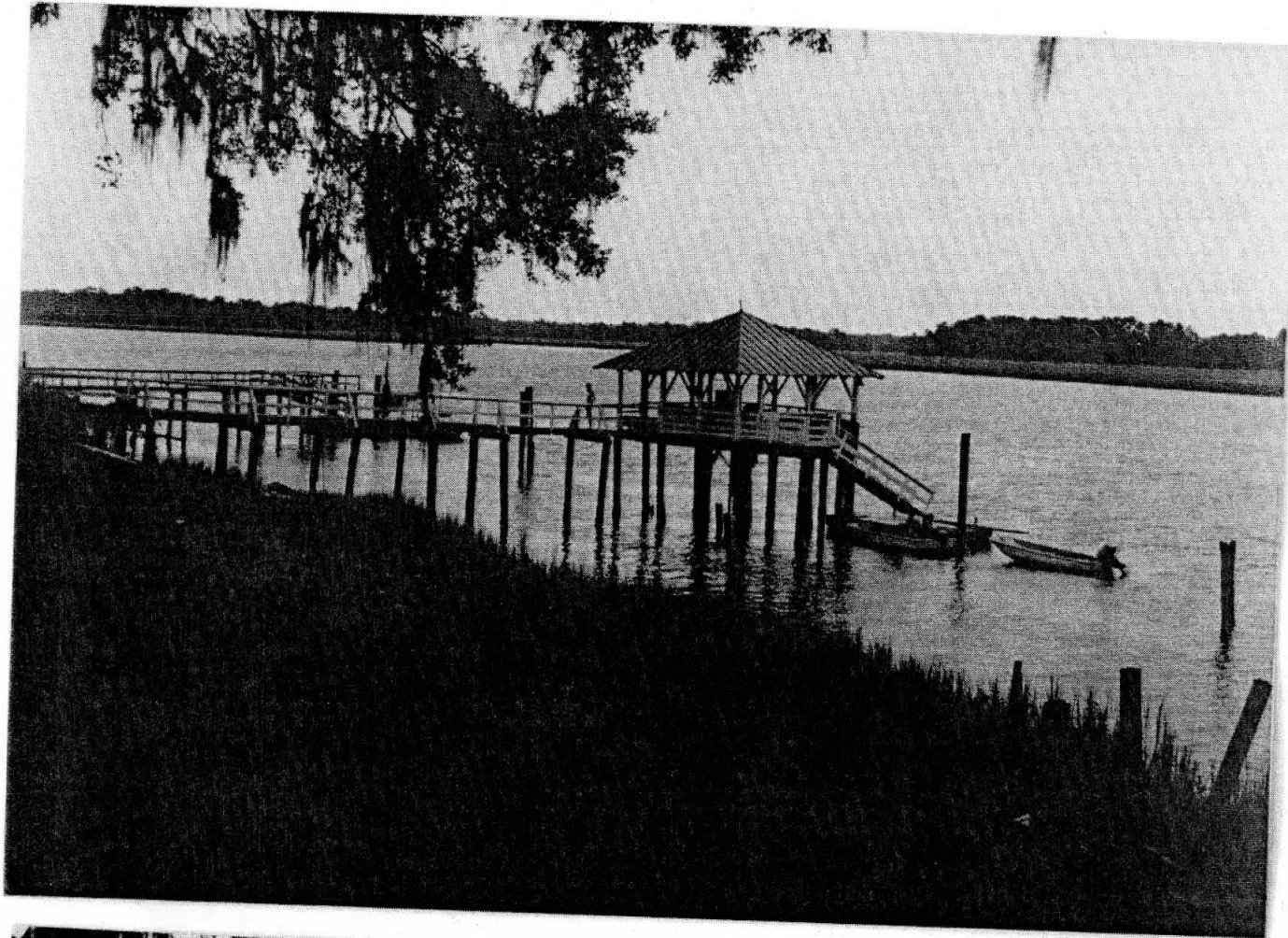


Rambling Recollections

As

Told by Tommy

(Typed by his Wonderful Wife)

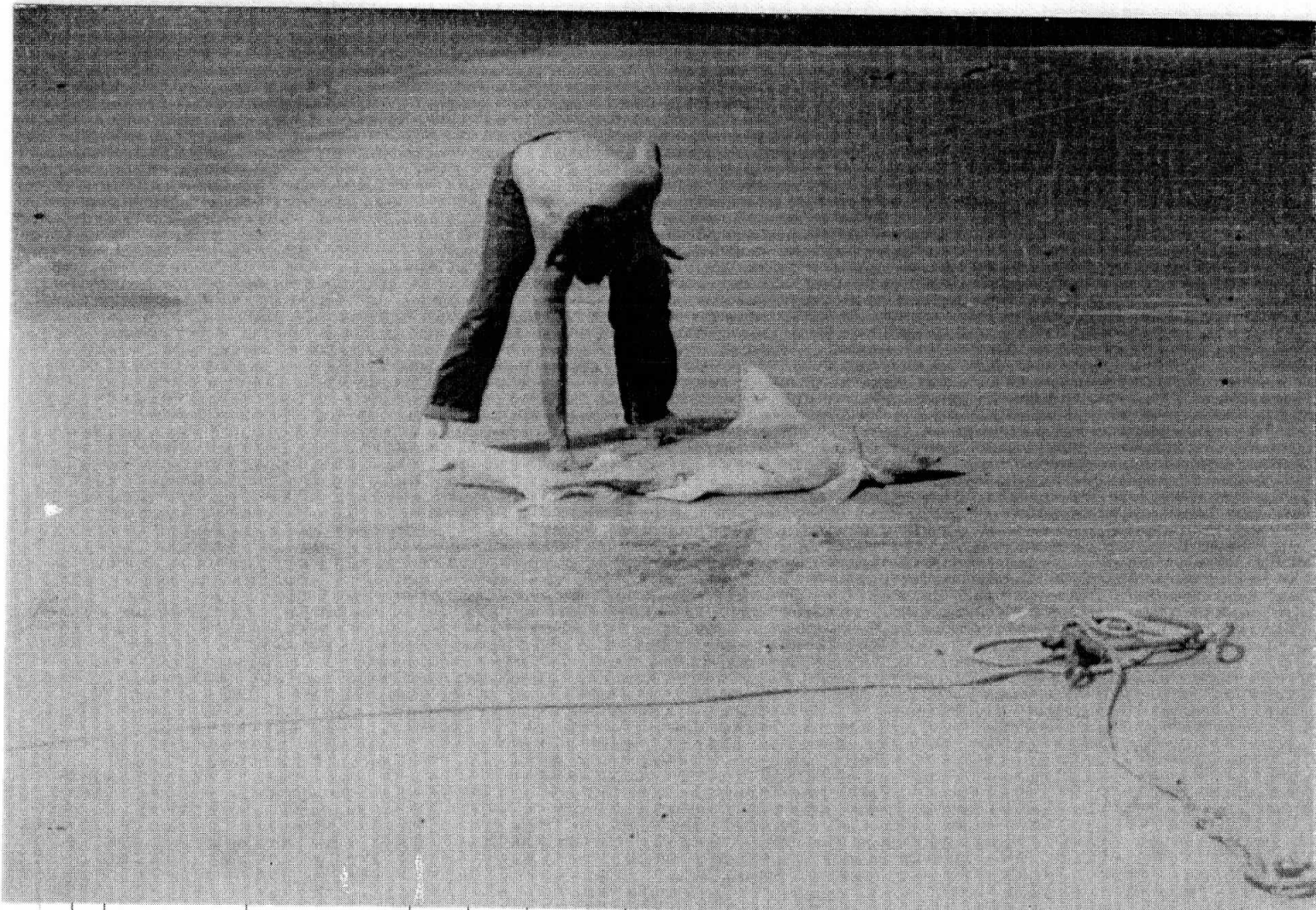


Isle of Hope

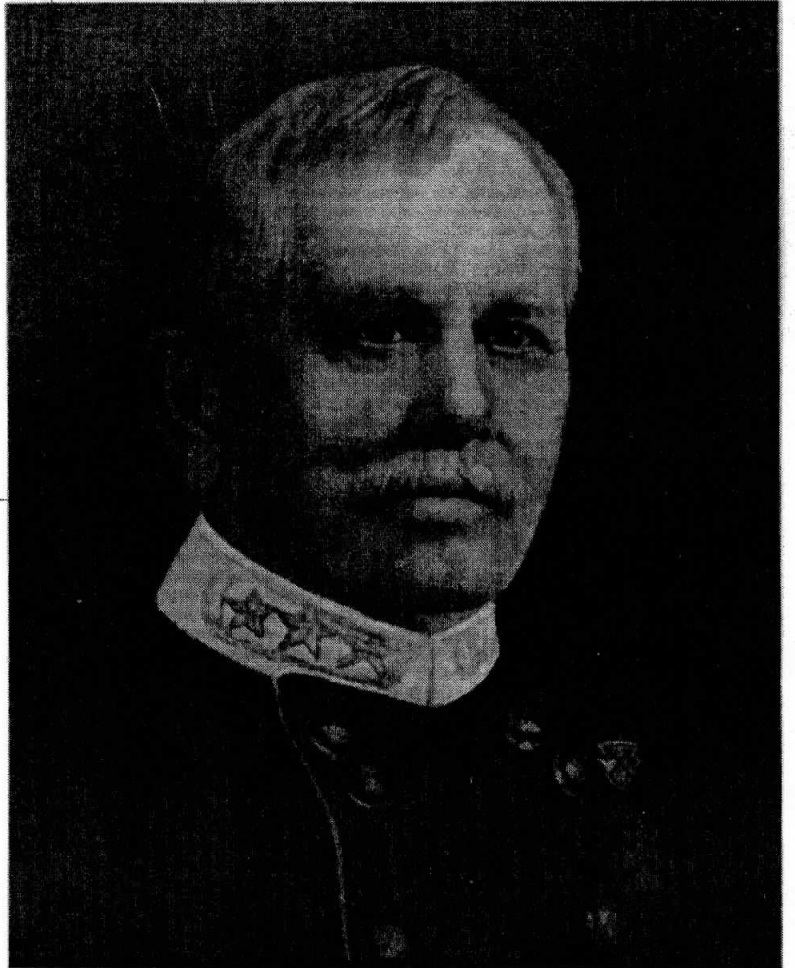
My earliest recollection was when Tats and Fa...I was about three or four years old...lived in a house on about 51st street in Savannah. I remember my grandmother Johnson lived at the top of the stairs...I have no idea whether that is correct. Next, we moved to the house at Isle of Hope and my first thoughts on that were that it was a delightful spot...my mother had talked about it and about this was where she wanted to live...but my father had his reservations but he said it was her dream spot or something to that effect. So she had him buy the house which was a rather interesting thing too. She had found that some people named Bacon (a Bacon was a pallbearer in J. T. Johnson's funeral) lived there. They were rather eccentric... as a matter of fact, the neighbors were so concerned that they built barriers between the property. He would sometimes go out at night and shoot his pistol off just to make some noise. And the neighbors were afraid he was shooting his sister. Anyhow, he didn't and he died and she died, and my mother called my father and told him to call Henry Carter, a friend and a real estate broker, and tell him to buy the house for us. They hadn't even been buried yet, but my mother said she'd call him. I don't really know which of them did call, but Henry checked with the estate and law firm and found out that the house would be sold, and the long and short of it was my mother and father bought the house, and then as I recall, when I first slipped inside of it, it was not a very pretentious place...it had what I would call beaverboard walls rather than plaster...it also had some animal heads, like moose, hanging around the living room. The living room was quite adequate...it was about twenty by thirty feet and the attached dining room up a step was another fifteen or twenty feet long. The kitchen was, at that point, behind the house in another building and my mother decided that was not a very good deal. She said the house had to be moved back because she wanted a better view of the river which was out front. My father...I'm not sure what he said...he was traveling most of the time at that point and my mother took charge of things. Another early recollection is my mother took me out there...I saw as many mules as I have ever seen...there must have been one hundred of them. The house was up on log rollers and they rolled the house back from the river. It was a very exciting thing for a five year old boy to see all those mules and the house moving. The house got moved back and connected up to the kitchen. It all worked out in a beautiful way. At the time we bought the place for twenty or forty thousand dollars it had twenty-six buildings on it, including a milkshed, a big barn... a wonderful barn that my father later put a bowling alley in the top of it so we'd have something to do on rainy days...it also had a pear orchard back behind the barn, and a wonderful scuppernong arbor beyond that and two pecan orchards

beyond that. There were about fourteen or fifteen acres. Along the front was a delightful picket fence which my mother didn't like and I know that was scheduled for extinction, but anyhow it took awhile before she could get rid of it and there was a road that came by there. And she got rid of that ten or fifteen years later...she just cut the road off because people were driving in front of her house and then took the fence down and went along from there. The buildings in the back...there was a nice cottage which was directly behind the house which as a matter of fact we were fortunate enough to live in for several years...there were some other folks had lived in before us. The first person I remember who lived there was a servant named Julia and then Uncle Harry...Uncle Harry Newcomb. Uncle Harry Cohen Newcomb. I have now found out my great, great grandfather was a Cohen in Savannah and this was his son. Uncle Harry had been in the merchant marine and had been an engineer on ships most of his life. Tats fixed up the cottage for him first. I think the next one that lived there was Dr. Wright...Dr. David Cady Wright. Rector of Christ Church in Savannah. When he retired, and they didn't really endow preachers at that point, and when she moved him into the house...he was really not well at all...and I remember going back there and chatting with him...he really was a wonderful guy...he was one of the best preachers I ever heard in my life. I can remember him preaching at Christ Church and he'd practically raise the roof with his screaming and hollering if you didn't pay attention. He really was a wonderful person and his daughter Jane stayed there with him, but it seemed to refresh him if I went over there to see him so Tats sent me over there every day. The next folks that stayed there were the Britts, Sydney and Annie McIntosh Britt, who stayed there a short while. After that, Jack and Babs Cay stayed there for a couple of years, and after that there was David and Peggy and they added on the room in the back and I think we were the next ones who stayed in the cottage. It was a well-used place and delightful. Right behind the cottage was what had been the milkshed, and Tats didn't like the way it looked so it eventually got moved, and there was a concrete pan underneath it she used to use to take the car back there and have someone wash it. Back behind that was a garage. I think it was delightful when at Christmas one year, my father bought Tats a new car...this was back in the 30's when very few people got new cars...and he tied a string around the car and put a note under the Christmas tree with a note that said "follow this string to your Christmas present." And Tats was so excited when she went out. She thought she'd gotten a new horse but it went to the garage instead of the barn. But she enjoyed that too. In fact it was much easier to take care of than a horse. To back up a minute, I must say Fa had some delightful idea of things as did my mother. Over on the other side in the back was another cottage which had three rooms in it. They added a bathroom because

there weren't any bathrooms around and that gave the servants a place they could go relax and rest. She put some things in there so they could be comfortable and actually I think a couple of them lived back there for some time, and also a couple of them had lived in the other cottage. The other buildings, largely, she disposed of except for the barn. The barn...I remember one time my father came home when I was about ten years old and he had a cow behind the car on a rope behind the car...he was very proud to tell my mother that he had gotten a cow. And she said "who's going to milk it?" He said "we'll find someone." Anyhow, the cow whose name was Betty or Betsy or something like that got put in the barn and I went to look at this beast which was smelly and he informed me it had to be milked in the morning and in the evening. And he said, "don't you want to know how to milk it?" and I said, "yes sir." I happened to remember that a couple of years before he had told me he lived on a farm in Orchard Hill near Griffin Georgia, and he couldn't learn how to milk a cow, so his younger brother had to milk it. He said that was very convenient because he didn't have to get up quite so early in the morning. So when I grabbed hold of those things underneath the cow, it swished its tail and hit me in the back of the head. I tried those things and couldn't figure out how to work them. David immediately came over and said "oh, let me try." So I got out of the way and David came over and got the milk to come out and so he was the milker. I swear to goodness David is the smartest guy I know practically, but I done him in at that. He had to get up in the morning and milk the cow, then we'd go to school, come home and play in the afternoon and he'd have to go out and milk the cow again. Later, after we built our little sailboats and so forth, he'd have to come in from sailing earlier than we did so he could milk the cow. Have to back up a minute to the other cottage that was over towards the Pierpont house...Tats decided that was where she wanted her rose garden. That was over towards the barn facing towards the river. She went back there and found to her delight there was some clay back there...which was most unusual because in Savannah of course everything is sandy...and she said "oh, this is a marvelous place for a rose garden" and she sketched out a rose garden and planted a rose garden, and then someone found the original plans and found that that was originally a tennis court. Tats loved to play tennis and said "oh my goodness I planted roses where my tennis court is supposed to be." But anyhow, I think she enjoyed the roses as much as she enjoyed the tennis. And next door, the McIntoshs, whom we've enjoyed and loved through the years. But I remember when we were first introduced we went along over to what we called the secret passage...there was a hedge between the two properties...and we met them and I remember I was mostly intimidated...all of them were real big except for the last two...they were not much bigger than I was. That was John and



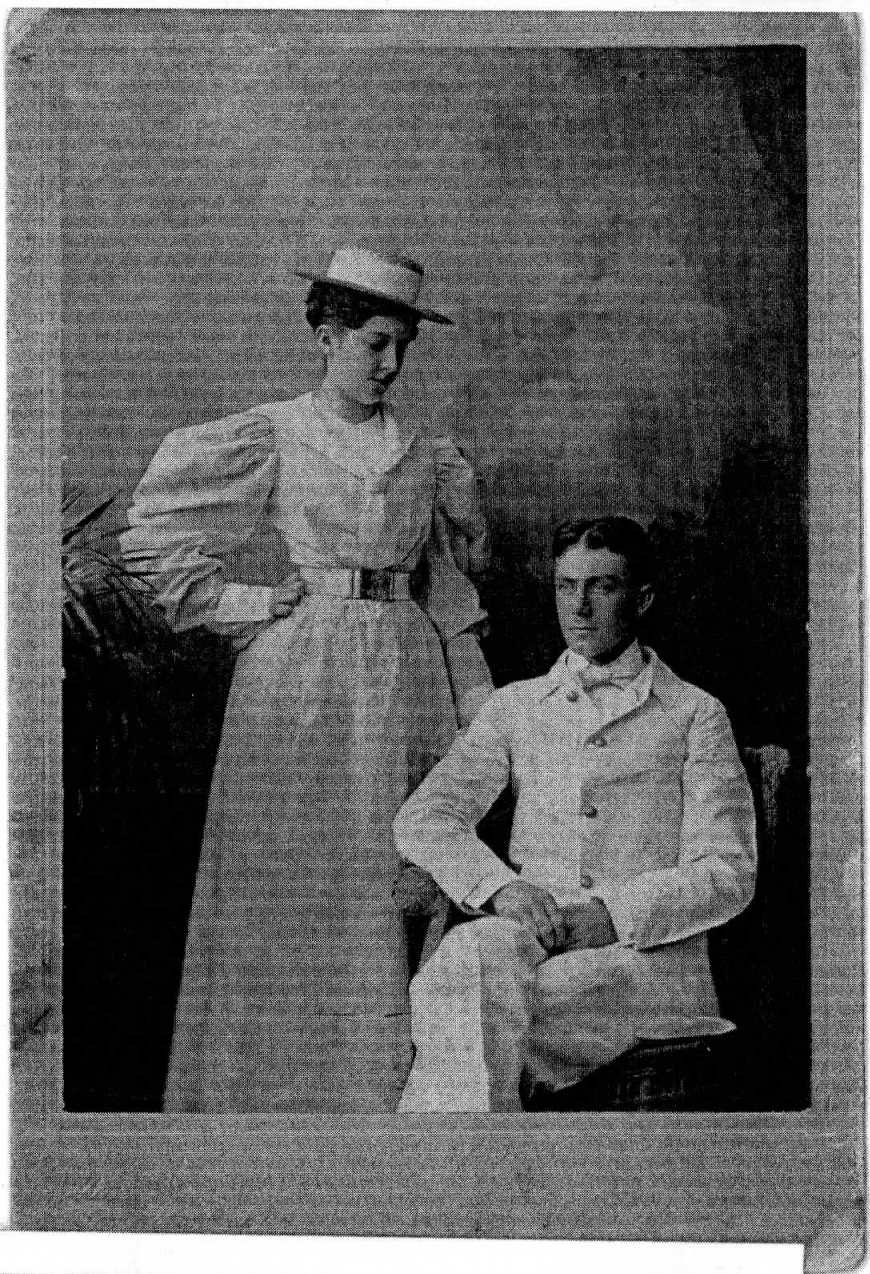
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Betty. And I must say that through life John has probably been my best friend. And Betty was also my best friend until she died except for my dear wife Benita. But it was an amazing situation. The McIntoshs...over the years they have become wonderful, wonderful friends...the whole family, a distinguished family that goes back to the Revolutionary War years and back into Scotland. We moved into the house which seemed to be a lot bigger than the house we lived in town. By that time there was not only me and David, the next brother, who was two years younger than I, Bobby was a year and a half younger than David, Kathryn was two years younger than Bobby and then Betty who was another two years younger than Kathryn. We also had another brother, William Murphy Johnson, who died as an infant. He was just a few days old when he died. He was the sixth child. He was born somewhat prematurely and just didn't make it. Even though I thought it was the biggest house I ever saw, us boys had to move out on the porch to make room for the girls. But anyhow it worked delightfully and I must say over the years it probably was one of the happiest houses in the world.

The Family

I'm going to review a little of family history. First, the Twiggs family though I think we have a pretty complete record with various family trees that Albert has put together. The ones I recollect from the Twiggs are Meta and Daddy (John David Twiggs...and I think he probably should have been the II) and Meta was a Sinkler from Charleston but she was his second wife and she was the mother of Albert and Margaret. His first wife was Ida May from Savannah. She was the daughter of a Dr. May whose father or mother was a Cohen...I can't remember his first name. We've seen a picture of him which Pem had and she'd say "this is my grandfather Cohen" so he'd be my great-grandfather Cohen. That would tie in with Uncle Harry Newcomb, who was either his son or his brother, that moved into the cottage. Meta and Daddy were really very close and whenever another child would come along Tats and Fa would send me up to Augusta to spend a week or two with them or a month which was a right cute way of doing things. They'd put me on the train in Savannah...Central of Georgia...which would take about four hours to get to Augusta but my father's father, grandfather Johnson, had been superintendent of the Central of Georgia Railroad and my father knew a lot of people around the railroad, and they'd put us on the train going to Augusta and they'd take care of us and we'd get off and when it was time to come home, they'd put us back on to come back. I must add that it wasn't very simple to get on the train with my mother who was somewhat inclined to be late and we'd frequently miss the train at the train station and have to chase it up to Pooler to catch it. But we always got on it somehow or another. Tats was a ferocious driver when she wanted to be but it really was quite pleasant and we got used to the railroads. Getting back to the Twiggs family momentarily, Daddy's father was Albert Jefferson Twiggs who we called Big Pops. He and his father fought in the Civil War...Big Pops's father actually was a physician. His name was John Twiggs and he was murdered by his overseer when he came back to visit the plantation which was in Edgefield over in South Carolina when he came back to check on it when he was off during the Civil War. Albert Jefferson Twiggs, my great-grandfather, whose picture we have in the den, became very active in the Confederate veterans and was the Georgia Commanding General of the Confederate Veterans at one point. I understand he was a delightful person but he died a couple of weeks before I was born. He and my grandfather were in the contracting business together and were building roads in various places. They had a sizeable contracting business...they had their own railroad equipment which could carry the necessary materials like steel, concrete to different sites. The way they used to build roads in those days...they'd first build up rough railroad and the train



would bring the materials there to build the other road or bridge or whatever it might happen to be. During World War I, they built some bridges in Virginia and unfortunately they didn't have a war clause in the contract and it was supposed to be completed by such and such a date with serious penalties. They could not complete it because they couldn't get anybody to work because everybody was going off in the army. The company went busted and Daddy, my grandfather, he was in his early 50's, closed out the company and went over to his biggest competitor and asked for a job. They said they didn't have any work for him in the executive offices and he said "let me work as a truck driver." He was that kind of a man. He was quite a man, he taught me many things, he was just wonderful. Even though earlier at VMI he had been First Captain of the cadets and I had met some of them who knew him during that era...one of them was General Kilbourne, who was Superintendent of Cadets when I was there...he called me into his office and talked about him at length...at least an hour and a half talking about my grandfather and about what a wonderful man he was and what an inspiration he was. General Kilbourne, at that point, was the most decorated man in the US Army with a medal of honor and other things... it was quite impressive. Daddy's mother was Emma Jordan from Virginia...I think from somewhere in the Roanoke area but I'm not positive. She frequently went back to visit Virginia during her lifetime and also traveled extensively. When I told Uncle Albert I'd just gotten back from a trip around the world he said "Oh, you're following in Big Mama's footsteps." Emma Jordan was Big Mama. I said "what do you mean?" and he said "she traveled around the world seven times." This would have to be in the 1880's, '90's, coming into 1900s. She was quite a traveler. Her sister-in-law who was always called Aunt Annie Taylor (she was a Twiggs or a Greenwood...I'm not sure which) was married to a fellow named Taylor and she also did a bunch of traveling and I can remember as a young fellow...she lived over in the apartments by the Bon Air in Augusta...and we'd go up to her apartment, and she had a curio table which had the most interesting items in there, and she would tell me where each one came from. One time when I was there. I was so impressed by all of this that I did the unspeakable and said "Aunt Annie, how old are you?" She looked at me and laughed and said "son, I'll tell you, I'm as old as my tongue and a little older than my teeth." I've never forgotten that...it's a delightful expression if you don't want to tell your age. Going on back to the Twiggs...the picture of the guy that's in our living room is George Lowe Twiggs and his wife who was Sarah Lowe... they were first cousins and were the parents of the John Twiggs who got killed by his overseer in South Carolina. Their families had places across from each other at the fall line of the Savannah River...the place where the rapids were and you couldn't bring the ships

in any further, and they had been competing with each other for a hundred years for bringing the goods in and taking the goods out, so the families decided why continue the competition, why not merge. They merged by marrying their two oldest children who then merged the plantations. They also had a beautiful old house in Augusta where the expressway goes now. I have been there a number of times...it was on Green Street. It had four floors...the top floor was the ballroom... a beautiful room with columns and gold things around the top. We were able to go up there in rainy weather and skate. His brother was David Emanuel Twiggs who was a decorated general in the Union Army who at the time of the outbreak of the War between the States, he was the commanding officer of the Southwest territory...all the new territory we had gotten from Mexico during the Mexican War...Texas and all the southwestern states. He was getting on in years...I think of him as a young fellow now, but at that time he was about seventy, but he apparently was not as able as he once was. One of the stories...I don't know whether it was documented or not...that Aunt Margaret told me was he was awarded a medal...though at that time officers were not awarded medals, they were awarded jeweled swords of extraordinary value. At a battle in Mexico...I can never remember which one it is, Monterey maybe...he had prepared himself for battle. At that time if you got wounded in the stomach it was usually fatal. To avoid that, you emptied your stomach, so he had taken a laxative so if he got wounded he wouldn't die of peritonitis or whatever you get. And so he was sitting on the john when the battle commenced. The battle was going bad for our guys when someone came and said,"General, we got to get going." So he got off the john, jumped on his horse and waved his sword around and told the troops to turn around and charge. So they quit their retreat and turned around and charged and took the day and the city they were trying to capture. He got various things from Congress and, as a matter of fact, he was such a distinguished hero that they had a portrait of him hanging in the halls of Congress. I have tried to locate the portrait but unsuccessfully. During the Civil War someone put a big sign under it saying "Traitor" so I presume it got destroyed. He turned over the southwest territory to the Confederacy and he was on his way back to Augusta to spend a few days, and he thought he was going to be appointed Commanding General of the Confederate Army since he was the second ranking general in the Union army. He unfortunately died while he was on this trip towards Richmond. His father was John Twiggs who was a general in the Revolutionary War. He was originally either from Maryland or Virginia...I don't think Albert tagged it right. He was a general who was active along the border between Augusta and South Carolina and the main fighting that went on at that time was between the colonists...those who were loyal to England and the Rebels and he was one of the

**SUPT. JOHNSON
CRITICALLY ILL**
Peritonitis Develops Following
Appendicitis Operation.

John T. Johnson, general superintendent of the Central of Georgia Railway, is critically ill at the Oglethorpe Sanatorium with peritonitis, which developed following an operation yesterday afternoon for appendicitis.

At midnight Mr. Johnson's condition was grave and little hope was held out for his recovery. He was stricken with appendicitis about 11 o'clock yesterday morning at his home, No. 315 East Huntingdon street, and was immediately taken to the sanatorium.

Mr. Johnson left his office at 7 o'clock Saturday night, apparently in the best of health. He had held a meeting with the superintendents of the Central lasting most of the day. Sunday morning he did not go to his office, breaking his custom, but remained at home for the purpose, as he expressed it to friends, of "resting up."

The operation for appendicitis appeared to be successful. The patient rallied and seemed to improve. In a short time, however, peritonitis developed and he rapidly grew worse. Mrs. Johnson and two children, Marlon and Bradley, are away for the summer, in Virginia somewhere, but efforts to reach them by telegraph have been unsuccessful so far. They were expected to be at Gordonsville yesterday but messages to that place were not delivered.

Mr. Johnson is one of the most popular railroad officials in Savannah. Since the death of General Manager T. S. Moise he has ranked next to President W. A. Winburn in the Central.



J. T. JOHNSON
Superintendent of Central of Georgia
Railway.

**MR. JOHNSON WILL
BE BURIED TO-DAY**

Central Officials Accompany
Body to Columbus.

HIS FUNERAL TO BE THERE

Deceased Official Held in High
Esteem in Columbus.

Rebels. He served with Nathaniel Green and some others...there's some correspondence between the two of them...and I also have been told he was one of the first trustees of the University of Georgia. I have not been able to validate that. He also was employed by the State of Georgia to survey the lands that belonged to the state and the colonists and to the Indians, and at one point he was called the savior of Georgia because he peacefully got the Indians to relocate within areas that were acceptable to both sides. His wife was Ruth Emanuel whose brother was David Emanuel who was one of the early Governors of the state of Georgia. I think he was the third or fourth Governor or something like that. I can remember talking to Judge Atkinson in Savannah who had done various research into history, and he said that David Emanuel was distinguished in several areas other than being governor...one of which...he was an expert marksman. Because of his name, people thought he was Jewish. Actually he was a Presbyterian...a staunch Presbyterian...and took great offense at being called a Jew. If someone called him a Jew he challenged them to a duel, and it is said he took care of two or three people who called him a Jew, in a duel. In looking further into it myself, I found there was a large diaspora of Jews to Scotland in around 600 or 700 AD and this is probably where he came from. Having been in Scotland for a thousand years they thought of themselves as Scots not Jews, even though they retained their Jewish names. I thought that was right interesting. Back to the Johnsons...we don't know a lot about them. My grandmother was Betti Lou Mountcastle whose family was from around the Roanoke area. My grandfather was John Thomas Johnson...he was known as J. T. Johnson...was Superintendent of the Central of Georgia Railroad which I always thought was a flunky. But in later years I found he was the big chief in charge...he was a big fellow. We have seen newspaper articles about his funeral and it had the Governor and the Ex-Governor and senators on a special train that took him from Savannah over to Columbus where he was buried...I think in Linwood Cemetery. He apparently was quite a guy. My father always said he was an orphan but I don't think he was, but I haven't been able to run down much on him. Carolyn Trosdal has a bunch of papers on him that apparently indicate things otherwise and I have not been able to get them from her to read them. Hopefully I'll be able to get them and add an addendum to this. I did notice when we were up in Annapolis that the first Governor of Maryland was a fellow named Thomas Johnson. I don't know whether he was a relative or not. I don't know...that would be interesting to follow up on. I have not be able to do so yet. So much for ancient history. These will be random thoughts so don't expect them to be in order. One quick addendum...the plantation in SC that belonged to the Twiggs eventually was bought by my dear wife, Benita's, great-grandfather, Jacob Phinizy, who later sold it to the Haskells



and Uncle Bub is married to Laura Haskell...which property she and her family inherited over in South Carolina. They are very happily lapping up the money as it is sold.

Our Servants-"The Help"

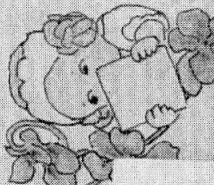
I'd like to tell about some of the servants we had. When we first moved out to Isle of Hope, we had an English governess. She was an older woman than most of the servants, and she didn't last too long. She lived in the house with us and then we got another governess who was younger...I'd guess she was probably in her twenties or something like that. She was English and what these folks were supposed to do was to look out for the house and make sure the servants were taking care of us. And also, they had some sort of class during the day to teach us something or the other...I don't remember much being taught. At that point, Fa was having to go to New York on a rather constant basis, and the way they went, they'd get on a ship in Savannah and go up, and the next morning they'd be in New York. It was a delightful way to travel back and forth, go up there and spend a couple of days on the ship and come back. So the governess sounded like a wonderful idea. Everything went along pretty good except that second governess they got...she was kind of mean. One morning, Johnny Mac and I saw her in the kitchen. Someone had left the hose outside...the kitchen was downstairs, actually below ground level...and the windows were open because it was summertime. We got the bright idea of turning the hose on and cool her off. Bless pat, we turned the hose on the poor woman and started skeeting her and she was jumping all over the kitchen trying to get away from the cold water. Fortunately my mother and father came home that afternoon and after giving me an appropriate punishment, they took her in to the train station, and she departed going back to Europe. I'll never forget that poor woman jumping around there like she was being hit with machine gun fire. But anyhow, we didn't have any more governesses after that. We had George who was supposed to take care of the yard and drive the automobile and Clara was supposed to do the kitchen. The yard was a little bit big so George would get folks to come over and help him. Then we got someone else as a maid...Tallulah...then a nurse named Julia who took care of Betty. As a matter of fact, one time when Tats was going up to Augusta with Betty, she had Julia along. She had a dreadful automobile accident and I remember Julia got terribly cut on her arm...a cut about a foot and a half long and it was bare...it was awful looking. Julia worked for us and actually lived in the cottage for a couple of years Then George had a heart attack or something...he took sick...and Clara became the primary housecleaner and George became the cook. And he did a pretty good job although Clara went down and showed him what to do before every meal. They were delightful, George and Clara. George died somewhere in there and during that time we were introduced to the Lutens. They were a large family. Annie Lutten who was



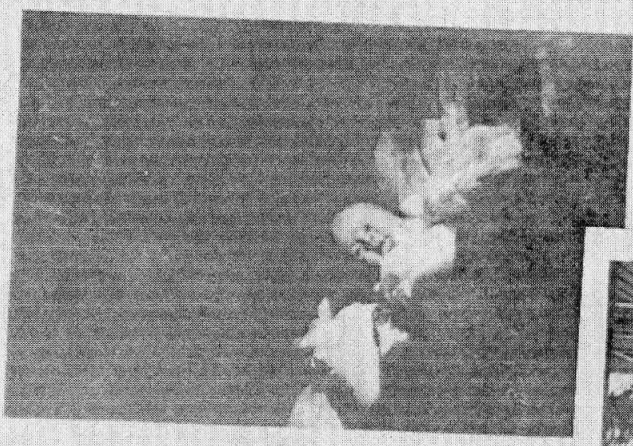
My First Outing

At the age of two weeks
 my mother took me to the park in
 her carriage as I had not gotten
 a carriage. It was a beautiful
 day and quite warm! I
 went to sleep as we walked
 along for I had a blue nail
 over my face and could
 see nothing but after I reached
 the park I woke up and had
 lots of fun for a while watching
 the squirrels and pigeons but soon
 tired of them and thought of all
 my toys at home. So I told my
 mother to take me back to my mother.

Photographs



Age One
 Mother.
 Taken on
 the bed
 in my room



6 months

the mother used to do the washing. We had to take the laundry over to her house. She couldn't leave there because she had, I think, seven children. She'd wash and dry the clothes over there and then we'd go back and pick them up and bring them back home. This was back during the '30s. Her children came over and worked for us off and on doing odd things. She was basically uneducated but she had at least three of her children who she put through college by washing clothes. James became a principal of one of the high schools in Savannah. Mary, who was a wonderful, wonderful woman, was a little bit older than I was. I remember one time when I came back from Episcopal, she was baby sitting the other children in the house, she looked at my books. At that point, she was in college. She looked at them and said "those are the same books I've got and I'm a Junior in college." At that point, I was in second year at Episcopal. We had several conversations over the years but Mary said at that time "you know, it's going to be a long time before we get these things caught up together. I think it will be at least two generations." Now at this time, in 2003, I look back on it and realize she was hurrying things up. We still haven't gotten them together. Another one that worked for us was John Henry. John Henry taught me to tie shoes, taught me to shrimp, fish, etc. Benita still tells me I tie my shoes wrong but I tell her that's the way the English tie them, and she's finally gotten so she doesn't fuss every time I put my shoes on. I now wear loafers so she doesn't have to worry about it. Just a short word about the depression. I was about five or six years old at that point. Fa came home from work shortly after we had moved into the house at Isle of Hope...we had about six or seven servants at that point...and he asked me to come downstairs with him...it was just after breakfast. He called all the servants in and said "I've got some bad news. I have been cut back considerably in salary so we're not going to be able to afford having you work for us any more. I just wanted to give you a chance to find other jobs, and when you make up your minds what you want to do, let me know and I'll do the best I can. Times are bad and I'm out of money." And with that, one of the servants said "can we go talk about it?" He said "certainly." They went and talked and after about a half an hour, they all came back and said "Mr. Tommy, can we all just stay on and work if you can feed us?" This is important because things were really desperate at that time. And they were willing to work just for food. Fa said "we can do a little more than that" and as I have already pointed out elsewhere in this tale, there were a couple of cottages on the place, and several of the servants moved into those. And he said "I'll pay each one of you three dollars a week so you'll have some spending money and we'll feed you as long as we can." They were all just as happy as they could be with this solution to the problem. Can you imagine the problems we had at that time? These folks were really wonderful people, and Fa was trying to do the best he could.

His salary had been cut down to something like five hundred dollars a month, he had just taken on the house and had the payments and all this other stuff, but it worked out. I remember the Christmas after that I was wanting a watch for Christmas and Fa said that that was out of the question. John Henry happened to hear me tell Fa that, and bless pat, on Christmas I got a watch from John Henry. Watches were not expensive at that time...I think about a dollar and fifty cents...and that was a half of his weeks salary that he paid for a watch for me. I've always been very touched by that. Others that worked there...like Susie Bevins who'd come over on special occasions or helping out Clara and George...she was George's sister, I believe. She grew up over in Pin Point where one of our Supreme Court Justices came from. We also had various others, one of whom was a fellow named Meldrim. He had his own mule. He'd plow the field in the back and plant it every year and then come over and harvest it. I think that he split it with Fa. It was a real nice situation. We had various servants who were with us for a long time. One of them was Frank Stewart who had the most magnificent physique you ever heard of. We kept telling him he ought to fight Joe Louis for the heavyweight championship. He was flattered by it but he didn't try and fight him. Frank was a nice man and when World War II broke out...he had been doing some painting around the place for Tats...he went down to the shipyards and applied for a job as a painter and they paid him more money in a day than he made for us in a week. So naturally, he went to work in the shipyards. It also kept him out of the service. Then when I came back from the war, this other young fellow...he was about my age...showed up and said he wanted a job. And Tats said she didn't have anything for him. He asked if he could hang around for a few days and see if he could make himself useful. He said he had just gotten out of the army and didn't have anything else to do, and the other folks in Sandfly told him he might try there. He said he was a Tremble. The Trembles were the servants next door at the Pierponts. And Lehman just started helping around there. I think he finally left about twenty-five or thirty years later. Lehman was a wonderful man, even thought he did like to drink a little bit. There were other folks that worked there...I wish I could remember all of their names. All of them were most pleasant and productive. We grew up with them, you might say. There was not this antagonism between the races. We didn't realize there was supposed to be any antagonism. We were friends. If we needed something we asked. If they needed something, they asked. I remember on the island there at Isle of Hope there weren't too many white people. In order to get up a football game, we'd have to go find some of the black ones. We'd play football together, baseball together, we wrestled together, we did various things together. I must say it was just an amazing sort of a way to grow up. One thing that sticks in my mind...when I was appointed to the

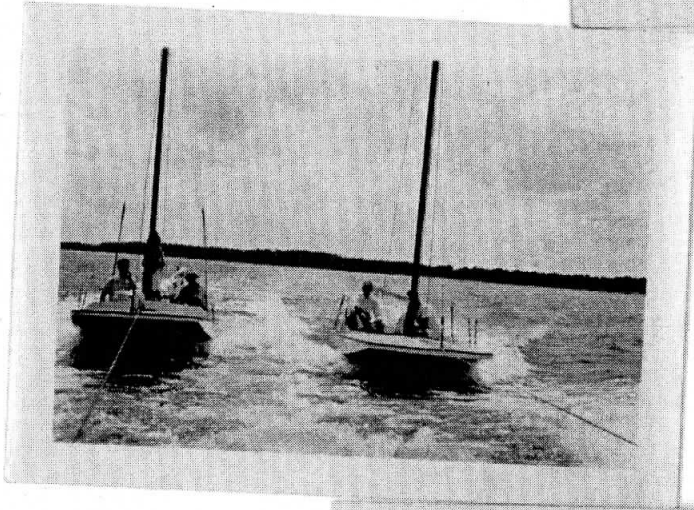
Solicitor General's office in Savannah, my picture appeared in the newspaper. And the next day, John Henry called and said "Mr. Tommy Jr., I saw your picture in the paper. You in trouble?" He couldn't read. I said "I'm in the District Attorney's office (Solicitor General's office)" and he said "oh, you're on that side then." I said "Yep" and he said "I sure am glad you're not in trouble. I was going to help you out if you needed it" This was from someone I hadn't seen in ten years. It was an amazing thing. Lehman, for instance...he got put in jail a couple of times. One time I went down and got him released and the jailor grabbed hold of me and put me in his cell and said "since you got him out you're going to have to stay here. We got to feed somebody this meal." I said "I'm in a hurry to get somewhere". He said "just sit here for fifteen minutes." So I sat in the jail cell for fifteen minutes. And it's not a very pleasant sort of thing to do. But it was an interesting sort of growing up.

School

We had to go to school. I started at Pape school which was really a girls school, and they allowed boys to come in the early years but girls could go on through high school. One of my greatest disappointments in my early life was when I was five. I went there together with Betty McIntosh and after about a week they told me I couldn't go there any more. I couldn't understand why. Later I was told that there were two boys in the class and fifteen girls and they didn't think that was a healthy thing. I got kicked out of kindergarten. I went back there next year to first grade. Unknown to the folks at the school, Betty would come home each day and tell me what they had done at school and she basically helped me to get started in first grade. By the time I got back to school, I was up with everybody in the class but they weren't up with me. I must say I was probably a problem because I remember being put out in the hall and being told I was a bad boy and that was why I had been put out in the hall. I was disruptive, etc. Pape was a delightful school which was run by a dear lady named Pape, and amongst other things you had to start out in school by learning French as well as English. The folks in Savannah thought, and I think they still do, you had to speak French in order to be civilized. I don't say that I ever agreed with it but I learned it to a degree. But anyhow, it was a wonderful, wonderful start on getting through life. After a couple of years Pape got too expensive so I had to go to public school. It was a carpool situation because they didn't have school buses. My father would take us one day and Mrs. Mac would take us the next day. My mother or Mrs. Mac would pick us up after school and I had to go usually to the Rankins because I was the youngest and got out before the carpool was ready for me to go home. Since I was at the Rankins, I think Tats then decided that I ought to take piano since Mrs. Ellis, Mrs. Rankins' mother, taught piano. I had to go by and take piano each day after school or once a week or whatever. And that took care of me having to go down there for a hour every day. I could walk from the school which was Charles Ellis to the Rankins. I was just a little fellow...six, seven, eight years old. Can you imagine having to walk several blocks in Atlanta to go somewhere? It was wholesome in its delight and you were welcome when you came in. After I took piano I decided I had to take guitar. By that time I had gotten to be nine or ten years old and I had to take the guitar to school which was a bother, but then I went to a dear lady named Mrs. Vick whose husband happened to be the superintendent of schools. It was a wonderful experience. But I remember one of the things about the guitar was you had to soak your hands in salt water, so I couldn't wait to get home and run down on the dock and put my hands in the water. As I soaked them, the little garfish would come along and I'd grab em and

throw them away. They'd come back and I'd grab again. I thought it was kind of surprising they realized I wasn't going to hurt them and they were just playing a game. (I'll go back to times on the dock and the river later.) Then Episcopal High. Everyone was required to participate in sports. You had to weigh no more than one hundred twenty-five pounds to play on the Cake (football) team. It was a good beginning experience...getting your head knocked off, but you made some good friends and started getting assimilated into the school. The studies were very difficult. I was one of the youngest students there. There were about ten of us who were twelve years old and the rest of the student body...which was at that time about two hundred twenty-five...were older boys up to a couple who were in their early twenties still trying to get out of school. We had one day a month when you could go into town...into Washington...on Monday because the other schools got out on Saturday and they didn't want us to get mixed up with them, I suppose. Anyhow, we would go in...a typical day off...see two movies and come back. I found the Smithsonian and before the moving picture houses opened, I'd go by the Smithsonian and spend the morning there, and then catch a movie about noon, and then catch another one about two, and then get back to school at the time we were supposed to be there, which was six o'clock. We ate all our meals in the dining room at the school. Being one of the younger fellows, we got out of study hall at nine fifteen while the older ones didn't get out until nine forty-five. So we got a head start in the bathroom and to bed. But it was a rude awakening to be shipped off to a place like that at such an early age of life. I survived...so did almost everybody else, amazingly...but I must say when we came home for Christmas, it was a joyful occasion. We went back to winter and I had never encountered any cold weather like that...the snow and ice...it was another education. The winter passed and spring came around and we could smile and breathe again. We had a spring break and we got to go home then. The Christmas break was usually about two weeks and the spring break was ten days. Then I must say it began getting hot up there in May. Humidity was something in Savannah, but in Washington it was unreal. They don't call it "foggy bottom" for nothing because the humidity was just unbelievable. Of course, we had no air conditioning and it was just plumb uncomfortably hot, and we looked forward to getting home so we could get the sea breezes and get cooled off for the summer. I attended Episcopal for four years and after a very inauspicious start, did quite well in the schoolwork and was on the High List most of the time after my first quarter. The High List was students who had an average of ninety or above and it was posted so you could see where other people were. And it was an interesting situation. We also were invited to visit members of the faculty on Sunday evenings. One of the faculty was Mr. Read...Mr. Willoughby Read and his wife.

They were from England at one point. Whether they were actually English or had lived there a lot I don't know. But they were a delightful elderly couple and we would go there, and they would give us some sort of punch and Mrs. Read made some delicious cookies. They also enjoyed classical music and they would play records and discuss the composers and artists who performed. Because of that, I found we could go to the National Symphony. We could get a season ticket of seven or eight concerts and that gave us an extra day...that didn't count as our day off...we could go there as part of our education. And I remember I wrote to my father and asked him if I could have an extra seven dollars and fifty cents for the season ticket and I got a letter back with a check from my mother saying, "yes, by all means." She had always been interested in cultural education, if you will, since she had not finished college and had educated herself very well through extensive reading and also going to any play that came to Savannah or anytime a symphony orchestra came there, and I attended quite a few of those. At Episcopal, we went into town on Sunday afternoons to these National Symphony concerts and saw some really fantastic people. I don't remember all of them, but we were exposed to most of the great artists at the time...folks like Caruso, etc. They were wonderful. We got into town ahead of time so some of us would see the burlesque show (which was a violation of the rules) before the symphony. I did not graduate from Episcopal because you didn't need to in order to go to college. At that time, I had enough credits...you had to have sixteen credits to get into college...I had eighteen at the end of my fourth year and that was enough to get into any college in the country, and with the grades I had at Episcopal I didn't even have to take the college boards which is the equivalent of the SATs today, I presume. Between leaving Episcopal High and going off to VMI, I worked one summer at National Gypsum in Savannah which primarily made wall board. It was a big company, a national company that Fa had done some financing for. The war was on at that point and they were delighted to have somebody come out there. I was planning on majoring in chemistry in college and they had a chemistry department and I went to work in the chemistry department. My main job was to go out and get samples of each batch of gypsum that was made and test it to see if it was hardening at the proper rate, then go and measure the boards as they came off the machines to make sure they were the right size...various things like that. The manager of the department was delighted I was there because the only other people he had working for him were three or four women who couldn't get out in the plant with the men. He had to go out there and do all that dirty work so he was delighted to have me there to do that for him. Also, about a week after I started he said that he was going on vacation. He hadn't had a vacation in two years, and now that I was there, he could take a vacation. I thought that was quite a compliment. My



father said "son, he was desperate." I worked out there for the better part of two months. It was quite a journey to get there and back because, of course, I had no automobile. I'd catch a streetcar. They had a carpool in town. They'd met the streetcar and take me to work and then take me back and put me on the streetcar to go home. I remember I was being paid the magnificent sum of fifty cents an hour which worked out to about twenty dollars a week which I thought was a fortune. But anyhow, it was an interesting experience. Then we got a letter from VMI saying I needed to take a couple more courses...solid geometry and trigonometry...before coming. So I had to quit the job and go to summer school at Savannah High. This was another interesting experience. I really didn't know anybody in the school there, and I started out in the middle of the course. The first test, they gave me the textbooks, the teacher was just as nice as she could be. She went over everything with me a couple of afternoons after class. In the morning, she got me up to speed with my doing double-time at night, you might say. So when the first test came along, I got a hundred on mine. The other people in the class were mostly people who had flunked it during the school year and they were taking it as a makeup. When they found out I'd gotten a hundred on the thing...the next test, I found everybody in the class sitting around me, on top of me practically. The teacher came in, took one look, realized what was going on and informed me I had to get up and sit somewhere else. So I then had to go sit in the corner of the room by myself from then on when we had tests. It was a quick summer and then I headed out to VMI. When it came time for college, I was all set to follow in my father's footsteps and go to Georgia and he informed me I could go to any college in the country except Georgia. He knew it too well. It came as a great shock to me because the guy who lived next to me in the dormitory at Episcopal most of the time, Vincent Dobbs, who was Wayne's father, (his family was from Athens), he made arrangements so we were going to buy out the local bootlegger and pay our way through college selling booze. My father didn't like that idea either so we had to explore other ways. By that time World War II was underway. I remember we were listening to a professional football game on the radio in the dorm when they broke in and announced that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. Us young fellows didn't think too much of it...what a shame...but it became increasingly apparent that all of us were going to be involved in the war ourselves. Vincent and I went to the Capitol the next day to see FDR ask Congress for the Declaration of War. We didn't get in but heard speeches on speakers at the Capitol. I'd go to a military school and be able to take part effectively in the war as well as get an education. In exploring various areas, my grandfather had gone to VMI and he suggested VMI, and I talked with the faculty adviser at Episcopal about it and he said "VMI is probably the hardest school in the

country to get into right now but you can try." So I filed an application and Daddy said he would write a note to the Superintendent and perhaps that would help. I was not surprised. I had the greatest of faith in Daddy...when not too long after that, I got an acceptance letter when there were a number of my classmates who had applied and they hadn't heard anything. VMI, that year with only two hundred fifty places, had received over ten thousand applications of which they had reviewed three thousand of them, narrowed it down and accepted only two hundred and fifty. I was right proud to be one of them. I later found out that not only had Daddy gone to VMI but also his father, Big Pops, had gone there so he could take some courses from Robert E. Lee who was next door at Washington and Lee at the time. In addition, one of Benita's uncles, Uncle Ferdinand, went to VMI. I was right proud to be there. I was not surprised but rather amazed, shall we say, how far its roots go throughout the country. But anyhow, I was accepted and the war was beginning to come along and I remember the summer before going off to college, the war had started and they were having quite a time with the U-boats out in the Atlantic, so back in Savannah when I was home that summer, one of the things my father wanted me to do was to help out with the Coast Guard Auxiliary which was used by volunteers to help patrol the sounds to make sure contraband wasn't brought in. Our armed forces at that point were very, very meager. The Coast Guard in Savannah had maybe ten people, so the Coast Guard Auxiliary augmented it greatly and probably did a great job making people think you had something and therefore stayed away. It was an experience to go out once or twice a month and spend the weekend at St. Catherine's, and inspect shrimp boats when they came in and wander around with the boats painted gray with numbers on them to make them look like warships but with a bunch of young folks and old fogies on them. To me it was a very interesting experience. I was exposed at that time on St. Catherine's to the caretaker, a fellow named Tobie...I think it was Tobie Wood. Tobie was one of the most amazing men I have ever encountered in life. He was a very powerful man...a white man...and he ran the place for the owners, and when we came he'd greet us and show us where things were and would usually take us across in the truck to look at the beach and then later we got a jeep for us to use down there. The old truck was something else...it was a Ford...you had to crank it. I thought I was a pretty powerful sixteen year old kid and I could hardly crank the darn thing and Tobie would just wind it up like a clock...it was amazing. I also saw him run down deer...it was an interesting thing. When we checked in with the Coast Guard they gave us rations, and at that time we had food rationing in the country because of the war but the Coast Guard always gave us a steak to have as a meal...our Saturday night meal. We found we could trade our steak with Tobie for a fish fry. and his fish fries were the best ones

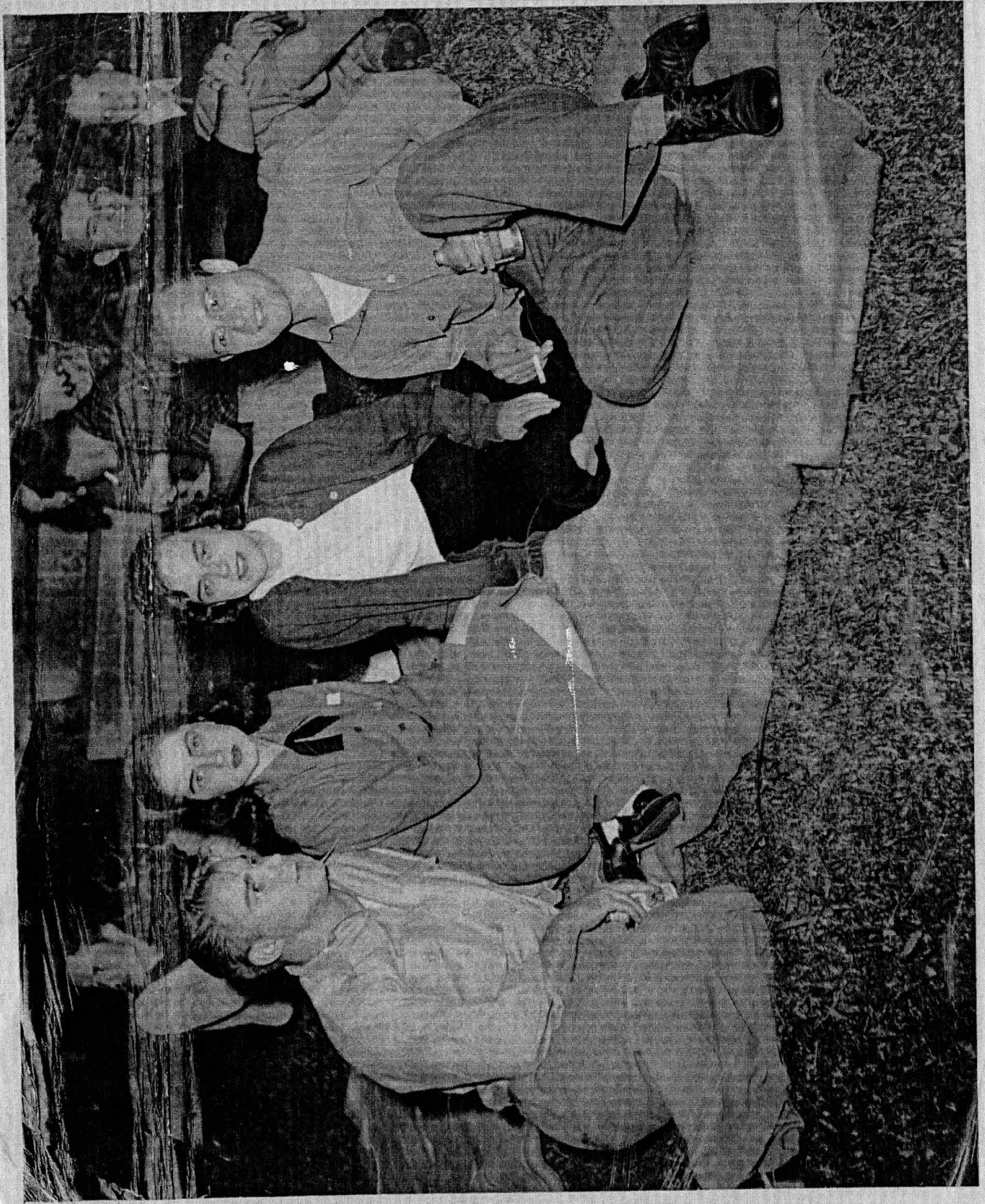
you have ever attended in your life. It was very interesting and we thought we were doing something good for the world. That fall of 1942, I went to VMI and found out how mean and ugly people could be. But we got there and they treated Rats, the Freshmen, like rats...the scum of the earth. It was a belittling experience but you found how to cope with it and what discipline was all about...serious discipline. They had a system where First Classmen could select Rats as their Rats and they were called your Dykes and you were their Dykes. That meant you were supposed to go dress them in the morning, make up their beds and things like that. You did various chores but you were not allowed to shine their shoes or shine their buckles. That was below your status...you weren't quite that low in the world. You had to walk the Rat line which was a prescribed course in the barracks and if you got off that you got beat. Even though you helped the upper classmen get dressed in the mornings, etc., they helped you in advising you what to do. The first morning, I had, as they say, to "drive down" to their room. They were on the first floor, I was on the fifth floor. (They called them stoops.) I went from the fifth stoop to the first stoop and found my Dyke's room in the grey, grey dawn and went in and looked up and the name on one of the dufflebags was Mountcastle. My Dyke was not Mouncastle but Frank Williams who was from Darien Georgia. When they woke up I said very fearfully, "my grandmother was a Mountcastle", and he immediately reacted and figured out who I was because they were a very close family and he knew that his great-aunt had married someone down in Georgia. So I had two friends...I figured...in the upper classes. Then they told me the only way to avoid being in serious trouble all the time was to go out for a sport and be successful in it . They asked me if there was anything I could go out for. I said that I'd tried football and I certainly wasn't big enough for that. At that point, I probably weighed a husky one hundred fifty to one fifty-five pounds and that wouldn't crack it. And then one of them said "have you ever tried wrestling?" And I said "no" and he said "we have a good wrestling team here and you could possibly make that, you'd be in the secured area." So I went out for wrestling and surprisingly enough I made the Rat wrestling team. I had never wrestled before but it was an experience I was proud of having done that. During the course of the year at VMI, they realized all of us probably would be gone into the service by the end of the school year, so they concentrated on the military part of it. I was in the artillery which at that point was a horse-drawn artillery. But we had the modern weapons which we could use and they taught each one of us each job from a private to a battalion commander which would have been a Lieutenant Colonel. We learned how to work the guns ourselves with a hands-on experience. We learned how to load it, we did all the stuff...made them go boom, etc. and then on to organizing them into a battery, firing at various targets and reading

maps. We could even draw up our own maps. It did come in handy I must say... it was a real experience. At the end of the year, I was promoted from private to corporal but then I knew I couldn't come back, I was going into the army.

I got out of the army for...of all things...the debutante season. They were having the first debutante season they'd had since the war started and you have never heard of so many parties, and such lavish parties. I don't think there's ever been a more wonderful season for a people just to dance and sing just for fun. I got a rude awakening because when I got home, my father said "I've entered you in three universities. You've been accepted at all of them. Which one do you want to go to?" I said "but I just got home". He said "well, you've got to start in January...this was the middle of December... and I said "what are they?" and he got me into Harvard and Vanderbilt and Wharton in Pennsylvania. I figured the closest place was Nashville so I opted for Vanderbilt. I was very much in error because it took much longer to get there than to the other two by a day. You could get on the train in Savannah and be in Boston by the next morning. And you could get on in Savannah and be in Philadelphia the next morning. To get to Nashville, you got on the train, had to change trains in Atlanta and it took you two days to get to Nashville. The reason for these three choices of schools was that my father assumed that I was going into business with him and Boston was one of the top financial centers. At that point, some thought it would be more a financial center than New York. But they were on par with each other. Philadelphia was, of course, in the same league but Wharton was supposed to be the best business school in the country. Nashville, where Vanderbilt was, was considered the financial center of the South because of the investment banks and the insurance companies there. Atlanta had not caught up with Nashville at that point so far as financial center was concerned. So I had selected Nashville and got there. I remember one of the funny things was I got a telegram from a man named Brownlee Curry who was head of Equitable Securities in Nashville, and the telegram said "call me. I want you to have dinner with us tonight." I thought "my goodness, he sent a telegram to ask me to go eat." Anyhow, I called him and said "Mr. Curry, why did you send me a telegram? Why didn't you just call me on the phone?" And he said "Son, my time is too valuable for me to wait a hour for you to come to the phone in the dorm hall me while I'm holding on the phone. It's much simpler for you to call me." I learned a real lesson there. If your time is valuable there are ways to whip it. I did go out to eat with them at his house which...shall we say...was nice "digs". He sent his chauffeur for me. I walked into the front door where there was a woman with a telephone switchboard in front of her. She was the receptionist at his home. I identified myself and she called Mr.

Curry on the phone. He came and took me back to a nice sitting room and we sat down and had a drink and chatted for a while. The phone rang two or three times. He'd pick it up back there. I finally said "what's the switchboard in the house for?" He said "look, I work all day and all night. It's easier just to have a phone in every room." He was as close to being a twenty-four hour a day worker as I have ever seen. He was brilliant, he'd made an immense amount of money, he liked to keep making it. I think if he had not died, Nashville probably would have remained the financial capitol of the South. He, unfortunately, had a heart attack about a year later and died. Equitable didn't have anyone that could take his place. I don't think anyone did. It was interesting meeting him and I was then introduced to his son, Brownlee, Jr., who invited me by the fraternity house he belonged to at Vanderbilt, Phi Delt. I went by there and had a meal one night and the next thing I knew, three guys came up and knocked on my door and asked me to join the fraternity. They'd already talked with me about what went on there. It was right at the end of the campus. It was a terrific location and the meals were better and cheaper than in the dormitory, so I thought that was a great idea. So I joined the fraternity. One of the people that I had as a fraternity brother was Sydney Keeble. His father was the general counsel for a rather large insurance company, Life and Casualty, and was also one of these aggressive business people. Sydney and Brownlee Sr. were a real pair. They drove the economy in Nashville. It was amazing how two men made such a big impression on a community. Both of them had heart attacks and died which was unfortunate. Then I settled in to finish up school at Vanderbilt. I was a Sophomore at that point. Towards the end of my Junior year, they had a program where you could get scholarships and a internship with businesses if you could qualify for it. So I applied for it because I was trying to pay my way through school and the GI Bill didn't quite make it all the way, and I was having to get ten dollars a month from my father. Later on, I had to get fifteen dollars a month. I thought that would be a way to get a little more money if I got a scholarship, and to my amazement I was one of a half a dozen who were accepted. It was a right interesting sort of a thing. You would go to seminars in the evenings three or four nights a week, but during the day you would work for one of the companies in Nashville and be paid by the company for working. Unfortunately, the man who was in charge of this program got an offer to become President of the University of Alabama in Birmingham. He accepted that offer and left and there wasn't anyone left to run it so it fell through. When you got back from the war, you were not required to take the normal required courses at colleges for graduation. I had taken all of the business and economic courses that I could and was about to run out. I also took Spanish because I had to have something else. I took Psychology too. Fa suggested that I

apply for law school. He said that it certainly wouldn't hurt anything and might help. So I applied to law school and was accepted there. Surprisingly enough, I began to like it. It was a new experience in school in that they didn't log you into class...you didn't have to check-in or anything...whereas previously where I had been, you weren't allowed to skip class without a penalty. This one...you didn't have to go to class. So for the first month, I goofed off and did what I wanted to do and then I suddenly realized I was going to have to take exams some time so I'd better learn something about this thing called law. I started going to class and I really was enjoying it and started studying and exams came along. Doggone if I didn't do right good. I ended up in the top three or four percent of the class. They had something they called the Order of the Coif which was the top ten percent of the class. I was well within and received an invitation to become one of the editors of the Law Review which was kind of a prestigious sort of a thing. Vanderbilt, at that point, was trying to become a major university and money was put into it. They had hired in the law school the Dean of the Northwestern Law School. Northwestern I had not heard much of then, and subsequently, have heard many things about the fine school that it is. Dean Roscoe Perkins was supposedly the foremost criminal law professor in the country. He was excellent. I took two courses under him. He was just terrific. Additionally, they hired the contracts professor from Harvard and also another professor from Harvard. Then they hired a man who became Dean of the Vanderbilt Law School, also from Harvard. What they had done was put together a staff which was, at that point, equal to any in the country. It was very interesting and challenging. I enjoyed it. After completing my first semester at Vanderbilt, my father thought it would be a good idea for me to go to secretarial school. When he'd gotten out of school, Mr. Mills Lane at the C & S Bank, Mills Lane, Sr., told him he would hire him on the condition that he learned how to take shorthand and to type. Fa then went to a special secretarial school up in New York...it was in upper state New York somewhere, I can't remember the name of it...but he thought it was a very valuable thing to have in your pocket. I might add, I was the only boy in the class in the business school. The rest of them were these delightful young country gals from all around Savannah, none of them from in the city. Of course, at this point, I have lost all those skills completely, forty years off of the typewriter didn't help any. It was helpful both in school and as a lawyer trying cases. It was nice being able to take notes in shorthand. Really, actually it was kind of a made up shorthand that I used. I used the phonetic symbols rather than the actual Gregg system of shorthand, although I did use that at one point. And the typing...I had to do my own typing when I first started and then I found this wonderful gal named Benita who knew how to type too. After we got married, she, effectively, did most of my typing for the



first six or eight months of our marriage. I went to Vanderbilt for a year and a half because they were on a semester system. I decided I really did want to practice law so I decided to change to the University of Georgia so I'd know somebody in the state of Georgia. I'd been away from Georgia ever since I was twelve years old and at that point I was twenty-five. So I transferred down to Georgia, went to school there and finished up law school. As a matter of fact, I ended finishing up first in my class. It was a very interesting and engaging education. I won't go into any great detail about it but it was good, an excellent education. Fa steered me in the right direction even though I did end up at Georgia where he said I'd never go. But when I graduated first in the class, he came up to graduation and watched me walk down in front of everybody else, he said "everything's okay." In my last quarter at Georgia, Dean Hosch called me into his office one day and said "Johnson, I want to welcome you into the Phi Beta Kappa fraternity." And I said "what do you mean?" He said "well, you've been selected to be a member of Phi Beta Kappa." And I said "that's very nice. How much does it cost?" He said "we can probably get around that." Anyhow, I just thought it was just a real nice compliment. I then wrote a letter to my father and told him I'd been nominated for Phi Beta Kappa, and he wrote back and said that he was very pleased with it. About that time Dean Hosch called me into his office again and said "Johnson, I've made a mistake." I said "what's that?" He said "you have to be in school for six quarters in order to be in Phi Beta Kappa and you've only been in school five quarters. Would you like to come back to school for another quarter so you can be inducted?" I said "no, not exactly. I think I'll go ahead and get out." To me, it was a nice compliment that at least I was nominated. Instead, I was elected to Phi Kappa Phi which is another honorary fraternity. My decision to go to Georgia to finish up law school was really quite a good one. Because through the years when I was practicing law, to be able to call someone I knew in a small town in Georgia or in a big town, was a great help. When we were working on various cases or various matters to be able to contact someone who knew you and you knew, was very valuable. Needless to say, as we go through life we repeatedly find out knowing people is a big help in getting to where you want to go. I've been reminded of that so many times when we run into people here, there and yonder, and find "do you know who" and "yes, we do", then you end up being good friends. One of the things that happened to me while I was at the University of Georgia was that I was able to go home practically every weekend. I roomed with Joe Bergen and we would go back to Savannah to spend the weekend and then come back up to Georgia. Joe had an automobile. I didn't, of course. But we became good friends and then he started dating the girl that I'd been dating and that took care of that situation real quickly. Joe and I remained good friends. One weekend when we

went home, my sister, Kathryn, had one of her friends from Sweet Briar there, Benita Phinzy, my dear, wonderful wife, and that was a new experience for me. We had such a nice time, the little I saw of her. They had scheduled it so she had dates with various people, etc. I do remember, the first morning she was there, I was working on one of my sailboats...the *Babe*, trying to get it ready for the summer and she helped me greatly...mostly by going in and getting me a cold beer about every hour. But then she enjoyed a beer too. I remember wonderfully that weekend as I went back to school with Joe and Shirley, I told them "I met the gal I'm going to marry". Both of them hoo-hawed and said "you couldn't possibly." I said "yes, I have" and bless pat, you know, we've been married some 50 odd years now.

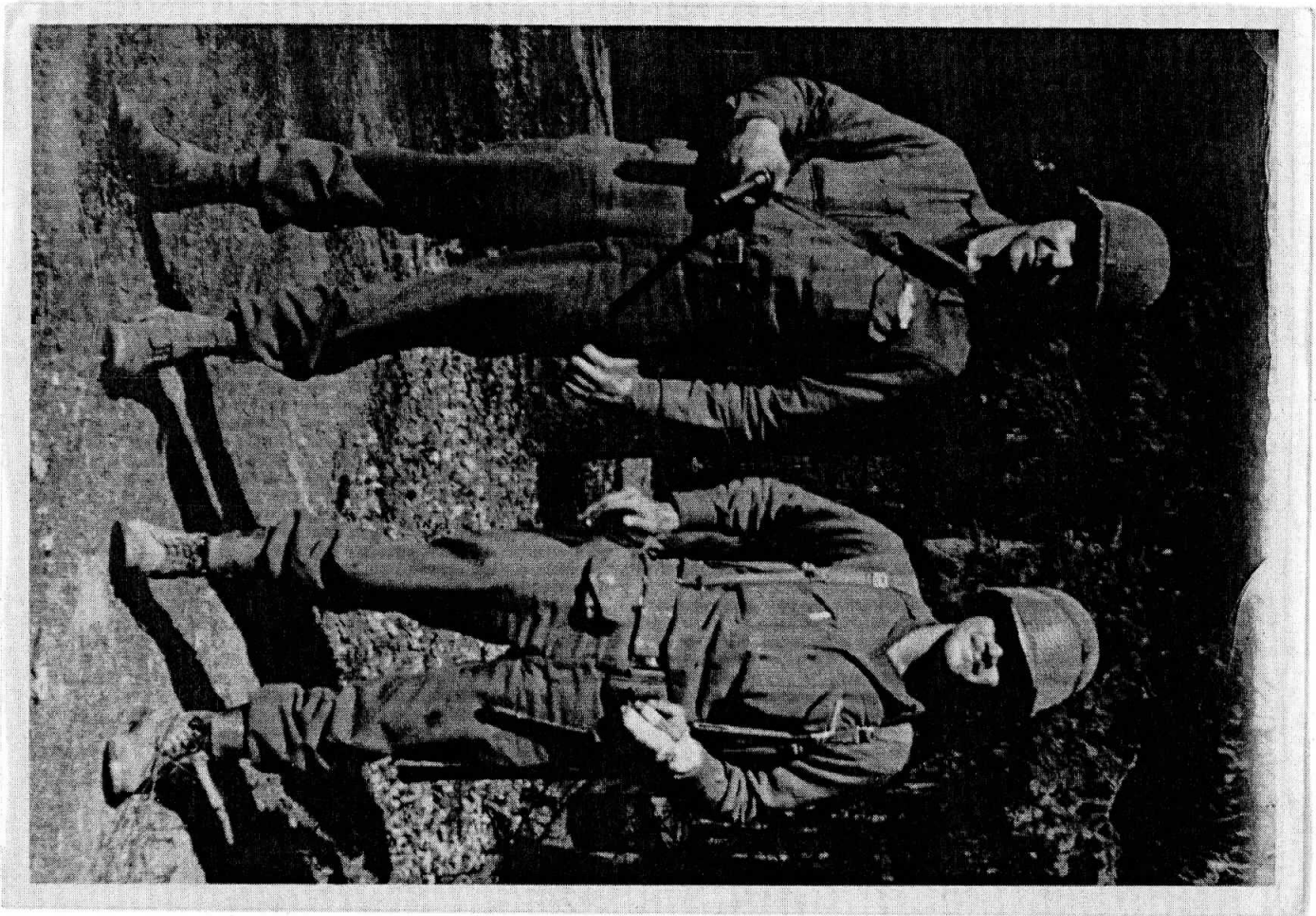
World War II

After my first year at VMI, I then tried to enlist in the army and was told that the quickest way was to just sign up at the draft board and they'd draft me before they could process me otherwise. So when I got back to Savannah, that's what I did. While we were at VMI, they ran us through various experimental things...one of which was taking classification tests for the army to see how our grades compared with folks who were coming in all over the country. I scored quite well on it as did a lot of people. We also had to take physical exams. And those were unreal because when I was on the wrestling team I was probably in the best physical condition I'd ever been in in my life, and we scored real well on those. I was proud of it until I found out when I got into the army they had those records down here at Fort Mac in Atlanta...my father had tried to arrange it so I'd be assigned to the Army Air Force Rescue Unit..the part that picked up people when the planes went down. They had a bunch of big boats and they'd go pick up people and heck, I could run one of those blindfolded. I was all greased to come up to Atlanta and get indoctrinated and head right back down to Savannah and become a part of that unit. They looked at my record and said "no, you can't do that... you've got to go to this special thing down at Fort Benning." So I was assigned to the Army Special Training Program (ASTP). I went down to Benning and spent the winter there. We finished our infantry training but you don't realize how cold it can be when you live out in the open. But boy, it was cold that winter. We had snow several times. By the time we finished infantry training it was in early 1944 and they were preparing over in Europe to invade. We were supposed to have gone back to college. The special program I was in in the Army...we even had college assignments. I was being sent back to VMI which I thought was pretty good but that was all canceled and we were assigned as replacements in rifle companies. Replacements are about the lowest step on the totem pole and rifle companies the lowest on any totem pole. We were then assigned to Fort Jackson in South Carolina outside of Columbia. It was not the high point of my life by any means. It was beginning to get hot there and the routine was that they rolled you out of the sack about six o'clock in the morning, threw some greasy eggs at you and some grits and told you it was time to get moving. The normal activity for six days a week was that by seven o'clock you'd be walking out to the training grounds under a full pack which weighed about forty pounds. And you walked ten miles out to the training ground and train all day and then come back late in the afternoon, walking again. I must say my poor old legs are still tired from that. We lived through that. Couple of funny things...one day I was in a class on the training grounds. The old army gave you lectures over and over again on the same

thing...most of which I had learned at VMI. One day the lecture was on taking a thirty caliber machine gun apart and putting it back together, and I went to sleep. It's amazing how you can go to sleep sitting on the ground with an old army instructor who gets up and says "we got to have some dis-sip-line around here men. Come on." I went to sleep and the Sargent came over and poked me and said "can you put this thing back together? You haven't been watching very well." I said "sure, do you want me to do it blindfolded or with my eyes open?" With that, he blindfolded me and I put it back together and he put me on kitchen police...KP...for the next week. That of course is not a real fun detail either. You begin to learn to keep your mouth shut and your eyes open after something like that. I think one of the first weekends at Fort Jackson I figured out it was a hundred and fifty miles from Savannah and you could go on a weekend pass for up to a hundred and fifty miles. I had gone down and gotten me a weekend pass and came into the barracks...it was Saturday afternoon... and said "anyone want to go home with me to Savannah for the weekend?" And three or four guys said "yea, let's go." So we got ourselves cleaned up and went out and started hitch-hiking down there. One of the guys was Warren Sweeney who was from Cleveland at that time and who now lives up in the Chicago area. We also had a couple of guys from Boston and other places...We did not end up getting a ride so went into town to the bus station and caught the bus to Savannah. We went and spent the weekend and Sweeney and I got along very well together. The other guys just didn't seem to fit exactly. From then on it was just Sweeney and I who went down to Savannah on the weekends. You weren't supposed to get but one pass a month or something like that, and I went in to get the pass, and one time I went in the Lieutenant said "you've already had two this month and that's all you're supposed to get." And I said "well, there's nothing to do around here." and he said "I'm going to walk out of the room for a minute and you can do what you want with those empty ones." So I picked up the blank book of passes and Sweeney and I used them to get to Savannah whenever we could get away. What we'd do... we'd go out and try to hitch-hike our way down there and I don't think we made it all the way except one time...but we got to be good friends with the bus driver and he would always come along behind us and pick us up. He was such a good friend that he would sign the passes as the lieutenant and we'd go on down. We really had some wonderful weekends and got to be good friends, and all of a sudden we were informed that we would have a government-sponsored tour of Europe. Much racking of teeth, etc. but at that point, my father and mother met Sweeney's mother and father. They went up to visit them in Cleveland, I believe. They corresponded the whole time we were overseas. They would exchange what Sweeney had written them and what I had written to Tats and Fa. Sweeney and

I...once we got over to Europe and were in combat which was another fracturing experience...we would check on each other each afternoon around dark. You'd find a place to dig a hole in the ground and go to sleep but Sweeney had been assigned to a different outfit. What I'd failed to mention was along the way in basic training...I think it was advanced training...both of us had gone to radio school so that we could operate the radios and unknown to us that was a death wish because once we got into combat, those who had radio training were assigned as forward observers. When we had gotten to the infantry regiment at Fort Jackson and were going through the receiving process, the officer who was assigning people had gone to VMI. He saw my VMI ring and said "oh my goodness. We don't have any more room in the artillery but the next best place I could put you is in the mortars, the heavy mortars." I said "but I've had artillery training" and he said "I know, but the army just doesn't work that way and if I could, I would." So I ended up in heavy mortars and Sweeney ended up in heavy mortars. Sweeney had been to Yale before he went over there. When we got assigned as forward observers, he was with one rifle company and I was with another. So when we could get back to our company when a day's fighting was over with, we were able to return to our units for the next days' assignment. Usually you wouldn't be right next to each other and we found that it was awfully hard to keep in touch and see if the other guy was all right. So what we started doing, when we got back to our unit, we had our code sign and we'd call out "CHLO-----WEE" figuring the Germans or our side wouldn't know what the heck that was...some lonesome cow out there wanting to be serviced or something. Anyhow, it worked. I'd hollow out "Chlowee" and over the hill, Sweeney would hollow it back. It was a very difficult winter to say the least. We started out...we landed at LeHavre in France. It was the first part of October. We left the United States the first part of September and went over to England and stayed in a town called Leek which was about an hour's train ride down to Manchester. My dear wife frequently tells me I don't always tell her to bring the right clothes (there was a heat wave the first time we went to England) but I swear we were in England in September and got snowed on the whole time. I don't know whether I was in the wrong part of England at the wrong time or what. Then we were shipped over to France, landed in LeHavre...cold, cold rain...and they put us in trucks and took us out into a field and said "ok, now dig in." Digging in was not a very good thing to do because it was raining so hard it filled up with water. I was no longer with Sweeney at that point. So we pitched a tent with whatever guy you were next to. You each carried a half a tent so you had to have a buddy to sleep with. We pitched tents and after that I don't think I pitched another tent until we got to Czechoslovakia. We spent a miserable night in fields outside LeHavre and the next day we were put in

trucks and taken down to Nancy and from there we were supposed to go into action by taking the fortress at Metz...which we did. But I must say that was our first brutal arrival into actual war because people were shooting and also there were bodies around. At Nancy and at Metz, they had bodies stacked up so they could be picked up and taken off and get buried I suppose. The fortress we took at Metz was barely occupied...no big deal...and we went in thinking this was pretty good to get out of this rain. We got inside and the Germans had been there for a good while and the plumbing didn't work. so they had used most of the place as alternate latrines. So it was just a stinkhole. We then were told that we were battle-hardened troops and we would go on to attack in the Saar basin. And that was our real baptism to fire. Before dawn, we were supposed to jump off, as they say, and we started out and just as we started getting into the area where the Germans were the only people in front of us, the biggest bloomy-di-bloom you ever heard, our artillery had opened up just behind us...not more than one hundred feet behind us...and the compression from those shells going over. Really, you could hardly stand. Not the shells hitting you but compression of the air. We hit the ground so we didn't have to worry about standing and then we advanced. And the war had begun for this young fellow, Tommy Johnson. We advanced and were heading into the Saar basin where the manufacturing center of Germany was when the Ardennes breakthrough occurred up in the Battle of the Bulge so we were stopped, and relieved by some other troops and pulled out. This, I think, was just before Christmas in 1944. We tacked up in trucks and were taken to relieve Bastogne which we eventually did. It was cold, cold, cold. I do remember before we headed out, one of the officers in the rifle company I was with at the time, L company, a Lieutenant Hall, found a house we could occupy and spend the night in before we'd take off the next morning. We got there and he said "you guys haven't been issued any rations but I have and I'll share it with you" and he pulled out a bottle of scotch. We all had a drink of scotch. I think that was one of the happiest Christmas presents I have ever had to have someone with that much compassion. We got to sleep dry that night in the room the Lieutenant had found for us and I must say that was probably the last time we slept inside for the next couple of months. We headed out the next morning in trucks and went up towards Bastogne. It was a long, bumpy, hard trip. Our backsides were worn out before we got there. It wasn't very far...only about a hundred miles...but it seemed like forever. When we got there, they dumped us out and we dug holes and slept in the icy ground and snow. The next morning, we got up and it was time to jump off and go attack the southern part of the German salient that was going towards Bastogne. My first recollection of it...of seeing things along the way like torn-up vehicles, bodies...was we came up over a hill and saw some German tanks, the Tiger tank, on



the hill opposite us and we, of course, hit the dirt. I called back to our guys to start shooting at them but they were a little late. The Germans shot at us first. There were six or seven of us standing around there and we hit the ground and when the shells stopped I was the only one alive. That's a humbling experience. I was able to call in and get shells on the tanks and they moved out and we were able to go on further forward. We went up a road about a mile or mile and a half and came upon a town full of Germans. We had to have again a right fierce fire fight. Somehow or another, I lived through all of that and then we went on. It was so cold, I can't express it. Anyhow, my feet got frozen and the toes started turning black...this was during the next few days... and they were very painful to walk on, so I found we had some overshoes and I got some overshoes, put some straw in them, and used them instead of my regular shoes because I couldn't get my feet in my regular shoes. We moved on along and gradually closed the line. The Germans retreated back or what was left of them. We captured a bunch of them and then we went into Bastogne. There wasn't much left of it. A few of our guys were there and they were glad to see us, but they were hungry because they hadn't had much to eat in the last couple of weeks. We were hungry too so the kitchen brought up a hot meal...the first hot meal we'd seen in two or three weeks. We secured the town and started heading towards Luxemburg. The Germans by then were pretty much in retreat. We went into Luxemburg...I remember I think we went into Luxemburg City...and we were able to find a place inside for a change and spent the night there. The next morning I thought I heard a cow out there mooing and here someone had brought in the midst of the war their cow to be serviced. Someone brought his bull out and they serviced the cow right in the middle of the street with shells going off in the distance. Luxemburg is somewhat different now. We were then warned by officers to watch for anything around because the Germans had probably left some booby traps and other things. We headed up towards the river. I forget the name of the river...it was a small river, the Our maybe...it was on the edge of town and it was the one we saw in the *Stars and Stripes* a couple of Days later that Patton said he'd walked across. We didn't see Patton anywhere around there. A couple of the guys did find some stuff called calvados which is like white lightning and they were getting loaded up with it and I went to the company and said "look, if you drink that stuff, we're going to be open to attack by the Germans. Let's cool it and sit here and wait and then blow 'em." And that's what happened. At nine o'clock that night, here came the Germans and we blew them out. It was an interesting sort of thing that a private could do something like that with these great guys we were with. We stayed there for a few days, then headed on out to go across the Mosel to go into Koblenz which is over on the Rhine. Going across the Rhine was the next big objective. We crossed the Mosel

in boats. It wasn't a very happy crossing but we happened to do it in the middle of the night and we weren't expected. We went across without any major casualties. The Germans retreated and I think they went on back towards Koblenz. We went into Koblenz and there was shooting still going on. I remember in this house to house thing, you'd duck into a doorway and lean around, shoot a couple of times, and duck into the next doorway. All of a sudden I looked up and there were these two British soldiers standing in front of this building, standing at parade rest with their guns at rest. I said "durn, how come they're standing there with shooting going on all around them and no-one shooting them?" The Germans retreated so I went up and said "what are you guys doing here?" and one of the guys said "we're protecting her majesty's property." I said "her majesty's property. Isn't she back in England?" "Yes, sir, but this is her majesty's property". It turned out to be a champagne factory or winery or whatever you call them. He said "we're protecting her goods." We said "okay" and about that time someone tapped me on the shoulder and said "the back of it has been blasted out. You want a few bottles?" The next thing I knew they had loaded up a truckload of champagne and taken it on up. We found an apartment building...it was empty...went in there and decided that was a good place to bivouac for the night out of the cold. We went in and of course had a couple of sips, got a good night's sleep and headed out the next morning. I was on a truck heading towards the main square in Koblenz when all of a sudden a darn fool Eight-eight opened up on us (an Eighty-eight is a very accurate German cannon) and I jumped over the side. Someone had left a big crosscut saw hanging up there and left the blade sticking up which I hadn't noticed and I caught my hand on it going over. And it tore it up something bad. I had to wrap it up to make it stop bleeding and went on to the aid station to see if I could get it taken care of a little better because it needed some stitches. I got there and the medic who was there said that the doctor would be back shortly. And the doctor came back in and the doctor had found the champagne because he obviously was so drunk I didn't want him to touch me. So the medic wrapped my hand up, bandaged it and then I went on back to this building we had found to stay in. An interesting thing was that we were all surprised that they had modern plumbing there. I must say we picked up a couple of bottles of champagne on the way. It helped with the pain but I must say, for the next several days, I was really in bad pain from this hand which was torn up. Then we were briefed about what was up for the next several days which involved crossing the Rhine River with the enemy on the other side. I was then told because I could not use that hand I would not be in the attack because we had to paddle boats across and things like that. But they would like me to go up there and do some spotting, so far as zeroing mortars in which I then found out was to be done that evening. That night

at dusk I went over this hill and thought I was in a position so no one could see me from the other side and walked down the hill and found a vantage spot. There was a town across the river. I was supposed to zero in on that which I commenced doing. The way to do it, you used a phosphoreus shell which would send smoke out. The phosphoreus shells, when they went in the water, they wouldn't do anything so it took several rounds to finally get one to zero in on the town. I then had them fire some high explosive shells over. At that point from another place which I had not seen and which was over to the left of the town I was zeroing in on, all of a sudden these big guns opened up on me. These were anti-aircraft guns I later found out, but they make a lot of noise when the shells are exploding around you and I ducked down into this ditch that was right there and let them fire and called back and said "look we've got trouble here." There happened to be a guy from the artillery there and he got on the phone and asked what was going on and I told him and he said "that's what we've been looking for." I said "what do you want?" and he said "can you zero in an artillery battery on them?" I said "certainly" and I gave him the coordinates. They fired a shell and it went right smack in the middle of where this guy was shooting at me and he quit shooting. I said "you're on target" and he said "is that the fortress we've been looking for?" I said "well, it looks like a fortress" and he said "duck down because we're going to fire". With that the most amazing amount of bombardment you've ever heard...I later found out we had something like forty batteries of artillery back there and they opened up with some hundred guns at a time at this target. It really kind of disintegrated. The next day when we got ready to cross the river, there wasn't any opposition and we crossed without any problems. I think that the lucky coincidence of my being shot at by those people and the artillery being back there ready to go, saved a whole bunch of lives because they had 'em zeroed in to get us when we crossed the river the next morning and of course they weren't there. The first troops across advanced right rapidly and then were told to hold up when they got about three or four miles into Germany because they were way ahead of the folks crossing the river up and down from us. We then started getting all of our folks across the Rhine River which the Germans said we would never get to and never get across. In the next two or three days, we landed I don't know how many divisions and, of course, up the river a piece at Remagen, they had the bridge that had been left intact so we could just drive across it with the tanks. We were about forty miles from there. They could get the tanks across and bring them down to our area and then we commenced advancing across Germany. The Germans were, at that point, pretty much in full retreat, were trying to regroup, but as we advanced we would take the towns, and they would usually have white flags hanging out of the windows all over the place. The men were all gone because they had been

in the army. The women were around and the women expected to be raped, but fortunately we had very little of that. We did have to go and check each house in each town as we went through it to make sure they didn't have any guns, etc. and I went into one in the beginning of it with one of the guys. I started to get my bayonet out to break a drawer open and he said "wait a minute, wait a minute. We can just unlock it." I said "but we don't have any keys." And he said "just a second, I'll show you" and he got a piece of piano wire out of his pocket and made a rude sort of a key out of it and opened the drawer. He showed me how to do it and we went around for the next week or so and opened the drawers instead of breaking them open. I found out that he had been a professional burglar but he liked nice things and didn't see any point in tearing them up if we didn't have to. We became the official openers of the drawers. Since I couldn't carry that big heavy radio with my hand messed up, it gave me something to keep me out of trouble. We then advanced on across Germany and got near a town called Plouen which was the next major objective. Plouen was a city of about 100,00 to 150,000 and it had been bombed out just a few days before we got there. Some of our planes coming back were looking for targets that hadn't been hit and Plouen hadn't been hit and so they bombed it. It happened to be Easter Sunday and there were terrible casualties. As we got into the city, the stench was dreadful and we saw bodies stacked up and down all along the road. It was most unfortunate, but those things happen. Just before we got to Plouen, we ran into a real tough fight and it turned out that Hitler youth were making a last stand. The Commanding Officer of our regiment had been sent back to England on leave and there was a replacement there and he said he had orders not to engage the Hitler youth. These guys were shooting at us pretty good, and they weren't much younger so we didn't see any reason why we couldn't shoot them back. He said "let's go out under a truce flag and see if we can talk them into surrendering." We then had a team go out in this open field with a white flag, and they got out in the middle of a field and bless pat, the Germans opened fire on them and killed them all. The man who was leading it's name was Hall... Lieutenant Hall from Florida...was a great officer and I think, as a matter of fact, he was the one who gave us a sip of scotch at Christmas. This made me lose it you might say. I said "well, we'll take care of that" and they said "the colonel said we couldn't do that" and I said "hell with the colonel." I got one other guy, then Sweeney, and we went back to where the mortars were and we set them up and started firing where this brigade of Hitler youth were. We later found out there were about six or seven hundred in this area. Sweeney and I fired those mortars until they got too hot to fire anymore...we ran out of ammunition anyhow...and then as we advanced there was no more opposition. We later found most of them had not been killed but were shell shocked from the tremendous noise

Köln
1945



of the shells going off around them. We advanced on into Plouen and occupied the city. We had to set up camp on the outside of the city because they felt we might catch diseases if we went in there and as we now know, that was a smart move but it was army regulations that you didn't go into a city and set up in a city because you'd catch any thing they had. We then ran regular patrols into the town and they had a substantial bunch of Russian slave laborers there who were just delighted to have us there so they could go out and kill all the Germans who had been bugging them for the last several years. We then had to stop them from doing that. I now see the problems they're having in Iraq and understand them. But we took care of the situation amazingly well. With a very few men, we were able to control the Russians and get them back in their barracks and keep them there. They tried to get out one day and raid a warehouse, and I was on a patrol in a jeep...just three of us in a jeep... and they...about a hundred or more...came on up the street and we told them to get back in their barracks and they laughed at us and said "no". They started to come forward. We had one guy who spoke Russian and he told them to get on back because we didn't want to have to shoot anybody. And with that, they all just doubled up with laughter and started forward again. So we lowered the machine gun and blasted the first row. They stopped, picked up the wounded or dead and went back to the barracks. They didn't come out again. That was brutal but it was an effective way to handle a difficult situation. The Russians seem to understand that that was what we had to do and they understood we meant business. We visited with the Russians and somehow or other they had found a way to get vodka into their camp and we had a couple of great parties there. Someone had those stringed instruments the Russians have, and they would play those and sing songs and dance. We danced with them...it was enlightening shall we say. We were there for two or three weeks waiting for the Russian army to come on over. We were told we weren't supposed to take things any further, and all of a sudden, we were told we could go ahead and advance into Czechoslovakia. We then got back into war again and started off into Czechoslovakia and thank goodness we got news as we started out on the advance about seven o'clock in the morning, that the war was over and the Germans had surrendered. The tanks had loud speakers on them and they immediately started broadcasting that to the people. The Germans who were there were set up to slaughter us as we came forward and the Germans didn't believe it at first, but then they listened to their own radios, found out it was true, and everybody came out with hands up. We then started setting up prison camps for the Germans. It was a great relief to have that part of the war done. Shortly thereafter, we were told that we were going to be shipped back to the States and going for the Japanese war. We then loaded onto boxcars...as they called them in World War I...forty and eight cars...forty

men and eight horses...and we traveled back across Germany and ended up in a camp at LeHavre again. We were there for a brief period, and then on July 4th, we shipped out going back to America. While on the train, we didn't have too much to do except sit down and gripe, so we started playing poker and by the time we got back to LeHavre, I was ahead about eighteen thousand dollars. We stayed there for a few days and while we were there, we were able to take a leave and go into Reims. I was able to take some people with me and spend some of that money because we couldn't take the money home with us. Prior to that, while we were still over in the eastern part of Germany, I think we were in a place called Schlitz, I got a pass back to Paris. It originally was a leave to go back to the States but we were going back there shortly, so they cancelled that and gave me a pass to Paris, and told me I could take two people with me. Of course, Sweeney was one of them. We went back and had a wonderful three day pass in Paris. We then, as I say, were preparing to ship out and we boarded the *America*, which I think at the point was the *West Point*, and headed home. As we headed out of the harbor, the skipper came on the announcement system and said "this is my last command. I'm being discharged when we get back to the States. I know this is the fastest ship in the world at this point, and I'm going to break the record going across the Atlantic." He swung out of that harbor into the English Channel and the waves were unbelievable. There were like forty foot waves and he hit them with flying speed. The boat was going so fast it was picking those monster waves up and throwing them all the way back past the stern. The ship was about eight hundred feet long. So you can imagine what was going on. Lewis Kirby, who was a friend of mine at Episcopal... I had reconnected with him at LeHavre...and we found to our amazement we had been with the same division across Europe. We were not only friends at Episcopal but we were toddlers together. His father and mother used to come to Savannah when he was an infant and we had joint birthday parties when we were two or three years old. His father was a big chief with one of the railroads and we'd go down and have a meal on their railroad car and they'd come out to see us in Savannah. Lewis and I were on the deck watching going out of the harbor. Excited of course. And we decided rather than going down and staying below in one of those really crowded cabins, (a cabin that today would hold two people had ten or twelve in it), and also down below things were getting awfully smelly, everybody was getting sick. We stayed up there and after we cleared LeHavre and headed on out to sea, we went down to get something to eat. We went to the dining hall and there were eight of us to get something to eat, and the rest of it was absolutely empty with some ten thousand troops on board. We then went over and the cooks were delighted to see somebody to serve, especially since we'd been in combat. They were anxious to please us, they asked us what we

wanted, and we, of course, ordered a steak. They gave us this great, big steak and we couldn't even eat hardly five bites of it. Our stomachs had shrunk so from the K-rations. Lewis and I went back up and watched the ship go through the Channel and on out to rough sea. That boat was just fantastic. I thought it was wonderful. We ended up spending the night underneath the bridge. It was much more comfortable there and a lot less smelly. Everything down below was dreadfully smelly from seasickness. We went across the ocean and got back to New York. We arrived a day or day and a half early, and there wasn't any place for us so we had to lay off in Long Island Sound for a day before we went into New York with the appropriate welcoming committee. The captain was right. He did break the record crossing the Atlantic. I did notice not too long ago that it stood until just recently. We came back across in three and a half days. We got into New York and we were still in winter clothes. It was still cold over in France and all of a sudden, the New York heat hit us. July can be hot there. We were loaded onto trains going South and we had to wear our winter clothes because we didn't have any others. They took us on down and dumped us at Fort Benning. We were then given thirty day passes and it was most welcome I might say. We had a wonderful thirty days and during that thirty days, we were fearing the next thing...which was going to Japan. August came in and they dropped the bomb in Japan and the war ended which, needless to say, we were delighted at. The day all that happened, Johnny McIntosh and I were fishing and we heard about it and came back in and people met us at the dock waving, and screaming and carrying on. It was most exciting. Then we had to go back to Benning. Our division was being split up and I was sent to Fort McPherson to the separation center there which was the same as what had been the reception center. We had to wait for an assignment because you had to have so many points to get out. I got there and ran into one of my Father's friends and employees, Jimmy Mason, from Augusta. Jimmy said "I am so glad to see you." I said "well, thank you." He said "you're going to take my place." I said "what place is that?" He said "I'm personnel Sargent-major." And I said "Jimmy, I'm nothing but a corporal." He said "well, you're going to be Sargent-major here in a couple of days. I'm taking you in to see the Colonel right now. You're my hope for getting out of the army." I went in, was introduced to the Colonel and the Colonel said "okay." The next thing I knew, Jimmy had cleared out and I was personnel Sargent-major... whatever that meant. Then I found I was in charge of all of the personnel under the the reception center. Of course there weren't many people coming into the army so that seemed to be a minimum sort of a problem until I found out a few days later, they were honoring all the temporary ranks of all the old army guys who were privates, and corporals, etc., and they now received temporary ranks of Sargent or whatever. Lots of them were

temporary officers. They could retire after the normal amount of time but they could retire in the highest grade they had achieved. So all of them were reenlisting and all of a sudden, instead of having twenty people I had to look out for, I had ten thousand. They were coming in droves every day from all over the world. And all of them looking to be paid. The colonel was about to cry, he was so worried about how to do it because he only had about a half a dozen people in the office. There wasn't any way to cut checks, etc. I told the Colonel "that's easy. These guys are being paid over in

England so why don't we just get the payroll staff from over there and fly them over here and take care of them here." He said "you can't do that". I said "well, let's try it." So we did and bless pat, we had the whole payroll staff there and everybody was being paid on time. It worked out beautifully. I stayed at Fort Mac. I reckon it was about six weeks before I had accumulated enough to get out myself.

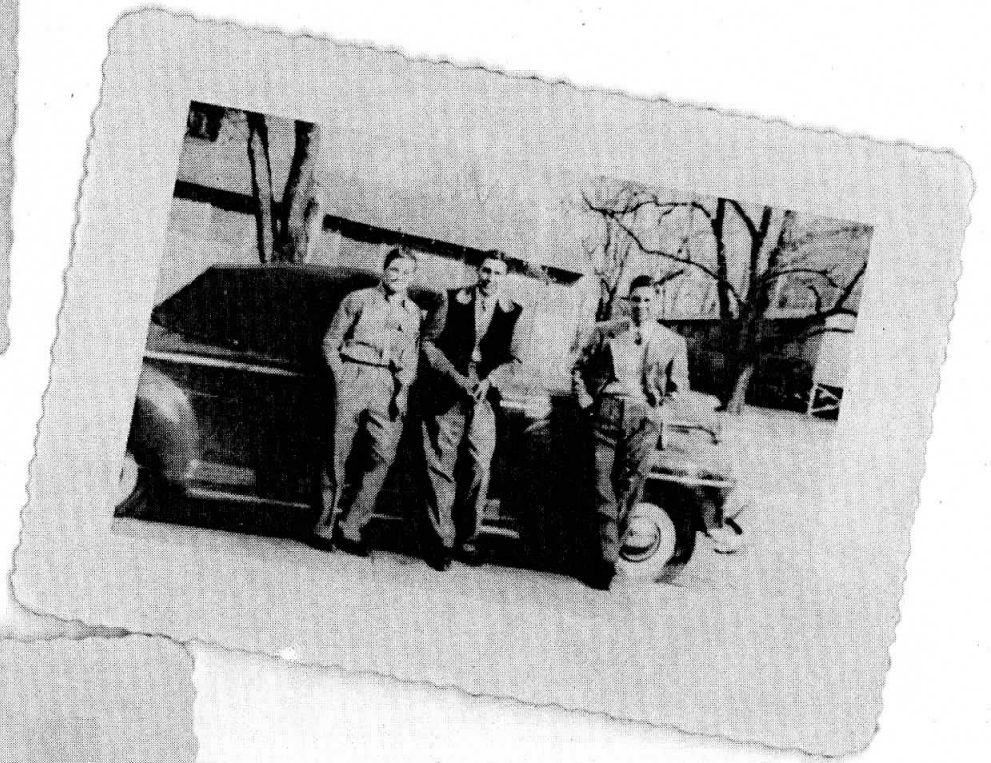
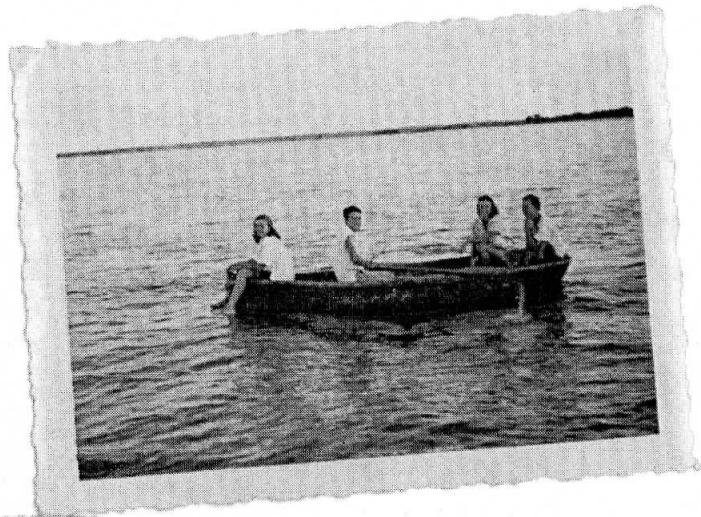


Friends

We also had various friends, one of which grew up with us and lived with us a good bit of the time. That was Obie Wood...Oscar Barber Wood, Jr. His father died when he was three or four years old and his mother had to raise him. He was a frequent visitor out at Isle of Hope. During the summer, he would stay with us most of the summer, as a matter of fact. Obie was the godson of Mr. William Murphy who was President of the C & S Bank. Mr. Murphy and Obie's father were good friends and Mr. Murphy, I think, pretty much put Obie through school. During World War II, he was in the Navy at one point...the Naval Air Corps. I don't know exactly what happened...whether the war ended too quickly or what. He wasn't in it too long and he ended up going back to school at Chapel Hill. After he got out of school, he wanted to go into the investment business, which was the business his father had been in, and came to work at Johnson, Lane. My father sent him up to Boston for a couple of years to be at Vance, Sanders to meet the people up there, etc. Actually, he was doing what Fa wanted me to do. I had gone into the practice of law rather than going up to Boston and New York. Obie stayed with the firm for a couple of years and then I think he went to work with the C & S and then Bob Minis & Company, who were Investment Counselors. Obie was always reaching for the moon. If he saw an opportunity, it wouldn't take much to send him off in all sorts of directions. He was a delightful person, we had many a happy hour together. After Benita and I got married, it seemed like he stayed more at our house than he stayed at home. He was a good friend during the years. He sailed with me at times too. We felt like Obie was almost like another brother. There were, of course, a number of other contemporaries we saw from time to time like Comer Train whose father was Dr. Train...they lived over at Beaulieu. I'd spend the night with him at times and he'd spend the night with me. Julian Quatlebam was also another good friend we went to school with, went through the debutante circle with and everything else. And Andy Calhoun, whose family was a good friend of my mother's...we saw a good bit of Andy. Then, of course, the folks closer to home...there were the Drews, Lionel and Henry Drew who lived over at Grimball Point for a while, and the McLeans who also lived over at Grimball Point, although the McLeans were somewhat older. There was a core of young folks, but I think as I mentioned earlier, there weren't enough of us to get up a real football game or much of a baseball game. We usually had to go round up some of our black friends either over in Sandfly or over at Grimball Point.

Pets

The next comment is on the animals we had. The first animal I really remember was after we moved out to Isle of Hope. Tats got me a pony. It was a Shetland pony, its name was Princess. Princess was one of the meanest little horses you ever heard of. You'd get on her and she immediately start bucking and try and get rid of you. The only person I remember who could really ride her was Henry Drew who was a little bit older than I was. He could hold on to her and chase her around, and then she found a delightful thing to do when you got on her to hold on. The McIntoshs had a gate in front of the property with a chain across it so you couldn't drive in. It was just the right height for Princess to run under and let it catch you on top of it. She would invariably head for that darn fool thing and you couldn't stop her. You'd end up on the dirt and she'd keep going along, kicking her heels and thinking that was delightful. Needless to say, my experience with horses was not the greatest. I did learn how to ride. I, unfortunately, said that I could when I got to VMI. They sent me into the barn and I had to pull a horse out of there, saddle it, put the bridle on it and all those things. I went out and was on the thing...which was more than most of the other guys were... and they said "oh, we'll show you what the rest of the folks do." Then I had to take this darn horse over these jumps and we went around this ring going over these jumps, and finally when we got back and I was able to get off of that creature, I said "I did it. What's going to happen next?" I did learn to ride and I could stay on most of the time. Later, Tats found a puppy she thought was delightful. It was a lovely Springer Spaniel. They gave it to all five of us children. They called it B-B-K-T-D which was Betty, Bobby, Kathryn, Tommy and David. We called it BeBe. It was a real nice dog. It would take care of any of us who happened to be around. Then when I started with the sailboats, the darn fool thing would jump in the water and try to follow me down the river and I'd have to scramble it onto the boat and it would get back in the boat and shake its nasty water off...all over me. It was a good dog...except for one time when Tats decided I had to take it down to the dog show. He didn't understand with all of those other dogs around. But that is not a very happy story. The next dog I remember was a beautiful Irish Setter named Rusty. Rusty was a delightful animal. We all loved him but he had one major problem and that was...he was gun shy. Fa had gotten him because he thought he would be a great dog to take hunting. Rusty was not a hunter. When they had sailboat races at Isle of Hope, they'd usually use our dock as the starting place and when they'd shoot the gun off, Rusty would go absolutely wild. If there was a car around, he'd jump inside it and tear the inside of the car. What that had to do



with it I don't know. But Rusty was a fine, fine-looking dog and a wonderful dog. He kept the rest of them away. There were two other animals that I had. I had a cat that I'd found somewhere and I brought it home. With much misgivings, they said I could keep it. I remember the fool cat...I'd take it out on my sailboat...it didn't like being on the deck, so it would climb up the sail and hang on the sail while we sailed around. Later on, I woke up one night and the cat was moaning. I didn't know what was going on. I turned the light on and the durn cat was having kittens. The cat didn't last much longer. The next animal I brought home...this was after I'd gotten out of the army I think...I went back in the woods hunting one day...hunting for squirrels. Rusty was along and here came a squirrel down a tree and jumped in the ditch. I leveled my trusty BB on it and Rusty came barking along. The squirrel looked at Rusty, then looked at me and made a mad dash for me. It's kind of hard to shoot a squirrel when its down at your foot. It ran up inside my pants leg. You never saw anyone take off their britches any quicker. I got my britches off and it had the squirrel in it. I walked back up to the house in my underbritches, looked kind of ridiculous but I got there and found a box and put my britches in there. The squirrel came out of my britches in the box. He didn't immediately chase off. The long and short of it, he obviously had been someone's pet because when I got a couple of things to feed it, it became very friendly. As a matter of fact, I'd take it with me when I'd go out on dates at times. He'd go in my pocket...loved to go to a bar. He walk along and have people give him peanuts and sip their beer and things of that nature. It was quite a little character. But I don't think it was the most popular animal my mother ever had around. I think that was the last animal I had as a young fellow before I married Benita.

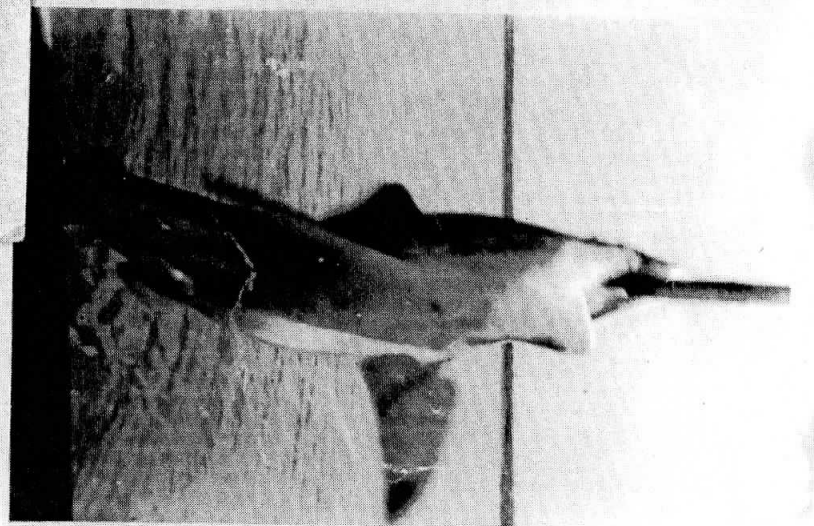
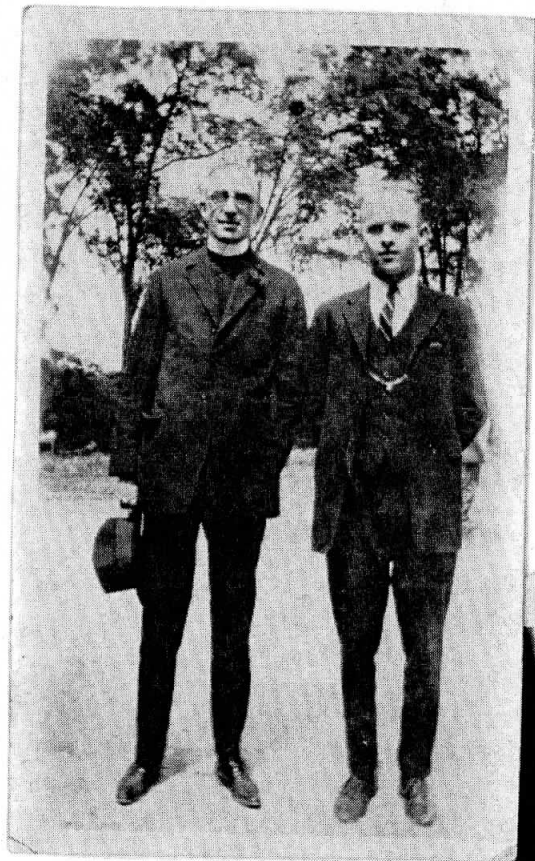
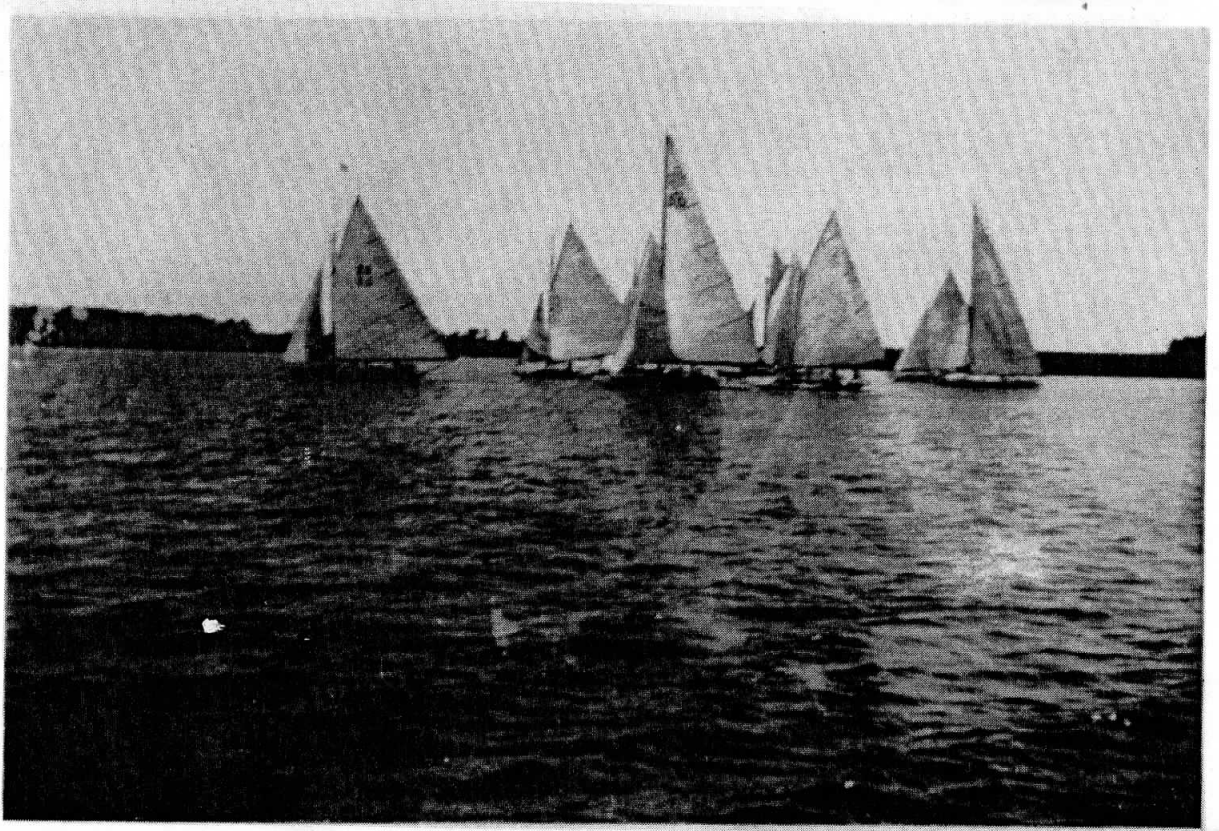
My Boats

Johnny McIntosh and I began making little model sailboats when we were ten or twelve years old. We would take them up the river in front of the house. There was a place through the marsh where you could find a little open place in the marsh and you could set the sailboats out there and they would sail across this little pond-like area. It was neat. We made these sailboats and also some airplanes...model airplanes...out of balsa and as the years went by, we got more and more aggressive. I saved up my money one year, I ended up saving five dollars. It was enough to buy some wood so I could make a boat big enough that I could get in. It was about a ten foot boat. I remember it was not the best designed boat or the best built boat. I got someone to take me to the lumber yard and I got some wood which happened to be, I think, quarter or three-eighths inch planks of pine and about six inches wide and it was beautifully easy to work. I made the boat in the old barn. There was a kind of a workshop of sorts across from the stalls. I worked on it and made it by myself with my father telling me what to do every now and then. I finished it and put it in the water. With planks, you have to let them swell and I had corked it. I put it in the water, it swelled, buckled a little bit so I had to refinish it again. I found a place to get a mast for it. I think it was a banister left over from some place. Tats took me downtown to the places where you bought cloth on Broughton Street. I got some yellow homespun. I don't know what kind of cloth it is these days. I came back home and cut it out in the form of a sail. We took it to a lady who did sewing. I remember it cost us about one dollars and forty cents to sew it up. The cloth had cost me a dollar so the sail cost me half as much as the boat did. But anyhow, the darn fool thing, when you put the sail up, it looked like a sailboat, got it in the water with it, and bless pat, it sailed like a sailboat. I must say it didn't sail very rapidly and the skipper didn't sail very skillfully. But I learned I could build a boat and sail it. It was not the best boat ever built by any means, probably about the worst. It was an interesting first effort. I then started saving up for another one because then plywood was becoming available...marine plywood that is...which would be ever so much better because it wouldn't have to be swelled up to keep it from leaking. That first boat, even though I'd corked it and everything else, it would leak like the devil. You'd sail across the river a couple of times and then you'd have to bail it out. But it was an education process. Golly Moses, being out on the river in those little boats like that and various others was just a wonderful experience. At that point, motorboats were very rare. About once a day, you'd see a motorboat come by and you'd look to see what it was. We did have a rowboat, usually, but it was a big,

heavy one, and boy, to row that thing against the tide was for the birds. So we quickly found out that you didn't have as much tide close to shore, found out where the eddies were, and we got a wonderful education on how to work around on river water, tidal river water that is. Johnny McIntosh and I used to row up to the end of the river, do shrimping and crabbing. One time we got stuck up there. We were getting so many crabs, we didn't notice the tide going out and boy, we couldn't get that big old boat back out of that little thing we had gotten into. It was about noon and time to get home. We knew we couldn't swim that far, so we tried to start to walk along. Underneath that mud are some shells you could cut yourself right bad on. So we were kind of just easing along the shore and we finally got home. It must have taken us an hour. When we got there, I'd never been so sunburned in my life. When Fa and Mr. Mac got home, they told us they thought we'd gotten enough punishment with the sunburn we'd gotten. But somebody had to go get that bateau back. So we then had to get in Mr. Mac's bateau, which was a lighter one, and we went and got the boat. We rowed both of them back and thankfully came in and crawled in the bed. We were a lot wiser little fellows for that. John and I watched boats being built all over the years. The ones I remember being built were those John's brothers, Olin and Billy, built. They built boats called Larks. They were a round bowed scow, sixteen feet long, cat-rigged. They seemed pretty darned good. It was a regular class that came down from the lakes, up in Wisconsin, I believe. They made two or three of them, raced them and there were scow classes both in Savannah and Charleston and on up the coast. They were delightful boats. We also watched Ross Allen and some of his friends build a swallow type scow. It was larger, I think about twenty-two or three feet long. It had a slight bow in it so the bow lifted up somewhat. It was not a cat boat. It was a sloop. It carried a lot of sail. It was hard to sail. The darn things would turn over if you didn't watch out. We were intrigued watching these guys and they would take us as crew every now and then. It was great. There were others who got the Larks. I remember one fellow from New York... a fellow named Bill Stetson got one and used to come down and sail it during the summer. He used to have me as crew. I found out years later I was the lightest guy around and he thought that was an advantage. There were regular races, most of which they had either at Isle of Hope or Vernon View and sometimes over at Wilmington. The Yacht Club, at that point, was one of the cabanas down at the pool of the Oglethorpe Hotel at Wilmington. Later on, of course, it was moved. During those years, though, John and I crewed for whoever we could crew for. We'd stand around the docks, looking lonesome, and usually someone would grab us and take us. I crewed with his father as much as anyone else. Mr. Mac was very nice about it. We began to learn very much about it from those sailing experiences. There were

various scows we used to race. The two biggest were what they called inland lake scows which were about thirty or thirty-five feet long, had dual centerboards, one on each side and really were a racing machine. They were beautiful boats. Mr. Demere had one and there was another up in the Charleston area. I can't remember the name of the boat. Mr. Demere's boat was named the *Viking*. It was just a joy to see those boats get out there and race. I then got myself an opportunity to build another boat. This one I built out of plywood and it was another ten or eleven foot boat, a scow. We ended up with about a half a dozen of them and we were known as the Mosquito Class. They actually let us sail in races with the big boats. It was fun, a lot of fun. There were others in the Mosquito Class. I don't remember all of them but David had one, Bobby had one, and Bradley had one. I'm not sure who had the others but there were about six or seven of them. We raced them regularly along with the big boats. They shot the gun off for us and shot the gun when we came in and we thought we were big-time stuff. We had a good time with them and learned a lot about them. Of course, during the week, we could sail whenever we wanted to. We used to go down to the dock, get on the boats and sail out. One of the things I remember which was just delightful was...there was a porpoise hanging around the dock, and it came up one time when we were getting ready to go out. It came up alongside and I don't know why but I just leaned over one side and petted it, stroked it. It blew air out of its nose, hung around and when I started sailing, it swam right along with me. Then the rest of the summer, every time I'd come down to the dock, that fool porpoise would come over to the boat, wait for me to go out and then go up and down the river. Every now and then it would rub itself on the bottom of the boat. I'd stroke the porpoise and it seemed to enjoy it. It was an amazing sort of experience for a young fellow. One time that summer, there were a half a dozen porpoise out there while there were three or four of us in the little Mosquito boats sailing along. The porpoise got playful and came underneath the boats, started flipping their tails (I think they were just being happy) and they started flipping us over. We then had to get the boats upright, the porpoises left and we came on back home. No harm done but it's right startling having a fish turn you over when you're sailing down the river. We had some wonderful experiences. We used to watch porpoises when they'd chase fish up on the shore. Then the porpoises would make kind of a slide up on the shore and get back. Then dash to the shore and then slide back down into the water. An interesting kind of situation. I have never understood exactly what it was. It looked like they were playing just like we wanted to play. We then, unfortunately, had to do something like go off and fight a war. When I came back, I had my discharge papers with three hundred dollars. I was looking around for a sailboat to buy and found that Mr. Backus over at Vernon View had built one

to use himself. He was no longer able to get out and sail, he wasn't well and was willing to sell it. So I bought it from him for three hundred dollars. It was a real learning experience because he insisted that I leave it over there in his workshop and get it in shape to put back in the water. So I did that. It became my first great, great boat...the *Babe*. I think I mentioned earlier my dear Benita helped me put it together one year to take it sailing. The *Babe* was a wonderful boat, won a bunch of races, regattas, etc. It was eighteen feet long and at one point I carried about two hundred fifty feet of sail on it which was too much. But it sailed. You could carry four people easily on it and I had many a pleasant time on that boat. One time I took it over to Charleston to a regatta. On the way over, someone threw a cigarette out of the window of the automobile. It lodged underneath the mast. Before we found out about it, it burned the mast half in two. When we got to Charleston, I had to go find a replacement mast and spent most of the night getting the mast rigged for the race the next day. I was a little late starting that day but ended up not doing too bad. We were second or third or something on that order. The Charleston boats, at that time, were being made out of plywood which was quite a challenge to us because ours were still being made out of cypress planks. But we beat them from time to time. There was one boat over there called the *Siren*. He and I were having to battle it out to see who was going to be the top boat for the season for two or three years and it was fun. After I got married to Benita, the folks in Augusta decided they wanted to start sailing. They came down and started buying our old scows. They paid enough money for them so I was able to buy a Y-flyer kit. The original scow that I had was the *Babe* and we called this one the *Bouncing Babe*, I recall. It sailed good too and we won some races with it, and had a regular class with it. This was after I was married. Had a wonderful time with it until I came in one day from a race and Benita said "that's it." And I said "what's that?" She said "I've been sitting up here with four children while you've been sailing a sailboat race. Nuh-uh." So I sold it the next week. I had some wonderful people to sail with. On the *Babe*, one of them was Pete Willis from Augusta and Pete and I had a grand time on that boat. Pete was just great. He was older than I am, didn't know much about sailing, a good man around the water, he could catch any fish you could buy. On sailing, you kind of had to tell him what to do. I remember one race...the wind started dropping and I said "Pete, ease the anchor over." You said "real easy" so the competition wouldn't know what you were doing. What you'd do...you'd put the anchor over, it would stop you from going backwards and they'd keep on going backwards, not realizing they were going backwards. So Pete dropped the anchor over, but we kept going backwards. So I said "Pete, did you put the anchor over?" He said "yea, it's gone." I said "where's the rope going around it?" He said "oh, was I supposed to tie it?" He'd dropped the



anchor over without tying the rope around it. We had some wonderful times and I must say, part of it, was the wonderful parties we had afterwards in connection with regattas. I built a couple of other sailboats. I built one for Betty and another for I don't remember who, and then we moved to Atlanta. One cold winter day, just after we had bought a lot up at the lake, I got the bright idea of getting some wood so that the boys could make their own boats. So I went to the lumber yard, bought a station wagon full of lumber, brought it home, came in and they said "where you been, Dad?" and I said "well, I went out and bought your birthday present." They were all chirped up. They all three have birthdays right together. They said "what is it?" and I said "your new sailboats." So they came running out to see their new sailboats. The car was full of wood and they said "that's nothing but a bunch of wood." I said "yep, but by the time you finish with it, it's going to be sailboats." They were a little bit leery of that but anyhow, we got the wood out and took it down to the basement and started putting them together and marking them out. I told them that whenever they wanted to work on them, just to give me a holler and I'd work with them but I didn't want them to be working by themselves. I didn't want any one to get hurt. And doggone it, each of those three guys made their own sailboats. Years later, Mary Louise told me she'd been unhappy because she didn't get one too so she could make it. We took the boats up to the lake, of course, and the boys sailed them for years. Just after we got married, one Christmas, I was trying to think of what to get for a present for Benita and happened to see David at a filling station. We had stopped to get gas...he in his car and me in mine...and he said "Tommy, I've got the best idea of a present for you to get for Benita." And I said "what's that?" and he said "get her an outboard motor." I said "what in the world are we going to do with an outboard motor?" He said "well, you could borrow somebody's boat. Mr. Mac has one he never uses, you could borrow that and you could go out and catch some fish and things of that nature." By the time he finished talking about it and drawing pictures in my mind, I went over to Stubbs Hardware and bought a ten horse power Johnson motor. When I got home, I thought "my goodness, if I don't have a hole in my head. What in the world am I going to do with that?" That's the first thing I ever borrowed money to buy as a matter of fact. I borrowed money to pay for the motor. Then, Christmas morning, I showed Benita the motor and she said "oh, what is it...an egg beater?" We kind of laughed about that and then she said "let's go over and find your present." I said "where is it?" She said "it's on Tats and Fa's porch." We were living at the cottage then. We went over to Tats and Fa's porch and bless pat, here was a motorboat. I think we called it the *Scottie-pooper*. Benita bought it unfinished and John and David finished it. So we then were able to take the boat down in the water, put the motor on it and we were in business. We used that boat

for years. It was a wonderful, wonderful sort of a thing. Tommy was a baby and we'd take him out in the boat and fish in the afternoon. We were fishing for food, desperate food. We'd take it out, catch some fish and oh, we had a lot of fun with it. Then the other children came along and it got to be too small for everybody to fit. Tats and Fa started using their boat so we couldn't ever get in it so I got the bright idea of buying us a boat. So we bought an old thirty foot ChrisCraft that we called the *Blue Heaven*. It was a delightful boat. It had enough room in it so we could sleep and all four children could sleep on it. We'd go down the river on weekends, usually on day trips, and sometimes we'd spend the night. It was wonderful. We kept that until we moved to Atlanta. When we moved to Atlanta, we traded it for a bigger outboard that we brought up with us and enjoyed it while we were here. We bought the lake property and decided to build a house up there. We found a delightful man named Otis Duncan who lived up in the Flowery Branch area and we got him to build the house for us. The house was built for less than ten thousand dollars. It had two bedrooms upstairs and two unfinished bedrooms downstairs, a bath up and a bath downstairs, a big combination living and dining room upstairs with a nice big porch in front of it and a playroom underneath it which was also adequate in size. The kitchen was delightful and Benita's requirements were that it have a dishwasher, a stove and refrigerator and all of those were included. It also had hot and cold running water. We enjoyed that lake house immensely. We used the outboard for years up there. Finally, it just got old and we sold it. I don't think we got anything much for it either. The motor had been stolen once and I had to go find a used motor to put on it but we had a good time with it. The floating dock I built in the backyard here in town. I built it in two pieces. I found someone who had a trailer who could take it up and he took it up and he launched it. I put it together. We towed it over to the lot, tied it to the shore and used it for 20 years. We've had some interesting experiences with what we have done and most of them have turned out very nicely. Or at least I'm not mentioning the ones that didn't. The lake house was a wonderful, wonderful investment so far as I was concerned and I think so far as the rest of the family is concerned. We were able to get up there, get away from the city and get a different outlook on life. We met wonderful, different people. The farmers up there, after they accepted us, were just wonderful. We would go over and get fresh vegetables from them. They kind of took us into their family. As a matter of fact, when one of them died, they asked me to say a few words at his funeral. It was a real, real different sort of environment. We enjoyed it thoroughly. Frankly, it was a lifesaver for me because I was traveling practically all week then, and just home for the weekend and to be able to go up there, relax, maybe catch a fish, was just great. It finally got when the children were gone, we weren't using it much anymore, so we

sold it. The original cost of it was less than about fifteen thousand or fourteen thousand dollars including the property, and we sold it for one hundred thirty thousand dollars. So it wasn't a bad investment.

My Marriage

You have had a brief glimpse here and there of an impending marriage and years thereafter. That is another story for another time.