

Famous Last Words of Stanley Arthur Phelps

PART ONE

October 1985

This chronicle is based on my own memories but some of it is based on what others told me as my memory does not go back much beyond the age of five.

My mother, Florence Messer Phelps, told me once that I was born in the afternoon of February 14, 1911. She said she did the washing in the morning. At that time, she, my father, Austin, and two brothers, John Edward and Richard Clayton, comprised the family.

I was born in Marlborough, New Hampshire, by the railroad tracks which would be near the middle of town, the first of quite a few towns I would live in.

We moved from there to Roxbury N.H. where sister, Dorothy Helen, was born. We moved from there to Chesham on the west side of the Reservoir where they say I ventured into the water and had to be rescued. I don't remember this so must have been quite small.

We moved from there to Ludlow, Massachusetts where father bought a small farm about 25 acres, I believe. This is my first recollection of places and things. My brother, Frank Henry, was the first of three born here, followed by Charles Austin and Ruth Margaret. Father said he had \$100 in his pocket when he bought the place so he was not then or ever would be well off. But I don't remember of ever going to bed hungry and most of our neighbors lived about like we did. This was during World War I and sugar was almost nonexistent at \$1.00 a pound. Father raised bees and white leghorn hens and milked four or five cows.

I started school at the age of five in what was called Red Bridge Schoolhouse and father carried scholars from that section of town with a horse and wagon or sled at first. He finally bought a Model T Ford Runabout and put a body on the back with benches on each side. It had no windshield but did have rolled up isinglass that could be let down in rainy weather. It had headlights run by gas so you had to get out and light them if it got dark. The steering wheel was on the right and a lever on the driver's right side shifted back for low and front for high. Father let me steer (sitting in his lap) up Reservoir Hill, which was done in low gear. He said I could tell my grandchildren I drove a 1907 Ford.

I have fond memories of the Ludlow farm and I used to follow father down the plowed furrow and smell the new soil or follow behind the mowing machine and smell the new mown hay. I was not big enough to do much work there but we all had chores and I learned to milk a cow before we moved to Bernardston, MA. I was always tagging along behind my two older brothers which usually got them into more trouble than me. They were cutting small pine trees with a hatchet one day to clear the pasture and Dick would get into the top and ride them down when they fell. Naturally I said I would climb the next one but I was too small. That didn't stop me so they started cutting the bottom branches off so I couldn't climb it. My fingers and the hatchet hit the limb at the same time and I lost the third finger on my right hand. Which never bothered me much except in milking.

Our neighbor had a Stutz chain drive car and he took me to the Ludlow Hospital which was the nearest to us. Of course the hand and fingers were covered with pine pitch and a young nurse had the job of washing it with what I thought was boiling water so I hollered enough so she knew I didn't like it but it didn't stop her. They did not have the know how in those days to mend the finger so they cut it off square and padded it in the front so the bone was protected. In later years my oldest boy got his finger cut the same way (the same finger and the same hand) in a car door but

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they were close to a Doctor so his mother rushed him there and they put it back together so you could never tell the difference. Just one of the many advances in technology from 1916 to 1935.

I should state right here that I consider myself lucky to have lived in the most productive and advanced century the world has ever known. Advancing from horse and oxen and steam to the automobile, the airplane, diesel ships and locomotives, radio, television, computers, rocket ships, milking machines and chain saws.

There was a large brook crossing the farm in the back mowing which was large enough to run a grinding mill on the farm above. Robert Reynolds ground his horse radish there and started the Reynolds horse radish brand which is still used today. There was a large rock on our side about five or six feet from the bank so we put planks out to it and it was a good place to fish from. I was small so fished with a hand line to catch shiners and pumpkin seeds as we called them. One day I must have had a shiner on and didn't know it so a big pickerel grabbed it and I would have been pulled in the pond but John grabbed me and helped haul him in. Sometimes we would step on the plank and two or three water snakes would come boiling out from under it and swim off. We had a small brook between the house and the road that went dry in the summer but we could catch frogs there and fry the legs. Also there was a canal across the road that went down to the Reservoir and that was the best fishing especially off the logging bridges.

Father was quite stern and if he said something was to be done or not done it was best to pay attention. Transportation being the horse and buggy or horse and sleigh there was always a buggy whip in the socket setting in the yard and much easier to use than cutting a switch. I remember one time I was having fun catching toads and dropping them thru the ventilator to the water well and I could hear them splash when they hit the water. Of course toads can't stand water like frogs can so they all died. Father had to go down the well and get them all out but first he used the buggy whip on my bare legs so I would not forget and do it again. I never forgot.

The nearest church was Ludlow Center about five miles away but every Sunday that it was at all possible we drove to Church. That was about the only social contact we had with people besides school. Naturally I grew up a bit shy with strangers. Father insisted that we go to Church and he was a man who practiced what he preached. He never worked on Sunday except to do the chores and I never heard him say a bad word no matter if he hit his thumb with a hammer or something went wrong. He would not even say darn. He said if you start saying little words you will end up using big ones.

Mother's folks lived in Bernardston, MA and when her brother, John, was married father hired a neighbor with a closed car to take us up to the wedding. That was the longest trip I ever took when we lived there.

We had a game we played in school, which I have never heard of before or since. Weather permitting we played it recess and noon. Someone usually had a rubber ball and the school house being a one room school was not very large so we would choose sides about even and get on each side of the building. Someone would then call "Halley Over or Hurley Over" and throw the ball over the roof. Sometimes high and sometimes just rolling it up and over so it would roll down the other side. If no one caught it, it would be thrown back but if someone did catch it everyone on that side would run around the school and try to tag as many kids on the other side as they could. This was repeated until one side caught everybody on the other side. Even first graders could play so it was much better than ball games played today.

Automobiles were quite scarce in those days and nonexistent in winter so just about everybody had one or two horses. Father had one quite awhile but needed two for plowing and

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mowing so he heard of a horse when he was pedaling butter and eggs in Wilbraham. The big towns were paved with brick and cobblestone and the draft horses would develop trouble with their front legs from trotting on the hard surface. This horse was young but he was so lame they had to stop using him. Father talked with an old horse dealer who told him to buy it cheap and make a pen in the barn cellar with a dirt floor and not work him for awhile but exercise him every day. He bought the big black horse for \$10 and named him Dick. Within six months he was good as new and was the best horse we ever had. The change in him seemed like a miracle.

Dorothy was next in age to me so I got to doing things with her instead of tagging along behind my big brothers all the time. Being the only girl with five brothers (before Ruth came along) every one said she was spoiled. She heard it so much that one hot summer day a rooster came strolling thru the open door into the kitchen. Dot saw it and shooed it out the door calling (get out of here you spoiled young one).

We all had chores and soon as I was big enough I had to bring in the wood. All the heat we had was wood as we had no electricity or gas or telephone. Nowadays we would be classed as at the poverty level or below and get welfare or maybe Red Cross help. Father, of course, was too proud to accept charity but we did get gifts and cast off clothing.

Anyway when Dot was big enough she helped me bring in the wood. It was easier to pile wood on her two outstretched arms than on my single left arm so I would put a good stack on hers and bring what I could stack easy on my arm. One day I remember as we came in the kitchen I said look at the pile Dot is carrying. Mother said "shame on you, making her carry more than a big boy like you." I always remembered after that and tried to do more than someone younger and weaker so it shows that parents can make a lot of difference in children's thinking, if they are around at the right time to guide them. Now too many mothers hardly know what their children are doing from one day to the next. She can't teach them much when they are in a Day Care Center.

All in all it was a happy time in Ludlow for me at least. But father was never happy with the status quo and we were quite a distance from Keene, NH, where his folks lived. So he decided when he heard Mother's folks, Grandpa and Grandma Messer, wanted to sell their farm on Fox Hill in Bernardston to buy it and move up there. Ruth was a baby at the time so there were seven of us children. I don't remember the exact year but possibly 1919.

Fox Hill was about one and one half miles from town but not far enough for a school bus so we had to walk to Green School which was on the bank of Falls River across the town. Dot remembers me pulling her back up the hill on a sled in the afternoon in the winter, but I don't.

We lived there about two and one half years and Raymond was born there. A new baby came with every new place we lived. We had a railroad station in Bernardston so Grandpa and Grandma Phelps could get to see us a little easier.

Grandpa Phelps lived on 80 North Lincoln Street in Keene for better than 50 years. He played drum in the town band and was a Deacon in the First Baptist Church on Court Street. He also had a flush toilet which was something new and different to us kids and they had to caution us not to pull the chain too often as he had to pay for the water. Something we had never heard of. He worked at Fish Woodworking Plant (near where the fire station is now) for years but they made him retire at 75. With no social security and inflation eating up his savings he had a hard time getting by in later years and had to sell his house. They had just two children, Austin and Zoella, but Zoella died of consumption when we were in Ludlow and I don't remember her much. She was a school teacher and never married.

Grandpa never had even a horse so he walked to work every day (two miles) and they walked to church every Sunday, rain or shine. He loved to walk and would take us boys up on Beech Hill

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whenever we went up to see him. They were wonderful people and we really missed them when they were gone.

When Grandpa Messer sold his farm to Father he moved his family to a house on South Street on the edge of Sanderson's meadow in the west side of town. About half of it was a regular swamp and it is undeveloped today. It had to be mowed by hand which gave quite a few men employment in August every year.

Grandpa Messer was a great teamster and although he was only a little over 5 ft tall he had great big Belgian horses. I could never understand how he could get the big harnesses on but he did. He was raised in Ludlow, Vermont, and used to drive a six horse team on the big snow roller that flattened the snow for good sledding before the days of automobiles. They said it could get pretty bad in the spring when the big thaw came and the pot holes sometimes were two feet deep.

In Bernardston he hauled logs and drove the four horse hitch on the road scraper in summer. It was quite an education to see his team pull a big load of logs out of a mud hole. Of course I have been stuck worse with a load on a ten wheeler and gotten out but it lacks the thrill of those big horses trying their best to do what he wanted them to do.

Grandpa and Grandma Messer had nine children but only Uncle Charlie and Aunt Ethel are alive today, Oct 14, 1985. They were Arthur, Will, Florence (my mother), John, Frank, Charles, Ada, Minnie, Raymond, and Ethel. Uncle Arthur died of appendicitis and I don't remember him but he had three boys, Walter, Lawrence and Donald, who all live in Keene.

Grandpa and Grandma lived in Bernardston until they died. Grandpa died of cancer. Four of the children died of cancer. They were a wonderful family and spread from here to California today. We still have a reunion every year to remember the ones that are gone and meet the ones who are here. Aunt Ada's husband, Henry Plimpton, is still alive at 94 and Aunt Minnie's husband, Ted Cromack, is still alive at 80.

The Fox Hill house was real old fashioned house with a large brick chimney in the center and massive brick work in the kitchen with a brick oven. We had a wood-burning kitchen range and I think the fireplace had been bricked up. There were fireplaces in the dining room and living room and I think at least one upstairs. I remember roasting chestnuts on the large flat stone in front of the fireplace. The last of the chestnut trees were still bearing at that time. Looking south from the dining room we could look right down the valley to town. Going west from the kitchen was a succession of sheds at different levels sloping down to the brook but all [were] connected. The last was the privy which made quite a trip on a cold winter night but it was usually a quick one.

There was quite a sizeable orchard back of the house and several fields but I doubt if any would have been more than five acres. We had several varieties of apple, Macs and Baldwins mostly, and Father trimmed, grafted and sprayed them, improving them so we could sell them house to house in Greenfield. I used to go with him and hold the horse while he filled a peach basket and went from house to house. He would go across the back lawn if he didn't sell and I would move the wagon along to keep up with him.

One noon we stopped to eat. While I opened the dinner basket on the seat he put the feed bag on the horse, which was a canvas bag slipping up over his nose with a strap over the top of his head to hold it on. He had to take off the bridle to do this so there was no control of the horse. We had just started eating good when something startled the horse. Father thought a bee stung him. The horse gave a leap sideways and put the wagon right up on two wheels spilling the seat with Father and I on it and all the apples into the ditch, with the seat on top of me. No one was hurt and the horse couldn't run very far with the bag over his nose so we loaded back up, minus a few apples.

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We also had blueberries in the big pasture and quite a large maple orchard which kept us busy in the spring. Father had some labels made up which he put on everything he sold. He had his name in the center and the [fruit] on the corners:

Apples	Cherries
Austin Phelps	
Plums	Berries

We also had a milk route and we boys would help deliver milk mornings before going to school. It wasn't too bad in summer but not as much fun in winter. Sometimes on a subzero morning the caps on the bottles would be about an inch above the bottle but the bottles seldom cracked.

Father needed another horse so he bought a pair and a surrey to go with them from his mother's cousin, A. Seaver from Marlborough. Seems as tho they called him Bert but I don't know for sure. I think it was about 50 miles and Father drove them home in one day, twenty four hours that is. One horse was a little lame so he couldn't make very good speed. He had to get rid of that horse as he never got better - the other horse, Ben we called him, was with us for years. We got another to go with him and they were about as mismatched a pair as I ever saw but they lasted for years and I learned to plow - with a walking plow when I was thirteen. Jerry would walk the furrow all day and never step out of it but old Ben stepped wider and could not stay in the furrow or between the rows on a cultivator. But at the end of the day he would still be going strong and Jerry would be lagging behind.

Father sprayed the orchard with a hand powered pump and I got my share of pumping that. It had a long handle which you pushed front and back to build up pressure. If we didn't keep the pressure up Father would yell to pump faster. He had a bamboo pole with a spray nozzle on the end and about 50 feet of hose so he could walk around the tree while I drove up between them. We used about two sprays I think, lime sulfur for the dormant and arsenate of lead the rest of the time. Worked very good in those days but now they have sprays so powerful you have to wear gloves and a mask to operate. The brook that went down behind the barn would go nearly dry in the summer and we could catch nice trout in our hands by reaching under the ledges.

We also had lots of patridge [sic] and deer but I learned that when I went after the cows I could not catch a patridge no matter how crippled she was (appeared) and even tho I could almost put my hand on her I could never catch one.

Another thing I learned here was to mow with a scythe. Father made a cart out of a couple buggy wheels and a bar to push and two legs to set it on and a good sized body to put green feed in for the cows. After school at night we three older boys would push it to the millet (barley) field and take turns with a fairly dull scythe mowing enough to feed about five hungry cows. This was in the fall and we were all barefoot, of course, and I remember sometimes there was frost on the ground and we would keep stepping to keep warm. One thing I learned was a sharp scythe is the main ingredient in doing a good job of hand mowing.

Father was never content with the status quo so he decided to sell the place on Fox Hill and bought a place on Huckle Hill east of town from Maurice Cutting. This was where I spent my growing up years until I was married in 1932 at the age of 21.

Of course with eight children in the family by today's standards we would have been considered below the poverty level but we didn't know it as we always had plenty to eat and warm clothes in the winter, although I went barefoot to school up to the eighth grade and enjoyed it. I have never had trouble with my feet to this day and I think that is one of the reasons. None of the big boys ever stepped on my toes more than once. I was used to fighting with my older brothers if

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I thought they were pushing me around (although I never won). I used to wrestle a lot in school but usually with bigger and older boys because any boy my size I could lick too easy.

One noon playing ball I was catching and when I threw the ball back to the pitcher he missed it and the ball hit the umpire, a boy who weighed about 200 pounds. Everybody laughed, which I think hurt him the most. He stopped umpiring and we kept playing ball but suddenly he walked up behind me and kicked me in the butt. I weighed less than 100 pounds but I pitched into him. I could hardly reach his face but punched him in the stomach. Of course he won and knocked me down a couple times but he never kicked me again and no one else did either. We played some pretty rough games but we learned not to depend on the rules or someone to enforce them.

When I got to sixth grade the class was too large so some of us with the best marks were put into the seventh grade so I skipped the sixth grade and graduated when I was 16 years old.

In all the time I went to school I never took studies home as Father said you go to school to study and you come home to work. We had chores at home every night. Cleaning stables, sawing wood, cutting corn and anything that was in season. I can't understand why children can go to school today with no work to do at home and still not read or write or add a column of figures and not get them right.

Another thing was discipline. Father told us boys if you get a licking in school you will get another at home. Nowadays if a kid gets one whack the parents rush to the authorities and try to get the teacher kicked out. No wonder the kids get away with murder. A certain type of child will try to get away with more and more devilry from the day he is born unless stopped at once and made to see the error of that way of life.

We lived just inside the distance limit for riding on the bus so Father got the job of carrying scholars. Most of the school year was poor traveling for automotive equipment so horses played a big role in the transportation although walking a couple miles or riding a bike was common practice. The main road through town was the only paved road. When I was thirteen and fourteen I did all the driving that I could. I learned to plow and draw logs in the winter using runner chains down steep hills and using limber poles for binders to hold the load tight. In winter I would get up at six am to drive the school bus right to the Vermont line and pick up the Sullivan family. Father said walk the horses on the way up so as not to get them too tired but trot them coming back. Sometimes I was a little late getting in the school as I had to put the team in stalls in the barn next to the school and the teachers were always saying they couldn't understand why I couldn't start a little earlier. All we had to do was wait a few minutes extra for a couple kids of course and we were late. What got to me was the teachers only got up an hour or two before school time and walked a quarter mile or less to school.

When Father moved on to the Huckle Hill farm there was no dairy barn but a hay barn about 30 feet square, a horse barn and chicken house. It was spring so we tied the cows (6 or 8 milkers) to corners of the buildings or trees to milk them and then put them out to pasture. This was not an ideal way to milk cows as they could walk around the length of the rope and go sideways as well.

My job was to spray the cows before milking to keep the flies off. One cow, disturbed by flies buzzing around swung her head around and her spike horn took me beside the head and knocked me flat. It left a gash in the side of my head for a long time and I learned not to get too close to a cow's head when tied with a rope.

Father started building a cow barn at once so along with starting to build up the run down land and building fences we were quite busy that summer.

Mr. Lunt, who owned the silver shop in Greenfield, bought a summer place on the Lampblack Road and gave Father the barn for tearing it down so we had a lot of cured timber to start with. One

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thing I remember about tearing down the barn was the method we used to get the wood shingles off the barn. Father got some small square pointed shovels and we would start at the eaves and peel them off right up to the ridgepole. Of course we did not save them but used tar paper for the barn roof.

Father built the cow barn on the south side of the hay barn to within 10 or 12 feet of the road and the horse barn on the west side but all under one roof so we could feed the horses and cows all at the same time.

The house was not quite large enough for a large family so Father built two rooms on the North West side of the house and a large woodshed on the west of the house. As we had no electricity or gas, wood was our only source of fuel.

We boys slept upstairs under the rafters and as the roof was wood shingles snow would blow under them on a winter's night and sift on the bed clothes so we would have to cover our heads with the blanket. We weren't allowed to have a lamp upstairs as Father considered it too dangerous so we went to bed with lanterns. It was not too good light to read by but I read most of Scott's novels, which were very fine print, and probably not too good for my eyes so I had to have glasses before I got through school. Reading was one of our best chances to get rested after a day's work and enjoy it at the same time. The Saturday Evening Post was a must but no one was allowed to touch it until Father had read it. When we could afford them we had the Country Gentleman, The Ladies Home Journal, one for us boys I think was the Youths Companion. We had a very good library in Bernardston beside Powers Institute and we always had time to slip in and get a book before the school bus left. As we never had any money we had to take advantage of everything free. We had to take good care of the books and get them back on time so we learned to be responsible for them.

Of course we all went to church on Sunday but Father did most of the chores on Sunday so we boys had a chance to sleep a little later. We really enjoyed that and looked forward to Sunday. Mother put a pot of beans in the oven and when we got back from church they would be ready to eat. We never had baker's bread as Father said it wasn't fit to eat but Father would take a thick slice of homemade bread, cover it with beans about one inch deep and cover that with thick cream. A millionaire couldn't eat any thing better than that.

Of course when strawberries were ripe Mother would have a hugh layered short cake with berries between and berries on top served with heavy cream. Of course none of us ever worried about calories as Father said he never heard of a fat Phelps.

As soon as I was big enough to ride a bike I kept after John and Richard to help me make up a bike from used parts and I ended up with a pretty good bike with wide handle bars and a motorcycle seat so I could sit up straight and ride in comfort. Of course we had to have mud guards front and back because we rode in rain, mud, slush and snow. When we rode to church with our best clothes on we didn't want a streak of mud up the back.

When I was fifteen I got the job of janitor at the Baptist Church so I had to get up early Sunday to open up the church and in winter to start the fires and get the church warm by 11 am. We had a big wood furnace for upstairs and a stove for downstairs. I think I got \$1.00 a Sunday but don't remember for sure. Sometimes I pumped the organ for a little extra.

I heard the other day of a boy who gets \$25 a week allowance from his father and is only in grammar school. I graduated from high school at 16 and the only money I ever had I earned. I didn't mind as we had learned to have fun without spending a lot. I went to Greenfield with the boys once to a bowling alley. I bowled one string but when I found how much it cost I never bowled again. I took up horseshoe pitching instead and got to be quite good at it.

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The spring I was fifteen Father decided I was old enough to work out for the summer so he wrote to an elderly cousin in Milford, NH named George Woodward, who said he would be glad to have some help for the summer, although he couldn't pay much as he was retired. I rode my old patched up bike to Grandpa Phelps's home at 80 North Lincoln Street in Keene and stayed overnight. The next day I rode to Milford, in all about 80 miles. With the new 10 speed bikes it wouldn't be much of a trip but I had to walk up the steep hills and even part way downhill on the other side to save the brake but it was all fun as I remember.

I had one of the best summers of my life with Cousin George and his wife Flora (who was related to Father thru the Fosters). They had a farm on Federal Hill of about 80 acres I believe. I learned to plow with a side hill plow or swivel plow as it was called as at the end of the furrow a latch was released and the moldboard could be rolled over and it would turn the furrow the other way going back. Father would never use one as he said it didn't plow level with the side hill. A few years later I learned to plow with a sulky or riding plow which had two bottom[s] which worked best on level land as hitting a rock on a side hill could roll them over.

Cousin George was an expert carpenter and taught me how to lay cedar shingles as his carpenter shop needed shingling. We filled a wash tub half full of water and stood a half bundle of shingles in the tub to soak so when we nailed them they would not crack and help to space them so they would not swell as much when it rained and buckle. Cousin George wasn't joking when he said he had heard of roofs being laid that leaked the first time it rained.

There was a large granite quarry at the edge of their farm and Sundays I would go down to look at the huge blocks of granit being removed from the quarry by mostly Finn workers. Of course they weren't working on Sunday but I could see what they had been doing all week.

Cousin George had a friend with a retail milk business who cut hay all over Milford and we helped him hay after we got ours done. They had me load and drive as I was used to doing that at home. I put on some loads so big they could not get them in the barn until they pitched some off the top. Cousin George was over six feet tall and he used a special long handled pitchfork to pitch on to a high load. I had more fun working with these men than the boys that age today get from kicking and throwing a ball around.

When the blueberries were ripe it was my job while Cousin George was doing the evening chores to go out and get a quart of blueberries for supper. They were in clusters where I could strip them off by the handful so it was fun to pick them. I earned enough to buy my clothes for school that year but I was sorry when it was time to go home and Father and Mother came up to get me.

The next year I went to work for another farmer in Milford named Cutts at the edge of town on South Street. He was about 60 but still milked about 20 head of Registered Ayshires and had about 60 acres of good level land. He raised ensilage corn and had about a half acre of asparagus so he had plenty to do and I had to work a lot harder than for Cousin George but I also received more pay. The summer went by fast as there were grandchildren around to play games and make things interesting.

The most exciting thing was a young fellow who took his brother's motorcycle one Sunday afternoon for a trial spin and didn't make the corner in front of the house. He hit a pole with the front wheel and flew off the bike hitting the pole about twelve feet up with his head and burst it open like a melon and he laid in the road with his brains spilled out. I never rode a motor bike.

However, when I returned home to Huckle Hill farm I had a chance to buy the chassis of a Model T runabout for \$10 without an engine. Our next door neighbor, Almon Flagg had a Model T truck he had junked in his dump and he gave me the motor. I ran this flivver for a couple years but

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it was quite primitive. The front tires went directly on the wheels and not on rims to mount. This made it quite unhandy with a flat on the road. We carried hand pumps but if they leaked too bad we just had to pry the tire off and patch it.

The longest trip I took was up to Keene, NH and Grandpa Phelps rode with me up to Walpole and over to Surrey and back to Keene. He got a big kick out of that especially going down hill where we worked up pretty good speed.

I got my first driver's license when I was 16 but it was only good for driving Fords so later I had to get another for 3 speed shifts. Then later when I got to driving heavy trucks I had to get another. I think I can safely say that I have driven more miles than anyone else in the family.

I drove Father's school bus some until I got a steady job at Barber Bros IGA in Bernardston. They had just built a new store on South Street a couple houses down from their old store across from Bernardston Inn. I worked there about seven and a half years and learned that there were easier ways of making a living than farming. My hours at the store were 7 am to 6 pm and Saturday until 9 pm or later.

I had a couple more Fords (touring cars) with two seats but they were open cars with side curtains and of course no heaters. I finally got an old Nash sedan with a heater and that was much more comfortable in the winter. One Saturday night after work Charles Burrows (Richard's brother in law) and I started for Mt. Washington. We got up there about daylight as I had gotten sleepy in White River Junction and slept for awhile. John was working at a summer hotel up there so we hunted him up and got a free breakfast. We were going to drive up the mountain but found it cost so much we couldn't afford it. Probably a good thing as the old car might not have made it. We got back as far as Northfield Sunday night and I was so sleepy I told Charles he could drive or we would sleep right there. He drove home and he was so near blind he couldn't get a license.

Another time he and I went to Boston one night to see John who was attending Mass School of Art down there. We got to his room on St. Botolph Street a little after midnight

and stayed overnight with him. The next morning I got up and we had three flat tires on the old Nash. I forgot to mention we had two flats coming home from Mt. Washington. That car was hard on tires. One time I ran over a skunk on the way home. I didn't really try to miss him but about a mile up the road that tire went flat and I wished I had.

Another time Charles B. and I were going to Boston with a Falcon Knight and ran out of gas so we pulled into a filling station with a light on. No one around. This was around midnight but I blew the horn and no one showed up so Charles says "well we can drain the hose and maybe get enough to go a little way". Just then a guy pops up beside us with a revolver in his hand and told us to get the hell out of there or he would shoot us. I said we were out of gas but he said get going so we jumped in and the car started and went about a half mile before it stopped again. We coasted off the road and went to sleep. About daylight we heard a tapping on the door and a policeman wanted to know what we were doing. I told him we were out of gas and he wanted to know if we had any money? I told him we had so he said there was a gas station a couple blocks ahead. I don't remember just why but we had Charles's (or John's) bicycle on the back so he rode in and got a gallon of gas. I had a full tank when I left home so figured we must have a leak and found the gas line was leaking. So we got that fixed and filled up with gas and went along.

As I graduated from high school at Powers Institute in Bernardston at the age of 16 I never had a car in school like so many kids do today. Of course I had no money to run one anyway. The last year of school was the most interesting as I won the prize speaking award and graduated third in my class (1927) of seven boys and one girl, Hazel Graver. The boys were Herbert Wright,

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Kenneth Deane, Richard Nelson, Howard Smith, Stanley Allen, Edward Koshinsky (didn't graduate), myself and Robert Putnam.

There were no drugs or alcohol in school in those days as prohibition was in effect until FDR got in office. High school boys had few of the problems of today and I never heard of a girl in P.I. getting pregnant. Of course we all knew how to get a girl pregnant (without sex education) but we also knew enough not to. Very simple, we just didn't have sex! We had lots of fun with the girls, however, going to the movies and just enjoying rides in the country Sundays and evenings. The best place to meet girls was in church Sunday school, choir rehearsal, prayer meetings and Christian Endeavor meetings. We also played tennis and (Tom Thumb) or miniature golf. I never went to dances (except the school prom). Couldn't afford that kind of entertainment.

At 21 I was still living at home, of course I had been paying board since I was 16 and went to work in the store. I decided to get married and I found a girl about my age living alone with her father who wanted to start a home of her own, too, so we went out to Hoosick Falls, New York one Saturday and got married in the Baptist Parsonage, September 17, 1932. Her name was Elsie Waite and we are still married in 1986 which must prove something.

Her family at that time consisted of her father, Ernest, her mother, Lilla Thrasher (divorced), her brothers, William and Cecil, and her uncle, Leon Waite. Her brother, William and wife, Helen, had daughters, Bernice and Norma, and later a son, Billy Junior. Her brother, Cecil, never married. Another younger brother, Guy, died on Christmas day in a hunting accident, self inflicted crawling under a fence.

We lived with her father a short time and then rented an apartment on the ground floor behind the store that Myron Barber had made over. Four rooms (and a bathroom), first such luxury I had lived with except the two summers working out in Milford.

Dennis was born December 21, 1934 in Franklin County Hospital, Greenfield. It was a very hard labor. The nerves in his left shoulder were strained and he has never had the full use of that arm. However, this has never held him back from becoming the best mechanic in the family and doing a lot of jobs better than men with two good arms. However, a child born that way today would have the benefit of an operation to correct the injured nerve which is just another stride forward in my lifetime.

I forgot to mention an episode in my life the fall after graduation when I went the fall term to Mt. Hermon School which was about five miles from home, the back road down Purple Meadow. Bernardston scholars could go there without paying tuition but I had to buy my books. I rode my bike everyday but when it began to snow I had to give it up. I figured I couldn't afford a higher education but it was really interesting as long as it lasted. I met boys from all over the world. In my class there was one from Persia named Rasoulie and one from Greece named Papastamatio. They were real smart and it was nothing for them to get 100 in exams. This ended my higher education, as they say.

I had my appendix out at the Farren Memorial Hospital in Turners Falls about this time, 1934. I went to have it out on the first attack as I had just lost my best friend and neighbor who couldn't get to the hospital for two days and it burst and killed him.

I was making about \$24.00 a week at this time and I think we payed [sic] \$18.00 a month for rent.

Myron Barber liked to play horseshoes and we got regulation shoes and set up sand boxes with regulation posts and played with lights at night and any other time we had a chance. In the winter we played a game called caroms, where we snapped the [wooden] rings into the corner pockets something like pool. We played once or twice a week changing from one house to another.

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We got pretty good at it and had some pretty hot games. My brother Dick, Myron, Charles B. or Arthur Truesdell usually played.

My youngest brother, Robert, was born March 17, 1933, a year before Dennis. The folks moved about this time to the [H]olton farm in West Northfield, across the road from Mt. Hermon. If they had moved there a few years earlier I would probably have finished going to school there and changed my whole life for better or worse.

This was about the same time as Franklin Roosevelt got to be President and things really began to change. To make more jobs he made the store hire two more clerks.

My youngest brother, Robert, was born March 17, 1933, a year before Dennis. The folks moved about this time to the Bolton farm in West Northfield, across the road from Mt. Hermon. If they had moved there a few years earlier I would probably have finished going to school there and changed my whole life for better or worse.

This was about the same time as Franklin Roosevelt got to be President and things really began to change. To make more jobs he made the store hire two more clerks. That meant I had to take a cut in pay as the big cut-rate groceries were coming into Greenfield and cutting the business of the small country stores. Pretty soon we all got laid off and the brothers had to run the store with just their families to help. This was right in the middle of the worst depression the country ever had and this was the year Lois was born March 22, 1936. I tried running a store of my own in the Streeter building but I had to give it up after about a year. I didn't have much capital and if I let any body go more than a week on their groceries I couldn't collect as they would go somewhere else. But it was something I always remembered so that when I started in the logging business I didn't get caught that way again.

I took any job I could get a day or two at a time and we lived in two rooms and a bath upstairs on Depot Street. We shared the bath with the Turners, who owned the place and lived downstairs. I hoed corn for 25 cents an hour, helped carpenters shingle roofs, and drove school bus to fill in once in a while and did most anything to fill in. Then Dick got a job taking down a house down at Quabbin Reservoir and we built it back up in Bernardston. That took up most of the summer and fall. The house is still standing on South Street about the third place on the left below the park.

Harold Streeter had gotten hold of our old place on Huckle Hill someway and asked me to move up there to run it for milk, fuel and rent and \$50. a month. Winter was coming on and I couldn't pay rent where I was so we moved up. The wife said she would not go back on any old farm but she went along when we got ready.

It was some different from living by the store. I worked seven days a week milking up to 24 cows by hand that couldn't be milked at his other bam by machine. After chores I would take the milk down street to the big barn and work down there till after noon and then go home and milk and do chores again. Holidays and Sunday I had the middle of the day off.

I shot my first deer on the Huckle Hill farm when I was thirteen years old. I shot four or five more before I was married but never had a license. I didn't get far off our property where it was legal to hunt without a license. I tried shooting them with a 22 caliber but they always got away and died. They were spoiled by the time I found them so never used a 22 on them again. The shotgun was the most reliable and in Massachusetts was the only legal gun to use.

When I moved to Sheldegren in 1939 I used to hunt in Vermont some with a rifle and like that much better on still shots but a running or jumping deer always gave me trouble with a rifle. The largest buck I ever shot I got in Whitingham, Vermont with a 348 caliber - 200 grain bullet. I borrowed the gun from Elsie's brother, Bill, who had a fine collection of guns but never hunted.

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The buck was a 10 pointer and I had the head mounted and gave it to my boss, Bill Koch. He had a cabin on the hill with a fireplace and he kept it over the fireplace till the place burned down.

I still have a fine head of an 8 pointer I shot on Huckle Hill above the LaValley farm in 1942. I shot two that morning with a single shot 12 caliber shotgun. I bought a second hand 30-30 caliber bolt action when I was at Sheldegren and still have it. I shot a lot of deer with it until my right eye got bad and I had to shoot left handed. I still have the gun but the old iron sights are hard for me to see now. I can only remember 25 deer that I have shot but I think there are some more that I have forgotten. New Hampshire has the best laws and the best deer hunting of any state I have hunted.

Arthur Truesdell, the son of the Congregational minister in town, clerked in the store with me and we churned around a lot even after we were married. He was pretty wild for those days but would be considered quite tame today. He was not the outdoor type but liked the girls, beer and fast cars, in that order.

After we left the store he went to work for Bill Koch in a store in Greenfield. After I had worked for Streeter a little over two years he told me Koch was looking for a hard working foreman on his farm. I knew the work couldn't be any harder and the pay was better so I took the job. The farm was right on the corner of Greenfield, Deerfield and Shelburne. In fact, the lines met in the center of the house so he paid taxes in the three towns. They took parts of each town and called it Sheldegren farm.

It was a typical hill farm without one acre of level land. It had about five acres of orchard and the rest pasture, fields and woods. Harry Koch, Bill's younger boy, took over the management of the farm the same year I went up there. He ran a retail milk route in Greenfield selling Golden Gurnsey milk.

We had about sixty milkers and thirty or forty young stock and bulls. The stock was all purebred and records were kept. This was before artificial insemination and young bulls sold well.

We also kept a flock of sheep and raised what were listed as hot house lambs. The ewes were bred to lamb in December and January and the lambs were fed the maximum to sell for the Easter trade, mostly Greeks.

We also had a large flock of hens and sold eggs along with the milk route. After I had been there about three years we raised about 1,000 chicks a year and sold poultry too, dressed for the market.

We always had one or two hired hands and they boarded with us in the south end of the big house and Harry and Janet lived in the north end.

We had to have a fairly good car here as Elsie carried the children to school in Greenfield. World War II started a couple years after we moved up there and help was hard to get and what we did get were mostly 4Fs. I was lucky to get brother Charles to work and Koch got him deferred so we had some good help.

We had a good team of mares at first but finally got a big International tractor and then a smaller Ferguson. We had two large silos and put up corn and grass silage. We had one man who just milked and took care of the test cows that were milked three times a day and fed the best feed to make records.

Curtis and Gary were born making five children bom in Massachusetts. We lived here until 1947 when we moved to Walpole, New Hampshire, the state where I was born 36 years before. I was fed up with Massachusetts where there seemed to be rules and regulations for everything and

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still the crooks and cheaters seemed to get away with anything. New Hampshire was a lot better but now the outsiders are moving in and trying to spoil it.

We moved onto a farm on the River Road owned by a man named Henry Anger. He also owned another farm further down the river in Westmoreland. The land was quite level and went right to the river bank. The first real level land I had ever worked on.

The first winter was the coldest I had ever seen, getting below -40 degrees on several mornings. We were lucky to have a young fellow, Freddy Vokey, come along who had worked for me at Sheldegren and he stayed up late at night and kept the fires going. We milked about 90 head so the barn was always warm. The stables were all cleaned by hand so that kept us warm too.

I worked there about two years when Henry, who wasn't very well, said he guessed he would move to Mississippi where he had been spending the winters. I decided I didn't want to live down there so started looking for another job. Fred Vokey, the young fellow who stayed the first winter, had gone back to Newfoundland and gotten married but we kept in touch with him and a few years ago went up to Newfoundland to visit him and his family. I went fishing with him in a twelve foot dory out on Trinity Bay. Had a lot of fun catching big cod on a hand line. We stayed a week there and picked raspberries and blueberries. We bought home fish enough to last all winter. Had a real fine time.

In 1950 I went to work for R.N. Johnson, a John Deere dealer in Walpole, who also owned three farms at the time. I went to work as herdsman at first as he had a Jersey herd but in a couple years he decided he was making more money in the implement business than the dairy business so he sold his herd. He still raised 75 to 100,000 bushel of potatoes every year so I went to work raising potatoes and working in the shop setting up machinery when we weren't working in the fields. Jack had made a lot of money during the war with potatoes but things had changed so he sold his farms and I went in the shop full time. I was soon going out to the farms to repair machines and demonstrating new machinery so I got so I could run about anything on wheels.

Jack had two boys, Tom and Jim, and two girls, Ann and Jane. Tom, the oldest, hunted with me whenever he got the chance so we got to know each other pretty well so when he split with Jack and started a sawmill in Henniker, NH, I decided it was time (after 17 years for Jack) to start working for myself on something I could do when I got older and could not work steady. So I went in with him on a truck and log loader and worked two years in Henniker, driving back and forth each day. That got to be a little too much driving and not enough income so started trucking nearer home and did pretty well so Dennis decided to go in with me and we got another truck and loader for him. He was a first class mechanic and kept the equipment up in good shape so we did pretty well. When I had been with Jack four or five years he sold the place I was renting north of town and I was fed up with moving every three or four years. I decided to buy a place. The bank had a small place on the Keene Road south of town. Just a five room house and bath and about six acres of land that I could buy for just the mortgage - \$9,000. It had water problems but I figured I could fix that in time. It had a deep well with high sulphur content so we couldn't drink it and a well on the back lot that went dry in September every year so we opened up another well north of the house that had been filled up with rocks and that is our best water now.

Old timers say the well on the hill never used to go dry but the farmer that owned the next lot cut the trees and made open fields of it and the water just run off. I started setting trees on mine and that has stopped a lot of the wash on my land. Of course we also have flush toilets and automatic washers that the old timers didn't have.

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When working for Jack, living on his hill farm, our sixth child, Douglas, was born and that rounded out the family until the grandchildren began arriving. The first three married and the last three didn't. Marriage kind of went out of style for awhile but I guess it is coming back a little now.

Dennis married a girl, Dora, with one boy from her first marriage named David and then they had two sons, Dale Stanley and John Austin. They are all married and live in Texas. Dennis and Dora, their mother, got divorced as he wouldn't live in Texas and she wouldn't live in New Hampshire. He is married now to Denise.

Lois married Howard Haskell, who lived in Vermont. They have two boys, Mark and Gene, and a girl, Donna. Mark married a girl named Mary and they have a daughter Sarah. Gene is not married but Donna has been married twice. The first one didn't last a year but she is married now to a Navy man, Warren Varnadoe, and they are stationed in Florida. He had a boy from his first marriage and now they have one of their own, Nathaniel, so that brings us up to date on Lois' family.

June married David Houghton, who lived with his family in Walpole. They both went to school in Boston but didn't get married till they were out of college. He studied business accounting and she studied physical education as a major. Soon after they married they moved to Ohio where they had three children, Jeffrey, Stephen and Denise. Steve is married but Jeff is living in Denver, Colorado and not married. Denise got married to Timothy Davis in Catskill, NY last August.

We have just gotten by the Christmas holidays of 1986 when all our children have been here for two Christmas parties as there isn't room in the house for all at once.

This fall and so far this winter I have been trucking logs with my thirteen year old CMC ten wheeler and loader that is older than that.

Also I have been cutting oak for my next door neighbor and poplar pulp for the lady who owns land beyond his so I keep busy most of the time.

I did more deer hunting than usual this year going up to the White Mountains to hunt with Tom Johnson at his camp in Warren for the first four days. Had a wonderful time looking at the big straight pines and oak (and also the big deer tracks and bear and moose). At 75 and all the deer I have shot I didn't work too hard at trying to get a deer.

I have just passed my 76th birthday and we had the most snow in January that I can ever remember but so far in February haven't had any. The snow got to be about three feet deep around the trees so I stopped cutting and have been trucking full time. The trouble is I am making so much money I will have to pay income tax so may take a month off.

1987 was quite uneventful except that in the fall as we were getting ready for a trip the first of September to Nova Scotia I got the shingles on the right side of my head and forehead and into my right eye. It kept me inside for the next two months and I almost lost the sight in my eye but it came back some. Although now I have a cataract started. Soon after I had it Charlie had it and then John had it. As far as I know no one in the family had had it (unless mother might have had a mild case quite a few years ago).

I had just put a new motor in my truck so didn't make much money during the winter. Had to hire it put in so all around it cost me almost \$3,000.

We had the driest spring in '88 that I can remember. There was not much frost and what there was went out slow and easy so I kept right on trucking. It was the first spring in the thirty years we have lived here that we had no water in the cellar. While having the shingles, which by the way is very painful, although not life threatening like cancer, diabetes and some other diseases, I got to thinking - what the human body has to endure in the course of a lifetime, in my case 77 years.

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I got my introduction to pain, doctors and hospitals at the age of five when I lost half my third finger on the right hand. I was taken about five miles to Ludlow Hospital by our neighbor, R.J. Reynolds, in his Stutz runabout.

The next injury I can remember I cut my ankle on a sythe just below the anklebone and I had the scar for years, I was about eight or nine on the Ludlow farm.

On the Huckle Hill farm I was working outside the house most of the time so had a chance to get more injuries, none too serious. Although without a little luck they could have been, as none were treated by a doctor.

I went barefoot from May to September so that was where most of the injuries happened. Several times I stepped on nails which sometimes penetrated quite deep. Mother treated them with a piece of salt pork and a soaking in Sulpha Naphtha [sic].

Although we only had horses on the farm we never had tetanus shots which are a must nowadays.

I got blood poisoning in the side of my right foot one summer from the outer side of my foot rubbing on the side of the trip iron (horse rake) as I was too short to reach it easily. Father had had blood poisoning a couple times so he knew how to treat it. He heated up an old straight razor to kill the germs and made two cuts thru the center of the swelling to drain the poison out. Soaked it for about an hour and wrapped it up with a poultice of some kind and I never had any more trouble with it. Of course, being barefoot we were always stubbing our toes, losing the toe nails sometimes and stepping on bumblebees. The healthy body being what it is these minor problems healed very quickly.

When we moved to the Huckle Hill farm we had no dairy barn to tie up the cows so to milk them we tied them to corners of the sheds or trees that were handy so their heads were able to swing around more than in a stanchion as I found out one day. I was spraying the fly spray on just before milking. I was standing close to the front shoulder of a big Holstein with spike horns and as the flies went to buzzing she swung her head to knock them off her and her horn caught me just above the temple on the left side of my head and knocked me flat. I had quite a dent on that side of my head for years but I notice now it has almost smoothed out. They said if it had hit the temple it might have killed. I didn't know it at the time so after a few minutes I went ahead, spraying the flies.

One day wheeling manure up a plank into the manure shed the plank broke and I fell into the wheel barrow, banging my head just above the right eye and cutting quite a gash, besides being completely covered with soft cow manure. I cleaned my eyes out enough to get to the watering trough and ducked into that clear to the waist. The cut healed okay with no infection.

I didn't go to the hospital until a couple years after I was married, and had my appendix removed at Farren Memorial Hospital in 1934. I have had ribs broken several times and about this time I had the first one broken while rough and tumble wrestling with one of the boys. He brought his knee up kind of sudden and caught me in the rib. Nature heals these up and about the only help is to have a tight bandage for a few days. Although I broke two once and pulled the cartilage off so that took over a month to heal but I never took any time off as I was working for myself.

About 1944, while working at the Sheldegren Farm in Greenfield for Bill Koch, I cut my left leg on a circular saw, clear to the bone, cutting the tendon that lifts the front of the foot up and down. The doctor cut each side of the cut and spliced it and I have never had any trouble with it. I had my first tetanus shot for this and suffered worse from the shot than from the cut.

One day while shoveling manure off a trailer my back and legs were suddenly paralyzed and I slumped into the manure. Brother Charles was working with me so he pulled me off the load and

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got me to the house. I took it easy for two or three days. Then I was in the dairy barn carrying two pails of milk and it caught me again and I fell spilling the milk. This was the beginning of trouble with my back until into my sixties. I went to doctors and chiropractors and they all had a different diagnosis from arthritis to a pinched nerve, which I think was the closest. When I worked for Johnson's John Deere I had it catch me while working under a machine and one of the men had to pull me out and take me home. One time I had a bad spell with it but thought I could drive truck all right. We took two truck loads of special equipment over to Durham but by the time we got there I was in such pain I couldn't get out of the truck so Walt Wright, the other driver, had to help me out. Then he had to help me onto the big machines as he didn't know how to drive them. Johnson thought I should go to the hospital and have an operation as two of his help had, but when I saw how little they could do I wouldn't have it done. He didn't like it very well and took my sick time off my vacation time. I thought after seventeen years if that was all he thought of me I had better quit. So I went into the trucking business with his son, Tom, for awhile and then for myself. The old man didn't like that very well but we did and that was the main thing. My back has never bothered me in the same way although once in awhile too much lifting will tax the muscles a little, which is entirely different from the paralysis I had before. I think I made the right decision, for me, not to have an operation but it might not be right for someone else.

When we first moved to Walpole I worked on a large dairy farm which consisted really of two farms and about 150 head of stock. I worked long hours and in the barns most of the time and I contracted some kind of skin infection on the backs of my hands and on my face that itched and formed scabs. I went to a doctor and he put me under an ultra violet ray lamp or something like that. Anyway it burned my face which swelled so much I couldn't see out of my eyes for two days. It didn't help any so I went down to Mass General Hospital in Boston. I had as many as seven doctors working on me at different times that day and they never did tell me what was wrong so I decided they didn't know. They did give me a salve to rub on and some pills I think which helped but did not cure. I told them I was working with cows all the time and wondered if that had anything to do with it but they would not say. Later I found that if I just laid a cow hair on my arm it would turn red around it and start to burn like fire so I knew what caused it and after I left the cow business I had no more trouble. The doctors said I had an allergy but they didn't know what I was allergic to.

The next thing I contracted was a sinus problem. Tom and I used to hunt all winter on weekends when we could get time off and it got so bad on real cold days I could hardly stand it. I had a gall bladder operation and I guess the sinus problem complicated it and I had a rough time of it for about four days. I had drainage in my throat which nearly choked me several times. They gave me so much medication that it cured the sinus. They cured my sense of smell at the same time and anything has to be pretty strong before I can smell it. Elsie was raving the other day about a dead mouse in the partition and wondered why I couldn't smell it. She told me where to look and I got it out. She says I am losing all my senses. I can't hear, can't smell, can't see out of one eye hardly, but I still have the sense to know my failings so I get by.

While working in the shop at R.N. Johnson's I had a couple quite severe concussions. One time I had a piece of steel I was drilling fly around and hit me on the temple. It knocked me to the floor and one of the men helped me to my feet. I felt pretty groggy so after awhile I went home. We had a light snow on the ground and the next day I noticed my tire tracks zigzagged around as though I was drunk. I rested that day and went to work the next day with no ill effects. A few years later I was working in a trench putting up forms for an addition on Johnson's shop. It was in January so we were all wearing mittens or gloves. I was holding the form in place so another man

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could spike them together. He missed the spike and hit me in the jaw and I came right out of the hole and laid on my back for a few minutes. I felt better after awhile and went to work but I was bleeding some so I went home. This was about 9:30 am and I rested all day but didn't feel like eating much and laid around on the couch. In the evening I went upstairs to go to bed and felt a little dizzy so drank a glass of water. I just made it to the bed and passed out. I was paralyzed in every way except I could hear everything going on. Elsie come up and spoke to me and I could hear everything she said but couldn't move or say a word. Just like I was dead and looking back at the world. Quite a strange sensation. I heard her call the doctor and he told her to pour some liquor down my throat. We didn't keep it in the house at that time but my son-in-law, Hack, had been out to Camp Drum and brought a small bottle of Brandy back for a souvenir so she poured a little of that down my throat and I came right around with no bad effects. I have liked a little liquor ever since. The doctor said the alcohol is the quickest thing to start the blood flowing in the brain in case of a concussion.

August 1990 - my latest trouble was kidney stones which I found give a lot of pain while going from the kidney to the bladder. I had three attacks in one night and one more about a week later but the doctor said nothing to worry about. He has never had any yet.

1989 - I still have my truck and tractor and do some logging although I have cut the hours about in half. This year I logged a lot at Westmoreland Depot for David Howland, a retired plumber. It was a good lot about 30 acres mostly level or down hill with large white and red oak and ash as well as some large pine. I cut about 25,000 feet but left when it got too muddy and will finish this next summer. With what trucking I do, this keeps me pretty busy.

Charles had quite a growth of pine, oak and ash growing in his sugar bush so last December I went down and started cutting for him. He went to Florida for the winter but I kept on cutting. It was 30 miles one way so I didn't get along too fast. In fact I spent all winter cutting about 20,000 feet but it was a nice south slope and quite nice to work in the winter. Any other time would have been quite muddy. It should help his sugar maples by opening the tops to sun and breezes to start the sap. I moved back to Westmoreland and logged a swamp that was frozen up so could stay on top.

My ole "73" logging truck had to have a lot of work to get it by inspection so haven't done much logging for a month. Mud season is a good time for working on equipment.

I cruised a [wood] lot the other day with 30,000 feet of large red oak, 10,000 white oak, 10,000 hemlock and some pine. If I get that it will keep me busy thru fall and winter and then at 80 years old I may retire. At least the trucking.

1989 was a good year for the family. Elsie had the most problems with glaucoma, high blood pressure and severe arthritis that crippled her so badly some of the time she had to have therapy to get things moving again. Gary moved out last month (for awhile) so she has less work to do now. Which is a big help. Dennis is doing well at his place in Sutton and comes down to help me now and then on my truck. I may have to get him to help if I get the big lot in the fall. Lois has had a hard year as all her children have had troubles and come home at times for help. But she only has three so that's not too bad. She has four grandchildren now. Donna has Nathan and Felicia, Mark has Sarah and Gene has Deanna.

June has had a busy year moving from Mass back to Cairo, NY and taking a motor coach trip to Alaska and the west. She also has four grandchildren now. Denise has Jessica and Robert, Stephen has Alecia and Erica. Jeff is not married so has none to speak of. Curtis is still in Boston and doing quite well. He helps his mother out a lot thru his physician friend, with drugs which

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would otherwise cost her hundreds of dollars. Gary has been living with us till a month ago but hopefully has got a job in Florida. Douglas went to Florida and worked for the winter in St. Augustine as work was slow in New Hampshire. I kept his house, that he is building on the Pratt Road in Alstead, checked on and shoveled out during the winter. We had a real nice New England winter and are looking forward to a nice summer.

We took a trip to Texas in May 1990 to visit Dennis's boys, Dale and John with their wives, Leah and Kara, and their children, Courtney and Katie. We stopped at June and David's the first Sunday out and then went to the Amish country in Penn. and stayed the second night. Then we went to Charlottesville, VA and stayed with Elsie's niece, Norma Smith and her husband, Roger, overnight, visiting Helen Waite, Elsie's brother Bill's widow, who lives nearby. Elsie had a bad cough when we started which we thought would get better in the South but instead got worse so we only stayed 3 days in Texas. Otherwise we had a good trip and a wonderful visit with the kids but I had planned to go to Nevada but we had to cut it short and return as she was in misery most of the time. When she went to the doctor at home found she had a bad case of bronchitis and it took two weeks to clear it up.

I finally got rid of my logging truck which I have owned since 1974. I let Dennis have it and he took it to his place in Sutton. I told him he could do what he wanted with it as long as he took it off my land. I started in the logging truck business in 1966 and have been in it continuously since but several factors made me decide to retire. My age being in my 80th year and just getting over a bout with kidney stones and having arthritis bad at times helped make up my mind but if things were the same in business as when I started I could go another 5 years.

Rules and regulations in the logging business have become a big headache as well as the IRS. Now with the price of gas gone from 35 cents a gallon when I started to \$1.32 and labor on trucks to \$35 an hour while the logging business is in a big slump is too much. Goodbye truck but will still do a little logging with my tractor, an old 1950 John Deere 420 crawler.

We are starting a war with Iraq over oil but I think it is a big mistake and we will end up not saving oil or getting rid of Hussein while a lot of people are killed. Bush is not a good chess player and does not understand the way the Arab mind works. If we had warned Iraq before the invasion we could have stopped the war before it started. After all he could not beat Iran in seven years with the west helping him (and Iran had just gotten thru a revolution) so he could not expect to beat the U.S. If we had stuck closer to the Monroe Doctrine we would not have gotten involved in Iran either. We are meddling in other people's business all the time and as usual making a mess of it. Business has been slowing down in the U.S. for the last 12 months and altho the war will give it a shot in the arm the rising prices of everything for the last ten years is bound to peak and start a downward trend. People have had too much money to spend and even then have spent more than they earned so when they take a cut or lose their jobs they have no savings to fall back on. A depression could hurt the Republican party as it did in the 30's.

William and wife, Helen, had daughters, Bernice and Norma, and later a son, Billy Junior. Her brother, Cecil, never married. Another younger brother, Guy, died on Christmas day in a hunting accident, self inflicted crawling under a fence.

We lived with her father a short time and then rented an apartment on the ground floor behind the store that Myron Barber had made over. Four rooms (and a bathroom), first such luxury I had lived with except the two summers working out in Milford.

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Dennis was born December 21, 1934 in Franklin County Hospital, Greenfield, It was a very hard labor. The nerves in his left shoulder were strained and he has never had the full use of that arm. However, this has never held him back from becoming the best mechanic in the family and doing a lot of jobs better than men with two good arms. However, a child born that way today would have the benefit of an operation to correct the injured nerve which is just another stride forward in my lifetime.

I forgot to mention an episode in my life the fall after graduation when I went the fall term to Mt. Hermon School which was about five miles from home, the back road down Purple Meadow. Bernardston scholars could go there without paying tuition but I had to buy my books. I rode my bike everyday but when rt began to snow I had to give it up. I figured I couldn't afford a higher education but it was really interesting as long as it lasted. I met boys from all over the world. In my class there was one from Persia named Rasoulie and one from Greece named Papastamatio. They were real smart and it was nothing for them to get 100 in exams. This ended my higher education as they say.

I had my appendix out at the Farren Memorial Hospital in Turners Falls about this time, 1934. I went to have it out on the first attack as I had just lost my best friend and neighbor who couldn't get to the hospital for two days and it burst and killed him.

I was making about \$24.00 a week at this time and I think we payed \$18.00 a month for rent.

Myron Barber liked to play horseshoes and we got regulation shoes and set up sand boxes with regulation posts and played with lights at night and any other time we had a chance. In the winter we played a game called caroms where we snapped the rings into the corner pockets something like pool. We played once or twice a week changing from one house to another. We got pretty good at it and had some pretty hot games. My brother Dick, Myron, Charles B. or Arthur Truesdell usually played.