

LEAS LIT

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LEAS LIT STAFF

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CONTENTS

The Proofreader's Lament	<i>Sarah Klos</i>	1
Spring Suite	<i>Gus Owens</i>	2
The Ghost of Osprey Point	<i>Eddie Pray</i>	3
Night Fears	<i>Margery Rubin</i>	10
Almost a Coalminer's Daughter	<i>Helen Flynn</i>	11
Then and Now	<i>Stan Brush</i>	14
<i>Columbia</i> Flies Again	<i>George Rubin</i>	15
Palo Duro Canyon	<i>Howard McKinney</i>	24
Catastro Fee	<i>Sarah Klos</i>	27
Seagoing Cowboys	<i>Neil Hartman</i>	29
Memory Theater in California	<i>Jean Nicholson</i>	32
A Fiery Epitaph	<i>Kay Cooley</i>	35
It Almost Makes One a Believer	<i>John Sommi</i>	39
John	<i>Margery Rubin</i>	41
Letters to Walter in America	<i>Ellen Stimler</i>	42

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THE PROOFREADER'S LAMENT

If it's *all right* with you,
It's quite *alright* with me.

Webster says it's okay!
There is more than one way,
Especially if you want this:
A little extra emphasis.

To use *all right* is stronger,
But it is a little longer.
To use *alright* is weaker,
But it certainly is a keeper.

So if sometimes we let *alright* go by,
You'll know it's quite *all right* – and why.

Next time we'll try *already*.
But only if you're *all ready*!

Sarah Klos

SPRING SUITE

1 Signs of Spring

Light longer
Birds singing in the morning
And crocuses warming up in the bullpen.

2 March

March is an old wizard
Dressed in rags
Wryly plotting
The creation of roses.

3 April

April and the trees are laughing
With little green buds.
I haven't seen them laugh
But I'll bet
If I were quick enough,
I could.

Gus Owens



THE GHOST OF OSPREY POINT

There was not a lot for a twelve-year-old boy to do in the small Midwestern college town of Cedar Falls during the summer months. Tom spent a lot of time at the library. He watched T.V. and he rode his bike around town looking for someone to hang out with. Boring!

Then he discovered the Palisades State Park. The Park, located about three miles from town, could be reached by biking along deserted country roads that bisected fields of corn and soybeans. Bumping along on his Schwinn, binoculars slung around his neck, he was in seventh heaven. On his own! Away from his baby sister whose cuteness was beginning to get on his nerves.

The wooded Park was established around the Cedar River, and named for the rocky line of cliffs which rose along one side. It was a beautiful preserve and home to an abundance of wildlife. It was also isolated and lonely.

Hawks and ospreys dipped and swayed over the river, the wind under their wings carrying them to nests built high on trees, or the occasional power pole that dotted the Park. Their shrieks and whistles split the air as they plunged feet-first towards the river, where, hovering on beating wings, they snared fish in their long sharp claws.

Binoculars at ready, perched on the edge of a rocky cliff, Tom watched their antics.

“Wow! This is awesome. I could stay here forever. Right here on Osprey Point.”

He grinned to himself as he laid claim to his territory by giving it a name. "Osprey Point. No one else knows about it."

But he was wrong!

The summer passed lazily, and Tom came often to Osprey Point. One day as he picked his way through the woods, he discovered an old railroad bed and an abandoned boxcar. It looked like someone had used it as a kind of summer retreat. Rusted and neglected, a tangle of shrubs and vines now crowded the old relic. It was deserted.

Or was it?

Excitement filled Tom as he crept closer for a look. Maybe he could make this into kind of a clubhouse, a place to get into if it rained.

As he got nearer, he thought he must be seeing things. The sliding door was open, and there stood an old man before an easel, palette in hand, busily painting.

"Who is he?" Tom wondered. "Is he real? What's he doing way out here in the middle of the woods?"

Tom could see inside the boxcar, and it looked like a natural history museum. There were collections of bird nests, pieces of fossilized rock, a snakeskin, some porous old bones and, perched on a branch, a rather moth-eaten-looking osprey.

"Come in, son, come in. I've been expecting you," the old man called. Gray hair escaped from under the conductor's hat he wore, and bushy eyebrows sprouted above startlingly blue eyes. He reached down and helped

Tom climb aboard.

“Hey, who are you?” stammered Tom, his heart pounding. “Do you live here?”

“No. I just come out on the weekends to commune with nature, and dabble with my paints. I’m retired now, but I used to teach at the college. Taught biology for forty years. Professor of Zoology, that was me. You can call me Dr. Z.”

“Gee, this is neat. Did you collect all this stuff?” Tom asked examining the sharp talons of the osprey.

“Sure, I bring it here and capture it on canvas. Noticed you sitting over there on that point studying those ospreys. They are something, aren’t they? Those fish hawks have a wing spread up to six feet. They sure like this river, good fishing, too.”

“Yah,” Tom agreed. Feeling more comfortable, he looked around the boxcar. “You hurt yourself or something?” He noticed that the professor walked with a limp.

“Oh, a few years back I had a bad fall, and it left me with this gimpy leg. I get by O.K.”

“Want to share my lunch?” Tom asked. Reaching into his backpack, he pulled out peanut butter sandwiches, trail mix and a couple of apples.

“Sure, why not. Good time for a break,” Dr. Z. said.

The two of them sat down at the door of the boxcar, legs dangling over the edge, and ate their noon meal. Nearby, the staccato drumming of a pileated

woodpecker punctuated the stillness. A bright red song bird flashed in and out among the trees. A blue jay screamed at its mate, and over the river the shrill cries of the ospreys continued to pierce the air. This symphony of sound and color flowed smoothly about them as they sat munching their peanut butter sandwiches.

Tom returned again and again to Osprey Point. He didn't tell his parents about Dr. Z. He didn't want them getting on his case about talking to strangers. Anyway, Dr. Z. had become a friend. He was a bit strange, Tom had to admit. He was downright weird, but Tom liked him.

Some days, Dr. Z. never appeared at all and the door of the boxcar remained shut. Other times he would appear out of nowhere, and be busy with his paints and brushes. He always shared some quirky bit of knowledge with Tom.

“Did you know that the male and female osprey are alike in configuration and coloring? Can't tell 'em apart from a distance. How's that for equality?”

Sitting on the Point one afternoon, Tom was watching the giant birds swoop over the river, plunging for fish and shrieking to each other. Dr. Z. was nowhere around, his boxcar shut up tight.

As he leaned forward for a better look, he felt himself slip, and he began to slide off the edge of the cliff. Grabbing a branch, he tried to pull himself up. He almost made it. Then he started to slide again. His stomach scraped against the side of the rocky wall.

“Oh man, this is it,” he thought. His heart raced as

he saw the long drop to the rocks below, and scenes from his life actually flashed before his eyes.

He tried to yell for help, but nothing came out. "I'm a goner," he thought.

Suddenly, a strong hand reached down and grasped his wrist. "Best be careful, son, it's a long way down," Dr. Z. said as he pulled Tom to safety.

"Wow, that was close." His face white with fear, Tom clung to the old professor. "Sure glad you came along!"

That night, Tom did tell his parents about Dr. Z. He had to explain the rip in his shirt and the scratches on his stomach. Of course his parents were shocked and totally bent out of shape. They couldn't decide whether to be angry or grateful. They decided to be grateful and insisted on returning to the park to express their gratitude to the professor.

He wasn't there. He was nowhere to be found. The boxcar was deserted. Tom's father looked up the park ranger who informed them, "Nobody's been around these parts for years. Used to be an eccentric college professor who came out here on weekends. He liked being alone, a strange sort of guy. Darned if he didn't go and get himself killed by falling off that cliff over there.

Tom's heart lurched inside of him. "Can we check inside the boxcar?" he pleaded. "He's got to be here someplace."

“Young man, your imagination must be working overtime, but if it will make you happy, go ahead,” the ranger replied.

Together, they pulled the door back and climbed inside the car. It was dusty and filled with debris. There were the bird nests, the snakeskin and the molting osprey. An easel stood in the corner, a palette caked with dried paint next to it.

“See, I told you there’s nothing here but a lot of junk.” The ranger kicked at a bunch of canvases propped nearby. “Nobody’s been near this place since that old professor checked out.”

The canvases slid apart and fell clumsily to the floor. Oil paintings of birds and the flora and fauna of the preserve spread before them. They were faded and grimy from years of neglect, but one painting glowed warmly among them, like a bright wildflower.

“Well, I’ll be darned. Will you look at that,” the ranger exclaimed. He held up a painting of a young boy, perched on the cliff. An osprey, wings outspread, flashed across the canvas.

“It’s me!” Tom cried out. “It’s me. I knew he was here.”

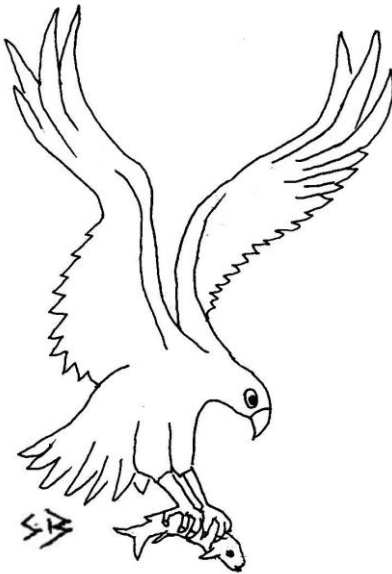
His parents studied the painting. “It’s Tom all right, and the paint is fresh.” They looked at each other. “Do you suppose? No, it can’t be.”

But Tom knew. “He came back to help me. He knows I’m O.K. now, so he’s gone. He’s gone for good. He won’t be back,” he said with certainty.

Forlornly, Tom wandered around the boxcar. He picked up a piece of fossilized rock. He touched the snakeskin, noticing the diamond-shaped pattern that extended its entire length. He cradled a bird's nest in his hands, and marveled at the intricate architecture. Finally, he stopped before the stuffed osprey. A slight breeze from the open door ruffled the bird's feathers, and its small beady eyes, fixed on Tom, seemed to wink.

Thoughtfully, Tom stroked the ragged feathers of the old bird. Then he smiled, winked back, and said, "Good bye, Dr. Z."

Edith R. Pray



ALMOST A COAL MINER'S DAUGHTER

When I saw the news of the tragic accident in the West Virginia coal mine, I again wondered what my life would have been like had it not been for the courage of a fourteen-year-old young man.

My dad, William MacLachlan, was born in 1879 in a small mining town in Scotland called Muirkirk. With the blessing of his family, he and his best friend and cousin, John Maxwell, having decided they were *never* going to be miners, left it all behind them and took off for Manchester, England.

They had just finished eighth grade and were not sure how they would earn a living, but they were eager to get away and excited about the future. My dad found a simple job in a foundry, and John worked as a delivery boy for a grocer.

It's important to tell you first of John's fabulous success. He delivered groceries to the home of the Chief of Police of Manchester. His wife was very impressed with the young man. She convinced her husband to accept him for the Police Academy when he came of age.

John worked his way up through the ranks of Police officers, and he eventually became Chief himself. He was then knighted by the Queen, as was the custom at that time. I had the thrill of visiting Sir John and his family when I was thirteen. Imagine my excitement to be taken for a ride in Sir John's chauffeur-driven car!

My dad was never knighted; however, his is a remarkable story too. While he worked in the foundry, Dad found he was very interested in what could be done with various metals. He watched and questioned, learning all he could. His boss, seeing this interest, found him a job in a foundry in Glasgow, Scotland, where he worked and studied for several years.

Being active in his church and singing in the choir enriched his new life. In the choir was a dear, petite young lady who caught William's eye, and after a time of courting he and Nellie became engaged.

At about the same time an opportunity came up for him to join a group of young men going to America. He left his lovely Nellie with the promise to send for her as soon as possible. I have a day-by-day account of his unbelievable and sometimes frightening trip of twelve days traveling in steerage with several hundred others, all crowded into the hold of a small ship, the *S.S. Astoria*. The first four days they could not go on deck because the weather was so bad. When they arrived in New York City, they were minus two passengers who had been buried at sea. Dad said their families probably never knew what happened to them. The year was 1904.

After getting clearance from Ellis Island, the group Dad was with spent a night in the Hotel Knickerbocker for 75 cents. The good meal they had there was just 20 cents. The next day they boarded a ship for the trip to Charleston, South Carolina.

William, following his interest in working with metals, was soon able to send for his dear Nellie, his bride-to-be. When Nellie's ship docked in New York

City, she was exhausted from her trip and sad at leaving all her loved ones. She stood at the rail with her eyes full of tears. However, Dad had arranged for a band to play “Wait Till the Sun Shines, Nellie.” She was smiling when William gathered her into his arms. They were married the next day.

After working in a shipyard in Newport News, Virginia, during World War I, Dad and Mom moved to Newark, New Jersey, where he was able to go back to school and earn a high school teaching certificate. He taught the science of metals at Stuyvesant High School in New York City for many years. He had a shop class once a week where they made things of metal, such as owl andirons, cat and bulldog doorstops. All of these things were his original designs. He loved every minute of his work. Each day he rode the train from Connecticut, where he and Nellie now had a lovely home. Each of their five children went to college – quite an achievement for the fine young man who left Scotland at fourteen with only an eighth-grade education.

Our happy and rewarding life was a far cry from what it would have been in Muirkirk. We have always been grateful for that. We love the memory of our parents and honor the courage they had to set out for a new world. And frankly, I am glad I wasn’t a coal miner’s daughter!

Helen Flynn

THEN AND NOW

When I was young
I thought that time
moved like it was
standing still



It took for ever
for the end
of my afternoon “nap”
to arrive

for the required minute
the thermometer had to stay
jammed under my tongue
to pass

for the minute hand on the classroom clock
showing the time for class to end
to get there

for the long
eyes-closed prayer in church
and the sermon
to end

for my birthday
and Christmas Eve
to arrive

Now it’s just the opposite
and I’m out of breath
just keeping up

Stan Brush

COLUMBIA FLIES AGAIN

Charlie Levine sat in his office, looking down on the busy street traffic below. Park Avenue glittered in the rays of the late afternoon sun. August found New York City sluggish and lethargic. Maybe, Charlie thought, it's due to the stock market crash and the Depression that seems to be sinking into the fiber of everyone and everything. He got up from his desk, lit another cigarette and walked back and forth. He needed some new excitement, something to make a splash, as he had in 1927. At that time he became the first passenger to cross the Atlantic with Clarence Chamberlain, in his plane *Columbia*.

“God,” he said to no one in particular, “was that over three years ago?” He smiled and thought about that beautiful monoplane sitting in a hangar on Long Island. A knock on the door interrupted his nostalgia.

“Come in,” Charlie said.

“Mr. Levine, Mr. Erroll Boyd is here to see you,” his secretary announced.

“Okay, show him in.”

Charlie put out the stub of his cigarette and extended his hand to a tall, thin young man with wheat-colored hair that fell over his dark eyes. Staring shyly at Charlie Levine, he unzipped his leather flying jacket.

“Sit down, Erroll.”

The young man dropped into the lounge chair opposite Charlie.

“Mr. Levine, I read in the paper that you’re looking for a pilot to take the *Columbia* up again. I know I’m your man.”

Charlie smiled, as Erroll’s self-confidence seemed to grow the more he spoke.

“Okay, here’s the deal,” Charlie interrupted him. “I feel that *Columbia* can set more records even though we were second best to Lindbergh. How about a nonstop round trip from New York to Bermuda?”

Erroll, a man who loved to fly, was swept away by the idea. “I know a great navigator to take along. I do need the money; you know how difficult times are now.” Charlie nodded his head in agreement and said, “Erroll, tell me something about yourself. I know you’re Canadian but very little else.”

“I was born in Toronto,” he replied, “and served in the British Royal Naval Air Force during the Great War, got myself shot down and landed in Holland. The Dutch held me there until the Armistice, then sent me back to Canada. Times were real tough. After the war, I held a few jobs but nothing I liked, including being a manager of a marmalade factory in Detroit. It’s flying I’ve always loved, and luckily I got back into it, first as a test pilot, then flying the mail out of Montreal and lately air-freight work over the mountains in Mexico.”

“You’ve had one checkered career so far. I like that, but what do you see as your future?”

“It might seem like a pipe dream, but I want to be the first Canadian to fly the Atlantic from Canada to England. Lindbergh is my hero. He did it and I know I

can too, especially in your Bellanca. I know the *Columbia* is a stronger, better plane than the Ryan Lindy used.”

“I’ll tell you what, I’ll help to bankroll such a flight but we need to find some substantial money. Let’s talk about this after you give my *Columbia* some flying time. Let’s try Bermuda first.”

It was a rainy, windy day in the middle of August when Erroll Boyd with his short, stocky navigator, Harry Connor, took off from Roosevelt Field on Long Island and, keeping the plane at about 10,000 feet, they made a successful flight to Bermuda. There was little head wind and very few clouds as they circled the island and headed back to New York.

Leaning across to his navigator, Erroll said, “This ship is built to cross the Atlantic. I can see why Levine doesn’t want to sell it.”

A week later the two men, Boyd and Connor, sat in Levine’s Fifth Avenue office.

“Mr. Levine, we are more committed than ever to fly to England. However, we need more financial help. Do you know others who would back this venture?” asked Erroll.

Charlie lit a fresh cigarette and stared out through the window of his office. He suddenly turned and said, “I have an idea. Let me call Jack O’Brien. He owns a speakeasy here in New York and he owes me one. We’ll all go down this evening and talk to him.”

It was a wet sultry night when the three men entered the speakeasy on 14th Street. The change was dramatic as they left the dark dreary street and entered

the noisy, bright club. They were shown to a booth by the waiter, who placed a bottle of whiskey and shot glasses before them. O'Brien walked over. He was a big man. A few strands of what hair he had left were combed over to the side of his head and his eyeglasses hung down over the end of his nose. He slid into the booth across from Boyd and Connor, next to Charlie Levine. He filled his shot glass and said, "Okay, what's on your mind? Charlie said you have an offer for me."

It didn't take long for Boyd to explain what he wanted to do. "Jack, we need money for this flight. Mr. Levine has come up with some, but we need at least \$10,000 more as a start-up. We also think we can raise the rest back in Canada."

O'Brien pushed his glasses back along the bridge of his nose. He thought for a minute. "Hey, Charlie knows I like to gamble and this sounds interesting, but I'll tell you what. I know Hearst would also be interested. I'll wire you guys his decision. In the meantime see what you can do at home and good luck."

O'Brien finished his whiskey, raised his big hulk from the table and left. Erroll smiled. "I guess, Mr. Levine, we better get home because we got a lot of work to do."

By the end of August, Boyd was working hard to raise money for the flight. When they got back to Toronto, he and Connor were twisting every arm they could find. Then there was a telegram from O'Brien: "HEARST HAS BOUGHT THE RIGHTS FOR THE FLIGHT STOP HE IS MATCHING THE \$10,000 STOP AND ADDING MORE STOP I'M TAKING

THE NEXT TRAIN WILL BE IN TORONTO SATURDAY STOP WILL HELP YOU WITH FUNDRAISING STOP SIGNED O'BRIEN" When O'Brien arrived, they all found that local fundraising was a very discouraging task. The Depression had hit as hard in Canada as it had in the States. Boyd suggested to O'Brien that maybe they ought to try Montreal. "I want to talk to Mr. Levine also and find out about the condition of *Columbia*."

The next day, O'Brien decided that he had had all he could take and headed back to New York, while Erroll Boyd flew on to St. Hubert airport in Montreal, only to find a telegram message from Levine. They no longer had an aircraft. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police had impounded the airplane after Levine had it flown to Montreal. Immediately Erroll called Levine in New York. "What the hell is going on?"

Evasive as usual, Levine said, "Seems I owed some back wages to a crummy pilot I had hired back when. I have my lawyers working on it. You guys keep on trying to get funds. I'm sorry I can't help you financially until I get this situation cleaned up."

A dejected Erroll thought, "Could this be the end of his dream to fly *Columbia* across the Atlantic?" He sat all alone in his hotel room knowing he didn't have the resources to get the job done. Early next morning there was a knock on the door and even before he answered it he thought, just maybe today there will be a lucky turnaround.

Erroll opened the door and there was Harry Connor before him, dressed in a new tweed suit, gloves,

and well-shined shoes, and he carried a cane. There was a smile on the ruddy face of his navigator.

Boyd was flabbergasted. “How did you do it? The clothes? Come on in,” he blurted out.

“Simple,” he said, “I went to the men’s shop in the hotel and charged all this to your bill.” They sat looking at each other, the rumpled, tired, dejected Erroll and the optimistic, smiling Connor. Soon both began to laugh and cry at the same time. The phone ringing interrupted their histrionics.

“Hello, Boyd, it’s Levine, I got good news for you. My lawyer in Montreal got the case dropped. The plane is back in your hands. Good luck.” He hung up. Again, both men stood hugging and laughing.

“Now first, let’s get out of this hotel without paying the bill.”

“I got an idea,” said Harry Connor, “let me make a few calls.” About two hours later there was again a knock on the hotel room door and Boyd opened it. There, facing him in the doorway, were six young men dressed as hotel waiters, doormen and service personnel. “You guys just follow us,” said the leader of the group. They exited the room escorted by these bogus hotel workers. This motley group left the hotel by a rear service door. It seemed that Harry Connor knew some guys at McGill University, and when he told them of their plight at the hotel they, like the Royal Mounted Police, came to the rescue.

Back at St. Hubert, Harry and Erroll inspected the *Columbia*. The sleek, silver monoplane sat in the dimly

lighted hangar. It appeared ready to fly east across the Atlantic for the second time. The phone ringing in the hangar office interrupted their inspection. "Hello," Erroll said, "that's great, get the fuel truck over here as soon as possible, and thanks." He hung up and looked at Connor with a big smile on his face. "How about that, Harry? That was the Moxie Soda Company and they have been persuaded to ante up the money for our fuel. I don't know who is behind it, O'Brien or Levine, but we're going on a trip."

It was bitter cold that late September day when Captain Erroll Boyd and Lieutenant Harry Connor sat inside the cockpit of the *Columbia*. Erroll gently pushed the throttle forward and the plane left the ground with ease and headed east into the darkening sky. With more head wind than they had expected, Connor was watching their fuel and the map. He turned to Erroll and said, "We can't make Newfoundland. We better find a place to set down here on Prince Edward Island." A short while later they landed in a farm field. The farmer was amazed, as he had never seen an airplane before, especially not in his own yard. He invited the two airmen in and told them they could stay as long as they needed to. That invitation turned into a whole week, as the weather and the wind out of the east turned bad. A call to the weather service suggested that on October 9th the winds would be changing and this would be their best time for flying east. Erroll asked the farmer if he could get some locals to help move the plane. The farmer made some calls to get some men to help. Trying to act nonchalant about the flight, Erroll and Harry put on their business suits instead of their flight clothes.

Outside it was a clear, cold morning with only a slight wind from the west. They added the last of the fuel and were happy to see the farmer and a number of his friends come over to help turn the plane to get the tail skid out of the mud. The engine caught and *Columbia* shook with an urgency to get into the air. Erroll shouted out the side window to the farmhands to let go of the tail. The spectators moved away as the plane rolled forward, picked up speed, slowly rose above the farms and rivers, and headed east.

As the day progressed, their flight went by uneventfully, with Erroll at the control and Harry navigating. Shortly after dark, the cabin lights failed and Harry had to use a flashlight so that Erroll could see the controls. Not long after that it began to rain and any visibility they had of the ocean below was gone. Thick clouds closed in all around them. Every few minutes Harry would point the flashlight beam on to the wings of the plane looking for any ice formation. When he did see some buildup he told Erroll, who brought the plane down a few thousand feet and turned south. Now both were worried that they were flying out of the regular shipping lanes where a vessel could hear or see them. Another problem arose when Harry tried to transfer fuel and found the line was clogged. In the dark cabin both men worried. Would they now have enough fuel to make it?

A bright, cold-looking sun rose in front of them and they could see the British coastline below. Erroll banked the plane over the countryside and found a level beach in front of him. *Columbia* gently came down only a few inches from the water. Both men got out of the

aircraft and looked around. The morning air was still and a few seagulls circled above them. They grabbed and hugged each other. “By God, we have done it!” they said almost in unison.

Charlie Levine sat reading the morning newspaper report in his New York office. “October 9, 1930: Two young Canadians, Capt. Erroll Boyd and Lt. Harry Connor took off from Harbor Grace, Newfoundland, and today October 10, 1930, landed in the Scilly Isles off Cornwall. The first Canadians to fly the Atlantic. ...”

Charlie ran his hand through his hair and picked up the cigarette he was smoking. Taking a long drag, he smiled and said to himself in the empty office, “My plane, my big tough Bellanca, has done it again. Twice across the Atlantic isn’t bad, not bad at all.”

George Rubin

PALO DURO CANYON

I want to go to Palo Duro Canyon again
to hear the murmur of
Prairie Dog Town Creek,
To feel the vibration of dancing feet of Comanche,
Pawnee and Kiowa-Apache warriors
Echoing from canyon wall to canyon wall.
To weep in memory of shame and betrayal
That turned proud horsemen into desperate beggars.

Forced to the reservation,
They fled and sought the protection
of the canyon.
Many died when they were
betrayed by a scout.
Their anger gave little peace
to Quaker Laurie Tatum, Superintendent.

I want to go back to Palo Duro Canyon
to hear again the murmur of
Prairie Dog Town Creek.
The empty canyon for a time
Echoed to Charley Goodnight's
vision of cattle.
Many visitors today little remember
That it was here
The Comanche and the Kiowa-Apache
Were humiliated
They would never roam free again!

Prairie Dog Town Creek
Still runs down from the Staked Plains of Texas
To twist its way between
the high canyon walls
to join the Red and Mississippi Rivers
on its way to the Gulf of Mexico.

I want to go again to Palo Duro Canyon
To hear the murmur of
Prairie Dog Town Creek.
Ghost walk the valley
ghost of time immemorial
The hope and aspirations
of innumerable men and women
of tribes long forgot
who sought the protection of its walls
ghost of victory and triumph
ghost of betrayal and despair.

I want to go back to Palo Duro Canyon
To hear again the murmur
Of Prairie Dog Town Creek.

Howard W. McKinney
3-08-06

Note: Palo Duro Canyon is located about 20 miles southeast of Amarillo, Texas. From its head it wanders some sixty miles to the southeast. It averages six miles in width and at its greatest depth is 800 feet. It is unique, I know of no other like it in all the Great Plains.

Perhaps only the Bad Lands or the Black Hills of South Dakota would compare.

In late September 1874 the Fourth Cavalry under Col. Ronald S. Mackenzie found their way into the Canyon. The number of Indians killed was not great but the policy of destroying their possessions so they could not survive, left little alternative but to go to the reservation. About 1400 Indian ponies were captured; maybe 300 to 400 were given to the military scouts; the rest were killed. It was the killing of the ponies that the Comanche could never forget.

President Grant's policy of appointing Quakers as Superintendents was underway. Laurie Tatum, an Iowa farmer, did not know he was being considered until he read in the paper that he had been appointed. His book "Our Red Brothers" published 20 years later, recounts his struggle with the angry Comanche. He was equally frustrated with the obtuse procedures of the Government bureaucracy. His volume is still a "must read" if you would understand the frustrations of the reservations.

Palo Duro Canyon as a State Park is bound to struggle as all places of nature must, the mounting demand of the tourist who want to see nature from their air-conditioned cars and stay only in triple-A rated hotels.

Texas has so far responded slowly, and one can only be grateful that so much of the canyon still gives one the feel of association with the unknown tribes of antiquity.

HWMcK

CATASTRO FEE

As I was preparing for a visit,
My table so exquisite,
The food most inviting,
Everything delighting!

I said, "It is purrfectly clear,
Oh, Pumpkin, dear,
Your footprints in the stew
Will never, never do!"

A feline mess was imminent,
To sense this was so intelligent..
To the bedroom the cat was banished.
A catastrophe neatly vanquished.

My guests enjoyed, as they were able,
Everything I put upon the table.
But then there came a pounding,
On my front door resounding,

Security said, with a weary look,
"Your phone is off the hook."
"Well, it cannot be mine," I exclaimed.
"From all phone calls I've refrained!"

"But it is most certainly 271.
We know this is the one.
There is a pathetic meowing
And louder it is growing!"

Oh no, I groaned,
Pumpkin has phoned.
Her only way to have fun
Was obviously to dial 911.

What an absolute catastro fee,
Seven-fifty on my bill I'll see!
If it wasn't for the laughter
I'd be catless forever after.

Sarah Klos



SEAGOING COWBOYS

At the end of WW II, while I was still drafted as a conscientious objector I took two trips to Europe with the Heifer International Project. Sponsored by the Church of the Brethren and UNRRA, Heifer is a nonprofit organization that works to end hunger and poverty around the world. Heifer provides income-producing animals, and the training to care for them, to impoverished families in an attempt to help them become more self-reliant. Although the project started out in 1944 by just sending bred heifers, they soon branched out to horses, chickens, goats, rabbits and many other animals. Receiving families have to sign a contract that they will “pass on the gift” by giving the first-born offspring, or litter, to another family in need. Since 1944, Heifer has helped millions of people in more than 125 countries.

After being released from the draft in 1946, I signed on with UNRRA as a supervisor of the “seagoing cowboys” whose job it was to take care of the animals on the way over and to clean the stables on the way back. The Church of the Brethren bought the animals and delivered them to the seaport. UNRRA then took over and shipped them to Europe, later to Asia, and many other countries.

In November of that year, I was rushed to New Orleans to catch a ship to Greece. However, a sailors’ strike kept us in port for about a month. This meant that we probably would not be home for Christmas, which was important not only to the cowboys, but also to the

regular seamen. These freighters were not allowed to carry passengers, so we twenty-five “cowboys” had to sign ship’s papers as if we were part of the crew. We were supposed to be paid one dollar for each trip, but I never saw the dollars for my five trips as supervisor! UNRRA paid our salary.

For this trip to Greece, there was a group of five farmers from Ohio, my home state. They had never been on the ocean before. They were signed up because they wanted to help the war-ravaged countries of Europe. The “cowboys” were quartered on the fantail of the ship. That meant that when we hit bad weather, which you do in December, the propeller would sometimes come out of the water and shake the ship as one would shake a dog by its tail. Therefore, these landlubbers had a rough time and experienced seasickness frequently. This particular trip had just horses and they would get sick even if the sea was calm. On most trips with horses we could count on losing about a tenth of the 800 we had aboard. We would haul the carcass up from the hold with a winch and then dump it into the sea as food for the sharks! I discovered that some of the Ohio farmers were sleeping with their horses down in the hold in order to take care of the animals and also because it was midship and not nearly as rough as the fantail. They were helping both the animals and themselves. Since I was considered an officer of the ship, I was provided with a stateroom midship that contained four bunks. I invited three of the Ohio farmers who were having the most trouble with their stomachs to sleep in my stateroom for the remainder of the voyage. I really enjoyed their company since we spoke “the same language,” Ohio farmer’s language.

On the 24th of December we were heading home but we were several days from port. The farmers suggested that we “cowboys” go out on the deck and sing Christmas Carols to the seagulls, the stars and the crew. When I was growing up, I was accustomed to touring our small Ohio village with a group from our Methodist Church, singing carols to the villagers. This was different! I felt that we were singing to the heavens and the whole world. The next day, several members of the crew thanked us for singing and admitted that it had never happened on any ship that they had been on before.

This simple Christmas celebration remains in my memory today, whereas many of the elaborate and formal church services with poinsettias, organ music, choirs and such that I have attended over the years are no longer remembered. However in the Christmas of 1946, I felt connected to the manger in Bethlehem and the Christ child who was sleeping with the animals.

Neil Hartman



MEMORY THEATER IN CALIFORNIA

How would you like to share stories of your childhood and youth with a group of eighth graders? Could you tell them about kerosene lamps, horse drawn buggies, ten-cent movies, picnics at the farm? Could you demonstrate a little bit of the Turkey Trot, the Shimmy or the Charleston?

That's what a group of five senior citizens did for the Memory Theater of Pasadena, California. Arranged by the citywide Art Program under the Pasadena Art Commission, it was the first time the Memory Theater went out into the community and actually performed in one of the schools.

The eighth graders enjoyed hearing that a girl who bobbed her hair was considered "fast" in the twenties. They especially laughed as the seniors talked glowingly about the romantic rumble seats of the old cars. They didn't leave out the unromantic part about the dust and dirt if the car exceeded 30 miles an hour. Nor could they forget the problem of getting stuck in a ditch. Only a team of horses could pull them out. Another form of transportation that brought delight was the trolley ride along Pasadena's Colorado Boulevard. The young people laughed as they heard about the sign inside the trolley that read, "No shooting of rabbits from inside the trolley!"

The senior thespians shared some of the sad events as well. The horrible influenza epidemic of 1918 claimed 500,000 lives in the United States that year. Mustard

plasters, commonly used during illness of any kind, did little to help the situation. Of course, one worked hard in those days. One woman recalled that, as a young girl, she baked fifteen loaves of bread a week in a wood stove. Later, she assisted with a catering service and served such dignitaries as Herbert Hoover, Charles Lindbergh and Eleanor Roosevelt. Once when she was serving in Eleanor Roosevelt's son's home, the first lady's granddaughter came to "help" the caterers. They were making cinnamon toast. The child commented, "It is difficult to eat toast with braces on one's teeth." When asked why she wore braces, the little girl replied, "So I won't look like my grandmother when I grow up."

When one of the eighth graders was asked how she liked the program, she said, "For the most part I really liked it. It shows how times have changed from when they were growing up. It gets you thinking about what we'll be telling our kids when we get to be their age."

In 1989, while leading a play-reading group, director Don Walters noted that some of the older adults made comments referring to the past. Don realized how much seniors have to tell about how people used to live. He gathered a group together, and they shared memories, taping them as they talked. Thus Memory Theater was born! After several sessions, he edited and typed the stories. This first group read their presentations in several senior retirement centers. Other groups were formed and are currently active. The camaraderie and laughter enjoyed by both participant and audience account for the success of this enterprise.

Collected memories that are passed down from generation to generation are a treasure for all time. Often it is in these kinds of memories that we discover our connectedness to each other. This theater experience demonstrates one way in which one generation could bond with another. It leads us to ask: What memories are we sharing with our grandchildren? Could we do it through writing, storytelling, drama, or song? What are we waiting for? Let's get started!

Jean Nicholson

A FIERY EPITAPH

Although cancer racked his body, Ezra Bowen challenged to the maximum the eleven of us students in his nonfiction writing class the spring of 1995. Son of the noted historical fiction writer Catherine Drinker Bowen, his intellectual rigor and penetrating analysis allowed few faults to escape his sharp eye.

“Who dat?” he would scrawl next to a murky reference. “Verbiage,” he would label superfluous adjectives. But nothing drew his fire like forms of the verb *to be* and the passive voice. “Use a real verb!” he would thunder. To drive home what real verbs are, early on in the class he assigned a 500-word description of an event using only active (voice) verbs.

In the public library of Bridgeport, CT, I found an arresting account of the fire of 1845 that reconfigured the city’s entire downtown business district. Although the narrative engrossed me, the hunt for forms of the verb *to be* in my writing gripped me even more. I could not begin, for example:

“Fire! Fire! ...” The alarm *was raised* at 1:30 a.m. ... the saloon keeper, hired hands and families of Wells’s Oyster Saloon and Boarding House *were driven* out into the bitter cold.

The active-verbs-only rule required:

“Fire! Fire! ...” The alarm raised at 1:30 a.m. ... drove the saloon keeper, hired hands and families of Wells’s Oyster Saloon and Boarding House out into the bitter cold.

Finding replacements for and even changing sentence structures to avoid forms of the verb *to be* challenged me.

After a week of hard work and satisfied that the verb *to be* had been expunged from my piece, I handed it in. It came back with a “who dat?” scrawled next to “William Peet’s residence” in the fourth paragraph. Breaking the rule, I wrote the only possible answer, “Peet was the father-in-law of Mayor Harrell” and resubmitted it. It read:

* * *

The Fire of 1845

“Fire! Fire! George Wells’s is on fire!” The alarm raised at 1:30 a.m. on Thursday, December 12th, 1845, in Bridgeport, Connecticut, drove the saloonkeeper, hired hands and families of Wells’s Oyster Saloon and Boarding House out into the bitter cold. Shopkeepers and tenants poured from neighboring dwellings to stare at the flames leaping from the cellar. Helped by high winds, the fire soon spread through the row of wooden structures on State Street, tore through the eastern half of a block of businesses between State and Bank, and raced toward Water Street.

From all quarters of Bridgeport, fire companies converged on the burning business district. Able-bodied men sprang to help the crews unwind the hoses and pull them eastward to the shore, intending to suction up water for dousing flaming roofs. The hoses, however, could not reach the water--then at low tide--so the men dropped them and centered their efforts on saving as

much as possible of the contents of buildings lying in the fire's path.

Out of control, the fire sped north on Water Street, where most of the city's trade unfolded in ramshackle shops and warehouses lining the waterfront. Foodstuffs, dry goods, and piles of merchandise burned to a crisp. Molasses unloaded from a West India brig only a few days earlier oozed out of grocery stores onto the street, slowing the work of the firefighters. Onlookers cheered when the Old Flat Iron Building, a run-down boarding house owned by Benjamin Harrison and an eyesore to the townspeople, fell to the flames.

Fearing the fire would spread westward to Main Street, firemen bent their efforts toward checking its advance on the north side of State Street by blanketing with wet carpets the roof and east side of William Peet's residence. Peet was the father-in-law of Mayor Harrell. If his home burned, the firefighters calculated, Main Street would be next. The strategy worked and saved Main Street.

By 4 a.m. firefighters had the blaze under control, but the citizenry had to wait for dawn to appraise the devastation. Estimates of the citywide total began at \$125,000. Forty poor families lost all their possessions. Merchants and craftsmen lost their goods: 800 barrels of flour; 100 barrels of mackerel; large quantities of tea, coffee, sugar and molasses, leather and hides, clothing, carpets, grain and dry goods. The fire destroyed 49 buildings--over half of the business district. The trade center on Water Street disappeared and never returned.

Merchants moved their remaining possessions to Main Street, where a new commercial hub put down roots.

George Sanford, a young apprentice carriage maker who lived through the fire of 1845 and whose account of it appears in George Walder's *History of Bridgeport and Vicinity*, ends his account cheerfully:

“I recall that many remarked the next day that the fire was “the best thing that ever happened to Bridgeport” and I think it was so, as nearly all of the buildings burned were old and dilapidated.”

* * *

Professor Bowen marked the paper A-. A superb teacher and writer, he died a few months later.

Kay Cooley

IT ALMOST MAKES ONE A BELIEVER

Each Easter Sunday Catherine and I conduct an Easter egg hunt for visiting grandchildren. Two years ago we had three tykes join us for the weekend, ages six, four, and three. After they were sound asleep we hid some eggs throughout the house for discovery Easter morning, proof that the Easter rabbit had paid a visit. Additional eggs were also hidden, not too cleverly, on the deck and in the adjoining yard for a further hunt when other grandchildren of like ages arrived later in the morning.

The second hunt was an equal success, replete with loud squeals of discovery as the grandchildren raced about the yard, each child filling small bags with eggs. The children were soon very busy opening their finds (we always hide something inside), making comparisons, and offering trades.

The dutiful grandfather – that’s me – slipped away to the Kaydee trail with the remainder of the eight dozen eggs we had prepared, for some additional surprises.

Returning home I told them, “We have a bunny trail behind the Community Building. I wonder if the Easter rabbit has left a few eggs there.”

One eight-year-old skeptic gave me questioning look, his expression saying, “Come on, Grandpa – a bunny trail?”

“Oh yes! I’ll show you.”

Needless to say, the troop did not need further encouragement. Off we went. Much excitement again as they made the left near the canoe storage.

“See!” I said to my skeptic, pointing to Tom’s bunny adorning the Kaydee trail marker. Shouts of delight echoed through the trees as they began making new discoveries. The bunny trail was living up to expectations.

After we gathered at the end of the trail and received a count from each searcher, we turned as a group to head down the Rancocas trail and home. We had taken only a few steps, when there, bigger



than life, an adult cottontail rabbit sat in the middle of our path. The rabbit turned and hopped a few feet ahead, flashing his bright white tail with each bounce. The egg hunters froze, pointed ahead and shouted, virtually in unison, “THE EASTER BUNNY!” The rearguard raced forward, not about to miss anything, while the leaders flew forward as fast as their little legs could take them. The rabbit scampered forward to keep his distance, amid loud cries of “We found the Easter Bunny!” Since a rabbit is even faster than little children, he easily escaped.

Could we have choreographed a more exciting end to an Easter egg hunt? We rested on our laurels and triumphantly led the grandchildren home, having truly convinced some that there really is an Easter Bunny. They had seen it with their own eyes.

John Sommi

JOHN

Big eyes,
Like huge black cherries, some say,
Surrounded by the black petals of lashes.
Skin, more melanin than mine,
Inherited from some ancestor
Who must resist the hostile African sun.
Hair that fights the hand when stroked.

This child of mine
Questions me, as seven-year-olds do:
Why, when, where, how, who?
This beautiful son asks, trusting me,
What will my life be like?
More than anything he wants to know,
How will I fit in?
And I can't give him a clue.

Margery Rubin

LETTERS TO WALTER IN AMERICA

My mail on February 8, 2006, contained an odd-looking letter, with bulging content in what looked like a homemade envelope, and with a plastic overwrap stamped “received in damaged condition in Medford.” The sender’s name disclosed a lady I had heard about but never met.

Inside was a scrap of paper signed by the sender, saying she hoped I would be interested in the letters enclosed. Letters? There were just a number of folded paper bundles.

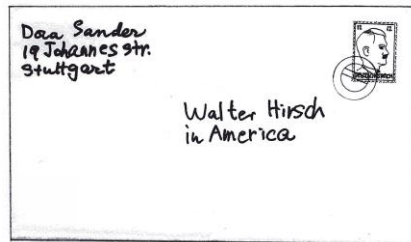
The minute I unfolded the first bundle, I was in a state of shock and disbelief. They were the letters I had written to the lady’s late husband, Walter, who had been my boyfriend during our teenage years in Stuttgart, Germany, more than 70 years ago. There were 11 letters, most of them several pages long, written from 1933, just after the Nazis came to power, until 1938, when I left Stuttgart for England and then emigration to the U.S.

Unfortunately, I did not save Walter’s letters. Our families were good friends, and Walter and I went to the same school through the eighth grade. We were also members of the same Jewish youth organization. Walter’s family left for the United States in 1933 and settled near relatives in Newton, MA. My own family had relatives in England, and they tried to persuade us to build a new life there.

My decision to emigrate to the United States was very much influenced by Walter’s reports of life there.

He had described the creativity and independent thinking encouraged in his high school, the many college opportunities, and the lack of discrimination against immigrants. In England, I always had the feeling that I wouldn't be accepted unless my ancestors had lived there for hundreds of years.

The letters are still readable after 70 years, and they chronicle the increasing severity of the anti-Jewish laws and regulations. However, Stuttgart was in the far south, and their impact was not felt significantly in the early 30's. Below are some excerpts from the letters (in English translation).



Stuttgart, end of December 1933, 1 p.

I got your card when we got back from a wonderful skiing vacation with my father, my brother Lothar, and a friend of Lothar's. The snow was wonderful. My parents heard from yours that you are now in the local high school. I am enjoying the Jewish youth organization. We are planning an evening for our parents with plays and music. In our Jewish religion class today, the rabbi read to us from an American newspaper that the companies there are now going to a five-day week. For him, this meant that more Jews would be able to attend Sabbath services!

Hamburg, August 22, 1934, 4 pp.

I am writing from Hamburg, where I am spending a few weeks with the family of my mother's best friend. I am enthusiastic about all the water surrounding the town, although I almost drowned in it. I rented a rowboat in good weather on the Alster, which is like an enormous lake. All of a sudden, one of the oars disappeared into the water. I hunted for it but couldn't catch it. Meanwhile, a storm came up and a torrential rain poured down on me. Moving the oar from side to side, I tried to get back to land but seemed to get farther away. Finally, I spotted the oar and managed to pick it up. Working hard with both oars, I finally got back, with blisters on my hands and looking like a gypsy.

Many of our friends have already left Germany. As for me, I just can't believe that we cannot lead a useful, helpful life here. When I see how hard my father is working to keep his 100-year old business going, I feel there must be a way. However, I am not optimistic about our future in Germany. The older people are saying that change is sure to come, but I don't rely on that. ... I've heard with surprise that some young people who went to the United States are already camp counselors or have other supervisory positions. Amazing, what's possible over there.

Stuttgart, December 19, 1934, 2 pp.

I want to drop out at Easter after the tenth grade and spend six months studying Hebrew and Jewish history. Not because it is the "fashion" right now but because I feel a deep responsibility to acquire this knowledge. I had a conversation about it with my

mother, who rejects all Jewish traditions, and told me: "It's better to do good deeds than to hold silent beliefs." I don't agree with her, you can do both. ... I have become a group leader in our youth organization, but I myself am in the group led by my cousin Bettine, whom I admire enormously. That's the best part of this youth group, it gives us new friends if we are open to them. ... I would like to hear from you about Jewish life in America. Do they celebrate Chanukah?

Stuttgart, April 27, 1935, 4 pp.

I have decided to go to Horn on the Lake of Constance, where a Jewish lawyer, who isn't allowed to practice any more, has rented a large farm and established a kind of school where young people can learn agricultural skills in preparation for emigration to Palestine. For girls he has added courses in childcare and foreign languages. Some of the girls in my youth group feel I am deserting them. But I feel my first duty is to learn all I can, complete my education, establish myself in a profession, before I can teach other people. My cousin Bettine is the only one of the Jewish students in our high school to remain after the 10th grade to try to graduate. Her brother is trying to finish his medical degree, and he will go to England if he is stopped by the anti-Jewish laws.

Horn, Lake of Constance, May 13, 1935, 5 pp.

I really like it here and I think it's the right place for right now. This farm and garden uses only organic fertilizers and expects to be self-supporting. In the morning, I work inside and learn cooking, ironing, etc.

and in the afternoons I am outdoors working in the asparagus and cucumber beds. I love working outside, but I have to exercise much self-control that I don't explode in anger because I hate housework. The people here are very nice, there are 6 boys and 2 girls. I miss my youth group very much, and I have just no time for reading any of the books I brought. ... I do believe that Palestine cannot be the whole solution for us. Even if we as Jews are not allowed to help defend the country, I want to stay here as long as possible. You probably can't understand this.

P.S. I am glad I did not send off this letter, because I just got one of yours. I am surprised that you had a Bar Mitzvah in your synagogue. Tell me, did you just go for that purpose or do you attend services there regularly? I would be interested to hear about the reform-type service. We are here learning about religious "renewal," which really means that people who have not observed any Jewish traditions are trying to go back to them and study Hebrew and Jewish history.

Horn, Lake of Constance, September 23, 1935, 9 pp.

In the face of all the new anti-Jewish laws and activities, we Jews have the enormous responsibility to go out into the diaspora and set an example of a life lived with high ethical, honorable, and service-oriented standards. ... I do not like the reform synagogues and the abandonment of old rituals, such as not eating pork, for instance. Even though modern times are different, I feel Jews should retain these old customs. ... My parents went to the wedding of my father's youngest brother, Ernest, who had moved to London in 1929 and recently

married the daughter of a copper magnate with a large country estate employing over 150 people. My mother has it all figured out that I am to go there next year as an apprentice of some sort, but I'm not going! My father has big plans, he wants us all to go to England and he would try to build up a new business there. I know that few of us will be able to finish their education, but I want to be among them. ... We don't know whether Jewish children can stay in our former school, the teachers are fighting for it. ... I plan to go back to Stuttgart in January and stay until April. It is sad that our family is being torn apart so early; I have to take the time to enjoy my family home as much as possible. Only since I've been away have I really learned to appreciate my family home.

Stuttgart, April 9, 1936, 3 pp.

At this time, personal relationships are the only positive thing for me. In addition to my correspondence with you, I am also exchanging letters with 8 -10 former friends who have emigrated. I enjoy writing and getting letters as long as it goes beyond stuff like eating and sleeping and deals with matters of real substance. One of your former friends, Guga, will soon arrive in the U.S. She took dancing lessons before she left and I think she will do well over there. The idea of preparing for emigration with dancing lessons is completely foreign to me. I want to learn as much as possible and take in as much "culture" as I can. Sometimes I think that we Jews are being punished by this forced evacuation of our homeland, and it will be our task to live a model life

incorporating the best values and in that way perhaps move humanity forward a small step.

My parents are in Palestine for six weeks, staying with their friends, the Cramers in Naharia, and sharing their lives to determine whether their lifestyle would be right for them. I learned that I cannot go to a school of social work, as the program would take too long. So I will have to prepare myself to go to Palestine. Perhaps I will go to England first, where my uncle, newly married, has invited me. I already found a family where I could do some work. ... You probably don't know that our wonderful school has been closed by the Nazis and our beloved teacher has been demoted and assigned to a small suburban school. All his former students got together to give him a farewell party, and it was great to meet with all my old schoolmates who have become young men and women.

Thams, Oxon. England, September 7, 1936

My grandmother and I traveled to England together, and she stayed with my uncle in his home in London while I was an au pair in an English family here. My mother surprised us with her arrival a week ago, but it was great to be together for this week before going back to Germany. ... I was interested in the English Jews; they are just like the German Jews before 1933, some very orthodox, living mostly together in some places, others not observing and trying to meld into the English communities. This includes my uncle and his wife and her family. However, I have seen some anti-Semitic signs even here; there were posters on Oxford

Street “The Jews Are Our Danger.” ... My father opened and read some of the letters written by one of the young men in Horn who wanted to marry me and take me with him to South America. I am angry about the letter opening, but I would not have married this boy anyway. My uncle in England has offered to pay for my education so that I will later be able to support my parents and help them to build a new life here ... However, I simply cannot accept this. It is incompatible with all my beliefs. I would have a lifestyle quite foreign to me and would feel that I am taking the easy way out and running out on my obligations to myself. I don’t see any place here where I could build something, rather the opposite. If I stayed in England, I couldn’t have the profession (social work) I wanted. I feel rather selfish about this right now, but I hope to find a solution that will be acceptable to everyone. I should be starting school soon, but sometimes you have to take a bypass to get to the road you want. I’ve been away from home for quite some time and want to spend the winter in Stuttgart. ... Our teacher (Herr Schieker) is in a bad way. All his letters are being opened by the Nazi authorities. He isn’t able to have any visitors in his home. ... While in England, I “softened up” considerably and tried to adjust to what was expected of me. I had two sherries and smoked my first cigarette. I think emigrants make a big mistake when they stick by their old principles and lack flexibility as indicated under the new circumstances. I’ll go back to my old ways in Stuttgart, but here you can’t just take without giving something of yourself.

Stuttgart. May 11, 1937, 4 pp.

My cousin Uli is now a teacher in Palestine. He has become quite orthodox, I am afraid. I can understand that quite well. Once you start involving yourself in Jewish history and rituals, you keep going into it deeper and deeper and end up orthodox. ... I really feel that I am not the right person to go to Palestine because I don't believe in Zionism. I think I am a Pantheist. You tell me that the world isn't ready for citizens of the world. I don't care what the world thinks. The only thing that counts is that I am persuaded that my own beliefs will solve the most basic problems. ... But back to you. You are probably in college already. What major study area have you selected? Another question: Do you have time to keep up with German literature? If so, I could tell you about the books I have read. ... Finally, after long negotiations, I have been accepted as the youngest student in a one-year course in home economics with a state exam. I won't talk about it until it actually comes to pass [note: it never did]. I won't have any regrets leaving Stuttgart. I am hoping to get some new stimulation, sorely lacking here now. I am afraid I am not mature enough to generate such stimulation from the inside; I still look for it from outside myself.

London, c/o Sir Alexander Russell, M.P., October 20, 1937, 5 pp.

It's Sunday in London and so foggy that my eyes hurt, because the fog seems to get in through cracks in the wall. The outside world disappears, and I am comfortable in my warm room and ready to visit with

my friends, and now it's your turn ... Well, I am back in school. I wish they had a free university here but they don't. So right now I am enrolled in a cram course to pass the English matric [note: the equivalent of the American GED], which will then allow me to apply to an English university. I am astonished how much I have already forgotten since I dropped out of high school 2 years ago. Chemistry is the most difficult subject for me, because we had no lab work in my school ... I managed to find a wonderful family where I get room and board and am treated as a member of the family in return for German lessons for the two teenage daughters. The man of the house (Sir Alexander Russell, a widower) is a Member of Parliament, and I have a chance to learn a lot and meet many interesting people. In a way, it doesn't strike me as fair that I get all these benefits for a few hours of German lessons. But I try to help the young ladies in other ways, by advising them on their clothes and having serious conversations with them, all benefiting my English. ... Aside from these family involvements, I feel quite alone. I tried to get together with German refugees my age, but I didn't like their superficial and casual attitudes. After I've been here longer, I may be able to meet Stefan Zweig and his friends. I am a devoted reader of Herman Hesse, Hans Carossa, and Ernst Wiechert. All of them write magnificent fiction and non-fiction. If you haven't read any of their work, I would like to send you some when I go back to Stuttgart over Christmas. I've read a lot of Hesse. I think he is the greatest. After reading his *Steppenwolf*, it's like an abyss opens in front of you and forces you to rethink everything. ... My cousin Titi will be able to finish 12th grade and graduate, but her

plans are more uncertain than ever. She is thinking of going to Palestine for three months to evaluate the situation there for her future. ... Why don't you come over here during your summer vacation and work as a tutor in some rich family?

Stuttgart, April 17, 1938, 4 pp.

I came back home during the Easter vacation. One reason was that there is a new law prohibiting Germans over 16 years studying abroad from returning to Germany for more than 8 days. ... Our family is breaking up. Lothar is going to Leipzig, where he will live with a family known to my parents and become an apprentice in a printing plant. I can't understand this plan; my father seems to continue hoping that Lothar will be able to take over his business, which seems totally unrealistic to me. Last night, first day of Passover, my brother Frank assembled the family for a Seder celebration and led the readings from the Hagadah. He said he learned it in his religion class. I can't believe that this is my "little brother." I helped him with some passages, as some of it came back to me from my own classes in high school. I really concentrated on these readings, and I felt that all of us experienced a sense of belonging and satisfaction from having participated. ... My Uncle Emil's bereaved family are in Palestine right now, and when they return they will move there permanently. It is great that this family has a joint solution this way. I feel that nothing much will be accomplished by my emigration, since my parents and Lothar do not want to leave. I would go right away, if I was sure that my family would follow, but I don't feel I

can assume the responsibility for all of them. I feel I have to complete my education and be able to earn a living before asking my parents to follow me... I just read *Of Human Bondage* and liked it very much, but I just don't have enough time to read fiction. While in Stuttgart, I read Herman Hesse's *Weg Nach Innen*, a wonderful book just right for me now. In English, I read a lot of Ruskin, which may surprise you. I am also getting to be quite fluent in French and enjoy some novels by Maurois. ... Now for a surprise. I have been thinking about it for a long time, and by now it feels very natural and obvious. I will emigrate to the United States and get my education there. I've come to the conclusion that things have changed in England so much since last September that I don't see how I could achieve my professional goals here. I am told that all I could hope is to work as a secretary. If I go to America, there is more of a chance that Lothar and Frank will follow me. It was difficult to come to this decision because of my parents, but they are understanding and supportive. My uncle in London approves of this plan also, and many other people are encouraging me. It seems rather daring, as I don't have any relatives there other than my mother's brother, who is an officer in the Salvation Army and not in a position to help financially. But my London uncle will undoubtedly help me at the start. I would really appreciate your opinion – very honestly, please – about my plan. After I go back to London, I can't live with the Russells anymore, because the girls have gone on a trip, and I will be staying in a student residence until after the exam.

* * *

Postscript

While the letters end at this point, I feel I should briefly describe what happened until the whole family was out of Germany.

After passing the matric, I spent the summer as a paying guest in the home of a high school teacher in Versailles, France. I wanted to improve my French and found this family through a newspaper ad. Uncle Ernest had a colleague in Paris make sure that I wasn't falling into the hands of a brothel madam. Meanwhile I had obtained a quota number from the American Embassy and my father purchased an ocean liner ticket for me to leave in October, 1938. After the summer, I went back to Stuttgart to pack bags for the emigration. Then came the Munich crisis, and it looked like war, and I thought I was stuck. But after the "peace" agreement I was able to go back to London to say my good-byes and then leave from an English port. Then all plans were cancelled when my father was arrested during Kristallnacht and placed in a detention facility, where he was told that he would be released if he had proof of emigration. This arrest finally convinced my parents that they could not stay in Germany and they were ready to join the exodus to the United States, waiting in England until *their* quota numbers would be available.

After I postponed my emigration to wait for my parents to get to England, I took a job with a family in Leeds, babysitting and general housework, for the winter. I returned to London a few days before my parents, Lothar, and my grandmother Sander (91) arrived in early March. I left for the US two weeks after their

arrival. My father and Lothar were interned in England as German aliens when the war broke out, but my father was released fairly soon because Sir Alexander Russell provided the necessary papers for his release. My parents and Frank came to the U.S. in the fall of 1940. Lothar was sent to an internment camp in Canada. He was released when he agreed to go to a Canadian university and after the war he came to the U.S.

As to my relationship with Walter, when I arrived in New York in March, 1939, he was at Indiana State University, and there was no way we could meet. We did not meet until the early '40's, after we had both graduated from college. I was in my first job in Washington, and he was in the Army stationed not too far from there. He used to come for visits on his leaves. I was all excited about my job and developing a career and was not romantically inclined or ready to get married. Walter married a German refugee as soon as he got out of the Army, did graduate work at Indiana State, and eventually became a full professor there. We dropped all communications after his marriage. I heard about him indirectly from one of his cousins in New York, who was a close friend of mine and who gave his widow my address when she wanted to send the letters to me. We plan to meet in New York City some time in 2006.

Ellen Stimler