

# My First <sup>1</sup> 83 Years



By  
Ernest W. Crow

## Preface

My First 83 Years was prepared as an oral history. It is not intended to be a complete or a thorough autobiography. It was dictated under the direction of Rita Pearce of the *I, Witness to History* Program at the Resource Center at Larkfield Place. Ms. Pearce is a doctoral candidate at Oklahoma State University. I sincerely appreciate her patience and professional advice in helping me put this document together. While the words are mine, the scanning of pictures, placing them appropriately, and the organization of the text, were done by Rita.

*Ernest W. Crow*

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*Ernest W. Crow*

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	page
Early On	1
My Family Then	5
Growing Up	10
My Brother, Jim	14
College	16
Medical School	21
Wartime	24
Return to Wichita	29
Internal Medicine Training	30
Boulevard Plaza Office	31
Cardiology	33
The School of Medicine in Wichita	36
Community	39
Honors	40
Our Children	41
Bertie	46
Epilogue	48

## **EARLY ON**

I was born in Wichita, Kansas in 1920. We lived on Hiram Street directly across from Friends University where my father taught. I spent much of my early childhood playing on the campus and especially recall my favorite climbing tree.

One unpleasant early childhood experience occurred when our Cocker Spaniel puppy was run over. It may have been a car or a street car which at that time ran in front of our house. I have a vivid memory of the event. My father told me nothing could be done. I was apparently aware of fire engines coming quickly to fix things, so I asked Dad to call the fire engine to come and help the puppy.

We moved to a farm west of Wichita the year I started school in the first grade. It was located one quarter of a mile west of what is now West Street on what is now Tracy Street. At that time it was just a sandy lane. Eureka School was at the junction of the future West Street and our lane so I had only a one quarter of a mile walk. There were only two rooms and all six grades were in each room. My teacher was a Miss Parrish and I loved her. I had the pleasure of sending her a note when she retired from teaching in Wichita a few years ago.

My brother Jim and I had a good time on the farm in spite of the hot dry days. We grew a few crops—I especially remember the water melon patch—and Dad continued his teaching at Friends University.

When we lived in Wichita we had modern plumbing but things were not quite so modern on the farm. Our kitchen had a hand pump on the sink and the bathroom was adjacent to the kitchen. The toilet did not have the usual flush mechanism so we would bring water in a bucket from the

kitchen to pour into the toilet to flush it

My worst memory of the farm days was the illness of my Mother. She had diphtheria from which she recovered although in those days that was certainly not a given. The family physician, Dr. Carter, came to the farm and gave her diphtheria anti-toxin injections in the abdominal wall. At least to my childhood eyes the needle and syringe were enormous.

As a college professor my father needed an additional year of graduate work to complete his PhD degree. So at the end of my second year in school we moved to Lawrence, Kansas. We lived upstairs in a very large brick house which still stands and appears to be in good condition. That was a pleasant year and while there I attended the third grade at Pinkney School. I had good neighborhood friends and there was a nearby pond for play. My brother had a Saturday job delivering hand bills and I usually trailed along with him.

After one year we moved back to Wichita into the same house on Hiram Street where we lived when I was born. I went to school at Franklin School for the fourth, fifth and sixth grades. It was a seven block walk to school but I do not recall that being a hardship. I still have pleasant memories of Franklin and recently enjoyed doing some tutoring there. I recently met a classmate from Franklin School and we both recall being the “stars” in the childhood play “The Secret Garden”—my first and only acting experience.

I had many friends as a child especially in the neighborhood and at the University Friends Church where my parents were very active. The church had a gymnasium

where I spent many hours and may have been where my early interest in athletics developed.

My parents loved music. Dad listened faithfully each Saturday afternoon to the Metropolitan opera. There were many music performances at Friends University so I had early exposure to good music. My parents insisted that I take piano lessons which I did for three or four years. I was not very good and did not enjoy it. But when I started to junior high school I had enough music background to move quickly into other instruments. I played baritone horn first and then shifted to trombone. That was responsible for a lot of pleasure in future years. In high school I played in both the orchestra and the band. I joined a dance band in my senior year in high school and continued to play with that group through college. We played for fraternity and sorority dances as well as community dances. It was a good group. Three of the more talented members became professional musicians. Bertie has frequently said that we never had dates on New Years Eve since I was always playing for a party, but it did help pay for my college education.

I had one unpleasant experience while in the eighth grade. I developed brucellosis which kept me out of school for much of a semester. A very interested teacher brought study materials to my home so I was not held back and finished junior high school with my class.

The brucellosis resulted from a "crime doesn't pay" story. I was on a church overnight outing. When we got up in the morning someone crawled over the fence to milk a cow. I do not recall who milked the cow but I know I did not do it. I did not know how to milk a cow and I don't recall ever having tried. The Public Health Department traced the brucellosis to the cow from which we stole the milk. So I missed a semester

of school but during that time I grew six or eight inches in height.

The doctor who cared for me was Dr. O.S. Rich, a homeopathic physician. He of course dealt in herbs which I believe accounted for an odor which accompanied him. It was not unpleasant and I believe I would recognize it now should the opportunity arise. He was a very kind, gentle man and he came to the home to see me regularly. I had great admiration for him and I believe he had much to do with my choosing a profession in Medicine. In retrospect he probably could not do much for me medically, but he did make me feel better. In later years I had the pleasure of visiting with him again as he was still in practice when I began my medical practice in Wichita.

My childhood was made more interesting as a spin off of my father's profession. As a biology teacher he had much knowledge about things of interest to me. People often brought interesting and unusual animals for him to see or identify. Many became my pets. I had snakes, a possum, unusual insects and birds as pets. As an early day biologist he taught botany, general biology, bacteriology, embryology, genetics and more. He even made a few prehistoric animal digs and I was privileged to go on a couple of those with him.

## **MY FAMILY THEN**

My father's first name was Hollie, certainly an unusual name for a man. He never liked it and never used it, rather he used his middle name, Ernest. So he was H. Ernest Crow though his close friends from college days called him Pat. He began using the name Pat the day he enrolled in college. When he gave his name as Crow they asked, jokingly, are you Pat Crow? Pat Crow was an infamous crime figure in the area. So the name Pat stayed with him.

Dad came from a large Missouri and later Oklahoma family. Since he was the youngest child I never knew his older siblings. The two I knew best were my aunts Caroline and Clara. Some of their grandchildren were about my age so I saw them often. Dorothy Jean, Valverta, and Genevee were the ones I knew best.

My mother, Lena (Betsy) Whitaker was born in Rising Star, Texas. She did not like the name Lena so Dad called her Betsy and the name stayed with her. My grandfather was murdered in 1896 by a rival newspaper man and my grandmother died in childbirth two months later. So at the age of age ten Mother along with a sister and two younger brothers was sent to live with her Aunt Crosha and Uncle Henry in Cherokee Oklahoma. All of them eventually lived in Wichita near my childhood home. Mother met my father when they attended a small Quaker academy in Cherokee and then both came to Wichita to attend the Quaker college, Friends University. I grew up in close contact with those two uncles, Jim and Perry. Ernest, who was born when our grandmother died, was adopted by a Texas family and I did not know him until later in life.

My Uncle Jim was a great story teller, very gregarious and outgoing. I loved being around him. He lived with us for a while during the depression while he worked at a service station

near downtown Wichita. Since we had no more bedrooms he slept in the basement. Uncle Jim offended Mother because he kept smoking his pipe, a habit she did not approve of. Even though it bothered her and she did not approve I don't recall her saying much to him about it. She always told us "If you don't have something nice to say about a person, just don't say anything". That was a rule we grew up with. Both parents seemed to agree though they came from very different backgrounds. They were strong supporters of education.

My Uncle Perry was entirely different. He was dignified, quiet and had a very gentle demeanor. He was a banker who died quite young. He and his wife Berenice lived near us and their three children, Martin, Patricia and Nancy were a few years younger than me.

Uncle Ernest was a country –western singer and performer. He lived most of his life in West Texas where he had a little combo that was well known in the Abilene Texas area. He had a personality much like Uncle Jim. When he was quite old he called to say he wanted to come to Wichita to play for his nieces and nephews. Of course we were delighted so I encouraged him to come. Unfortunately he had a stroke shortly after the phone call and it left him somewhat disabled. But he did come and he put on a good show. His pianist and her husband brought him to Wichita. She was an excellent musician and she seemed to have great respect for Uncle Ernest. He sang and played the fiddle. Some were standard western songs but some were his own compositions. In spite of his recent stroke we all agreed he was very talented. My attempt to record it all failed.

My mother also had five sisters. Mother taught our daughters Barbara and Marilyn the names of the sisters and they liked to recite the names in a sing song fashion. With

Mother's name included they are in descending order by age: Ida, Ora, Lena, Georgia, Cora and Beulah.

Ida and Georgia lived in Wichita and their children and grew up with Jim and me. Ora lived in Ft. Worth, Texas and Jim and I were fortunate to spend time with her and her family from time to time and we felt very close to her children. Aunt Cora lived in Atchison, Kansas. She had children who were much older than I but the one my age unfortunately died when she was about ten years old. Beulah was the youngest of my aunts and I did not know her as well as the others. After considering the breakup of the family following their parent's death I marvel that this family managed to stay so close to one another. My Mother and my Aunt Ida made a concerted effort to keep the family together and I believe did it remarkably well.

Aunt Ida was a very intelligent, cultured and gracious lady. Of her five children, Marjorie was about my age and we were and still are very close. Aunt Ora was a gregarious, funny friendly woman that every one loved. She devoted her life to caring for her daughter Vivian, who was left paraplegic after an automobile accident when she was in her late teens. Aunt Georgia was much like her sister Ora, gregarious, friendly and loved by every one. Georgia and her husband Clifton lived only a few blocks from us. Their four children, Corliss, Lois, Perry and Helen were near our age and we were frequently together during our childhood.

Mother told me many stories about her mother and father. They must have left a very important impression on her since she mentioned them oftener than the aunt with whom she lived. She did often speak of her Uncle Henry whom she seemed to adore. She often quoted her father. She told me several times that he did not like the word shut. He preferred her to use the word close as in "close the door". My grandfather was a school

teacher before he started publishing a weekly newspaper.

Mother was an incredibly kind woman and I suspect I could do very little wrong in her sight. It is difficult to say which of my parents had the greater influence upon me for I



*Maternal Grandparents: James Perry Whitaker and Parilee Perry Whitaker*



*Paternal Grandparents: Franklin C. Crow and Mary Jane Hethcock Crow*

now have great respect for both of them as parents. My parents were Quakers and they were both quietly kind, gentle and peace loving. They did public demonstrations against the Viet Nam War.

My paternal grandparents lived only two doors south of us on Hiram Street. Grandfather died when I was only three or four years old and I can barely remember him. Grandmother lived to be 96 years old and I knew her very well. Her maiden name was Mary Hethcock. She was from near Bourbon, Missouri where my father also was born. She was uneducated but I suspect that she had a very good intellect. I spent a lot of time with her because as a child through high school it was my responsibility to check on her every day after

school. She was a tiny tough old lady but I thought she was wonderful and we had a very loving relationship.

I heard the radio for the first time in her home. I was living on the farm so it must have been about 1928. We would come in from the farm every Sunday evening and listen to the Amos and Andy radio show. I believe she kept every thing she ever acquired and most of it was in her attic or basement. I loved going to those two areas and found them fascinating. She had two old guns, which belonged to my grandfather. I believe that he was a veteran of the Civil War but was never in actual conflict. One was a Civil War musket and the other a pre Civil War hunting rifle. She had all the accoutrements to go with them including lead bullet molds. I still have the guns in my home. I recall her attic where she had clothes of another time. She had pairs of high top women's shoes, which she had never worn. So as a child I loved to rummage about in the basement and the attic.

## GROWING UP

I had many good friends. My closest childhood friend was Edward Webster. His widow still lives in Wichita at Larksfield Place. I had several other good friends since we all lived in one neighborhood, attended the same school and in many cases the same church. So we played together and got in trouble together.

Professor Schultz's family lived next door. Paul was my brother Jim's age and Ellen was near my age. They were almost like relatives so I still see both of them now and then. Ellen lives in Lawrence, Kansas and Paul lives in Independence, Missouri. We attended the funeral of Paul's wife last year in Independence. I borrowed my first trombone from Paul and later bought it.

Many of my growing up memories involve athletics. There was a vacant lot just a few doors from our home and that was the neighborhood game area. We played football, baseball and soccer. Roller skating was a great past time. University Street near our home was newly paved and the smooth surface made a great place to skate. Our church frequently held skating parties.

I got into athletics early. I started playing basketball in junior high school and also participated in track. I held the (unofficial) Wichita junior high school record for the high jump. I continued both sports in high school and college. I was tall and thin and not properly built for football so basketball was a



*Mother and Dad Crow*

better fit for me. I broke an arm when I was a small child and my mother did not want me to play football. She knew I would break it again. My parents have told me that I broke my arm on the day of my mother's dear Uncle Henry's funeral which I was too young to attend. The family doctor, Dr. T. J. Carter, another of my father's close friends, came to the house and set the arm. I have a crooked arm but it seems to work very well. I am told that kind of fracture now is casted in a different way and no longer results in a crooked arm.

A few years later in 1928 Dr. Carter swallowed a chicken bone which perforated his esophagus and resulted in his death. My father served as a casket bearer at his funeral.

I started working in a neighborhood grocery store even as a junior high school kid. I delivered hand bills and groceries on a bicycle. Then, while much too young I got a job in another grocery store, but this time driving a delivery truck. I was only fourteen years old but must have driven the family car some by that time.

I delivered groceries to a lady on Rutan Street in east Wichita. My grocery was on the west side of Wichita so it was a long drive across Wichita. Driving back on East Central Street the old truck was making its usual rattling, banging noises as it bumped along the street. Someone waved for me to stop. One of the tires had come off and I was driving on the rim. I am certain it rode just as well that way as with a tire so I did not notice the difference. The grocery store owner was not pleased so he withheld my wages until the tire was paid for. Anyway I lost a tire and a few dollars, it makes a good story and my kids have loved the story.

I enjoyed high school. I had a wonderful time at Wichita High School North. I had a few skills in music and some athletic ability and I was a good (not outstanding) student.

I made the high school band as a sophomore and enjoyed

playing the trombone. I recall marching in our Thanksgiving parade in downtown Wichita wearing my new, very bright red band uniform.

I played basketball all three years in high school but my senior year in both basketball and track was encumbered by a very badly sprained ankle. That occurred in the opening minutes of a game against a very good Newton High School team. So I played very little after that. Since the injured ankle was on my take off foot in the high jump I eventually learned to take off on the other foot. I still have several good friends from high school days. There were only two Wichita city high schools then so East High School was our major rival.

I first began dating when I was a junior in high school and that is where I found the love of my life, Bertie. We were high school sweethearts and began dating during our senior year.

I had several outstanding teachers in high school and one or two losers. My geometry teacher was probably my best teacher as well as a favorite. She was probably less than five feet tall, weighed about eighty pounds and I was terrified of her, at least initially. In my senior year geometry was my sixth hour class. Basketball practice began immediately after that, but there was no way that we could get out of her class until she was through with us. I recall being late for practice frequently because Miss Fronk made us stay until we finished the task she had prepared. She had a very important influence on me.

At North High School we had a good but far from outstanding team. All of the team members were good students. We loved our coach, Clyde Priddle, who recently died at age of 96. Two of my high school team mates and I took him to lunch a couple of times the past year. It was always enjoyable since he was still very alert. He was able to recall many details that we had forgotten.

In high school I began my career as a dance band musician. I continued that through high school and three years of college and even part of my freshman year in medical school. I was not the best musician in the group but I guess I was adequate. I was able to pay for much of my college education by playing for dances. I sold my trombone to buy an engagement ring during my junior year in medical school.

## **MY BROTHER JIM**

Jim is four years older than I am and was always a good role model. He was a good musician and an excellent student. My problem was that he was a better musician and student than I was. My father always believed that my interest in athletics stemmed from my not being as good academically as my brother. I think I just enjoyed athletics and I don't recall being concerned about the academic difference. As we grew older the four years age difference seemed less important and we often did things together such as double dating and playing music together.

The minister of the church insisted that he have instrumental music at the Sunday night service. I began playing with that group when I was in high school and Jim was college student. The group was composed of Jim who played violin very well, another violinist and an excellent pianist who taught piano at the university. In addition our trumpet player, the son of the minister, was an experienced and good musician. I played trombone adequately. Sadly we had a cello player who can best be described as off key. Those of us in the group realized his cello playing was bad but the audience did not seem to notice. I know we did not listen to the sermon.

Following the evening service we often retired to a Sunday School room for a "jam" session. After a few weeks the minister asked us to move on. We then went to the home of one of the group and continued playing. That was my first attempt at improvisation. We continued this activity during the summer months even after Jim left for graduate school and he would join us in the summer.

Though Jim might have been able to become a professional musician he chose another vocation. He has told a story of starting to college and giving thought to majoring in music. He enrolled in a music course in harmonics and joked that it was so

difficult that he changed his major to science.

I am proud of Jim. As the years have gone by we have enjoyed being together and seem to have much in common. After Jim went to the University of Texas to graduate school I spent a very good summer with him. More about that later. He is now 87 years old and still very active. He is an internationally known geneticist. He has been at the University of Wisconsin in Madison for over fifty years after having taught for a few years at Dartmouth College.

One pleasure we have shared recently has been the joint publication of a paper in *Genetics Magazine* and the subsequent presentation of a paper on the same subject to our History of Medicine Club.



*Ernest and James*

## **COLLEGE**

After graduating from high school most of us stayed in Wichita to attend college. Unless one had a scholarship one probably couldn't afford to go elsewhere. Many of us from the west side went to Friends University and many of those living east went to Wichita University (now The Wichita State University). Several of us played basketball with or against each other for six or seven years and often we were close friends. The only serious problem of my college days was losing friends during World War II after we had left college.

Bertie attended Wichita University and I attended Friends University but we continued to date regularly. Some times when I played basketball against Wichita University we would double date with Vernon Williams who played on the W.U. team. His girl friend Marjorie and later his wife was one of Bertie's good friends and sorority sister. It was a different time- I doubt that such things happen now

The most important event of my high school years was meeting Bertie. During our senior year we were in a class taught by the worst teacher that I had in high school. It may not have been entirely his fault because my attention was on the pretty girl sitting two or three seats in front of me. However, Bertie agrees that he was a poor teacher. We dated regularly from then on even though we were at different colleges.

My brother and I both attended Friends University. There was never any question of our going anywhere else. It had very little to do with academics but a lot to do with the depression and difficult financial times for our parents. As Dad taught at Friends we were allowed to attend tuition free. We both majored under our father and as a biology professor he was my academic advisor. Now that I have had education in several other universities I can honestly say that our father was a very

good teacher. He had a significant and favorable influence on me though I doubt that I recognized it at the time.

College was another time of great fun. Bertie and I had a lot of good times together. We have since concluded that attending two colleges in the same town has advantages. We were able to participate in social activities at both schools. Unfortunately my fun, my job and a girlfriend interfered with academics for a time, but more about that later.

I continued to play basketball in college. Three of our team had played three years together at North High School and some of our North High team went to Wichita University so we had a very friendly rivalry.

My brother and I both worked at the Wichita City Library. My starting salary was twenty five cents an hour. Several other students from both universities worked there and jobs there were kept open for university students. It was a good strategy since some of those students went on in Library science and became librarians.

At the end of my sophomore year and knowing that I planned to go to medical school my father, acting as my academic advisor called me in to his office for a "fatherly chat." He said. "I am your advisor and the one who must recommend you for medical



*Father: H. Ernest Crow,  
Biologist*

school. Unless you start doing better I am not going to recommend you." That definitely got my full attention. Then he gave some additional advice. He suggested that I should do some of my pre-med studies at a large university to determine if I could compete in a tougher academic environment. Jim was in graduate school at the University of Texas so I went



*Seated: Ernest Crow,  
Class President*

there to take two semesters of comparative anatomy. I did well and I am sure Dad was as pleased as I was.

Many of my college friends were music majors. Don Reeves had a marvelous voice and was talented in dramatics as well. He was killed in World War II. I had asked him by letter to be best man in my wedding; I never heard from him. I learned later that as a fighter pilot he was shot down somewhere in the Pacific. Jay Dirks was also a

singer and later became a geologist, he died several years ago and his daughter is a soloist in our church choir. Eldon Lipp was fine violinist and a contemporary of Jim. He had put his education on hold until he saved money to attend college. He became a public school administrator in charge of several junior high school music programs in Wichita. Another good friend was Mike Taylor a basketball player and later an accountant for our medical office.

Another of my friends was Boyd Kopper. Boyd, Don Reeves, Jay Dirks and I took a trip south as soon as school was out the summer of 1940. Since I was going to Austin, Texas for school we all went south together. Boyd owned a Model A

Ford coupe with a rumble seat which provided our transportation. We picked up Jim in Austin, Texas and then proceeded to the Texas coast near Port Aransas. I had a wonderful time although I did have my first attack of sea sickness. I have recently looked at a Ford exactly like the one we traveled in and find it almost impossible to understand how five adult males could get into that little car. On the return trip they left me off in Austin to attend U.T.

While in Texas I did some hitch hiking for the first time in my life. It was a common practice then. A Texas t-shirt helped in getting rides. On week ends I sometimes hitch hiked to Fort Worth to visit my cousins. My mother did not know about my travels though she finally found out. When I completed my work at U.T. I decided to hitch hike home and surprise my



*Ernest at Age 21*

parents. I managed to make good time until I reached Arkansas City, Kansas. When I finally was unable to get a ride I had to call my parents to come after me. Embarrassing! My mother now knew about my travels. I had only one unpleasant experience. I was picked up by a man who I believe in retrospect and by his actions was a homosexual. Nothing happened but I was glad to get out of his car somewhere in Oklahoma.

I made my decision to go to medical school when I was in junior high school. The major reason may have been the illness I had and because I was so impressed by my physician. I never considered any other profession. I went to medical school after three years in college. I did this by going to summer school each summer including the summer

before my freshman year and after my junior year. Although I still needed five additional hours of credit I was allowed to transfer some hours from KU from my freshman year in medical school so I graduated with my class at Friends.

One of the requirements for graduation at Friends was an oral examination by your major professors. One was my father and the other our next door neighbor Dr. P.D. Schultz the chemistry professor. I found this exam to be one of the most difficult of my life. I had been away from undergraduate biology and chemistry for a year so I really believed I did poorly. However I received my degree so I presume that I was at least satisfactory.

## **MEDICAL SCHOOL**

I enjoyed medical school and had a great time. In my freshman year I moved into a medical fraternity, which almost everyone else did as well. It was not a very exclusive organization. You just chose which of the three fraternity houses that you wanted to live in. Almost all the students lived in one of three fraternity houses. Rarely was a medical student married in those days, I think in my freshman class there might have been one or two out of approximately 80. The rest were single.

I moved into a fraternity house with my good friend, Bill Folck. We took first semester anatomy, biochemistry, and embryology. I found anatomy to be interesting, and I got along well in it. Dr. Tracy taught embryology, and I'd had a lot of embryology under my father, so I found it to be quite easy. I was really impressed with the quality of Dr. Tracy's professorship; he was a great teacher.

The anatomy course was under Dr. Lattimer. He was a very good teacher and he was demanding. Now they have other ways of teaching anatomy. Then two students had a cadaver and kept the same cadaver all the way through freshman anatomy. So we dissected, studied, and learned a lot of anatomy for a year.

I had an injury in medical school the first year. While I'd had a number of minor athletic injuries, such as sprained ankles, this was the most painful and most disabling injury I ever had. I was in a touch football game. The medical school had an intramural football team. We were playing one of the social fraternities and I'd jumped to catch a pass. The man who was opposing me jumped at the same time. Somehow his knee struck me on the inside of my thigh. It didn't bother me very much until I got home and my thigh began to swell. It swelled to an enormous size and I was taken to the hospital. My leg stayed swollen over the next several weeks. All that blood gradually

gravitated down to my knee and my ankle, so I was laid up for a long time, although I was only out of school for about a week. The school finally sent me back to Wichita, because I couldn't go to classes. I stayed off my foot most the time.

My future wife was with me when I came back to Lawrence on the train from Wichita. Everyone in my age group in World War II will remember those train trips. We got on a train in Wichita, and there were no seats available. There were lots of people standing, and lots of people sitting on the floor. One seat opened up, and I got it because my leg was bothering me. Bertie sat on a suitcase all the way. Those old trains were noisy, dirty, and rough, but we were young and it didn't bother us too much.

I had a knack of being elected to offices of some kind. I was class president a couple of times at the college, and I was president of my fraternity in medical school. It took up more time than I wanted, but it was an experience that I enjoyed. As president of my medical fraternity because I was so busy with fraternity activity, it affected my grades. I should never have allowed that to interfere, but I did. It was a good experience and I made some very good friends in my medical fraternity and in my medical school class.

In those days medical school at the University of Kansas School of Medicine was divided between two campuses. The first year and a half, and all the basic science was taught in Lawrence and then one transferred to Kansas City for clinical training.

During the summer between my freshman and sophomore years the war was upon us, and attempts were made to accelerate medical school training. We were asked to take summer school, so I went to Kansas City during the summer and took pharmacology.

I got a job working at St. Luke's Hospital at night as an orderly. By that time, Bertie was working at St. Mary's

Hospital, so it was a relatively pleasant summer. I also took a course in pathology that summer, then I went back to Lawrence for my sophomore year there.

After the first semester, I moved to Kansas City permanently and rented the top floor of a house with three of my friends, Perry Petterson (who was best man at my wedding and my close friend), Dick Coutant (who is now a psychiatrist and practices in Bartlesville, Oklahoma), and Bill Folck (my first room mate, who became a physician for the aircraft industry, I think with TWA). Fortunately, Bill Folck was a pretty good cook, so he did most of the cooking.

## **WARTIME**

World War II began with the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December, 1941. Prior to that time I had registered as a conscientious objector having grown up in a Quaker family where conscientious objectors were the rule. As soon as Pearl Harbor occurred, I decided that wasn't the way to go, so I took a reserve commission. The military, in order to keep medical students in school and keep them out of the draft, gave us all reserve commissions. So I became a second lieutenant in the reserve. About a year later the military changed their plan and took away our commissions. They inducted us as privates in what was called the ASTP (Army Student Training Program). We then went back to medical school as privates. It didn't change anything, except we had to meet for formation every morning before we could go into the hospital to work. It had one advantage for Bertie and me in that I was getting a tiny stipend from the military and she had a job. We had enough money to rent an apartment and get married. So the big event of my medical school years was our marriage which occurred in 1943.

We came down to Wichita for the big weekend. My room mate, Perry Petterson was to be my best man at our wedding, and I was to be his best man the evening before.. Perry and his bride-to-be, O'Ruth, and I came down in one car for our weddings. The Pettersons wedding was in the home of a minister who was related to O'Ruth. Bertie and I were married the following day at First Methodist Church. We didn't have a honeymoon as such, but we did have a week of vacation time. We didn't have money enough to go anywhere, so we borrowed a car from Bertie's aunt and spent the week in Kansas City. We took the car back to Wichita at the end of the week. I went back to school and Bertie went back to her job working at Trinity Hospital in Kansas City. I spent the rest of my junior and senior years in Kansas City taking the usual courses.

I had a disappointing senior year in medical school. Because of the war effort, the faculty was diminished in numbers and it was necessary to farm students out to other locations. By drawing lots I was assigned to Kansas City General Hospital. While that was a good experience in some ways, it was a mediocre experience as far as teaching was concerned. There was very little teaching going on, so what I learned at Kansas City General Hospital was mostly experience rather than academic learning. In spite of that, it was a good year and Bertie and I had a good time.

After graduation, recognizing that I was almost certain to be called on active duty as a medical officer, we chose to come to Wichita to intern.

By this time we were blessed with a pregnancy. Bertie's due date would occur during my internship year, so it was convenient that I could intern at Wesley Hospital in Wichita. That way we had some family support on both sides of the family. So our first child, Barbara, was born in April of 1945 at Wesley. We then stayed on another nine months after the internship waiting to be called to duty.

Our first assignment was in Battle Creek, Michigan. We were told not to bring family with us, but we ignored that. Bertie and Barbara came with me. We were there only six weeks but it was an unpleasant time for us, because we couldn't find a place to live other than one room in a home with no kitchen facilities. We were happy to have that over with in a fairly short period of time.

We spent a brief period of time in San Antonio, Texas, for basic training. Again, Bertie and Barbara went with me. We had access to the home of my sister-in-law, whose parents were out of the area for a few weeks. As soon as they came back, we had to find another place to live. There was a great shortage of places to live in San Antonio. Our friends, the Lohmeyers, were

in the same situation with one child about the same age as ours. We rented a single tourist cabin with a kitchen, a very small living room, a very small bedroom, and one small bathroom. Somehow, we managed to get all of us in it some way, and survived. We're still good friends, so I guess we managed to live through a lot of inconveniences that nowadays we might not tolerate as well. But it was wartime, and everybody had the same problem. We all seemed to adapt to those inconveniences pretty well.

Then we had a couple of good assignments in the military. I was assigned to a hospital in Santa Fe, New Mexico, which was a massive chest-disease hospital. It mostly dealt with tuberculosis. It was a temporary hospital, in that it was built after the war started. It was a theory in those days that tuberculosis was best treated at a high dry altitude, and Santa Fe's altitude was about 7000 feet. The quality of medical care was excellent.

The medical officers who were assigned to Santa Fe were generally people experienced in chest disease. My superior officer had had training at a Chicago tuberculosis hospital, so in a very short time, I learned a lot about tuberculosis. Later my superior officer moved to Wichita.

In those days tuberculosis was treated by collapsing a lung. We had to inject air into the space between the lung and the chest wall. At the same time, streptomycin had just become available as a new antibiotic. It was effective in treating tuberculosis, so we used it also. We gave it in doses that would in modern times be considered to be massive. Unfortunately, there were a lot of side effects to the drug; the most serious one being deafness. The really high doses of the drug caused considerable nerve damage to the auditory nerve.

We were still in Santa Fe when the war ended. All the New Mexico National Guard was activated before World War II, and

was in the Philippines when the war started. They were on the Bataan Death March and many of them died. Those that survived lived in a Japanese prisoner of war camp for the duration of the war and were certainly not well treated. Many suffered from malnutrition as well.

As soon as the war was over, several of those veterans transferred into my section in Santa Fe. By the time they got to our hospital, it probably had been ten days to two weeks since their release from the prisoner of war camp. They appeared to be well nourished, which indicated that they'd gained an enormous amount of weight in the short period of time after being released from prisoner of war camp. The other observation that I made was that these fellows were remarkably happy. I would have expected them to be bitter about their experience. Perhaps in later years or months they may have become bitter, but at the time, they were just happy to be alive. It was an interesting psychological observation.

After closing that hospital, I was transferred to William Beaumont General Hospital in El Paso, Texas, and placed in charge of officers' section. My immediate superior at Beaumont was transferred into that institution. He had also been a prisoner of the Japanese, and he was violently disliked by my other prisoner of war patients. They suspected that he received some special attention and favors during his stay at the prisoner of war camp. Had the former prisoners been physically able, that physician might have been in some physical danger. At any rate he was there, and he was my immediate superior. He had very little medical knowledge, but it was no fault of his. He'd been away from medicine for five or six years. He was a major by this time, so that placed him as superior to the two of us who were in the medical officers' section.

Otherwise, the service there was pleasant. I saw some interesting medicine, and I had a good time. Barbara was

growing up. During that tour of duty, our second child, John, was born.

I noted the difference in the way the two pregnancies were treated. When Barbara, the older child, was born here in Wichita, Bertie was hospitalized to bed rest for ten days or two weeks. When John was born at William Beaumont General Hospital, we had a very progressive young obstetrician who was into newer things. Bertie was ambulated on the first or second day of her stay, and was in the hospital only two or three days. There was quite a difference, which she appreciated enormously. As an interested spectator, I observed that she clearly got along much better with the second pregnancy than the first. John was born in 1947.

For the first time, we had some money. I was a captain and the pay was substantially more than I'd ever made before. We traveled across the border frequently to Mexico, and had lots of picnics and visits to the mountain areas around El Paso. So all in all, the military service was pleasant.

## **RETURN TO WICHITA**

After military service we returned to Wichita. I had decided to continue training in Internal Medicine. Residencies were hard to find because of the large number of returning service men and women. Wesley had an Internal Medicine program. It was primarily a preceptorship under Dr. Thor Jager not a well organized residency. But I had a great respect for Dr. Jager and that was the major reason for my spending that time at Wesley.

Following a year under Dr. Jager, I opened an office in the downtown Beacon Building. Dr. Jager asked me to join him in practice but there was no space in his office, however he found me an office in the same building. I started my own private practice, but did his evening hospital and house calls.

I learned a great deal from Dr. Jager. He was a medical genius. He was very well trained in the traditional manner of that era. Well trained physicians spent some time in Europe and always were trained in pathology as well as their specialty. Dr. Jager was trained in internal medicine and pathology. When I was associated with him he was pathologist at Wesley Hospital and practicing internal medicine mostly as a consultant. It became my responsibility to do all the autopsies at Wesley then go over the microscopic with Dr. Jager. That was an invaluable experience.

For a short time after I opened my office in the Beacon building I was not very busy in the office but quite busy with night calls and hospital visits. A short time later my old room mate Perry Petterson finished his residency and moved into the downtown office with me.

## **INTERNAL MEDICINE TRAINING**

After two years in practice I realized that I still needed more training to qualify for my board examinations in internal medicine. So Bertie and I closed the office and went into debt again (we had paid off medical school debts while in the army). I went to the University of Pennsylvania for an additional year of internal medicine training.

By that time we had our third child, Marilyn who was born in 1950. We took the three kids and found a duplex in Media, Pennsylvania. I did my work primarily at the Graduate Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. It was a wonderful experience in a very academic environment. We were also able to take advantage of a lot of the history and culture of the area. I had no on call responsibility and weekends were usually free for travel. We saw and enjoyed many interesting sites all new to us.

There was a very strong faculty at Graduate including the famous Dr's Henry Bockus, Julius Comroe, and many others.

## **THE BOULEVARD PLAZA OFFICE**

Prior to leaving for Philadelphia I was already dissatisfied with my office in the Beacon Building. Mr. J.W. Womer was a real estate developer who occupied the office next door. He was developing a shopping center in the Boulevard Plaza area near Lincoln a few blocks west of Hillside street. When I complained about my office space he said "Let me build you an office".

I talked to several other physicians and we agreed to have Mr. Womer build us a new office building. Sid Platt, who became our close friend and neighbor was the architect. The building had three reception suites with several physicians sharing each reception area. We all shared one laboratory and a radiology department. We found a recently retired radiologist to return to part time work and interpret our x-rays.. There were twelve physicians in this cooperative venture.

When I returned from Philadelphia the new office was completed and I moved right in. Perry Petterson and I continued to share an office and work as partners and with Gary Wood we formed a three physician on call schedule. Soon Perry's wife , O'Ruth returned to practice after childbearing duty and moved in with Perry. The original group of physicians in this group practice were: Dr's Harold Low, Doris North, Victor North, William McKnight, Gary Wood, William Browning, Alexander Laham, Paul Wedin, Robert Purves, Perry and O'Ruth Petterson, Jay Wisdom and myself. This was a very successful and pleasant arrangement and we were pioneers in the exodus from downtown offices.

My practice grew rapidly and by 1957 I desperately needed help. My good friend, Dr. Max Allen a professor the KU school of Medicine knew of a young man just finishing his training and looking for an opportunity. Dr. Harvey Tretbar had completed a residency in Internal Medicine and a Fellowship in Endocrinology at the Cleveland Clinic. He joined me that year

and that was the start of what was to become a rather large Internal Medicine group. That was also the beginning of a wonderful friendship spanning almost fifty years.

## **CARDIOLOGY**

By 1959 I was a little restless practicing general internal medicine. I already had a special interest in cardiology and had been interpreting most of the electrocardiograms for Wesley Medical Center for several years. I made a sudden decision to take a fellowship in cardiology. That decision was made at a Sedgwick County Medical Society meeting held at the Allis Hotel in Wichita. I was program chairman for the society that year and our speaker was Dr. E. Grey Dimond. He was professor and chairman of Internal Medicine and the Cardiovascular Division at the Kansas University Medical Center. He spoke to me about a new fellowship program in cardiology that he was developing. As we sat together at the banquet table I asked a few more questions and then made a tentative agreement to be the first physician in the new program. After discussion with Bertie and Dr. Tretbar I made the final decision to disrupt my very patient wife's life once again.

The following September I began my program at the University of Kansas Medical Center. The program was devised for a person such as me. That is a practicing internist who now wanted to specialize further. It was a very stimulating year. I learned a great deal and developed some skills that I found very useful and important. While it was a pleasant year for me I know it was difficult for Bertie. We had three pre-teen to teenage children by that time. I drove back to Wichita every Saturday noon then returned to Kansas City early Monday morning always arriving by 8 AM. While the weekend was short I often had more time with the children than when I was in active practice when hospital rounds and calls often took up most of the time. Barbara developed mononucleosis during that year and was out of school for a few weeks making the time even more difficult for Bertie.

After completing my year in Kansas City I was qualified to sit for my board examinations in Cardiovascular Disease. I returned to Wichita and resumed practice. During my absence my partner, Harvey Tretbar took care of our practice with a little help from another physician who joined us for that one year only. On my return I brought another of the cardiology fellows, Dr. Frank Brosius with me and shortly after that another of the Kansas City group, Dr. William Hayes joined us.

Much of my motivation to seek more training was the rapidly developing specialty of Cardiology and the technology associated with it. So soon after our return Dr. Brosius and I with help from Dr. Hayes a few months later developed a cardiovascular laboratory at Wesley. We acquired equipment to do specialized procedures such as cardiac catheterization, phonocardiography, vector cardiography and exercise electrocardiography. Phonocardiography and vectorcardiography are no longer in use since newer and better techniques have been developed.

Cardiac catheterization was much more difficult but less precise than it is today. It required a surgical incision to expose a vein and or artery and usually an incision was made in both the elbow area and in the groin. Fluoroscopes were much less advanced and visualization was not near the quality currently available to cardiologists. In spite of these limitations I believe we did good quality work. Soon the technique of coronary arteriography was developed and that opened up the field of coronary by-pass surgery, so very soon we were involved with a very active cardiology specialty practice.

During the 1960's our group grew in other ways with the addition of other internal sub specialists. Some time during that decade we changed the name of the group to Internal Medicine Associates. During the mid 1960's I decided to stop doing most invasive procedures such as cardiac catheterization.

I had developed more and more interest in the clinical management of heart disease and in the development of echocardiography and pacemaker management. In addition I had agreed to direct the cardiovascular lab at Wesley.

The 1960's were exciting years. We developed new procedures and Dr. Farha did the first open heart operation at Wesley. I had done the diagnostic tests including cardiac catheterization on the patient. Farha had already been making all the necessary arrangements for a cardiac surgery program. The patient was a lady about forty years old with an atrial septal defect. That being our first open heart procedure the patient had an extraordinary amount of attention. Dr. Farha did not leave the hospital for three days and nights and my partners and I did around the clock monitoring and medical management. The patient did well and the cardiac surgery program was off and running. Much, much more cardiac surgery was to follow.

We practiced in the Boulevard Plaza until we outgrew it. We moved to 3333 East Central and continued to grow. It was a great location for me since I was limiting my work to Wesley Medical Center just across Central Street. As the group grew more we finally moved to 3243 East Murdock in a new building next to Wesley and attached by tunnel for use in bad weather. I finished my private practice there.

## **THE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE IN WICHITA**

After World War II medical education in Wichita was developing at a rapid rate. While there had been residencies before the war there was an increasing interest in expanding the residency programs and some even hoped to develop a medical school in Wichita. That finally happened but in a way that was not originally planned since earlier discussions centered on a full four year medical school.

The state legislature was interested in expanding the medical school to provide more physicians to under served area of Kansas. The Kansas Board of Regents and the medical school developed a plan. The plan provided for a campus in Wichita to take advantage of the already developed medical education and residency programs there. The first two years of medical school would remain in Kansas City where the basic science faculty was already developed. Then several students could be sent to Wichita for the junior and senior clinical rotations in Wichita's large hospitals.

Our close friend, Dr. D. Cramer Reed was already dean of the College of Allied Health at Wichita State University. He agreed to be the first dean of the University Of Kansas School of Medicine at the Wichita Campus. He and his colleagues in Kansas City asked me to become the chairman of Internal Medicine but I declined. I did agree to chair a search committee to find chairman and we interviewed several candidates. The one selected moved to Wichita but stayed only a week before leaving. I have never known why he chose to leave so abruptly. That left Dr. Reed with a major problem since students would be arriving soon. So again Dr. Reed asked me to assume the job as Chairman. I finally agreed to become an interim Professor and Chairman starting in 1973.

During the next few months we developed a curriculum for internal medicine using the volunteer faculty and one part time salaried faculty member. The first students arrived in January 1974 and I believe they had a very good experience in their rotation through Internal Medicine. We finally found a permanent Chairman, Dr. Douglas Voth, and I was able to return to private practice but with continued teaching responsibility. I accepted the faculty position as half time Director of Internal Medicine Education at Wesley Medical Center. That position required me to develop programs for students and residents who were taking internal medicine rotations at Wesley while at the same time teaching.

A few years later I gave up the administrative position at Wesley and did what I enjoyed most; that is teaching in the context of private practice. I recognized it to be time consuming and that it would have a negative impact on my income. None the less it was something I wanted to do and I found it enjoyable and rewarding.

During the remainder of the 1970's our private practice continued to grow. We had subspecialists in gastroenterology, pulmonary disease, infectious disease, endocrinology and diabetes and the cardiology division expanded. Most of the members accepted positions as volunteer faculty and taught in the medical school or accepted students and residents on clinical rotations.

Since we were an academically oriented group we developed a truly innovative program. After some research I was unable to find another private practice group who had such a plan. So we started our own sabbatical plan. It was very successful and most of the group took advantage of the opportunity to upgrade themselves academically. The plan allowed one to take six months for study at a location of one's

choosing and with full salary. If an additional six months was desired then one half salary was provided. I used my sabbatical to prepare for board examination in cardiology and passed. I did not tell anyone other than Bertie that I was going to sit for the exam, just in case I failed.

In 1988 I limited my practice to office only and at the end of the year retired from my Internal Medicine Associates office. But then the medical school again entered my life. Dr. Joseph Meek was Chairman of Internal Medicine at the medical school Wichita campus. He asked me to join the faculty full time and concentrate on teaching cardiology to students and residents. The idea appealed to me so I accepted the job. I enjoyed the teaching and developed a curriculum in cardiology for students. I also started a free clinic for cardiology consultations for patients referred from the other charity and low income clinics. I found time to do a little writing.

By 1992 Dr. Meek had become dean and Dr. Robert Manning was departmental chairman. Manning decided to retire so I again agreed to serve as interim Professor and Chairman of Internal Medicine. In 1994 Dr. Garold Minns became Chairman and I gladly retired again. I continued to teach but gradually slowed down and fully retired, once again in 1998.

## **COMMUNITY**

We have several community interests. We have been supporters of Music Theater of Wichita from the beginning. We have an active interest in and have made significant contributions to The University of Kansas, Friends University, and the Wichita State University. We have had a special interest in Exploration Place where I served on the original board and where we both volunteer now. Larkfield Place has also been of special importance to us. I served on the original board and still serve on the advisory board. We have supported the United Way financially and as volunteers.

We have enjoyed and supported our church, University Congregational Church, where we are charter members. We feel comfortable there since there is no dogma, a wide variety of religious thinking is encouraged and where the very liberal theology is consistent with our faith.

## **HONORS**

I have received several awards during my many years of medical and academic life. Two of which I am most proud are: The Alumnus of the Year at the University of Kansas School of Medicine presented at the annual Alumni banquet in Kansas City. and the Delp Award for Excellence in Medicine which was presented in Wichita at the annual meeting of the American College of Physicians Kansas Chapter. I am especially pleased to have received teaching awards from both students and residents. It has been an honor to have served on the governing board of the American College of Physicians and of the American College of Cardiology.

For over thirty years I have enjoyed helping develop and administer our history of medicine group, the Jager Club. It is named for my mentor, Dr. Thor Jager whose hobby was medical history. I have now stepped down and others have taken over the leadership. I was extremely pleased and honored when the current chairman of the club awarded me the Gold Cane award accompanied by a very handsome specially made gold cane. The gold cane symbolizes excellence in medicine and was a tradition started in England over one hundred years ago.

## OUR CHILDREN

Bertie and I have been blessed with four marvelous children. All of them are married and they have provided us with thirteen beautiful grandchildren.

Barbara was born when I was an intern in 1945. She was only 12 months old when we left for military service. We had to live in rather austere surroundings since housing was so hard to find. We lived in Battle Creek, Michigan for a short time in a single room with no kitchen. It must have been a very difficult time for Bertie but, believe it or not, she had our 12 month old baby already housebroken, so at least there were no diaper problems. We lived for a short time in San Antonio, Texas before moving to Santa Fe, New Mexico. There we lived in a nice little adobe house across the highway from the Bruns General Hospital.

Our second child, John, was born in 1947 while we were living in El Paso and stationed at William Beaumont General Hospital. John added a lot of liveleliness to our family. He was a busy little tyke right from the beginning. We had a marvelous time with our two kids while living in El Paso. My medical responsibilities were not as demanding as they were later while in private practice in the years to follow. I had some time off and rarely had night work so it was a pleasant time to have two small children.

After we returned to Wichita our third child, Marilyn, was born in 1950. We were living at 3630 East English. I was again in residency training and had a very busy schedule, but Bertie



*3630 E. English*

managed the three kids efficiently as always. Marilyn was a delightful addition to the family and the two older children seemed to really love her.

In 1970 we built a home at 406 Lexington where we met our friends, the Williams and the Platts. We took one great trip with our good friends, the Platts. We took our three children and the Platts their two.

We went to Disneyland by train from Newton, Kansas to Los Angeles where we rented a station wagon. We then drove up the coast to San Francisco. After a few days there we returned to Wichita again by train. It was an exciting and successful trip for the five kids.



*406 Lexington*

We took another trip with four other families. We traveled in five cars as a caravan to the west coast. We stopped in Salt Lake City, spent a few days along the California coast, and then came back through Las Vegas. The kids ranged in age from nine to teen age. With five families there were a lot of children, and they had a wonderful time together and made some lifelong friends. The families were the Blaylocks, the Lances, the Matassarins, the Woods and the Crows.

By the mid 1960's Barbara was a junior in college, John was a freshman in college and Marilyn was still in high school. It was then that Bertie announced that she was again pregnant.

Our fourth child, Rick, was born in 1965. His older sisters adored him and John especially enjoyed taking him around and showing him off to his friends. Because by that

time there were no more young families with children in the neighborhood we built a home at 402 Longford where Rick spent most of his childhood.

Rick was in some ways an only child because the older children were out the home during most of his childhood. We had fun raising him and I had more time to spend with him than I had with the older children.



*402 Longford*

We enjoyed taking Rick with us on some exciting trips. I think his first major trip was to Alaska where we visited Anchorage, Kotzebue and Nome. It was a great trip for him and he had fun and learned a lot. We also took him with us to Switzerland. He was interested in trains and a high point was a visit to the transportation museum in Lucerne, Switzerland. That was an especially nice trip since our oldest child, Barbara and her husband, Ed, met us there. Later at age 12 Rick joined us on a University of Kansas tour to the Scandinavian countries.

We are very proud of these four children. All of them have been well educated and are college graduates. Two of them have advanced degrees. Although they have done other things, all of them now or in the past, have owned their own business and seem to prefer it that way.

Barbara, after teaching mathematics at the college level bought a Sylvan Learning Center which she has operated for many years.

John was originally in anthropology and taught briefly now has a degree in Hotel and Restaurant Management. Now he operates his own independent hotel development company

with a computer from his home office.

For many years Marilyn owned and operated her own stained glass company utilizing her skills as an artist. She still does some stained glass work in her home but mostly just for friends and family.

After Rick graduated from college he worked in financial planning but always wanted his own business. Now he owns and operates a home cleaning service.

All of our children seem to be happily married. Barbara is married to Ed, John to Claudia, Marilyn to Dan and Rick to Karen. Our youngest, Rick, has been married for thirteen years and the others for longer periods. Barbara, the oldest, has been married for thirty-five years.

We are proud of our children. We are especially proud as we watch them as parents. They are all great parents. Like all grandparents we think our grandchildren are special, they are all a delight for us. They range in age from six to thirty three. Three are now married so we hope for great grandchildren next.





*Barbara and Ed Biersmith with  
Hollie, Andrew, Mathew, and  
Cara*



*John and Claudia  
Crow with Adrienne,  
Daniel, and John  
Michael*



*Rick and Karen Crow  
with Jason and  
Lauren*



*Marilyn and Dan Waller with  
Erin, Mark, Matt, Bethney, and  
Megan*

## BERTIE

My wife, Bertie, and I have been married for 60 years, and were very involved with one another for five years prior to that. The sale of my trombone for the purchase of an engagement ring formalized a decision already made, that we would marry as soon as possible.



She has been a remarkably wonderful and patient wife. She put up with the inconveniences of traveling around the country in military service, and living in Philadelphia with three small kids while I did additional graduate work. She took care of the same three children during a second period of time when I was away doing graduate work in Kansas City. And then had our fourth child after we thought our family was complete.

Most of the success that our children have can best be attributed to Bertie. I was frequently busy or gone leaving her with the major responsibility of raising children and keeping the home operating efficiently and lovingly

There is one story that defines what a truly remarkable woman Bertie is. It occurred with the birth of Rick. Our three older children especially love to recall that event. When Rick was born, Barbara was 20 years old, John was 18 years old and Marilyn was 15 years old.

On November 13 Barbara brought two friends home from the university. Marilyn and John were both at home for dinner also. Bertie prepared a large, characteristically marvelous dinner for the family, and after dinner the kids all went there separate ways.

During the night Bertie went into labor and Rick was

born early the next morning on November 14. Bertie called the older children by phone and told them they now had a new baby brother.

That was a very happy moment for the children and a time when they gained a new and even greater respect for their mother. Not many woman could have a child while in their mid-forties, prepare a large family dinner, clear off the table, do the dishes, then go to the hospital and have a baby, all in a matter of only a few hours.

And she did it with such grace, ease and love.

One great joy Bertie and I share is a love of the mountains. In 1955 we bought a small Colorado cabin in partnership with three other couples. We spent a summer holiday there almost every year. Then in 1986 we built a lovely log cabin near Divide, Colorado. We spent many days there each fall, a few days at Christmas and most of each summer there until we sold the cabin in 2002. We loved it but age determined that it was time to give it up.

Bertie is and has been my wonderful, loving wife; a marvelous homemaker, a loving mother, a superb cook and my patient companion. Now at the age of eighty three she must surely know how much I love her though I have not told her often enough. And I know she is loved and adored by her children and grandchildren.



*Cabin at Divide, Colorado*

## EPILOGUE



The Labor Day week end 2003 was spent at Grand Lake Oklahoma celebrating our sixtieth wedding anniversary. Most of the family were there including three of our four children, most of our grandchildren and brother, Jim. It was a marvelous occasion and all had a great time but we, most of all.

As I reflected on that occasion I wondered about those factors responsible for Bertie and me having such a long and happy marriage. I know there were many times when my work and my compulsion about my work made life more difficult for Bertie and the children. So what did we do right?

First there was never any doubt about the love which I have for Bertie and our children nor for the pride I feel for all of

our children and now our grandchildren.

I know that respect, kindness, compassion and ordinary courtesy which are so important in everyday life are even more important in married life. I know Bertie exemplified all of those qualities and I hope I did as well. I learned that those same virtues held true in medical practice. I was a good doctor, although I know many who are better. When I retired from practice I received many letters and cards from patients. No one wrote that I was a brilliant physician or had saved a life or shown extraordinary medical skills. What was mentioned was that I listened, seemed "to care", that I spent time with them and was kind to them. Those lessons were taught by my parents and I know Bertie was taught those same lessons.

We are proud of our children. But it is not their success for which we are most proud; it is that they are good, kind and compassionate adults. For that we are most pleased.

