

GREAT MEN OF THE CHURCH I HAVE WORKED WITH

This is the kind of a chapter that can get an author into trouble, not from what he says but because of what he doesn't say. I am sure when I get through I will have left someone out who should be included among those great men of the Church I have worked with. I have decided I will have to limit this review to twelve men - six ministers and six laymen. When I have to select only twelve out of a couple of hundred I could easily include, I have an impossible task.

The minister who unquestionably must be number one is Walter Buckner. My first contact with him was in the early 1920's. In the 1922 Conference Journal is a record that says "Walter Buckner was chosen by the Conference Epworth League Cabinet as Dean of the Institute for next summer." I was a member of that cabinet. From that time on until 1953 when he died, there probably was no one with whom I spent more time than him. He was always willing to share my problems whether they were personal or related to the Conference. He never had too much on his mind but he could lay it aside and listen to my problems. I have already told how I sought him out six weeks after I began working for the Conference. I'm sure had it not been for him then I never would have continued in the Conference office. The darkest moment of my life was the day my mother died. After the first shock from the realization she was gone, the one I wanted to talk to was Dr. Buckner.

My closest association with him came through the Conference Board of Trustees of which he was president for twelve years and I was Executive Secretary and Treasurer. He had an uncanny ability to see through the tangles of a problem and to come up with a workable solution. He had a keen sense of humor, but he never wasted it. He knew just the right moment to use it. He had that rare ability of making a wisecrack or clever observation just in time to prick open the tension in a meeting.

His death was wholly unexpected and was a great shock to me. His Memorial Service was held in First Church, Glendale on September 16, 1953. I was honored to be one of those who was asked to say a final word of tribute to a truly great churchman.

A contemporary of Dr. Buckner was Dr. Jesse Lee Corley who was Executive Secretary of the Board of Education when I came into the Conference office. I was Treasurer of the Board of Education and spent a lot of time with Dr. Corley because of budget problems. He was an expert in the field of Religious Education but he needed someone to keep a close check on his finances. We never had any real trouble between us, but we went round and round more than once on program proposals that he wanted to undertake without having financing to do it. He was also an expert negotiator. I was witness to a negotiating effort on his part one time. I learned a lot from the experience of just listening in on the discussions. There was a real power struggle going on between Dr. Walter Buckner and Dr. George Warner for leadership of our delegation to General Conference.

Dr. Warmer was president of the Board of Education and was as adroit a politician as this Conference ever had. Dr. Buckner was Bishop Baker's right hand man. Dr. Corley sensed the power struggle that was going on and was trying to prevent a head-on collision. The four of us were in a car at the Spanish American Institute. The conversation lasted about thirty minutes. When it was over Dr. Warmer became the self-appointed manager of a campaign to get Dr. Buckner elected to the Judicial Council of the Church at its Uniting Conference that was about to be held. Anyone elected to the Judicial Council could not be a delegate to the General Conference. The strategy worked. Dr. Buckner was elected to the Judicial Council and was effectively sidetracked as far as any future competition with Dr. Warmer for leadership in the Conference was concerned.

Dr. Corley was never noted for fast thinking on his feet. If he had time to develop a paper on some subject he did a great job, but if he were before a group answering questions that were being fired at him he was somewhat at a disadvantage. I remember one night in the old church at El Centro, California he was standing before a group and was struggling in an effort to express himself on some point. He was saying "It is like - it is like -" but he couldn't quite get the simile he wanted. Just then a string of beads some lady was wearing broke and began hitting the wooden floor. Almost instantly Dr. Corley reacted with "It is like-casting your pearls before the swine." I had no more loyal supporter than Dr. Corley.

Dr. George A. Warmer was also contemporary with Dr. Buckner and Dr. Corley. I presume that the fact I was quite young when I came into the Conference work is one reason why the leaders in the Conference then were much more of an influence on me than some of the leaders later on. My perspective no doubt changed, but I stood in awe of some of the "giants in the forest" in those early days. I never counted Dr. George Warmer as a close friend as I did Dr. Buckner and Dr. Corley and yet he was in my opinion one of the great leaders of the Conference. The fact that he was elected as a delegate to the General Conference more times than any other minister in the history of the Conference proves that he was an able and powerful leader. He was fearless in confronting a problem. I used to watch him with great admiration as he faced an issue. He didn't back away like some men would. He would bang into it like an all-American fullback. He was ruthless in facing an adversary but he was always a gentleman. I knew something of what went on in the background between Dr. Warmer and Dr. Don Householder who was associate pastor at Trinity Methodist Church in Los Angeles. Dr. Warmer was the District Superintendent and had every reason to "lower the boom" on Dr. Householder. Suffice it to say that Dr. Warmer did not allow any personal animosity to color his administrative responsibilities as he handled an extremely delicate problem which resulted in Dr. Householder surrendering his credentials.

I am sure some who may read this story will be shocked that I would include Dr. Robert P. Shuler in my choice of "Great Men." Well the plain truth is that to me he was a great man. No man could build the church Bob Shuler did at Trinity Church, Los Angeles and fight corruption in the city as he did without being a great man. It pained me deeply that Bishop Baker and Bob Shuler were so completely apart on almost every issue. There were

many times when I thought Dr. Shuler used exceedingly poor judgment, but I never doubted his sincerity. He was known as "Fighting Bob" and it was a fitting description of him. He was fearless almost to a fault. Sometimes he would publish something in his paper that was not based entirely on facts, but I never felt he intentionally misrepresented anything. Again it was more an error in judgment than it was a deliberate misrepresentation. I always got inspiration from his preaching as a youth. After Unification I almost felt sorry for him because he seemed so much alone in the Conference. He had been a great leader in the former South Church and had missed being elected a Bishop in 1938 by very few votes. He had vigorously opposed Unification. Now he was a hopeless minority in a fellowship where there was practically no fellowship extended to him.

When Bishop Baker was to retire plans were made to raise enough money in gifts to buy the residence in Pasadena which the Bakers had occupied and present it to them. It was planned to give Bishop Baker a list of those who had contributed. In going over the list I noticed no contribution had come from Dr. Shuler. I knew, of course, of the chasm between Bishop Baker and Dr. Shuler, but I had a strange desire to have Dr. Shuler's name on the list. I wrote him a letter and told him about my feeling and said that if he didn't object I would like to make a modest contribution in his name to the fund. I got an answer right back thanking me for my concern and with a sizable check. My admiration for Bob Shuler jumped several points.

Another minister who was a part of a more recent era and whom I consider to have been a great man was Dr. Fred Trotter. Fred and I were associated together in several Conference endeavors. He was the chairman of the quadrennial Advance Committee from 1948 to 1952. He was a member of the Conference Commission on World Service and Finance for six years, and was chairman for two. He was a District Superintendent for a little over a year before he died. Because we were together a lot in going to sub-district meetings and conferences of various kinds, we took our wives with us when we could. This developed a friendship between the two couples that greatly enriched our lives. After Fred was gone Hazel wanted to work and came into my office as a secretary for some twelve years before she retired.

In many ways Fred was unassuming and wholesomely reticent, and yet he never hesitated to stand up and be counted when the heat of an issue was upon him. Some members of the Conference speak frequently on the floor of the Conference-but are seldom heard. Fred's opinions were constantly sought and respected. He was held in high regard by his fellow ministers who elected him twice to the General Conference and four times to the Jurisdictional Conference.

I never heard Fred utter an unkind word. Retaliation was not a part of his character. If he ever harbored an unkind thought he had the Christian grace to keep it to himself. Twice during our close association together I knew he was facing bitter disappointment, but his conduct under these circumstances only made me want to know the secret of his victorious power and to have it myself.

Fred lived what he preached. He had faith! He had no hesitancy in coming face to face with the great transition which we call Death.

Fred left to our Conference something no other minister has left - three outstanding sons in the ministry. Dr. Thomas F. Trotter served as Dean of the School of Theology at Claremont before going to Nashville as General Secretary of the Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Dr. Irwin Trotter is Program Director for the Conference Council on Ministries. Dr. Mark Trotter is presently pastor of United Methodist Church, Anaheim, California. Mark was pastor at Sierra Madre for eight years while Velma and I were members there. I often told Mark after a sermon that I heard Fred preaching as I listened. He is a great preacher.

Another ministerial "Great" was Karl Downs. Karl came to Pasadena as pastor of Scott Church in 1938. He had been active in the National Council of Methodist Youth and had gotten acquainted with Jim McGiffin. Jim arranged for him to come out for some summer Institutes in 1937. I agreed to meet him at the Union Station in Los Angeles and drive him up to High Sierra Institute in the mountains above Fresno. During our trip up and back and during the week we had many intimate conversations. While he was at Scott Church our friendship increased. In 1943 Karl was elected President of Sam Houston College in Austin, Texas from which he had graduated. He asked if I would serve on the Board of Trustees and, while the college was 2000 miles away, it did offer a bridge into our Conference over which some financial help could be routed. In 1947 the Board upon Karl's recommendation conferred upon me the honorary degree of "Doctor of Laws." It was an honor which I probably didn't merit but one which was greatly appreciated.

In February of 1948 Karl underwent an operation for what had been diagnosed as a kidney infection. He did not come out of the operation. When his wife, Marian, was cleaning up his desk she found a letter partially written to me which she sent me. In it Karl referred to "the glorious summer evening in 1937 when God brought us into this bond of friendship." Then he said "I have never admitted this before but despite my attempts to be openminded, I had faced so much hypocrisy that although I wanted to believe in the white race it was at times most difficult. Then you and your family, Jim, Lucy and others"---The letter was never finished.

After Karl had gone Dr. Harold Case told me about Karl's influence in Pasadena. He had a boys' club going at Scott Church that was taking a lot of Negro boys off the streets and was keeping them out of trouble. One Negro youth who was a school dropout and was quite a delinquent was in court over some vandalism he had been doing. The Judge called Karl and asked him to take custody of the lad, which Karl did. He got the boy back in school and into his club and church activities. The boy went on to UCLA and became a great athletic hero. He also became the first Negro to play major league baseball. His name was Jackie Robinson. Ten years after Karl died we had a banquet in an effort to get some financial support for the College in Austin. I was Master of Ceremonies and Jackie Robinson was the speaker. During the dinner I told Jackie the story and he confirmed it.

Karl was only in his thirties when he died. He truly was a great man and my life was enriched because of him.

Probably the layman who should be number one on my list would be Jim McGiffin. Jim and I had a lot in common. Both of us were interested in the Church to the point of investing our lives in it. Both of us were laymen. Neither of us had a college education. For thirteen years we were closely associated in the Conference. Jim was Youth Director. Jim and Lucy went to Hawaii for several years and then he became a staff member of the National Division of the Board of Missions. He lived in Northern California but had responsibility for Christian Education in Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico. Even though we were hundreds of miles apart, we usually shared a room. He was a great fellow to be with.

Jim had an unusual consecration for his work. He was utterly committed to whatever job was assigned to him. I worried about his devotion to his work because I knew that he traveled across the Church many times when he really wasn't physically able to do it. He was away from home a major portion of his time, but he was the kind who had a job to do and regardless of his own well-being he did it.

Jim had a great concern for persons. When I first knew him he was a fiery evangelist. Later his emphasis changed and many who did not know him well thought that his whole viewpoint on life had changed. I really believe that Jim never changed. Basically, his life has always been an expression of concern for persons, and this did not change. His methods were different.

Jim had a tremendous influence on people, particularly young people. I do not know of anyone, lay or ministerial, who had a greater influence on those with whom he came in contact. Although he did not have the formal training in counseling that many church workers have had, he had an innate ability that many trained people do not have. It seemed unavoidable that persons with problems would talk them over with Jim. I know he bore the burdens of others far beyond what an ordinary man should be asked to bear.

Jim McGiffin earned the classification of a great man because he lived and did the things great men do.

When I came to work for the Conference the attorney for the Corporation was Mr. S. W. Odell. He wanted to be relieved of the work and turned it over to his son, Donald A. Odell. Don was a member of Holliston Avenue Church in Pasadena and was about five or six years older than I. We hit it off well right from the beginning. When it was suggested that I be a nominee for election to the Uniting Conference Don nominated me. I'm sure it was his great speech on my behalf that was responsible for my election. Don was one of the three laymen elected to the Board of Trustees in 1935. After Dr. Buckner died in 1953, Don became President of the Board-and when I retired in 1971 he was still President. In other words, he was a Trustee for 36 of the 37 years I was in the office. I told in another chapter how he was elected to the Judicial Council in 1956.

He was a natural for that office - a good churchman and a good attorney. I spent a lot of time with him on a lot of different problems and he was always the same - careful, fair, firm and honest. I owe much to him. When he was appointed Judge of the Superior Court, County of Los Angeles, the Conference lost a superior attorney.

Mr. Alvin Tolle is another choice layman with whom I worked a great deal. He was both a Trustee and a member of the Commission on World Service and Finance for many years. Alvin's church background was in the Epworth League. He was a long time employee of Bank of America and for many years before he retired he was manager of the Monrovia branch. He had a keen mind for investments and it was an education to work with him. He was a loyal supporter who wasn't afraid to tell me if he thought I was on the wrong track. I owe more to him than he ever realized.

Mr. Verne Orr, Sr. of First Church, Pasadena was another one of the choice laymen of Methodism with whom I had the pleasure of working for many years. He was formerly a Vice-President of one of the Chrysler Corporations. He moved to Pasadena and opened a Chrysler agency. That is how he earned a living but I often thought his chief interest was the Church.

He was chairman of the Investment Committee of the Conference Corporation and because of that office I spent a lot of time with him. Even after he sold his auto agency and moved to Claremont Manor, he still gave unstintingly of himself to Church interests. He was Treasurer of the School of Theology and was an active Director in the Pasadena Methodist Foundation. One of Verne's pastimes was to write notes and letters to people who had accomplished something or had some special event. He had a typewriter with a black and red ribbon and if he wanted to emphasize something he would use red. He never overlooked anything that happened. If I were elected to something I was sure to get a note praising me and saying how happy he was that I had been elected. Velma often got notes too, telling her how proud he was of her husband. He knew how to use spare time more effectively than any man I ever knew. He was generous almost to a fault. When I retired he bought a large block of tickets to the Newporter Inn dinner and gave them to residents of the Claremont Manor. He was in the hospital at the time of the dinner and couldn't be present. He was adviser to both Bishops Baker and Kennedy. I know both of them appreciated and honored his advice when it was sought.

At the General Conference in 1956 in Minneapolis someone proposed there be a dinner for the delegates from the two California Conferences. Mr. John Crummey of San Jose said he would take care of one-half of the cost if someone from Southern California would take care of the other half. I asked Verne if he would do it and he readily agreed. The dinner was facetiously referred to as the "Crummey-Orr dinner." That event started a friendship between the Crummeys and the Orrs that has lasted. When I retired a letter was sent to Mr. Crummey inviting him to contribute a letter to those that were to be presented to me. He received it in Honolulu and mailed an answer written in longhand from Guam. He was 93 years old then. In the letter he said "You introduced us to those who

have become our best friends for many years, the Verne Orrs. They have continued among your and our closest friends." Verne thanked me many times for introducing him to Mr. Grumme.

George V. Steed, long time member of First Church, Alhambra is another layman par excellence. George's father was a minister of the Conference. George and his brother, Roy, were in the construction business together. Whenever there was a church to be built Steed Brothers were available to build it on a time and material basis but with a guaranteed top price. Such an arrangement is very unusual. Usually in addition to giving the church a break as far as the contract was concerned, they would make a sizable gift to the church. And if when the project was completed there was any unspent balance it would be refunded to the church. That is what could be called real stewardship. George and I were on the National Board of Missions at the same time and traveled back and forth together. He was always figuring out ways of helping someone. More than once he wanted to help someone anonymously and would ask me to be his agent. Only the Angel Gabriel has a record of the good deeds which George Steed has done.

George and Eva were in the party that went to Hawaii in 1950 on the Lurline. Bishop and Mrs. Baker, George and Eva and Velma and I were all at the same table for meals on the ship. At night after the Bakers had retired the four of us would "make whoopee" together. We really enjoyed their companionship.

George and Eva had a cottage at San Clemente and were really responsible for us buying a place there. They have just recently purchased a home in Laguna Hills, Leisure World. George is my idea of a great layman.

All the laymen I have named thus far have been older than I. One who is younger and who has been a great fellow to work with is Marion Walker of Ventura. I don't remember when I first met Marion. He was chairman of the Commission on World Service and Finance for quite awhile. Then he was chairman of the Board of Pensions. He was also a Trustee for many years, and now is a Trustee of the School of Theology. He is serving presently as chairman of a committee of the School of Theology to raise \$500,000 to fund the Bishop Gerald Kennedy Chair of Preaching.

Marion is a "gentleman" rancher who lives in Ventura and whose main ranch is near Patterson in northern California. He is extremely generous with his time for church affairs. When I was elected Secretary of the General Conference I was automatically a member of Commission on the General Conference. Prior to that I was the lay representative of the Western Jurisdiction. I arranged with Bishop Kennedy to get Marion named on the Commission in my place as the representative of the Western Jurisdiction. He has served in that capacity now for twelve years. One of the penalties of retirement is that you have to forego the pleasure of being with such colleagues as Marion Walker in the work of the Church. It has always been an enjoyable experience to be with him.

Another group of ministers I want to mention because they have been so close to Velma and me are the ones who constitute "The Gang." This group started about 1944 and has met from four to six times a year ever since. Some have moved, some have died, but those who remain still get together regularly. We usually have lunch together and then go to someone's home for an enrichment program of some kind. Those who are still around are Dr. and Mrs. Paul Huebner, Dr. and Mrs. Russell E. Clay, Dr. and Mrs. Frank Toothaker, Dr. and Mrs. Wendell Miller, Dr. and Mrs. Robert McKibben, Dr. and Mrs. Theodore Palmquist, Dr. and Mrs. Stanley McKee, Mrs. Hazel Trotter, Mrs. Loula Oechsli, Mrs. Ruth Geer, Mrs. Fern Reisner, Mrs. Lucy McGiffin and Velma and I. These friends have shared together joys and sorrows and to me all of them are entitled to be included as "Great People."



Dr. Karl Downs, President Samuel Huston College, Austin, Texas.

Chapter 25

MY COLLEAGUES IN THE OFFICE

Some men have jobs which they perform year in and year out without having to depend upon anyone else. My job could never have been performed had it not been for the support and help others gave me. It has always bothered me that I got the credit, praise and adulation for work which was largely done by others. To those who worked with me and gave me such loyal and devoted support all during the years I am eternally indebted and grateful.

I have already written about my acquaintance in 1924 with Frank Webber and about his coming into the Treasurer's office in 1929 to take my place. I also wrote about how close I came to going to the California-Nevada Conference in 1949 and how Frank took the job instead. I was privileged to have Frank as my assistant from 1934 until 1949. Our contacts after 1949 have not been as frequent as I wish they might have been. He certainly made a great success of his work in the California-Nevada Conference. If you want a good barometer to tell in what esteem a person is held in his Conference, check the record and see how many times he has been elected to the General Conference. Frank was elected in 1951 two years after he became Conference Treasurer and was elected to every General Conference since then. He has served in eight consecutive sessions of the General Conference.

There were two things about Frank that always impressed me. First of all was his integrity. Never once in all the years I have known him have I ever had the slightest reason to question his integrity. Once he told me something I could depend upon it as surely as I could depend upon the sun coming up. Once a responsibility was assigned to him, it was as well as done. Once he was told something in confidence it would never be leaked. The only time I remember being irked at him was because he knew something I wanted to know. I knew he knew it but it was confidential and he kept it that way. We were rooming together at the Annual Conference in 1943. He was appointed head teller for the election of General Conference delegates. I was willing to be elected. The first ballot was taken at an evening session. The tellers stayed after the session to count the ballot. I went to our room and waited up for Frank. He finally came in. We talked about the weather and a hundred other things but no word came out about the election. I thought surely he would tell me the results without my asking him outright about it. Finally he went to sleep-but I didn't. I found out I was elected to lead the delegation when the ballot was announced the next morning.

The second trait I have admired in Frank is his even temperedness. If his blood pressure ever goes up you can't detect it. Maybe his wife can, but I never could. If the tension of the job ever got to him he was able to keep it to himself. I never saw him angered but once. A new girl he had hired in our office gave him trouble. Finally it got to him. He tolerated it long after I would have blown my top. When he came in the next morning I knew what was about to happen-and it did.

Frank has made some generous statements about my influence in his life. It has certainly been an association that has been mutually beneficial. He has been one of my closest friends and I owe him much.

When I came into the office in 1934 Dr. A. Ray Moore and Frank Webber were there. Dr. Moore had a secretary who did my secretarial work also. When he left in 1935 she also left. Dr. Oren B. Waite had a secretary when he was liquidating the Pacific Palisades Association who was available and he brought her in. Her name was Zeta Keetch. She did the secretarial work for both Dr. Waite and me until 1941 when he retired and I took over the work he had been doing. Zeta stayed on for seven more years when she transferred over to Bishop Baker's office. Zeta was a lovely person and a capable secretary. She continued on after Bishop Kennedy came in 1952 but finally had to resign in order to take care of her aged mother and an invalid sister.

We began early in 1948 to find a replacement for Zeta when we finally agreed to release her in order to accommodate Bishop Baker. A letter was sent out to the churches stating that a secretarial position was open and inviting applications. A lady named Elizabeth Hiatt who was working on a part time basis at the Maynard Memorial Church in Culver City applied for the position. An appointment was made for an interview but I had been called to Texas for the funeral of Karl Downs, so Frank Webber interviewed her, and hired her. She came to work March 1, 1948 and was my secretary for almost twenty-three years. She was also the office manager and supervised the work of the other girls. She retired July 1, 1970. When Elizabeth retired we had a dinner for all the employees at Headquarters in her honor. That night I said there were five things about her I wanted to mention and I want to repeat them now.

First is her competence. When Frank briefed me about her he told me she had been the personal secretary to Dr. John Studebaker, Superintendent of Schools in Des Moines, Iowa. I knew she must be a competent secretary. She proved to be all I had expected--and more. How a secretary learns how to react to a situation as her boss would react, I don't know, but in spite of all my idiosyncracies, Elizabeth seemed to know exactly what I would do in a given situation and she acted accordingly. Never once did I ever reverse a decision she had made. In 1952 Elizabeth was asked to go to General Conference in San Francisco to be in charge of the Secretarial Pool which was composed of eight secretaries responsible for doing all of the secretarial work for the Conference. She was so competent in this assignment and made such a favorable impression that she was asked to do the same thing for six sessions of the General Conference. She was asked to do the same thing again for the Special Session of the General Conference in St. Louis in 1970 but a broken hip prevented her from doing it.

Second is her spirit of willingness. No matter how unreasonable a request may have been she seldom said it couldn't be done. Instead she set about to find the way in which it could be done. No matter how competent a secretary may be, unless competence is accompanied by willingness, it

is of no avail. Whoever wrote

"Someone said it couldn't be done,
But he with a chuckle replied,
He wouldn't be one who would say
It couldn't be done until
He at least had tried."

must have had Elizabeth Hiatt in mind.

The third quality I want to mention is her pleasant personality. No matter how bad she may have felt or how much pain she might have been in, she always seemed to be able to smile and to disregard her discomfort. How much better it is for a secretary who has to constantly deal with people to be pleasant about it all rather than to be a sourpuss. Elizabeth's demeanor in the office set a high standard, indeed.

Another very desirable attribute has been her unswerving loyalty. I have been blessed all through the years with a staff whose loyalty has never been questioned, and who never have let me down. Even when there might have been a borderline situation, once my attitude or desires were known, everyone on the staff has bent over backwards to support me. I know executives who are constantly worrying about whether those upon whom they must depend are loyal. I have never known that kind of worry - for which I am most grateful.

Tolerance is another quality which is very essential in a secretary. It must be difficult for a person to subordinate his or her own attitudes or convictions to that of another person. I have never expected a person on my staff to be a rubber stamp, but it has helped more than one can realize to work with people who have been so tolerant of my attitudes, prejudices and shortcomings. Elizabeth has had a super ability at this point and I am indebted to her for it.

When she retired she told me that if I ever did any writing she would be glad to do my typing. That was almost five years ago. When I decided to write "The Hole Story" I got in touch with her and she gladly assumed the task of typing it for me. She certainly has been and is an important link in the story.

Another secretary who had been in the office for seventeen and a half years when I retired is Mary Lou Vargas. Her father was Dr. L. P. Tirre, once Superintendent of the Latin American Provisional Conference before it was integrated into our Conference in 1956. It was a great help to have Mary Lou on hand during the days of integration and merger. She had a wealth of information about the Latin ministers and churches that proved to be most valuable to us. One responsibility that was assigned to Mary Lou was records and correspondence related to the Endowment Fund. When that Fund was taken out of our office in 1966, it was logical that she become the secretary to Al Wright who was taking my place. She was

reluctant to go but we told her when the proper time came she would be brought back to our office. When Elizabeth Hiatt retired in 1970 Mary Lou came back as the office manager. She is still serving in that capacity.

Another colleague in the office who came in connection with the Latin American Conference merger was Larry Dominguez. Larry was the Lay Leader of the Latin American Conference. He was highly dedicated to his work and was thrilled when I suggested he come to our office as one of my assistants. He was elected as a lay delegate to the 1956 General Conference in Minneapolis. I introduced Larry to Percy Trevethan who was Executive Secretary of the National Goodwill Industries. Percy took a great interest in Larry and arranged for him to go through a training course to become an executive in the Goodwill organization. Today he is in charge of Goodwill in Santa Cruz, California.

In 1966 a supply minister named David Taylor was appointed pastor at Broadway Church in Glendale. He was also attending classes at the School of Theology in Claremont. His wife, Shirley, heard we had an opening in the office and applied for the job. She proved to be a very efficient secretary. I needed a secretary to help me with General Conference work in preparation for the 1968 sessions at Dallas and the 1972 session in Atlanta. By doing the work Shirley became quite familiar with what would be going on during the Conference. I arranged for her to go to Atlanta to be in charge of the Secretary's office. She was pleased to be asked and she did an excellent job. After I retired in July of 1971, I arranged to have an office for General Conference work on another floor of the Headquarters building. Shirley stayed in the Treasurer's office but took care of my correspondence which was dictated on belts. When the 1972 General Conference was over the Treasurer's office decided to retrench by eliminating one secretary and Shirley went with Pacific Homes. She and David moved back to Oklahoma in the fall of 1974. She soon applied for a position with the Council of Ministries of the Oklahoma Conference and is now working there. I was pleased to write a letter of recommendation for her. She was a pleasant person to have around and an excellent secretary.

Another person who did a lot of my pre-General Conference work was my daughter, Marilyn. She had worked from time to time for Elizabeth Hiatt when extra help was needed. She was a good worker and was always dependable. She was always quite conscious of the fact that she was the boss's daughter and this bothered her. She certainly didn't have any special privileges because she was my daughter but remarks were made from time to time which disturbed her. I was proud to be known as her father and she never gave me any reason to decrease my pride.

I have written about Al Wright and Harold Johnson in previous chapters. Both of these men were real assets to our office family. They served relatively short periods of time under my direction. When I turned portions of my work over to them I knew the work was in good hands.

Another young man who came into our office in 1959 was George Williams. We had been searching for several months for a young man with a business

major who would be interested in working for the Church. Both Ray Meyers and I knew George as a young boy in the Washington Street Church, Pasadena. He was a nephew of Miss Katherine Higgins, who headed Plaza Community Center for many years. George had finished his college work at Long Beach State College and when we contacted him, he was glad for the offer we made. He came in as our cashier and later was made assistant treasurer. The main responsibility assigned to him was as Controller for the Conference Board of Missions. When I retired in 1971 the Commission elected George to take my place. He was about the same age as I was when I became Treasurer. I had great hopes for a long and illustrious career for George. However, after three years as Conference Treasurer George accepted a position with the Board of Global Missions in New York and left the Conference. Although I was quite disappointed, I wrote him a letter wishing him well in his new position.

Another colleague to whom I owe much is C. Raymond Meyers. I knew Ray first in the Washington Street Church, Pasadena where we were members beginning in 1935. Ray was a young man then. He had a beautiful voice and was often a soloist in the choir. He was a talented musician with a violin or on the organ. After graduating from business college, Ray began working for Bekins Van and Storage Company. In those days we were still receiving final remittances from churches at the Conference session and we needed a lot of extra help. Arrangements were made for Ray to take some of his vacation the week of Conference and he would spend the week in our office. In 1944 we needed an assistant bookkeeper to help Frank. Ray was offered the position and accepted it. When Frank left in 1949 Ray became Associate Treasurer and Accountant.

Although he has seldom had the chance to be the "front" man, he certainly has been a tower of strength undergirding me. He has spent many hours on his own time helping treasurers of local churches set up adequate bookkeeping records. He has always been loyal almost to the point of blind loyalty. If I should ask him to butt his head against the wall, I think he would do it. When we were up against a deadline for some part of the work he would stay half the night to get the work out. His work was never sloppy and was always accurate. I never had to question anything that came out of his office. I knew it was right. On more than one occasion Ray was approached to consider offers elsewhere. He always let me know about it and I always gave him my consent and blessing. I was always glad when he turned down the opportunity to go elsewhere. I am sure if he had left we would have gotten along somehow, but I shudder to think what the Treasurer's office would do without Ray's steady guidance. When I retired he said a few kind things about me at the dinner the Headquarters employees had for me. I probably won't get a chance to reciprocate when he retires, but if I do it won't be difficult to find something good to say.

I can't close this part of the story without a word about two people in Hawaii who have really been colleagues. One is Jim Misajon. Jim was in a fine position with the Tax Office in Honolulu when I met him in 1954. He was also Lay Leader for the Hawaii Mission. He wanted to become a minister but had only a high school education and was married with three

children. Bishop Kennedy and I took it upon ourselves to create a scholarship fund to help Jim get his college education. He and his family came over to the mainland and Jim did four years of university work in three years. He went back to Hawaii and took an appointment at Kahaluu as pastor for two years. He had a break in health and could not continue. The National Division in Philadelphia needed someone to look after its interests in Hawaii other than the Superintendent. Jim was a natural for that type of work and served for six years as an assistant to the Superintendent. When the Mission became a District Jim's job was phased out. He accepted a position with the University of Hawaii as an assistant to the President. He has remained closely associated with the Church and represents Hawaii in many ways. He is a member-at-large of the National Council on Ministries and is also on the Advance Committee of the Church. He has a keen mind and unusually sound judgment.

I have had many pleasant contacts with Jim and his wife, Sally. They are among our best friends and, while Jim never was officially related to my office, we were both related to the National Division and shared many responsibilities. I consider him as one of my colleagues in the finest sense.

One incident that occurred when Jim was in Southern California going to school is too good to pass up. Misajons had a son named Stephen. While they were living at the Spanish American Institute in Gardena, Stevie was in the sixth grade in one of the Gardena Schools. The class was invited to send four of its students to be on Art Linkletter's television program and Stevie was one of those chosen. He was a bright eyed poker faced Filipino lad and Art turned to him and asked him if he knew what philosophy was. Stevie nodded that he did know. Art said "What is your philosophy?" Without any hesitation Stevie said "He who thinketh by the inch and talketh by the yard should be kicketh by the foot." Needless to say his answer about broke up the show. When Art had recovered his composure he said "Where did you get your philosophy?" Stevie said he got it from his daddy. Art asked about his daddy and Stevie told him his daddy was going to be a Methodist preacher. Since Art is a "preacher's kid" himself, he had something to talk with Stevie about that was of mutual interest.

Another colleague in Hawaii is Mrs. Lorraine Kadooka, the office secretary in the District office. Technically, Lorraine was never a part of our office, but we considered her as such because we had so much correspondence with her about our work, particularly at the time the Mission became a District. She was always prompt in replying to our inquiries and was a very accurate worker. We would have been severely handicapped without her cooperation. She is a lovely and thoughtful person and we are indebted to her in many ways.

There are many others who should be included in this chapter. Zeda Riedel, Mildred Sidner and Marian Yecsmen were all bookkeepers in Ray Meyers' department. If a tally had been kept of all the questions I asked them during the years I would be embarrassed to know the number. They were always ready and willing to help out. The fact that they served so many years is an indication of how valuable they were. The same is true

of Hazel Trotter and Evelyn Sabin who were secretaries under Elizabeth Hiatt. How anyone could have been as fortunate as I was to have had all these great co-workers, I'll never know. They were without any exception gracious, dependable, loyal, efficient and tolerant. I owe much to each and every one. We used to have a slogan in our office that went "You don't have to be crazy to work here, but it helps." We were all crazy in a sense-crazy about our work and crazy about each other. If we hadn't been our work at times could have been intolerable!

Chapter 26

OTHER JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Several times during my career I have had to make a decision whether to accept another position or stay with the Conference. Several other times I had inquiries as to whether I would be interested enough in an opening to apply for it. All through my life I have had a feeling that an offer might be an indication of God's will for my life and I ought to explore it and be sure before I acted upon it. I wrote Dr. Charles Kendall a letter in 1954 in response to his inquiry as to whether I would be willing to have my name suggested as a successor to Dr. Thomas B. Lugg who was retiring as Treasurer of the General Commission on World Service and Finance. I said to Charles "I have always tried to make my decisions on the basis of what I believe to be the will of God for my life. Rather than to close the door on an opportunity without giving it any consideration, I feel duty bound to listen and see if doors open or close without my help or interference. Isn't that the way to find out what God's will is?"

I agreed to accept one position elsewhere but I stipulated a condition that was never met. I was so sure I was going to accept another position that I actually went house hunting in a far away city. Altogether I guess I have considered at least a dozen offers or openings but eventually each of them was turned down. Once a decision was made to turn down an offer, I never had any regret or feeling that maybe I made the wrong decision. Perhaps I am naive in saying that I honestly have felt it was God's will for me to stay thirty-seven years in one place. I kept a file of correspondence about other proposals. I found the file recently and went through it. Some positions I had corresponded about I had entirely forgotten.

In 1939 Dr. Paul Quillian, pastor of First Methodist Church, Houston was our Conference speaker at Long Beach. He approached me about a position as Business Manager of his great 8000 member church. I had been in the Treasurer's office only five years and did not have any desire to leave. I finally wrote Dr. Quillian of my decision. He answered graciously "I appreciate deeply the spirit of your letter and can see and sympathize with your attitude and decision. Any other attitude would have been unlike you." It was only a short time after his letter that Dr. Quillian suffered a fatal heart attack.

Dr. Grover Emmons, founder and editor of The Upper Room, became a member of our Conference through Unification in 1939. He was quite interested in a proposal that there be a Church Statistician, probably in New York City with the Book Editor of The Methodist Publishing House. He talked with me twice and had others, including Dr. Roy L. Smith, talk to me. While I did evidence some interest, I finally requested that my name be withdrawn.

In 1942 Dr. F. W. Mueller and Dr. W. J. Elliott of the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension in Philadelphia made a great effort

to get me to come to Philadelphia in the Treasurer's office. I was greatly interested in the offer and actually spent a couple of days looking at houses in some of the suburban communities. I think I might have gone except for one thing. The position I was offered was "Assistant Treasurer." Mr. H. Conwell Snoke, an attorney in Philadelphia, had been employed eight years before and carried the title "Associate Treasurer." Connie and I were almost the same age. I reasoned that when the time came for a replacement of Dr. Elliott as Treasurer, the Associate Treasurer with eight years more tenure than the Assistant Treasurer would get the call. I said I would take the chance if our titles were the same. Dr. Elliott did not see my point. Complications developed in Los Angeles concerning the care of my father and I finally decided a move to Philadelphia was out of the question. Connie Snoke was elected to succeed Dr. Elliott when he retired a few years later.

In 1946 Dr. T. A. Stafford offered me the position of Treasurer of the Board of Pensions. It was a very enticing offer but I was certain from the very beginning it wasn't the thing for me to do. I wrote to him and explained my reasoning about it. He replied "I regret your decision, but I have to admit the reasons you give are valid and I would feel the same way myself in the same circumstances."

In 1948 the San Francisco Area was divided and Bishop Donald Tippet was elected and assigned to San Francisco. Dr. Wm. P. Rankin had been Conference Treasurer and was to retire in 1949. A year or so before the decision was made to divide the Conference, Bishop Baker and I "cooked up" an idea of having an Area Treasurer. The plan was for me to spend one week per month in San Francisco and three weeks in Los Angeles. Of course we never got to try it but some of the men in the north thought from the proposal I might be interested in coming north. Bishop Tippet encouraged them to contact me about it which they did. I was interested for several reasons. I had been in Los Angeles fifteen years and felt that perhaps that was long enough. Bishop Baker was to retire at the end of the quadrennium. I didn't have any idea who his successor would be. I knew Don Tippet and knew I could work with him. Our son, Jack, was planning on going to school at Berkeley. When the committee contacted me I made it very clear the only basis upon which I would come would be to have a complete centralized Treasury plan as we had in Southern California. If that could be worked out I agreed to accept the position. The effort was made to get all the organizations of the Conference to become parties to the plan. The Endowment Fund in the California-Nevada Conference is quite an independent group and is self-perpetuating. In other words, it elects its own Trustees and the Conference really does not control it. This Board would not agree to come into a Centralized Treasury plan and I wouldn't accept the offer unless they did. I finally suggested the committee consider Frank Webber who had been my assistant for 15 years. They talked to him and finally made a deal with him. He became their Treasurer and for twenty-six years has done a superb job for them.

Shortly after that Dr. Robert Burns of College of the Pacific at Stockton approached me on a proposal that would have brought me to their office. I went up to Stockton and was interested in what they had in mind. In order to accomplish it there was some internal problem that had to be worked out. Apparently it was blocked. Bishop Tippet wrote "I am distressed by what we learned over at College of the Pacific. I wanted to let _____ go at once and bring you in now ----but those who doubtless know more of the local conditions deem it unwise. Sorry, a second time, we could not bring you up to California-Nevada Conference."

Early in May, 1951 Dr. Harold Case accepted the Presidency of Boston University. He returned to Southern California and attended the Annual Conference session in June. One of the emergencies he discovered at Boston was the necessity of replacing an 80 year old treasurer. He seemed enthusiastic about wanting me for the position. I had a trip scheduled in the east in early October and agreed to take enough additional time to go on back to Boston in order to look the situation over and discuss the matter further with Harold and his Board. As I thought about it during the summer I became more and more convinced I should not go any further with the investigation. I wrote Harold and called his attention to the fact that I had never gone to college and that while a college education might not be an absolute requisite, I knew it would be a distinct handicap not to have had it. Further, I was never trained for accounting work. I said "Harold, I am not qualified for the position, and I know it." His answer was gratefully appreciated and more generous in its appraisal than I was myself.

As I look back, nearly all the proposals which I seriously considered were in anticipation of Bishop Baker's retirement. I had such a wonderful relationship with him I guess I just couldn't face having to start over with another Bishop. How wrong I was! It was only a year or two after Bishop Kennedy came to the Los Angeles Area that I came to the conclusion I would never leave Los Angeles as long as he was the Bishop-and I never did.

There was one occasion when I was almost forced to accept another position. The circumstances surrounding this incident were as near to a nightmare as I ever want to get. In the fall of 1968 several of the creditors of Pacific Homes contacted Bishop Kennedy because of their great concern over what was happening financially in the affairs of that Corporation. I am writing another chapter which will be devoted entirely to that problem. Bishop Kennedy brought me in to the discussion. On December 27, 1968 a meeting of the Pacific Homes Corporation was held and Dr. Edward P. O'Rear, who had been the Executive General Manager for fifteen years, resigned. During the spring of 1969 Bishop Kennedy and I held a series of eleven meetings across the Conference to brief Conference members, lay and ministerial, about what obviously was a crisis. As a result the Conference approved our proposal for a guarantee of a \$4,000,000 loan which Pacific Homes desperately needed. The loan was finally arranged with Connecticut

General Insurance Company of Hartford, Connecticut. Mr. Ed Stant, Comptroller for Pacific Homes, and I had met Mr. James Tate of Connecticut General in Chicago and worked out the details of the loan. The contact with Mr. Tate had been arranged by Mr. Robert Francouer, a Chicago loan broker, who had been employed by Pacific Homes to find such a loan. When the arrangements were finally made and the papers were received one of the requirements stipulated that there should be a lay General Manager for the Corporation instead of a minister. I was in Iowa on vacation when Mr. Francouer called on Bishop Kennedy to discuss this unexpected requirement. Dr. Noel LeRoque had been appointed General Manager in April to succeed Dr. O'Rear. The requirement for a lay General Manager would mean that Dr. LeRoque would have to be replaced. I, of course, do not know what was said by Mr. Francouer to Bishop Kennedy since I was in Iowa. I know I got a phone call advising me that it had been decided I should become General Manager of Pacific Homes. To say I was shocked is an understatement. I had a meeting the following week in Chicago and arranged to see Mr. Francouer. I finally convinced him the relationship of the Annual Conference to the Pacific Homes situation was extremely important and that my position in the matter representing the Annual Conference was vital. I pointed out that some other layman could be found to be General Manager of Pacific Homes without too much delay, but it might take considerable time to work out arrangements for a new Conference Treasurer with the knowledge of the situation I happened to have. He finally agreed with me and I was "off the hook."

It has been flattering to have had so many actual offers and so many additional proposals to consider. I have no feeling that I made a mistake in saying "no" so many times.

Chapter 27

MY FAMILY

While most of "The Hole Story" has dealt with my career, the most precious of my memories are related to my family. All the activities of my life aside from my career have been family centered. My parents always observed birthdays and other anniversaries. Such events always called for a special dinner which my mother always prepared. My parents never owned a car, a radio or a television set. Consequently, they were nearly always at home and as my brother and I grew up we spent more time with our parents than most children do. Our evenings, if we weren't studying, would be devoted to games with our parents. Our home life was a happy experience that we look back upon with gratitude.

My parents celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary on May 12, 1937. It was a highlight of their lives and we were all happy and proud of them. My mother suffered a stroke two years later and died in July of 1939. Dad lived alone for another six years. He was on his way to church one night and started across an intersection. A car struck him and he died on the spot. No one ever had better parents than I did. If I have amounted to anything at all, credit must go to them for the way they raised me and my brother.

Velma and I were married in my parents' home on West 93rd Street in Los Angeles on Saturday, September 20, 1924. It was a small family wedding. My brother was the best man and Eunice Rathbun was the bridesmaid. Rev. Arthur Hobson performed the ceremony. Velma's brother, Loyd, and some of his friends tried their best to "kidnap" the bride, but with my brother's help we finally escaped to the Rosslyn Hotel in downtown Los Angeles. The next day we planned to go to San Diego on the steamship Harvard which sailed from Wilmington shortly after lunch. We took the Pacific Electric train from 6th and Main to Wilmington. When we got off the train there was Les and two of his friends waiting to greet us with a shower of rice. Of course everyone on board the ship knew then we were newlyweds. When we got off the ship at San Diego there was Les and his friends waiting with more rice. They took us to the San Diego Hotel and chased us into the lobby under a barrage of rice.

Our first two years saw us living in four different houses. We were living at 4350 Van Buren Place, Los Angeles in a house which Velma's father owned when our first baby was born. John Wesley Hole, Jr. (Jack) arrived on November 17, 1926 at the Benedict Maternity Hospital in Hollywood. We bought a home in East Pasadena in 1928 and lived there for three years. We moved to Huntington Park in 1931 in order to be close to my work. The climate did not agree with Velma's bronchial problems and our doctor urged us to move to a higher, drier climate. Marilyn Louise was born October 8, 1931 and we moved to Sparr Heights, Glendale at the end of that month. A year and a half later we bought a Spanish type home in La Canada where we lived until 1956.

Our place in La Canada was ideal for raising children. We had two lots which were fenced in. We had a badminton court and finally got

a pony for Marilyn. We had also purchased a small cabin at Big Bear Lake which we could use on weedends, holidays and during the summer. Jack and Marilyn almost always took a friend with them to the mountains. The altitude at Big Bear was too high for me and we finally bought a larger cabin at Lake Arrowhead and sold the Big Bear place.

The children grew up much faster, it seemed, than we thought they would. They both were doing well in school. Jack was a bookworm and Marilyn was a tomboy. When the neighborhood boys gathered on the lot next door to play ball Marilyn was out with them but Jack would be reading a book.

Shortly after Jack graduated from high school he was drafted into the Army. It was a difficult experience for us but no more difficult than it was for thousands of other parents. His basic training was in Camp Hood in Texas. I was able to see him a couple of times when I went to Austin, Texas for meetings of the Board of Trustees at Sam Houston College. He was home for a furlough prior to going overseas when the war was ended. He was sent over to the Philippines and was on the Island of Leyte for over a year. When he finally was discharged he enrolled in John Muir College, Pasadena and then for his college work at the University of California-Berkeley. After a semester there he decided there was no place like home. He enrolled at U.C.L.A. and got his Bachelor's degree there. After teaching high school in Whittier a couple of years he returned to U.C.L.A. and got his Master's degree. He then got into the Junior College system teaching science at Rio Hondo in Whittier.

More as a hobby than anything else he and a friend developed some film strips for audio visual teaching. They sent the strips to Herbert Budek Company of Santa Barbara, California for production and distribution. Apparently they were of good quality. About that time Holt, Rinehart and Winston, publishers in New York had asked Dr. Frederick L. Fitzpatrick, former head of the Department of Science Education at Teacher's College, Columbia University, New York City, and Jack to write a textbook on Life Sciences for Junior High School use. They proposed the arrangement to Jack. The book is now in its third edition being revised each four years. The first edition came out in 1966. Several hundred thousand of the book have been sold. Oddly Jack has never met his co-author. The entire process has been accomplished by mail. At present Jack's teaching at Rio Hondo is limited to classes of student nurses to whom he is teaching anatomy and physiology. He is also writing another textbook on anatomy and physiology at the request of a textbook publisher, Wm. C. Brown and Company, in Dubuque, Iowa.

Jack and Shirley Mae French were married on April 2, 1955 in the Chapel of First Church, Glendale by Dr. Everett Palmer. They have three children: Laurence Wesley born April 12, 1958; Karen Lynn born May 28, 1960; and Michael David born July 31, 1965. They live in Whittier, California.

Marilyn graduated from Junior College. On December 11, 1954 she and William Francis Peer were married in First Methodist Church, Burbank.

Bill had been in the youth group of the La Crescenta Valley Methodist Church where our family were charter members. After graduating from high school he joined the Marines and spent his military service in Korea. When he returned he was employed for a time by Gilfillan Radio Company before going with the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena where he is still employed as an engineer.

Their wedding was a gala affair. Bishop Kennedy performed the ceremony. Marion Downs sang. The church was filled because word had gotten out that the Bishop was to be there. Marilyn and Bill have two boys: Wm. Francis, Jr. was born September 11, 1955; and Charles Edward was born October 24, 1958. Billy is interested in anything that grows. He is also an excellent cook and is good enough on the piano to give lessons. Chuck is an athlete. He plays third base on the La Canada High School team. The Peers live in La Canada.

Grandma and Grandpa are extremely proud of their five grandchildren as well as the parents.

Probably the greatest thrill of our lives came in September of 1974 when Velma and I celebrated our Golden Wedding Anniversary. Actually the celebration covered over a month's time. In thinking ahead about the event several months before Marilyn facetiously said "Dad and Mother are going to take us all to Hawaii with them to celebrate." Well it sounded like a good idea so we began to plan it. We first thought of going in September right at our anniversary date, but Jack couldn't arrange his schedule to get away so soon after the fall term began. So we decided to go in August. Arrangements were made for Shirley's parents to stay with their children. Billy and Chuck stayed at home alone. On the morning of August 20 Velma and I, Jack and Shirley, and Marilyn and Bill took off on a United Airlines 747 Jet for Hilo, Hawaii. It was the first flight for both Shirley and Bill.

We had made hotel reservations ahead as well as Avis reservations for a car at each airport. We were to have two days on each of the outer islands and three days in Honolulu. When we landed in Hilo we got our car and went to the Hilo Lagoon Hotel which was opened in the fall of 1971. As soon as we got our rooms we took the car and drove to Akaka Falls. The next day we took off early in the morning to drive clear around the island. We went first to Volcano House, the Kiluea volcano crater and Thurston Lava Tube. Then we went to Black Sands beach where we had a picnic lunch. We went to City of Refuge, Kailua, Kona and then on to Kamuela, Honokaa, Waipio Valley and back to Hilo.

Thursday morning we left early to go to Maui. Our hotel was the Maui Beach Hotel in Kahului. As soon as we got settled in our rooms we took off to go up to the Haleakala Crater which is over ten thousand feet high. We drove the entire distance over a winding road in fog and mist. Just before we reached the top we came out of the clouds into unbelievable blue skies and sunshine. We had purchased box lunches at Kahului so we sat on the rocks and ate Colonel Sanders chicken. When we got back to the hotel we took off again to see the Iao Needle and to get dinner. Velma and I stayed

in our room that night while the four younger ones went to Lahaina. The next morning we drove the 55 mile road to Hana. Again we had a picnic lunch. While eating we saw John and Cora Tincher. They had been serving the Hana Congregational Church during August. After lunch we went on another 12 miles to the Seven Sacred Pools. We were within a mile of Kipahulu where Colonel Charles Lindberg was to be buried on the following Monday. We didn't know it at the time, but we were within just a few hundred feet from the cottage at the Hana Hotel where Colonel Lindberg was dying. John Tincher had his service. Saturday morning we flew to Kauai. Our reservations there were at the Kauai Resort Hotel. We had made dinner reservations that night at Wailua Marina restaurant through our good friends, Rev. and Mrs. J. C. Runes. Unfortunately, the Runeses were called on an emergency to the mainland, but they had made arrangements for some beautiful carnation leis to be given to us at our table. It was a most pleasant surprise. On Sunday we again took a picnic lunch and went to Waimea Canyon. It was a thrilling trip with spectacular scenery. Monday morning we had time to drive to the end of the road on the east side of the Island at Haena. We saw the beautiful Hanalei Valley and Bay. Shortly after lunch we flew to Honolulu. There we were met in true Hawaiian fashion by Dr. and Mrs. Harry Komuro, Dr. B. Rhodes Martin, Jim Misajon and Dr. Earl Kernahan. The kids got a big thrill out of receiving leis Hawaiian style. Our hotel was the Pacific Beach Hotel on Waikiki Beach. It was a new Japanese Hotel. We were on the 17th floor with a veranda for each room and a spectacular view up the coast to Honolulu.

Monday night we had the Komuros, Misajons and Martins as our guests at the Willows restaurant. Anyone who hasn't had dinner at the Willows hasn't seen all of Hawaii. It was a most enjoyable experience in a setting of real Hawaiian atmosphere. Tuesday we drove around the Island of Oahu. That evening Harry and Yuki had a party in our honor in their home. They had a beautiful 50th Anniversary cake. Yuki and her daughter, Beth, sang the Hawaiian wedding song for us. There were about twenty-five of our friends there to help us celebrate. Wednesday we loafed. The women took a bus to see the Ala Moana Shopping Center.

Thursday it all came to an end. We left at 9:30 a.m. for home. It was the first trip to Hawaii for Jack, Shirley and Bill. Marilyn had been over in 1954. Velma had been there on five previous occasions. For me it was my twenty-seventh trip. No matter how many times I get to go to Hawaii each trip is as thrilling as the past ones.

We were all glad to get home but the nine days together were without any problem of any kind. The weather was perfect. We couldn't have had a nicer celebration than this trip turned out to be.

The actual date of our anniversary was Friday, September 20th. Our children and grandchildren had planned a reception for us on Saturday, the 21st. We were alone on the 20th so we went over to Lawrence Welk's restaurant near Escondido for lunch.

The reception Saturday was in the La Crescenta Valley United Methodist Church from 2 to 5. About 125 friends, relatives and former neighbors

honored us with their presence. Marilyn and Bill had worked out a surprise program. Rev. Bobs Watson, their pastor, had written a script based upon information they had gathered from Velma's bride's book and other sources. He had 64 slides made to go with the narration which he had put on tape. It was cleverly done and, in addition to being a surprise, it was almost a shock. The crowd thoroughly enjoyed it. Son-in-law, Bill, put the narration on a cassette tape for us and Bobs gave us the original script and the 64 slides. We have showed them several times.

After the reception some 25 relatives went up to Marilyn's for a buffet dinner in the evening. To be able to celebrate 50 years of wedded bliss together is something, but to have it celebrated for over a month as we did was certainly wonderful.

We wrote a letter to each family after it was all over thanking them for all they had done for us and telling them that even more than the reception we were grateful for them and what they meant to us. 1974 truly was a memorable year for us.



J. Wesley and Velma Hole on the occasion of their Golden Wedding Anniversary.