

Sunny Isles

A motto on a sundial seen many years ago has often been recalled: "I record only the sunny hours". There were many sunny hours to record in our home life — hours that were characterized mostly by peace & quiet & security rather than by enthusiastic activity. Sundays were always special days. There were special clothes to be worn on Sundays only. Sunday School and Church were always in order. We attended regularly because it was the thing to do, like going to school on week days. We learned and we worshipped. Our church was in the throes of a language controversy, the older folk wanting preaching services in Swedish, the younger generation asking for English. But the Swedish ~~church~~ services helped us younger folk especially to "keep up our Swedish" as we phrased it. Also, we met so many of our friends at church. It was no ~~of~~ living experience for most of us. But there were special sunny days for our family and one yearly event we shall never forget. Our city lay on the west bank of Lake Michigan with wives of teachers north and south of town. Once each year Mother would pack a

picnic basket and after church on our bright Sunday in July or August, after church, we would, as a family, take the trolley to the end of the line. That would leave us a mile or so to walk to the beach.

These were happy, memorable events. Swimming was, of course, the main diversion of the afternoon, and I remember both my father & my mother in the water - it revealed a side of their personalities that was seldom exposed elsewhere - their so very human love of play. The picnic basket mother had prepared was a delight. The I must confess I do not remember any particular dishes served - only the general good feeling of joy and satisfying gladness. When we took the trolley home we were weary - but we didn't feel weary - we were so happy and so a pace with each other.

Another joyful occasion came to our family each summer. I had one favorite uncle - Uncle Ernest - who managed a fruit farm in Doan County, Wise. Once each summer for several years we spent a week or two with them - always during the cherry picking season. These were busy days, for there

was only a week or so in which to pick
the season's crop of cherries which all
went to the cannery in Sturgeon Bay.
Young folk, perhaps a dozen or twenty
came from the neighborhood to pick and
thus to earn a bit of extra cash. My
father and I picked, too, and it was on
those occasions that I seemed to be
closer to my father than at any time in
our years together — working, sharing,
living together, they were sharing for those
two weeks with so many others a
companionship of enthusiastic activity —
risking a little bit of our lives ~~up ladders~~
without which we could not reach the
higher branches — it was life as it
should be lived, and we all have sunny
islands in our past we would like to go
back to and visit once again — Door
County cherry picking time is one
of those sunny occasions ^{for our family} — so well
recollected in the memory of all of us
who were there.

Singing —

School

1 Day in School

Bain School was a ~~prose~~ rectangular red brick two story school house, about a fifteen or twenty minute walk from our house. On each end was an entrance, the east end being the girls' entrance and the west being for ~~the~~ boys. Six grades were taught in these part-kindergarten days. It was a disciplined school, if one were to choose one word to characterize it. We never seemed to be on any intimate terms with our teachers, but we respected each one, and there are really no unhappy incidents to remember about Bain School - except, perhaps, the dreadfully stern Mrs Keating, our school principal - she was the ultimate in autocratic-disciplinary school administrators of that ~~type~~ ~~which~~ ~~usually~~ ~~occurred~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~report~~ ~~card~~ ~~business~~ ~~with~~ ~~me~~.

Lincoln Jr. Hi. School (grades 7-9) was located directly to the east of our home - about a half hour walk from home. It was an intermediate school, providing the step from grade school to High School. Some memories linger from those days. I remember being introduced to soccer, a game I felt adept at. We played the games at Lincoln School, but never since. I particularly enjoyed my math classes. The way we walked to school led thru a wooded area thru

First Day in School

walking to school was what all of us pupils did until we were old enough to ride a bicycle, ~~and~~ for there was no other way. My first day in school is now a blank to me - I remember nothing of it, nor do I have any recollection of my first ^{grade} teacher. But since there were other days & other teachers to come, I can assume my first teacher was both adequate and pleasing, because such are my memories of later teachers. I have no recollection of having any and orientation problems in the early days. I do remember our report cards. Always there was a square for an evaluation in department. If the square contained a 5 for satisfactory, ~~it~~ I was relieved of the anxiety which usually accompanied the report card home with me, and a picture of Sir Dalabhad with the inscription: "My strength is the strength of fear because my heart is pure." I suppose I did reasonably well in each of my subjects. The I remember never caring very much for spelling when I arrived at the Crest which was always thrilled was - particularly because of training when I became old enough to take it.

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First School

School benches were always eaten in a room set aside for the purpose in the basement of our school building, boys & girls each having their own room. Sandwiches were standard fare, and an apple usually, for dessert. Our school yard was gravel - again divided - boys on the west side and girls on the east. Classrooms were rather sparsely furnished - seats for each of us, a green colored writing board on the front wall and usually on the left & right side were where we students often, as a class, did much of our work - penmanship, arithmetic, spelling etc. - The whole class at the board at one time. In most of our classrooms there were four pictures - one of Washington & one of Lincoln, a copy of the ~~the~~ pledge to the flag, and a picture of Sir Isambard with the inscription: My strength is the strength of year because my heart is pure. I suppose I did reasonably well in each of my subjects, tho I remember never caring very much for spelling. When I arrived at the Craft work always thrilled me - particularly manual training when I became old enough to take it.

I remember one schoolmate particularly because he was the only colored student in

our school. I was not especially drawn to him but not because of his color, It seemed our personalities were so different
I was introduced to soccer in junior High School. I seemed to have no trouble manipulating my feet so liked the game, The I never played it since. I remember quite vividly the Armistice Day - Nov. 11, 1918. I was at school when news of the Armistice came. School It was mid morning for us. School was dismissed and we students wandered out. It was a ^{wild} sunny day. Arriving home about noon I found no one there. Mother, as I remember it, had gone to trip town to join in the celebrations. I was eleven at the time - too young to realize all the implications of the event, but impressed with the thought that something significant had taken place.
Event in High School, there were no family vacation trips. Money was in short supply - there was no money to spend on luxuries or on recreation. As soldiers had settled upon our home, it seemed

Our home was dominated by Mother's personality. She was always serious, and deeply religious. She was without a sense of humor. She was so joy that I remember Mother was a stern disciplinarian

~~text~~

High School days ended with graduation in 1927. The years of adolescence were "growing pains" years. My father worked in the factory from 7am until five or six. It was hard work, and he was usually physically exhausted. Home social life as a consequence was languished. Church life was at low ebb with the language of questions unresolved, but continuing to be an irritant. There were few young people, and faith unengaged. There were no summer camps, no retreats.

The feeling of estrangement set in. It has continued thru the years of my life. I do not remember any really social events in which I or my family shared while I was in my late teens. I had no close friends. I participated in no extra-curricular events in High School. There were no family vacation trips. Money was in short supply. There was no money to spend on unessential, or on recreation. A sadness had settled upon our home, it seemed.

Our home was dominated by Mother's personality. She was always serious, and deeply religious. She was without a sense of humor. There was no joy that I remember. Mother was a stern disciplinarian.

She seemed unable in those years to enjoy anything. We attended no concerts. Our home was most feebly furnished — food was prepared with little attention given to a tasty morsel on a lovely table setting. We were not to "jut on" or be "stylish". A great cleavage existed between the "rich" and the "poor" of the world, and we were the "poor". We never had a telephone — I had left home before I ever spoke in a telephone or ate in a restaurant. We were to be "humble" people but as time went on we lost all our self-esteem and consequently our self-confidence. To the end of her life Mother spoke of her large hands and feet, her common looks, her lack of education,

school without class instruction. I remember working out the table book and fixing my reports quite alone in the school. I appreciated working with DeWald. He was a well known physics instructor, having written our last book in collaboration with another physics professor from Hamilton College in Paris. I have motivation for a physics major and my natural liking for the subject. Also

College Days

I do not remember exactly what instrument brought me to Coe for my college education. Most likely it was Coe's provision of a scholarship which eased the financial demands of a college education somewhat. It was, I think, in the fall of 1932 that I journeyed to Cedar Rapids to matriculate. I studied French under Dr. Harmin Coe, He noted for his skills as an artist, and Latin under Dr. Bryant. Dr. Coffin taught math and the head of the Physics department was Dr. Leo Wold. I chose Physics as my major and enjoyed every minute of both class instruction and laboratory experiments. One course was particularly interesting, the course in Light. It was taken in summer school without class instruction. ~~I~~ I remember working out the lab work and filing my reports quite alone in the school lab. I appreciated working with Dr. Wold. He was a well known physics instructor, having written our text book in collaboration with another physics professor from Hampford College in Penn. I have motivation for a physics major - my natural liking for the subject. Also -

~~those~~ there was an intellectual ferment in the land over the subject of evolution. I had then early religious training and by ~~the~~ the studies at HBY became a stern Creationist. ~~But~~ But I wanted to be sure of my belief and a science major in college was a challenge to me. If I was in future days to enter the ministry and preach, I wanted to be sure that my own faith was strong and tested and that I could be a committed Christian, as I understood the term, and maintain intellectual honesty and respectability. I believe I can truly say that ~~my~~ I was confirmed in my faith thru my college experience being more assured than ever of things I believed.

Coe College was a land grant college and as such had an ROTC chapter on campus. All male students were required to complete two years of ROTC instruction or training. Following the initial two years, students were given the opportunity of joining ~~or~~ taking two more years of training and ending up with an ^{U.S.} army commission if they wished. I took my two year stint under instructors Major Vidia and Lt. Raul, exemplary men & officers in every respect. I have often wondered where these officers and so many of

The men they trained served our country
in the war into which we were to be thrown
a decade hence.

When I was working in 1940 I received a
letter from the FFC in Oakland, California, extending
a call from them to be their pastor. It was
entirely unexpected. As we later learned we had
been recommended to the church by former
missionary (Cory) Lloyd Johnson who was at
that time serving the FFC in Healdsburg, Calif.
It was not a difficult decision for Powell
and I to respond ^{to} positively to
the call. ~~It had been our first and~~
~~only field of service so we were~~ did
~~not find it an easy task to leave the~~
~~congregation. On the other hand, there was~~
~~no other of value than the decision to go~~
to Dallas had been made a sense of
calling filled our hearts. It was time to go.

I should note here that one overriding
principle has guided me in the decision
making process. That the year - it has been the
conviction that God, having called me into
the ministry, would guide me in his plan for
my life. Prov 3:5 and Ps 121 were "determining"
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Oakland Calif - 1940-1950

the spring

One bright ~~sun~~ morning in 1940 I received a letter from the FFC in Oakland, California, extending a call from them to be their pastor. It was entirely unexpected. As we later learned we had been recommended to the church by former missionary (Congo) Lloyd Johnson who was at that time serving the FFC in Kingsburg, Calif. It was not a difficult decision for Harold and I to respond ^{to} positively ~~to~~ ~~them~~ ~~to~~ ~~that~~ ~~field~~ ~~of~~ ~~service~~ ~~so~~ ~~we~~ ~~did~~ ~~not~~ ~~find~~ ~~it~~ ~~an~~ ~~easy~~ ~~task~~ ~~to~~ ~~leave~~ ~~the~~ ~~then~~ ~~congregation~~. On the other hand, ~~there~~ ~~was~~ ~~a~~ ~~deep~~ ~~sense~~ ~~of~~ ~~calm~~ when the decision to go to Oakland had been made a sense of calm filled our hearts. It was time to go.

I should note here that one overriding principle has guided me in the decision making process thru the years — it has been the conviction that God, having called me into the ministry, would guide me in his plan for my life. Prov. 3⁵⁻⁶ and Ps 28 were determining scriptural supports. I have not had the gift of self-promotion. Tho I have sought to be faithful in my place, I have not been able to seek a "place" as such. I have called that have

Come to the hour not be solicited — They have come unexpectedly. It has been so in all of life. The blessings received throughout life have been received as gifts from God. "P" The way my Savior leads me:

We were due to begin our ministry in Oakland the first of December, 1940. Our personal possessions were meager, I purchased a trailer and ~~had it~~ loaded all we had into it and one day in early November started westward. ^{Myself with David —} We were not to go far however. Three miles out of Walker on a slippery curve we went into a skid which threw the trailer into the ditch tho' the car, a 1939 Chev. sedan remained on the road.

The Bonn family in Walker ~~was always~~ ~~our~~ took us in for a few days — true friends as they had been for so many years. The trailer was repaired, but loading it again with all our possessions did not seem wise now. So the cumbersome pieces — our bedroom set, our dinette table and chairs were packed and sent by rail freight to Oakland. Smaller items filled the bed of the trailer which served us well allowing us to arrive safely in Oakland with our possessions.

We did not leave Walker as early as

planned, however. Monday, Nov 11, was the day we planned to leave for St. Paul for a visit with our family there before going on westward. We did not, to get started for winter news, on the radio warned all the county side of a storm blowing in. It was the now famous (as informed) Armitage Snow storm of 1940. It was not until midweek we could leave Walter. The storm took a number of lives, amongst them two or three of Rachel's bomber friends. They had been fishing when the storm broke so suddenly. There was no time to get to shore. Rachel had worked at First State bank on Payne Avenue prior to our marriage. The journey across the country was delightful — we saw mountains and landscapes that we had never seen before. The back seat was packed tightly and David, so lively a child, played safely as we travelled. Joe Barr Jr. who wanted to get to California to attend the BIOLA school with us. The roads were ice-coated in some places. I remember arriving in Casper, Wyo. one night at darkness fell. We were so thankful to find a place to rest for the night. The road had been especially treacherous.

We crossed over the Sierras at
Dunsmuir Pass. As we dropped down into
beautiful California we were filled with
awe and wonder. The weather seemed
so balmy. Flowers were in bloom, especially
the roses. And then as we neared the
Bay Area we experienced emotions we
had never felt before.

The Oakland Church was a young church -
so much of the congregation were young
couples, our own age. We were royally
received and shared their lives ~~with them~~
for the next ten years as their pastor.
The five room parsonage was next door to
the church. The church building was not
large, so we ministered mostly to a
full church each Sunday. Paul, Betty
and Tom were each born in Oakland,
making them true California natives.

The church was located on the corner
of 43rd & Melrose on Oakland's east side.
The congregation has since built a new
building, but ~~somehow~~ the congregation
did not grow in numbers under our
ministry. ~~Not~~ ~~was~~ ~~it~~ ~~prosperous~~ ~~as~~ we did
however experience so much of
spiritual blessings those years. The Lord

sewed man and there was much growth toward maturity amongst the congregation.

Dec 7, 1941, was the "day of infamy". It was "Pearl Harbor" day, the day when Japan attacked the U.S. fleet in Pearl Harbor and the U.S. entered the world conflict, already in progress in Europe. The day will never be forgotten by those who lived thru it. It was just shortly after noon that we heard the news in Oakland over the radio. I had preached that morning. It seemed to be a usual day - but the emotional impact of ~~those~~ that day's ^{news} tingers with us yet. ~~properly~~ The Country mobilized quickly and for the next four years the world was absorbed in "the war". I thought to enlist as a captain but could never feel inwardly free to do so. Our service during those war years was a ministry to dozens of servicemen who passed thru the Bay Area on their way to battle areas. Our home was a haven open to them and for many of the men our home was their last contact with all that country and church, home and friends, we came to them before shipping out. We seldom had Sunday dinner alone those days. Our churchfield provided a bed

for many of the fellows who stayed over
nites. Several of the men were united in
marriage with their wife-to-be in our
church on passage. The children, David,
Paul, Betty and Tom were all favorites of
the servicemen. And the people of the
church were kindly hospitable to the men
in service also. Those were days well
remembered by so many whom we still
meet in various places as we travel.

During our Oakland pastorate I was
able to attend B. B. D. S. which eventually
awarded me with two degrees: B. of D. and
M. Th. The faculty had several challenging
professors under whose teaching I gained
sound theological knowledge. The Oakland
Church graciously permitted me to take
studies at B. B. D. S. while still serving them
as their pastor. B. B. D. S. was not a so-called
"liberal" seminary. Nor was it fundamentalist.
I think in modern terms today it would
be thought of as moderately conservative.
Two ~~ten~~ professors left a lasting influence
on my life: the president, ^{Dr.} Sanford Fleming,
and Dr. Bailey, professor of N. T. Dr. Fleming's
field was church history. The History of Revivals
was a course he offered which I appreciated
above many others. Revival and revivals have

been a special interest to me ~~then~~ ever since w/e days when God so signally blessed ~~our~~ ^{the} ~~main~~ preaching of His word. Dr. Bailey was a master teacher. His knowledge of his field, the N.T. seemed to be complete. His method of teaching was not that of a doctrinaire. He would always present ^{all sides of} a Biblical or textual problem and as students we were expected to weigh the arguments pro & con and make up our own minds as to what side we would take. Every subject was presented in such a manner as to be most stimulating. Yet it seemed as tho Dr. Bailey, knowing all sides of a problem, never seemed able to identify positively with any particular theological position. He never expressed a position opinion. As a consequence it seemed as tho BBDS lacked, for we at least, a strong theological stand or position. Paul; words to Timothy about those who were even learning but were never able to come to a knowledge of the truth fit the Seminary so well. BBDS is now gone, as an educational institution, having been merged with ~~our~~ the Baptist school on the West Coast.

Family-wise, our years in California were good years. Bay area weather was always pleasing. The other couples of the church were having their families and so ~~we had~~ ^{it was for} the best of relationships with our congregation. Visitors from the east came thru the Oa./S.F. area on their way up the coast and so many stopped to visit us or our ~~Just Book~~ the many homes in our Just Book were witnesses to. My Mother made her home with us, off and on during those years, dividing her time between our home in Oakland and Esther & Edie in the Seattle area. There was little room for the children to play — the street was the play ground.

The work of the church occupied my time. Sermon preparation never came easy for me. The extrovert personality was not my gift and the platform and pulpit were never my natural platform. My constant prayer was that God would somehow bless my preaching and life that some spiritual benefit would come to the congregation, in that mysterious spiritual transfer of virtue and vitality from the throne of grace to the believing hearts of our people.

One of the activities we engaged in

with ~~the~~ our churches of kindred commitment
were our yearly united evangelistic
campaigns. The city auditorium was rented
for the two or so weeks of each
campaign. Our first such campaign was
held with Dr. Henry Ironside, then pastor of
Moody Church in Chicago, was our preacher.
Other campaigns followed with other well
known evangelists, ^{such as} - Geo. R. Rice, Hyman
Oppelman, & J. J. Johnson.

Then the Oakland years, Rachel was by
my side, the exemplary pastor's wife. God
~~permitted~~ gave us three of our four children
in Oakland, and each of the children in their own
way was a true gift from God. It was in these
Oakland years that a pattern of life style was
initiated which had both its strong points and
its weaknesses, which were ~~in turn~~ affected and
in turn affected certain personality characteristics.

A keen sense of duty to my calling
kept spiritual concerns and the welfare of our
church ever uppermost in mind. The
Church came first in all considerations. This
tendency was strengthened by an inherent
sense of loyalty and an inordinate desire to
please people, to be well thought of. I can still
remember debating the problem with myself -
"If I anger people, disappoint them, break down

the feeling of good will between us, then I will lose my ability to help them, my influence would be gone. I had seen this happen in the ministries of some overly aggressive pastors, and I took the more mild approach. The good thing that has come from all this is that each of my pastorate have been characterized by peace and goodwill. I have not had "church problems" in the sense of disunity and discord among our congregation.

There is a negative aspect related to all this, however. My addition to the church often meant that the family shared an disproportionate part of my life. It was most evident in the tensions and anxieties under which I constantly lived. It produced an unbalanced seriousness. The relaxed playful atmosphere was not as frequently present as it should have been. For this overly serious vein I have paid a heavy price in guilt feelings and undue heaviness of spirit and have lived under a cloud of regret that I have not been otherwise. Rachel and the children have shared in carrying the load and have lived thru many days of gloom and darkness with me. It is my hope that as my loved ones look back over bying days there may be

enough love left to forgive this aspect of my life and to believe that as I lived with my infirmity, it was not a way of life that I either enjoyed or chose. There must have been a way to overcome but I was never to find it. I still live partly in the Roman 7 experience, as far as this infirmity is concerned.

There were some aspects of life in the Bay Area which were a boon to us. The weather was one of them — so gratifying each day. Both mountain and ocean were close by which made ^{family} picnics frequent and delightful. The two bridges — Oakland Bay and the Golden Gate bridge — never ceased to give me a sense of awe whenever we crossed them. Proximity to Mt. Heerowee (70 miles south) and Santa Cruz made that Bible conference area ^{easy} available. Traffic of war materials and service men thru the Bay Area made the area an exciting place to live in the '40's. Yosemite, the most beautiful of our National Parks, was 300 miles S.E. — vacations in Yosemite were never-to-be-forgotten experiences: camping at the foot of 5000 ft, swimming in Merced River, the fire fall each night, hikes in the Valley to the foot of Yosemite Falls, the looking amongst the sequoias, breathing the red wood scented air.

When the call came from Bedford to be their pastor, we had been in Oakland for ten years. Surely it was time to move but it was still a difficult decision to make. One Saturday afternoon Rachel and I took a ride to one of our city parks and there, seated at a picnic table, discussed again the matter of moving and making our decision to accept the call and go back to the mid west. We had more in the way of possessions than when we had arrived ten years previous. We used both R.R. freight and a trailer which we borrowed. We purchased a tent, an 11' x 9' umbrella tent, at the exorbitant price of \$75.00. It paid for itself on the trip eastward and was used by our family for many years after on vacation and camping trips. It proved to be a good investment. Traveling eastward, we ~~went~~ by way of took the southern route, visiting Zion National Park and the Grand Canyon on the way. We ^{were} six in the family then and drove a '50 Plymouth sedan. ~~Our '39 Chevrolet~~