon be needed. Before the end of the week, I volunteered and was in uniform as a member of Uncle Sam's Medical Corps.

After months of amputating, stitching and hoping, the bloody war was over, and I returned to the states, endeavoring to gather up the ragged ends of my life. While I was in France, my father died, and on my return I found my mother much older and grayer.

"Come with me, Mom," I pleaded. "I need you."

The same brown eyes that had comforted me since childhood, comforted me again. "I'll go with you, Johnny. You are all I have left in the world."

We rented out the house and were soon on our way to New York. I purchased a copy of the morning paper when I left the Holley Dale railroad station, and as I settled down on the train for the long ride, the newspaper's headline glared up at me: "Willard Wainwright Found Dead." The details told of him being found slumped over his desk

at the mill. There was a bullet hole in his temple, and the murder weapon had not been found but foul play was suspected. Wainwright's death meant very little to me. My only thought was that it had happened about two years too late.

I served my internship at the New York General Hospital, and with my experience in the overseas war hospitals, I progressed very well. Upon receiving my medical degree, I was retained as a member of the hospital's staff.

For two years I was able to provide my mother with the luxuries she'd existed without for so many years, and then as gently as she had lived, she died. I buried her beside my father in Holley Dale cemetery, and I was left with more loneliness than I had ever known.

Business reasons kept me in Holley Dale for a few days. The old home had been vacated, and it waited neat and clean for my occupancy. The long day finally ended, I turned my footsteps homeward. Suddenly, while listening to the strange and eerie creaking of the old house, my

mind turned to Cynthia Wainwright Carter. I had not seen her at the funeral, and I was disappointed.

Within minutes after the thought of her raced through my mind, there was a timid knock at my door. When I opened it, Cynthia stood before me.

"Hello, Johnny," she whispered.

"Cynthia, please come in," I answered, noticing the same happy deepness in her eyes that had always paralyzed my thinking was still there. "I was thinking of you," I added. "I wanted to see you. I was sure you'd be at the funeral."

"I wanted to come so much, Johnny, but I dreaded the idea of seeing you again with all those people around. It's been so long, and I've missed you so much." She hesitated and blushed slightly before continuing: "I don't usually make a habit of calling on bachelors in their apartments, but it's nice being near you again."

I was slowly brought back to the present by the ringing of the telephone. As I reached for the receiver,

I glanced at my watch and noticed it was 3:00 a.m.

"Hello," I said groggily.

"Johnny, come quickly!" Cynthia cried. "Bells are ringing all over the place! Ronald rushed from the house when they started. He seemed to go completely insane, and I haven't seen him since. Please come!"

Ice seemed to rush into my blood stream. All I had learned of Willard Wainwright's peculiar disease crowded into my mind.

"Listen, Cynthia, listen carefully. I'll be there as fast as I can. Meet me at the gate and have the key to the crypt with you."

"The crypt?" she quavered.

"Yes, please don't worry. I know what to do."

I drove up the steep hill faster than ever before and screeched to a stop just inside the gate. Cynthia was standing a short distance ahead of me, her face a chalk white. She handed me the huge brass key.

"What's caused it, Johnny?"

"Wait in the car, Cynthia," I told her. "Please,

don't come with me."

The key slipped into the rusty lock, and the heavy door swung noisily open, then I was standing in the musty dampness of four generations of the Wainwright dead. My feeble flashlight poked small holes of light into the blackness, but I immediately recognized Willard Wainwright's vault. The block and tackle still hung on its track near the vault, so hurriedly I attached the chain to the ring on the heavy concrete lid and began pulling. Gradually, the lid swung free, and I pushed it to one side. Down inside, my light revealed the sturdy mahogany coffin. I closed my eyes and pulled the lid open.

The odor that arose took my breath away. I opened my eyes, and the shrunken remains of Willard Wainwright lay before me. I took no time for examination, for I was only interested in a small button by his left hand. I located it, and to my surprise the handle of a small revolver was resting against it. As soon as I removed it, the ringing stopped.

The sudden stillness seemed to hang heavily over

the entire area. In that stillness, the mystery of Willard Wainwright's death unfolded itself in my mind. Ronald Carter could profit more from his father-in-law's death than anyone, and his actions since the tragedy were those of a haunted man. Where would be a better hiding place for the murder weapon than in the coffin of the victim, yet how could the murderer know that in the decomposition of the body the revolver would find its way to scream the crime to the world?

I ran the light over the corpse of Willard Wainwright, and I could still recognize the aloof man. I felt sick and weak as I closed the lid that hid him from my view, leaving the vault lid to be replaced in the brightness of day.

When I emerged from the crypt, a gray, withered man confronted me. It took a moment for me to recognize Ronald Carter. His eyes were large and haunted, and they seemed a lighter blue than I remembered them.

"Is the old man alive?" he mumbled.

I shook my head and showed him the revolver. His

watery blue eyes riveted on it for a moment, then as though all his muscles had given way, Ronald Carter slumped at my feet.

Cynthia stood at my side, and together we looked down on the once handsome man lying before us on the ground. I knelt at his side and took his pulse; it fluttered and died under my touch. I attempted to revive him, but Ronald Carter was dead. I carried his remains into the house and lay him among the luxury to which he had become so accustomed.

"May I drive you somewhere?" I asked Cynthia after phoning the mortician.

"Anywhere, please, anywhere," she answered pleadingly.

Obediently, I led her to the car. She sat beside me, and I felt her tremble as she looked down over the sleeping village. Slowly we descended, and I placed my arm about her shoulders and drew her near to me as a new day dawned.

MOLLY

By B. Davis Evans

appx. 2000 words

MOLLY

Mother was dead, and all eight of her children were gathered around her bed, performing a ceremony that she had requested be performed at her death. My oldest sister, Meg, sat on a bedside chair, and one after the other, she pushed a needle deep into the quick of each of mother's fingers. As far back as I could remember, Mom had been afraid that she might be buried alive. If any life remained in her body, she felt that a needle pressed into those tender areas might cause her to flinch, and we would know that life was still there.

After the horrible ritual had been performed on the tenth finger, mother was pronounced dead, and a group of ladies, who had waited in the adjoining room, came in to prepare mother for her burial.

I strolled from the darkened room into the brilliant sunlight. The world seemed empty. It was hard to imagine living on day after day without my mother to advise and guide me. I was 21, yet I felt like a child in the face of the tragedy. I did feel a sense of relief. Mother was at last free from remembering a horrible experience. The memory of which had stalked her living for eight long years. Swiftly my mind raced back to that fateful day when we discovered that my sister, Molly, had been buried alive. I was only 13 then. My world was young, beautiful and alive, and

I felt as though it would remain that way for a hundred years.

My sister, Molly, had returned home that fall after a marriage failure. She became ill, but the doctors of that day could find nothing organically wrong, yet she grew weaker day after day, and one night after being home only three months, she died quietly in her sleep.

Molly had been born a twin. She had married about the same time as Madge, her twin. Madge's marriage had been successful. The work of her engineer husband had taken them deep into Central America, so when we notified family members about Molly's death, we were unable to locate Madge. The only address we had was nearly a year old, and she was never too interested in writing letters. She had always been unthoughtful, selfish and vain. She was as different from Molly as frost was from fire. It had seemed to me that we were all afraid of Madge, and she got her way in all things to prevent her outbursts of temper.

After three days of preparing and waiting, we buried Molly. It was my first experience of seeing someone I loved placed in the cold earth. After the task had been completed against a tearful, sobbing background, we returned to our home that seemed forboding and empty. Never again would it ring with the pleasant laughter or be enhanced by the beauty of the dead Molly.

Unable to sleep that night, I walked from my bed and looked from my upstairs bedroom window. The yard spread out below me quiet and serene in the light of a winter moon. My thoughts returned to the cemetery, and I pictured Molly lying quietly in the confines of her satin surroundings. From out of the night,

I imagined I heard her voice. She screamed in fright. My blood froze in my veins, and I rushed to the protection of my bed where I spent a sleepless night.

Two days after Molly's burial, Madge arrived home, and regardless of the sadness that filled our home, she flew into a rage because we had buried her twin sister without waiting for her to be there. Mother retired to her room wordless, but Dad, who had always been a meek, humble man, stood up to Madge.

"We have given in to you around this house since you were able to say your first word. Everyone has been afraid to cross you in any way. I'm standing up to you now. You haven't written us for one whole year. You left no forwarding address, and we were unable to contact you by any means. We tried them all. Please don't upset us now. We are upset enough."

As usual, Madge heard nothing he said. If she did, it meant nothing to her. She tossed her head like an angry stallion, and her black hair glistened in the light.

"Father," she said, "I want to see Molly, and I am going to have her exhumed even if I have to get a court order. I'll pay for the exhuming myself. I mean what I say."

Father realized the futility of further argument, so arrangements were made to have Molly exhumed the following day. My 21-year-old brother, Mike, volunteered to do the digging. He had the task completed by sundown.

The cemetery was an etching in white and gray with the numerous tombstones protruding at various heights out of the snow.

dominating the scene, was a high pile of brown earth, earth from Molly's grave. The mound stood out in the whiteness like a lonely ship on a vast, white ocean. One couldn't tell where the snow ended and the sky began.

Slowly, Mother, Dad, Madge and I walked through the deep snow to the edge of Molly's grave. Mike was down in the grave brooming off dirt from the top of Molly's vault so that none would get onto her casket when the wooden vault lid was removed. The overcast day and the open grave promoted a foreboding in me, and I wanted the orderer done with.

Having completed his dusting, Mike raised the lid and Molly's casket came into view. Dad, standing at the foot of the grave, directed the rays of his flashlight into the dimness of the excavation. Mike fastened the end of a rope onto the casket lid. He then climbed out of the grave and stood on top of the pile of earth. No one spoke. Dad remained at the foot of the grave. Mother, Madge and I lined up along the grave's edge like statues in bronze. All eyes were fixed on the lid of the pink casket.

Mike pulled slowly on the rope, and the lid opened. The feeble ray of the light fell upon the most horrible sight I'd ever seen. Molly's eyes were wide open. Her beautiful black hair had turned white. Both her clinched fists contained black hair that had been pulled from her head prior to her real death. The satin lining of the coffin lid was in shreds, revealing that Molly had tried to claw herself out of her grave

Dad stood as though he'd suddenly been turned to stone. Mother roamed off through the deep snow. Moans coming from the depth of her soul, disturbed the silence. Madge had sunk to her knees, and her face was buried in her gloved hands. Mike moved from the mound of earth and stood at my side.

"My God! My God!": he murmured over and over.

Finally he lowered himself into the grave and tried pull Molly's eyelids over her her glassy eyes, but they were set, never to be moved. He tried to unclinch her fists, but they too were imovable. He stood up and looked at the horrible sight for a long moment, then he closed the casket, hiding Molly from our view.

Dad had followed Mother through the place of headstones and snow, taken her in his arms, and she buried her face in the rough fabric of his macinaw. Her body was wracked with grief.

Mike and I helped Madge to her feet.

"I never should have insisted on seeing her. We never would have known! We never would have known! Now We shall never forget this horrible experience," she wailed.

"Go home with them, Joe," Mike whispered to me.

The day was dying fast, and the momentary rays of the setting sun broke through an opening in the overcast long enough to cast the long shadows of the evergreens, like giant's arms, across the frozen world.

Dad and I held onto Mother's arms as we made our way out of the desolate cemetery. Madge walked somberly behind. It was nearly dark when we reached the cemetery gate, and as I looked back, I could barely see the outline of my brother, shilouetted

against the angry sky. His movements were slow and jerky as though he were a mechanical man as he proceeded with the task of replacing the earth in Molly's grave.

Mother never fully recovered from the shock of the experience; night after night, I heard her sobbing in her bed, and time after time she chilled the nights with her screaming as she awakened from horrible nightmares.

After eight years, she quit this life. Her final request was the needle treatment; she died fearing she may awaken in the confines of the grave as Molly had. We laid her to rest in her grave, located between the graves of Molly and father; father had died only one year before. It was spring, and the world was in a state of awakening from a winter sleep into a new life, yet as each of us looked at Molly's grave, we could still remember her wide-eyed, gray, horror-stricken girl, lying under the green, new grass.

The end.

THE UNDERTAKER OF RIM ROCK

appx. 1600 words

THE UNDERTAKER OF RIM ROCK

by B. Davis Evans

The Main Street of Rim Rock, New Mexico was deserted. A dry hot wind beat at the unpainted boards of the the few buildings of the business section. A lone, lean dog trotted along the vacant street, hesitating now and then to examine anything that may resemble food. A newspaper was picked up by the wind and flattened against a wire fence.

Rim Rock was sleeping. All the residents of the desert town were resting in preparation for another sultry day when they had to venture out into the blazing sun to eek out an existence from the rocky soil.

Among the half hundred houses that made up the town, only one light burned. It was in the back room of a small, unpretentious dwelling that stood at the edge of town. This was the home of Sam Conk, the only undertaker in Hardin County. Sam sat with his chair tipped against the wall. He bit cruelly into the stem of his pipe and puffed clouds of cheap tobacco smoke into the air. The smell of the smoke, intermingled with the odor of embalming fluid, gave a sweet, sickening smell to the atmosphere. A tall, gaunt, naked, male corpse lay on a porcelain slab. Embalming fluid was

was being pumped into the right shoulder area of the body, and blood oozed from the same area, ran down the slab and dripped off the end into a large bucket.

Through half-closed eyes, Sam watched the body turn pink. When the blood became an enemic red, Sam rose from his chair, stretched, yawned and slowly walked over to turn off the pump. He removed the hoses from the shoulder artery and pushed the embalming equipment to one side, then began the gruesome task of washing the corps, placing it on a dressing table and cleaning up the slab.

His work completed, Sam walked to the door, glanced back at his latest customer said: "I'll stuff ya into your glad-rags come morning. A big feller like you ain't to easily handled. Sleep well, brother."

Sam turned out the light and walked out into the night. He clamped the padlock on the lonely laboratory, and with the wind whipping at his baggy overalls, he made his way around the house to the front door.

When Sam had built his embalming room onto his home only one year earlier, he had wanted to include an entrance from the bedroom directly to his shop, but Ellie had protested.

"I'll not be caught sleeping right next to the dead. If you must build such a horrible place, you'll have to have your private entrance out there somewhere."

Sam moved across the ancient kitchen without turning on the

light. He dropped his overalls near the bed, kicked off his garters and climbed into bed along side his enemic wife. He placed his large hand on her bare upper arm. She cringed under his touch and moved to the far side of the bed.

"After you've been cavorting around with a dead body, Sam Conk, don't expect to put your hands on me," Ellie had told him on many occasions.

Sam understood. He streched out, sending his boney feet over the bottom end of the bed. He gazed into the darkness, distrubed only by the ticking of cheap alarm clock and a devert wind whistling around the corners of his home. The room was soon filled with the sound of the snores of the Undertaker of Rim Rock.

Then Sam awakened, the room was filled with daylight. He lay and listened for the usual kitchen sounds of Ellie preparing breakfast, but all was quiet. The hands of the noisy clock told him that his two daughters were on their way down the lane to the highway to catch the school bus. Sam arose, pulled on his overalls, slipped into his house slippers, filled his pipe with tobacco, was prepared for another day. As he walked into the kitchen, he discovered Ellie seated at the table, studying the patterns of the worn oilcloth covered the surface.

"Good morning, woman," he said.

Ellie didn't move. Sam wasn't sure she heard.

"Kid's gone?" he asked.

Ellie raised her eyes and looked momentarily through the screen door toward the lane. She then resumed the study of the oilcloth. Sam poured himself a cup of coffee from the battered pot on the stove.

He walked to the door and saw that his two teenage daughters were waiting at the highway for the bus. The lane was 500 yards long and Sam wondered again, as he had done many times, why the original owner of the property had built the house so far inland.

"Don't you feel well, Ellie?" said Sam, turning into the room to place his empty cup on the table.

Ellie said nothing. Sam looked at his frail wife and made an effort to recall how vivacious and lovely she had been when he'd brought her, as a bride, to the rocky farm eighteen years earlier. She, less than forty years old, reminded him of a little old lady.

"Woman, I've got a delivery to make. Should be back 'fore noon."

Sam stepped onto the porch. The sun was already high in the sky, preparing another scorching, blistering day for the residents of Rim Rock. The old family cat rubbed its body against Sam's legs, weaving in and out, making a purring noise, but Sam took no notice. He was looking across his barren acreage that simmered in the September heat. The land and the highway were still. The school bus had come and gone carrying his daughters to the Mardin County High School twenty miles away.

"I've done this to Ellie," Sam said to himself. "She was never the type to live on a farm."

The undertaker had farmed during the first few years of their marriage, but crop failures and debt had driven him to take a mortician correspondent course, because he felt there was a need for one in a county that didn't have one. Following the course plus a few weeks working as an apprentice in Los Angeles, Sam Conk became

Mariden County's only undertaker.

Sam's worried glance into the house found Ellie still sitting, still staring. He had taken her to Albuquerque a few months earlier. X-rays had shown that a stomach tumor was causing Ellie's miseries. The doctors had informed Sam that an immediate operation was necessary. \$1000 was the cost. He hadn't told Ellie that a tumor was eating at her vitals. He made her believe that an acute case of indigestion was her problem, and a few weeks of prescribed medicine would take care of it. Secretly he was hoping for his business to improve; a couple of first class burials would put him in a financial position to get Ellie's operation. People of the county, who could afford expensive funerals, were shipping their dead out of the county for mortician services.

Sam pushed open the door of his laboratory. The smell of embalming fluid, the corps and stale tobacco smoke greeted him. He opened a window, left the door ajar and began the grim labor of dressing the dead man. He rolled an economy casket along side the table and wrestled the corps into it, and soon had it secured in his ancient hearse, ready for delivery.

As Sam made a final inspection of his shop, he imagined he saw Ellie's haggard eyes looking at him from the white depths of the porcelain slab. He dropped to his knees, clutching the cool platform with his large hands and prayed:

"Dear God, I don't bother you often, but I need help now. You know as I do, my wife, Ellie, needs an operation. Please have someone, who can afford an expensive burial, die. I need money, God Amen.

Sam felt relief come into his soul; God was the only person who could help him, and he felt that help was on the way.

The delivery was made; Sam's latest customer was lying securely in the confines of his home, awaiting his viewing and funeral.

When Sam returned home, he parked his conveyance, and as he walked toward the kitchen door, he wondered if Ellie was still sitting where he'd left her. He opened the screen. She was still there, but her face lay on her left arm that stretched out over the table. The hand clutched an official-looking document. Sam feared the worst; he pulled his limp wife to a sitting position and found to his horror that Ellie's other hand was clutching the handle of a butcher's knife, that she'd driven into the gnawing pain inside her..

Bin Rock slept. The only burning light in the town was in Sam Gonk's laboratory. The lonely undertaker sat on his tipped-back chair, chewed on the stem of his pipe, and through half-closed eyes, he watched the naked body of Ellie grow pink as embalming fluid coursed through her veins. Nothing disturbed the silence except a dry, hot wind that whistled around the corners of his shop, the dripping of blood in the bucket at the end of the slab and the whimpering of Sam's daughters beyond the partition where they lay in their beds.

Sam unfolded the document, taken from Ellie's hand. Tears blinded his vision as he examined it. It was an insurance policy on Ellie Gonk with death benefits posted at \$1000. Sam Gonk was listed as the beneficiary.

The End

THE IRON ROD

THE IRON ROD

Carol walked slowly down the isle of The Orem, an electrically driven commuter car that traveled the steel rails connecting her country village, Spanish Fork, to Utah's largest metropolis, Salt Lake City. When she realized she was the only passenger aboard, she was a bit disappointed; no one was there to admire her in her new summer dress and her very first pair of high heels. She felt beautiful but alone as she seated herself in the plush upholstered seat. She adjusted her sun glasses and began reading from a movie magazine she'd purchased at the station. It was difficult to read well through the smoke-colored lenses, but Carol had seen Barbara Stanwick in a recent movie, reading through sunglasses as she traveled. Why not do likewise; Carol felt like a woman of mystery. She knew that her trip into the big city would be a memorable one; She'd never forget The Summer of 1938.

Someone was placing luggage in the rack above her. She paid no attention. She pretended to be consumed in the magazine from which she discerned pictures only. Suddenly the car lunged forward, as was its eccentric habit, prior to its getting underway. It hesitated then lunged again. The second lunge was accompanied by the sound of a dingling bell plus a groan from lonely horn. Carol didn't remove

her eyes from the magazine but the second bizarre, unconventional, convulsive motion of the vehicle caught the standing baggage adjuster off balance, and in his effort to seat himself in the chair facing Carol, he missed, fell in the area between them, knocking the magazine from the hands of the astonished girl.

Carol immediately lost her role as a woman of mystery; she removed her glasses and looked down into the surprised brown eyes of a handsome lad, who was about her own age, lying on the floor.

The youth immediately seated himself. "I'm sorry, I don't do that very often," he apologized.

"It's quite all right. Apparently you're not too well acquainted with this line," Carol answered laughingly, retrieving her magazine from the floor.

"No, I'm not; this is my first venture on this stage coach. I'll not be caught standing again when she takes off."

Carol realized that the encounter might be an answer to her prayers; this handsome youth could be her Dream Prince; after all, he did resemble Tyron Power, and that little lock of unruly hair that hung over his right eye gave him a mischievous look.

"I'm Rex Ivins," said the boy. "I live in Salt Lake City. I've been visiting a Spanish Fork cousin. I'm a junior come fall at South High School. What's your name?"

Carol immediately liked the friendly, straight forwardness of her new friend.

"My name is Carol Peterson. I live in Spanish Fork. I'm on my way to visit a married sister who lives in Salt Lake City. I too will be a junior this fall. I'll attend The Spanish Fork High School."

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As their swaying conveyance lumbered along the rails, Rex and Carol found themselves conversing about the eccentricities of the car and the men who operated it. They read and laughed at the advertisements posted on the walls; they learned that Bull Durham was in the bag, Prince Albert in the can and Lydia E. Pinkham in the bottle. They discussed school experiences, summer fun and hobbies, and Carol was glad she'd taken the early car as Rex Ivins was making her ride into the big city a pleasant one. She wondered if she looked as pretty to him as she had to herself as she'd made her way from home to the station earlier, watching her reflection in the shaded windows along her tree-lined street. She had seemed more mature suddenly and she loved it. She was taking her annual vacation to visit her sister Elaine, Mrs. Karl Marrott III in Salt Lake City. Carol's parents never took vacations so an annual summer excursion to Elaine's was a happy occasion for Carol Peterson, country girl. She loved the big, noisy, barnlike monster on which she rode; it was her deliverer, a means of escape from the dullness of country living.

Prior journeys, a distance of sixty miles, had been long and tedious to Carol, but on this early August day, the swinging, swaying vehicle was making its way through the heavy traffic of the big town before Carol realized the miles had been eaten up so soon. She never ceased to marvel at the sight of the tall buildings radiant in the morning sun and the fascinating people who took no notice of the noisy electric car, clanging, hissing and tooting

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a horn as it passed them by.

"City people don't take much notice of these Orem cars," said Carol. "Back home, it's quite an occasion when they come down Main Street, making all this noise."

"Salt Lakers are accustomed to noise, and this rig we're riding is just bringing some strangers to town. These people can care less," responded Rex.

On arriving at the station, located in the heart of down town Salt Lake, Carol immediately recognized Elaine's old gray Plymouth, waiting at the curb. She became so excited, she was finding it hard to breathe--She, Carol Peterson, 16, was about to venture onto the streets of Utah's largest city with only God knowing for sure what experiences awaited her.

In the excitement of her arrival she had practically forgotten about Rex, and as she obtained her luggage from the rack above, she realized he was speaking to her.

"Carol, will you go to a show with me Saturday night?"

"How could things happen so quickly?" thought Carol. "All this and now this handsome Tyrone Power-type boy is asking for a date."

"Yes, I'll go with you. Here, I have Elaine's address on this envelope."

"Thank you," said Rex. "I'll be there at seven o'clock."

They exchanged smiles and Carol rushed down the aisle, bumping every other seat with her luggage as she went. Elaine, tall and beautiful, was waiting on the station platform, holding the tiny hand of her three-year-old-son, Karl Peterson Armstrong Marrott III.

"What a huge name for such a small boy," thought Carol as she ran into Elaine's waiting arms.

The bustle and confusion of the terminal permitted limited conversation, and Carol marveled at Elaine's calmness as she maneuvered the car into the stream of traffic. She glanced back, hoping Rex might be in sight. Yes, there he was at the curb, watching them.

Carol thought, "He's not as tall as my Dream Prince, but a girl can't expect everything this early in her vacation."

Elaine's home was located in a subdivision well out of the city, and Carol, watching the poise and assurance of her sister, secretly hoped that one day she too could live in Salt Lake City with a loving husband and children, and who knows, the Orem accidental meeting of her and Rex might be the beginning of the rest of her life.

Once the smooth-running Plymouth was away from the confusion of the city, the question routine began: "How's Mom and Dad? Is it hot back home? Will you be glad when school starts? How was the trip?"

Elaine had finally asked the important question. "I thought you'd never ask," responded Carol. "The trip was super; I met a boy. His name is Rex Ivins, and I have a date for the theatre next Saturday night."

"My goodness, you do work fast. My little sister with a date. Is he a nice boy?"

"Oh, yes, you will let me go won't you?"

"Yes, you may go. I'm sure you're old enough to choose wisely."

What could be the turning point in Carol's life took place on Thursday, and now Saturday had arrived. Hours before seven o'clock, Carol was ready for her big city date. Elaine had given her the privacy of the house by taking Karl Jr. to the park, and Karl Sr. hadn't returned from golfing.

As the hands of the clock crept toward seven, Carol moved from room to room, catching glimpses of herself in mirrors, located sporadically about the small, neat house. For three days she'd mentalized the arrival of Rex Ivins in a white convertible. He'd whisk her away into the nightlife of the big city. This picture was a hangover from a movie, featuring Clark Gable and Claudette Colbert, zooming along a California highway in such a car. Claudette's scarf flowed back in the breeze as they traveled. Carol had donned just such a scarf, and she was ready for adventure.

Suddenly the stillness of the house was shattered by the clanging of the door chimes. Carol made a final inspection of her coiffeur and opened the door. Clad in doeskin slacks, white shirt open at the neck, Rex stood beaming on the porch.

"Come in Rex. You surely are prompt," she said as the coo coo bird jumped out of the clock and coo cooed seven times.

As Carol closed the door, she realized her hand was shaking. It was probably because this Ivins boy was actually more handsome than she'd remembered him. As Rex walked to the nearest chair, Carol realized she'd seen no dream carriage parked in front of the house. She again opened the door and scanned the area. There was no convertible. The only thing she saw that hadn't been there earlier was a dilapidated bicycle, leaning against the white picket fence. Carol's

romantic dream world came tumbling down; that bike may have been there all the time; she just hadn't noticed it. "Please God," she silently prayed. "Let that horrible thing belong to someone besides Rex." She turned, knowing that an Ivins' automobile was parked down the street and out of sight.

"That's odd; someone has parked a bicycle by our gate."

"That's my bike," responded the handsome boy.

"Are we going to ride a bicycle all the way up town?"

"Oh, it isn't so far, and that's a dern good bike,"

"Yes, it probably is a good bike, but won't it be quite difficult to pump us both all that way?"

"No, I'm in good condition."

Carol excused herself and hurried to the bathroom. Tears glistened in her eyes. She wanted Elaine to be home; Elaine could easily handle such problems as Rex Ivins and his bicycle, but Elaine wasn't near by. Carol dabbed her eyes with a tissue, put on the bravest of her smiles and walked slowly into the living room.. She realized how Mary of Scotland must have felt just prior to the falling of the ax.

"All ready, Mr. Ivins," she said as cheerily as possible.

Rex pushed his bicycle through the fine gravel onto the solid road. Carol seated herself gently on the metal bar. Rex pushed her and their mount up the road for a few running steps, then he flung his body into position on the leather seat. Carol was underway on her first big city date. She couldn't remember having seen a movie involving a bike on a date, unless it might have been an Andy Hardy flick, featuring Micky Rooney, but Carol soon realized she could waste no energy rebuilding her shattered dream; she was

too concerned about the uncomfortable iron rod on which she sat and the awkward position of leaning forward in order that her human engine could reach the handle bars. The boy breathed in little short grunts; his mouth was too near Carol's right ear.

"Why," she thought, "didn't I take a later car last Thursday, or why couldn't this lunk-head have seated himself at the other end of the car?"

Carol was thankful that the traffic was light, and she marveled that those lucky people in the automobiles didn't laugh at the sight of her all dressed up as though going to church, riding double on a bicycle, manipulated by a lad in white. But no one seemed to even notice them. Carol contented herself by thinking that dating on a bike was a big city custom.

The iron bar cut cruelly into Carol's body, and she was afraid to change positions too often for fear of upsetting the two-wheeled-rig.

"You sure do look nice," panted the boy.

"Thank you; so do you," answered Carol, wishing that a broken bottle or a stray puncture weed might disable the torture machine and they could walk the remainder of the way.

"Comfortable?" asked Rex.

"This bar is awfully hard; your bike must be made of a special kind of iron."

"Oh, its a good bike all right, but I don't think a person can tell good iron from bad iron by sitting on it."

"I suppose you're right," answered the girl, wishing sincerely that he'd brought a tandem job so she'd have something to do other than sit there humped forward with a cruel iron rod torturing

her body. She was worried that she'd never be normal again.

They finally arrived at Main Street, the halfway point to the Utah Theatre. Rex brought their mount to a stop for what he called a breather. Passenger busses rolled merrily up the street toward the heart of the city.

Carol said, "Why don't we hide your bicycle somewhere and take a bus into town?"

"I wouldn't do that; I saved all I made from my paper route for a year to buy this bike. I wouldn't want to run the chance of having it stolen."

The thought came to the girl that even though they may arrive safely at the theatre, the horrible experience would only be half over; the long ride home would be the worse half. She began laying escape plans.

"Mount up," Rex called out as he wiped perspiration from his brow then made an effort to put his unruly hair in place.

Carol moved into position to seat herself on the too familiar iron rod. She made a desperate effort to hold back the tears that might disturb the mascara that she'd applied to her eyes so carefully. But seated she was, and again the trek toward the Utah Theatre was resumed. She tried to content herself with the truism she'd heard her mother repeat so often: "This too shall pass away."

As Carol waited for Rex to park his trusty steed in the bike stand and apply a mammoth lock to the sprocket wheel, she realized her right leg hurt in excess of other aches throughout her body, and she wondered if the arthritis that Grandma Peterson complained about so often hurt as badly, but suddenly she was

brought back to her present dilemma by the voice of her big city date.

"Hey, Carol, can you loan me fifty cents? I must have lost some money on the way here."

"Is there no end to my embarrassment on this date," thought Carol as she rummaged in her purse, locating her total assets, sixty cents.

"He'll never learn of this dime. It may be the means of freeing myself," she thought as she handed him the fifty cent piece..

They walked down the long theatre hallway toward the auditorium. The walls on either side were alive with pictures of movie stars, Gary Cooper, Maureen O'Hara, James Cagney, Jimmy Stewart, Henry Fonda, Myrna Loy, Joan Bennett, William Powell, John Wayne and others. Carol almost forgot her recent experience when she was confronted by a life-size figure of The King, Clark Gable.

A silly symphony cartoon was well under way as Rex and Carol grooped in the darkness for seats. As she settled herself gently in the plush chair, she felt relieved that the silliness was over as she was in no mood for such trite activities while she writhed in misery.

The main feature, "The Girl Next Door," with Robert Taylor and Janet Gaynor soon carried Carol away from her problems, but sooner than she realized the flick was drawing to a conclusion, and she knew she had to play her trump card, the lone dime in her purse.

"Rex," she whispered. "The show is about over. I'm going to the ladies' room. I'll meet you in the lobby."

Carol was up the isle before the astonished boy could protest

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She located a pay telephone, hurriedly lifted the receiver, dropped her dime in the slot and rattled off Elaine's number to the number please girl. Elaine's cheery hello had never sounded so good.

"Please Elaine, come and get me! I'll be on the sidewalk in front of the Utah. Hurry! Just happen to be driving past here."

"What's wrong dear?"

"I'll tell you the whole miserable story when you get here. Please Hurry!"

As Carol hung up the receiver, she saw Rex looking for her in the crowded lobby. She backed up against the wall and tried to be as invisible as possible; stalling for time was important to the harrassed girl. She looked around for a ladies' only door, but none was in sight. Eventually Rex spied her, and the beaming boy was soon at her side.

"Gee whiz, I thought you had gone."

"No, I wouldn't do that. I've been looking for you," Carol lied.

They moved out into the long beautiful corridor. Carol pretended to examine picture after picture, but her mind lingered on the gray Plymouth: Is it at the half-way point? Is Elaine crowding it to arrive on time to rescue her? How can she delay the ordeal of starting home, riding that hideous iron rod?

"Well, we'd better get started; it's a long ride home," said Rex as he applied a metal pant guard to his oil spotted slacks.

Carol's hips received a new shock of pain at the suggestion, Sooner than she wanted it to happen, they were on the street that was coming alive with people. Carol stopped at the bike stand.

"Rex, let's just stand here for a minute. I just love to watch people."

"Won't your sister be worried? It's nearly 9:30."

"No, she won't mind. I'm 16, you know."

Carol studied the stream of traffic, hoping beyond hope to spy Elaine's ugly gray Plymouth. She'd always disliked that gray, gloomy, bob-tailed car, and often wondered why Elaine and Karl seemed to enjoy it so much, but now as she searched for it in the slow-moving traffic, she decided it was the most beautiful car in the world.

"Please come, gray Plymouth," she whispered. "I'll never think your're ugly again."

"Hey, you're watching automobiles. I thought you were interested in people," said Rex.

"Oh, it's the people in the automobiles I enjoy watching. I'll tell you what--I'd like to do some window shopping."

"It's awfully late for that and I told my mother I'd be home by eleven o'clock. I'll just make it if we start now."

Panic seized Carol as she tried feebly to think of another excuse to remain status quo, a term she'd learned in history a hundred years ago, or was it just last year? Rex had already unlocked the chain and was lifting his trusty iron horse from the bicycle stand. Suddenly it happened; the gray Plymouth was drawing up to the passenger loading zone. The car had never looked so beautiful and Carol vowed again to keep her promise.

"Oh, look! there's my sister. I wonder what she's doing here. I'll ride home with her Rex, and you can easily be home by eleven. Good-bye, I had a wonderful time, and I thank you," said Carol as she rushed toward her Cinderella chariot.

The change of events had caught Rex so off guard that he was unable to speak. Like one cast in bronze, he watched the girl climb into the waiting car.

"Thank you. I love you," whispered Carol as she placed her bruised body on the seat beside her sister. "Please get me away from here. I never want to see the Utah Theatre again."

As the lovely gray Plymouth became part of the Main Street parade of cars, Carol looked back at her big city date, still clinging tenaciously to his friend, "The Bike," and she decided as he disappeared from view: "He doesn't resemble Tyron Power as much as he does Peter Lorry.

the end