# RECOLLECTIONS OF BURCHARD

This is Sacramento, capital city of the Nation-State of California: first writing on Saturday, November 14, 1992. From this distance I am aware of the major developments in Burchard centering around the development of the Harold Lloyd house as a historical monument, and the founding of the World Farmers' Hall Of Fame and the development of Pawnee County as a historic place and as a place for tourism. These things are the contents of the dreams I had when I was young and growing up in Burchard. In those days of yore, I had no inkling that such dreams would ever develop into fact -- they did, long after I left. Now is the time to translate them into print.

What follows are my own memories of the place as I lived it, and they are centered around me. This is how I saw it, and this is what it felt like to me. All names are actual, to keep the guilty interested.

There is something about a New Year's Eve when it is the turn of a decade that makes it worth remembering.

The first New Year's Eve that I can remember at all was when we saw in 1950. The folks had decided that I could stay up through midnight with all the grownups and see in the new year. I had just turned six. Mom and Dad had called in Margaret and Marie Tegtmeier and their parents, Bill and Sophie Tegtmeier, and Elizabeth and Frank Simon. I don't recall if Maureen Tegtmeier and Yvonne and Wiladeen Speier were there. I installed myself in an easy chair beside a six-foot Christmas tree in the front room beside the cathedral radio to watch the grownups do what they liked best -- sit around the dining room table and drink beer and play Canasta. The hours rolled on, the tree, with its lights long since unplugged, finally tipped over, and I sat there happily watching the evening go by. Dad came over and pulled the tree upright, midnight arrived, and everybody split.

In the autumn and winter in Nebraska the major weather comes along following episodes of gray skies, usually. Not always. The most dramatic episode of such events following unseasonably clear, warm weather that I know of occurred a long time before I came along -- 1888. My memories of snowstorms and the events that were severe and furious enough to officially be called blizzards were not marked by any vast changes in weather as the event came down on us; it just came. It means they call a halt to all proceedings at the schoolhouse in midafternoon, call in the busses, and get everybody out of there. The town kids are sent home with orders to get there as quickly as possible, and be super careful. I can recall one such weather event in November of 1952. I was eight years old, in the third grade. They sent us out the front door of the schoolhouse at around 2:00

in the afternoon. The sky was dark gray with the bottom of the cloud deck that was the body of the storm, and the wind was already northwest at about 35 miles an hour. I can remember being able to see no details more than about twenty feet ahead of me, and the wind had the typical steady, deep-pitched howl of a Plains blizzard. No matter where you go in your life, you never, EVER forget that sound.

A block and a half southwest of the school, in the direction of our house, was the Methodist church and west of it, in its back yard, was the privy. The little two-holer faced south and was just enough shelter for me to crawl into and sit for ten or fifteen minutes to catch my breath before plowing onward. I can recall sitting there watching the dry, gypsum-like snow flying through the dilapidated walls of the little privy, spotting up the fancy red zipper notebook that had cowboys on the cover.

A few minutes later I was home with Mom, Dad finally showed up from the rural mail route that he couldn't finish because of the storm, and we dragged out the kerosene heater. We would need it pretty quick. Within an hour the power failed, and so did our electric furnace. The kerosene heater stood about a yard tall beside the dining room table, and it was the only heat and light in the house for the next two days. The wind outside was the only sound except for us walking around inside. This gets old after so many hours. After two days it gets very old. When the storm mass finally moved on to the southeast the clear sky behind it was very hazy and cold. The drifts were about ten feet deep around Burchard, and the roads were plowed out after about one more day.

I have been in California for more than eighteen years, and I've been in Sacramento for twelve years. I still wonder how many people here know what winter really is. I wondered the same thing during my six years in southeastern Arizona, in Tucson, in the late 1960's through 1972. Snow to them means a rush on any store that sells color film. I fantasize about making all of them read the books of Mari Sandoz, then I fantasize about whether it would do any good.

Burchard lies along the Burlington, specifically, the main line from St. Joe to Napier, Missouri, to Lincoln, via Wymore. As I understand, the railroad and Burchard arrived on the scene at about the same time, the early 1880's. The line hauled produce, grain and livestock, and passengers, the latter up through the very early 1960's. In my young days in Burchard, there were two schedules through town, the westbound and the eastbound; both came through during the first half of the afternoon. I never rode east out of Burchard, but Mom and I made numerous trips to Lincoln in the other direction. It was about a two-hour ride, west through Armour and

Liberty to Wymore, then north through Beatrice to Lincoln.

The "hump" was erected a few yards behind and east of the depot, on the opposite side of the "house" track, in the very early 1950's. The hump was a dirt ramp for backing trucks up to trackside to unload onto freight cars.

Some time in the late 1940's a Rock Island steam locomotive was derailed northwest of Burchard, somewhere near Rockford, Nebraska. Our trip to that scene was on a dark, wet afternoon. The locomotive looked smaller than it should, lying on its port side in the weeds beside the track, facing helplessly west. I wish I could either remember or research the details of this one. I seem to remember a lot of dark ruined iron lying around on the wet landscape.

The Burlington was the only public transportation Burchard ever had. As I recall, the last passenger train through town was the westbound, on Saturday, January 24, 1962. The reason I missed riding on that train seemed simple at the time, and since has become a tragic oversight. It happened to be the day that my classmate Terry Seip and I went to Manhattan, Kansas, to take the Scholastic Aptitude Test. We made the trip with Carl O'Hare, our senior class sponsor who was also the athletics coach, and our hero. It was a good, dark, quiet winter morning for a car trip south down along the twisty, narrow blacktop Kansas highways into Manhattan, then an afternoon ride all the way back. I later realized what I had missed. The test could have been rescheduled.... I miss Terry Seip, I miss Carl O'Hare and his brown '61 Ford, but I deeply miss the trains. The memory of that day was part of what brought on my religious love of rail travel that would develop later in that decade and last forever. I vowed much later that I would never again live in a town without regular cross-country passenger rail, a promise to myself that I never broke.

My last ride on a local in Nebraska occurred two years earlier. The Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy operated a charter local from St. Joe to Lincoln in conjunction with schools along the route, each season when Ice Capades visited Lincoln. Mom and I decided to ride the local and see Ice Capades in February, 1960. On Saturday, February 20, the Burchard school operated one of the schoolbusses to Table Rock to meet the local headed for Lincoln. We rode in a day coach with Rollie Riggins and Shirley and Sharon Morris. I can remember Judith, daughter of John Brandt, the depot agent, in the same car.

It was a dark, cold, and quiet winter day, with snow coming on. The ride to Lincoln was easy and smooth. The day was a typical shopping day in Lincoln, with the addition of Ice Capades in Pershing Auditorium. Then back to the depot. Our local waited for us, coupled south. By now, late afternoon, the snowstorm had moved in, and it

was a hard, heavy, although not violent, snow. It got totally dark very soon. Our schoolbus waited for us in Table Rock, and we plowed west on Highway 65 through the heavy snow. We were just able to detect the bus bouncing over the frozen ruts in the intersection of soon-to-be-paved Highways 4 and 65 and turning left, south, to Burchard. Those roads were not passable for more than another hour or so. But no such benign weather was going to seriously affect the local train from St. Joe to Lincoln and back.

United States Independence Day was always simply known as "the Fourth of July," or, "the Fourth." It always meant fireworks, lots of them. Big noise, big displays, and cowering dogs. About a week beforehand Dad and I would motor south to Summerfield, Kansas, where fireworks sales laws were liberal, and the hardware store would have quite a few tables laid out with displays of all that delicious firepower. It was a taste of heaven. As I recall, we didn't invest very much money in little things like lady-finger firecrackers. Most of it went for inch-and-a-halfs, cones, Roman candles, and other goodies I can't remember the names of. In later years, when we were teen-agers and older, and went back to Burchard to raise all the appropriate hell for that time of year, the big firepower came from Missouri, bootlegged across the river by the fastest drivers around. Thus we had cherry bombs, side-fuses, and, truly the finest of all, the silver nitrate salutes; each one was equivalent to an eighth of a stick of dynamite. You had to be careful with them.

Approaching one Fourth in the central 1960's Bill and Jack Rinne, Jerry Allen, Johnny Vetrovsky, and I grew tired of such puny firepower. We went to the Western Auto store in Pawnee City and bought a sack of potash and a length of blasting fuse. When the two men who ran Western Auto asked us what we were fixing to do, we told them we were going to make our own fireworks. They told us to be careful. We sawed a limb off one of Mom's and my elm trees and carved plugs out of it, and secured a nine-inch length of pipe. Plug one end of the pipe, pour in the potash and some dirt, carve a hole in the other plug for the fuse, shove that in, and you have your own little firecracker. We took it to the stream that flowed south along the west side of town into Plum Creek and planted it, lit the fuse, and ran like hell east across the cornfield to the fence row, and hunkered down. The blast was audible for about a mile, and the length of pipe soared a few hundred feet into the air and landed in the field right behind us. The pipe was spread wide open. The resulting hole in the creek bank was big enough to bury half a Volkswagen. In a place such as Burchard where there wasn't too much public entertainment, you learned early on how to make your own fun.

Back in the early 1950's and, I guess, much earlier, there were

things called May baskets. I don't recall how we justified making a holiday out of May First, but we did. There was a ritual in going downtown and buying all the penny candy you could find and going home and assembling little baskets with flowers on them, paper or real, and stuffing the candy into them. Then you lined all of them up on the dining room table and laid out the route of everybody's house you were going to deliver one to. Then Mom or your big sister would drive you around town to accomplish the deliveries in the late afternoon. If you were a guy, you placed the little basket on a girl's front porch, hammered once or twice on her screen door, yelled "MAY BASKET!" as loud as possible, then ran like a quarter-mile sprinter out through the gate toward the car, in mortal fear of being caught and kissed before you gained the safety of the car. As I recall, I never got caught, not once.

Election Day was a holiday in its own unique way. Presidential elections were major big time. I was born, baptized, and raised a Republican and was growing up in the days when we all liked Ike or, most of us, that is.

Six weeks before my fifth birthday, Mom and Dad went down to the fire hall where the Plum Creek Precinct polling place was and confidently voted for who would the next day be President-elect Dewey. Maybe it's just as well that I can't remember the mood of the outcome of that election. I do, however, remember the first political conversation I was ever in; one day I asked Mom what was wrong with President Truman. "He has his head stuck in the sand, like an ostrich." Oh.

The medium-sized black beetles with red chevron stripes on their wings who frequented the outside basement walls of the house in the autumn were Box Elder beetles, known in our family as "democrat bugs," spelled with a lower-case "d." Interestingly, a lot of our neighbors were Democrats, and we all loved each other like family. Politics around home in those days was rather mild. My own eventual political affiliation was so far away in the future then that it was unknowable, like a science-fiction story of far-future history, like Frank Herbert's "Dune."

Mom and Dad always worked as part of the election committee which maintained the polling place on the big day. Such duties always included lighting the big stove in the fire hall early in the morning -- in that climate, Election Day was usually cold, cloudy, and dry. A few days before the election Dad would bring home big sample ballots of all the issues on the ballot, printed on cardboard, big enough to mount on walls like posters. That gave me ballots to mark on with pencils while I lay on the floor. So I knew how to vote when I was still in primary school, just old enough to read. Voting became a religion, the reality to be achieved when I finally turned

twenty-one, a long time in the future.

Halloween was characterized by the wacky custom of trick-or-treating. In the late 1950's the town began to stage Halloween parties for children in the Legion hall downtown in a commendable and ultimately successful effort to curb trick-or-treating. Other than for school and church plays, the only costumes I ever wore were for trick-or-treating when I was very young. Even then it seemed to me very silly, and unhandy and cumbersome as a means of getting around. Around 1955 I began to realize that there were other, slightly different, aspects of the procedure besides knocking on doors and begging for candy. One would discover that the other word in the routine's name was "trick." Upsetting outdoor toilets was a tradition passed down from one generation of high-schoolers to the next, and we had our turn at it in the very late 1950's and early 1960's. I can recall that we, in our own turn, always made a point of avoiding the backyard structures of older ladies, especially widows. The lightweight building makes a soft crunch as it hits the ground. The trick is to make sure one does not lose one's balance during the tipping and fall forward into the vault under the building. We outgrew this custom during high school.

I can recall Halloween of 1965 when somebody conjured up the unique idea of turning off all the street lights in town. All that was needed was for somebody to locate the power pole on which was mounted the light sensor that turned on the town's lights as sunset faded. The procedure was to shinny up the pole with a flashlight, tape the flashlight to the pole so that its lens was aimed at the sensor, turn the light on, then slide down the pole where a getaway car waited to hustle the crew quickly out of town as every street light went out, all at once. What fun!

When Halloween pranks are focused on individuals' property, one must be aware of efforts by property owners to protect the property from the harm that was never really done, that is, by anybody who was careful. The only time I was ever shot at was that same night in 1965, in Liberty, when we were lying flat on our stomachs behind a man's house where we were trying to place a picnic table in the middle of a street. I can remember hearing a man say to another man: "No, I can't see 'em either, but I can hear 'em. Level one off over that way." Blam! At that point we left Liberty. It was a clear, very dark, very dewy night. I had on a pair of brand-new leather shoes which I had bought for twenty-five bucks in Lincoln earlier that same day. The shoes didn't survive that night.

If we ever publish the Recollections of Burchard, maybe we'd better word-process a word or three about the Burchard Weekly Planet. Somehow in the early spring of 1956 I got the idea that I could use

the new Smith-Corona manual portable typewriter that Lawrence Transue had sent me, to really do something. The television Superman was affiliated with the Metropolis Daily Planet and some friends of mine were hawking the Lincoln Journal: ("Link - UHN Jurr - NUHL Pay - PUHRR!"). Okay. Let's join the movement. I hand-wrote the paper, typed it on the little Smith-Corona using a lot of carbon paper, and thus I had a town paper. I recall that the Page One feature of Issue #1 focused on a 1955 return to the archaeological digs of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and I learned how to spell the name of a desert dry wash known as Wadi Qumran.

I soon got media coverage from Max Martin and the Pawnee Republican ("Young Editor Busy At Burchard"), and I acquired some notoriety. I marketed the little publication by a means that worked very well for the time and place -- I walked around town and told everybody that I had a weekly paper for them to read. I had a list of subscribers rather fast; I guess people believed in the paper. At that time Jess Ray was the school superintendent and he adopted the paper to use for a high school project. Immediately my weekly appeared on legal-size paper, mimeographed, and Jess Ray was telling me he wanted me to lower the price from 5¢ to 2¢. I told him "no way" and he immediately halted the high school project of publishing my paper. I think it was at about that time that I decided to give the project up and the weekly paper became history. During its short life a few issues of the paper went to Belgium. Through Viola and Elmer Rinne I had met a man who was visiting from a town called Overpelt. I don't remember learning from the visitor where in Belgium his town was, but I acquired the address and he got a few issues. I wonder if any of them ever actually found their way to him. Somehow I can remember, about a year later, in an inexplicable fit of self-punishment, burning all of the file copies. I wish I had never done that. In so doing I destroyed one of the very few notable things I did as a young boy in Burchard.

I don't recall very many instances of total fear in my young years, but I do recall the terror of polio. This memory was intensified recently by my watching an episode of the television series called "Homefront." The episode focused on polio in the Cleveland, Ohio, area in 1946. The story in the episode turned out benign, but my memory of polio is not benign. The folks were in terror every year regarding the possibility of my contracting the disease and I can recall many times when Mom and Dad would refuse to let me go outside. "You might catch it, Son." Remembering back from more than forty years later, I realize how accurate their fears were. It was a terrible time of justifiable paranoia well founded on fact. The hospitals in and around Lincoln were full of iron lungs and everyone made sure that their children saw the machines and the people in them. HIV is no more dreaded now than polio was then, and polio was a lot more explainable. You could visualize it. Jonas

Salk was a true hero of the 1950's. I will never forget the night when the media networks announced his development of the vaccine.

As I come to know Virginia's family and recall my own, I am reminded occasionally how it is when one says what one knows, when one shouldn't be saying anything. ("It's A Family Affair": Sly And The Family Stone) There was a time in the autumn of 1951 when my sister came home one evening and announced: "Guess what?! I have a date with Bob Utermohlen!" Bob had recently gotten the position of teaching the junior high school grades at Burchard. "Don't tell anybody!" Jerry did tell somebody -- he cannot recall who. The word got back to the home area, and Jerry was rightfully chastised. In the far term, no worry. Bob will need to correct me on some of these details, but I recall that his Chevy had a rope with which the passenger-side door was tied shut. This was before the days of computer-driven cars, passenger trains, airliners, etc.

Before I venture out into the Northern California rain for a New Year's morning breakfast (1993), I need to recall what it feels like to have somebody come home. In 1953 I was waiting for Tom to come home. He had been in the United States share of the occupation of what had become West Germany. He had been based in Mannheim. This was somewhere south of Bremerhaven, or so Bill Tegtmeier told us. One night in 1953 I was in my bedroom admiring the one-page advertisement I had clipped from the Saturday Evening Post that showed the license plates of all of the states of the United States and the provinces of Canada when I heard a commotion at the front door. Mom and Dad were yelling: "Here's Marie ... and Margaret ... and ... TOM!" That sound sent me very quickly from the bedroom to the front door, in about three steps. There was my big brother in his Army uniform, looking a little bit dazed. The next few weeks were full of memories, Army talk, as beautiful as it is, and the art of catching up on family and town affairs. Dad had a son with whom he could compare Army details. Dad had spent the Untied States' share of World War I in a camp in Deming, New Mexico, while Uncle Clay saw the festivities of Chateau Therie (sic) and Belleau Wood. But there was Army talk to be shared. I can recall now how good that felt.

Tom sent and brought home a load of Army shoulder patches, and thus I had one of my numerous collections. Mom sewed some of them, along with a set of Tom's Corporal stripes, onto a brown jacket for me and I had one of Tom's Army caps. I wore this outfit around Burchard with a justifiable amount of pride and it became my marque, so to speak, even when I tried to run home from the Saturday night free show in the Legion Hall in a driving rain, wherein all the outfit became totally soaked. I can recall Doris Hart and company turning the flat Army cap over and over on top of a stove trying to dry it

out.

Money was hard to come by in the 1950's, as it is now, but then and there, it was a little more innocent. Having inherited my love of drinking amber-colored beverages from tall brown bottles I became an expert on pop (this stuff is known as "soda" here in the Far West). Bill and Jack Rinne and I became aware that the grader ditches and side streets of Burchard were full of pop bottles that would be worth a refund. We became recyclers a few decades ahead of the times. We roamed the town and found every pop bottle that was intact, save for the one behind the blacksmith shop that had a dead mouse in it (that was a bottle for a 7-Up-like beverage known as "76"), and gathered them up and hauled them to Harts' Grocery, wherein Doris and Ellsworth gave us 2¢ for each one. This money went into a Butternut Coffee can where I found it in 1980 when I went East to relocate Burchard, the family home, and all of the memories. A lot of the bottles were the seven-ounce size, and the 7-Up bottles had the white image of a girl in a one-piece swimsuit painted on them, and Royal Crown Cola bottles were bigger, taller, and a lot harder to find. Not too many retailers around there were affiliated with distributors who could find Royal Crown Cola. But the bottles had yellow images of Egyptian Pyramids on them.

While I was born five and one-half months before the assault on Omaha Beach, my memories of World War II are very sketchy. One of the major radio news commentators in the United States then was H. V. Kaltenborn. His voice had a magnificent drone that will be part of history. I can recall Mom having the little Motorola radio in the kitchen tuned to his broadcast in the late afternoon and I heard him as I marched around the dining room table thinking, usually out loud, about everything.

My memories of Burchard in the central 1950's are vivid for a number of reasons. One of them is the all-encompassing paranoia that we felt toward the Bad Guys in the East. Thanks in large part to Josef Stalin, the whole human population of Russia was feared. Thus came the Ground Observor Corps. This whole movement was a study in citizen involvement. Had it happened later, it would have given the no-government-involvement Republican mentality of the turn of the 1990's something to gush over.

Dad and Mom picked up on this very strongly and I can recall the dark blue diagram books of the outlines of every known military airplane that flew the skies of this planet. They were delivered to every community everywhere. One of them occupied the end table in the front of our living room. Two or three people in town took turns spending summer afternoons sitting in someone's front yard

drinking iced tea and yawning up toward an empty blue sky that occasionally produced a Cessna. I remember all of this, and now I word-process about it with some sarcasm, but the idea was justified and it was based on a world situation that could have produced bombers in our skies coming from the north. I don't recall anybody in town being more enthusiastic and constructive with this project than was Joyce Bowman. It was not totally paranoia. It was a good idea that, in retrospect, was maybe a little overplayed. But it did bring us together in a unique way. When you spotted an aircraft flying over, you whipped open the guide book and identified it, then ran into somebody's kitchen and called Headquarters. I don't recall who or where Headquarters was, but every observor location had a code to identify itself. So Burchard was "Juliet-Lima-Three-Zero-Red." Watch out!

To respect my love of transportation, a few thousand words about the little blue '56 Ford:

With the rural mail route Dad had to replace the car at least every other year, sometimes yearly. All but a few of the sixty-one miles of Dad's route were on dirt roads in a land of black prairie dirt. In terms of pedology this land surface is known as Brunizems -- the black prairie. That means mud, if there ever is enough wet weather to create wet roads.

(As an aside -- considering the weather patterns of 1993, anything that I keyboard now is subject to the weather patterns of the central United States. Looking east from the Great Valley, all bets are off.)

I remember a lot of such weather. When the roads were too muddy and bottomless for a regular car there was always a Ford Model A, or a Jeep. The last new car that Dad acquired was a 1956 Ford Mainline two-door sedan, the color of which was, according to the dealer's book, Glacier Blue. (And the dealer was Cecil Davis in Pawnee City.) Dad died in July of 1958, so the car already had eighteen months of mail route mileage on it. It still ran like a top. Ford's products were very reliable. Mom and I inherited the little blue '56 as our wheels. Mom was a good driver and a pretty good navigator. In navigating, what she lacked, I could quickly fill in. The car went everywhere.

As I went on through high school with my need to fulfill my share of the motorized wheels that any high school student must have, the Ford was there and Mom came to know the driving talents of all of my school friends; when it came my turn to drive they had our Ford and the keys, and Mom worried hour by hour regarding how good a driver each one was, and what shape the Ford would come home in. In retrospect there never was anything to worry about. The car always came home with me in it, and some gas in the tank, and the keys always ended up on the end table in our living room. Bill Rinne and the professional driver Jerry Allen came to know the little Ford well, and they knew its every whim and mood. Mom was famous among my crew as the only person in the community who was so particular that she would always have an increasingly old car rebuilt, retuned, and made like new again, whatever the cost. Mom and I always knew the right mechanics and the reliable garages. The blue Ford got older and its mileage piled up, and all my driving friends knew exactly its resonating speed where the wheels would shimmy, the frame would vibrate, and the car would feel like hell, and beyond which, by another mile an hour or so faster, it would smooth out and hold the road like a champ. There were a lot of times when the car had to take us somewhere at a time when Mom didn't like the idea of driving

take us somewhere at a time when Mom didn't like the idea of driving and I didn't want her on the road, when Jerry Allen was there. Jerry was a professional driver, a race-car driver, with images of a very fast oval road in Indianapolis in his dreams. I lost track of the times when he drove the Ford for Mom and I as I navigated. Having Jerry Allen at the wheel felt like being with Dan Gurney, Roger McCluskey, or Bob Bondurant.

In good conditions Mom loved to drive, and she had no queasy feelings about going anywhere. Let's remember the time when she came to meet the bus in Beatrice on a dry, warm Friday evening in the fall of 1963 so that I could spend the weekend in Burchard. It was a very dry, very clear, very warm Indian summer evening: full moon. Going east past Virginia and Lewiston on State Highway 4, KOMA plays a new record, the latest effort by Bo Diddley: ("I look like a farmer, but I'm a lover -- can't judge a book by looking at the cover!"). This was a good clear Friday evening to be on the road. Mom was particular about the finer things in life, like trying to stay somewhere below the legal speed limit. After about two miles of Bo Diddley and the beautiful evening air and full moon ahead of us: "How come I'm going eighty miles an hour and I haven't done anything?!"

"Mom, just listen to Bo Diddley's beat, and look at that road! That feels too good to slow down!" Oh. When the little Ford felt good, it ran very smooth, and it could produce a lot of speed.

In the very early 1950's and farther back for a good many years, Dad served on the town board in Burchard. This means that at times he took a turn at driving the maintainer, to blade down the ruts in Burchard's streets. Time to refer to the index: the "maintainer" was a road grader with a partially-enclosed two-seat cab for the operator. I was no longer a little boy when I finally absorbed the fact that all road graders might not have cabs, and that they might be known as "road graders" rather than as "maintainers."

One summer afternoon, clear and hot, I spent the hours riding around town with Dad, looking behind as the deep, hard ruts disappeared under the grader's blade, and forward down the steel arms of the grader and, below them, at that satisfyingly big, long blade, and the soothing feel of its lower edge planing down the solid, dry mud of the streets of Burchard. The old diesel engine made far too much noise in the open cockpit for any degree of conversation; my mind wandered as Dad drove the machine, nice and slow.

This grader ride had to have occurred in about 1952; the two earlier years were dark and rainy, a time when all of those ruts were manufactured.

On what will my mind wander while the grader pushes south down the hill behind the schoolhouse, on Gage Street? At that young age I still had traveled no farther west than North Platte: there is a place out there, very far away, that everybody knows about, called California. What kind of people live there? What would it be like to be out there and know some of them? The family TV set and my introduction to the original Mickey Mouse Club and all those little Californians with mouse ears were several years in the future. Maybe I forgot that I have cousins around Ventura. I knew them. But still.... I visualized some anonymous person saying: "there's a lot of nice people out there." Was that prophetic? Forty years later this memory would reassemble itself in my office, beside the computer in which I process data regarding health insurance for dozens of thousands of California children in custody cases, in the eighth-most-populous Nation-State on this planet. And I sit there, remembering. One day back there, back then, in a little town on a long, hot summer afternoon, there was a long, spidery yellow road grader with a nice big, roaring diesel engine and a long, heavy blade, and some rough streets. And my Dad and I....

After the Burchard Lake became part of our world, from 1959 on, more things were added to our ways of doing things. Occasionally, there was enough cold weather during the winter to freeze the lake over and produce a respectable layer of ice. One afternoon during a weekend in the early 1960's, Jerry Allen, Jack and Bill Rinne, and a few more of us were in the company of Jack Huntington and his gray Jeep station wagon -- an all-terrain vehicle if we ever had one. We were motoring around on a gray, cold afternoon and found ourselves and Jack's Jeep near the south arm of the lake. The lake was frozen about as solid as the sky was gray; on a bet and a dare, we ventured off the lake road onto the solid face of Burchard Lake. The Jeep wagon had itself and at least six or seven of us to account for; it found itself on the ice of the lake. After a few whirls around on the ice, all of us on board looking at each other with the look of: "will we live to tell about this?", Jack Huntington sheepishly drove the Jeep off the ice and up the bank to the road. Then, back to town. We had braved the ice of Burchard Lake. Minnesota and Manitoba couldn't claim all of the winter heroics; we had a few of our own. And we were very glad not to have to feel any more lake ice under the wheels of Jack Huntington's Jeep.

Unlike a lot of people I know, I never put much emphasis on age, including my own, except when I turned a milestone age, such as EIGHTEEN. That magical date marked my achievement of legal drinking age in Kansas. It also meant I was eligible for Selective Service. It meant going to Pawnee City to interview with Harlan Pattison and registering for the Draft. Being subject to the Draft bothered a lot of people, but not me. Pattison told me right away

that I would be an automatic IV-F due to my eyesight, and I probably would never have to worry. The draft card was my first official ID, even before my Social Security number, which I didn't get till a year later when I was attending Nebraska Wesleyan in Lincoln.

The draft card stayed with me till one Sunday night in October of 1968. Boston Bob and I were sitting in my studio apartment in Tucson drinking beer, and we were running low. I left him there and drove the ten-speed to Circle K for a few more six-packs. I naively left the bike parked outside, unlocked, with the wallet in one saddlebag, the draft card in the wallet. Three seconds later the bike was gone, driven off by some opportunist who had watched me get off of it and walk benignly inside. I wrote to Harlan Pattison, explaining what had happened, and ordering another copy of the draft card, which he promptly sent. What thoroughness! What citizenship!

Those of us who grew up fairly close to the Nebraska-Kansas border -- forty degrees North Latitude -- enjoyed one unique aspect of growing up on the Great Plains. Legal drinking age in Nebraska in those days was twenty-one, while in Kansas, nearby to the south, it was eighteen. That is, if you could handle a form of low-alcohol beer known as "three-two," supposedly brewed with about half the alcohol content of what was available in states with drinking ages of twenty-one. One's eighteenth birthday was spent gathering one's legal identification together and convoying south to the great dividing line and continuing south into the land of new freedom. The three-two tasted weak and watery and, to me, maybe a little bit metallic, but it was cheap and available and it went down like water. (As closing time approached during the night the establishment would sell us enough full pitchers of three-two to last all night while they closed the doors at their legal hour and left us sitting inside, minding our own business and behaving, and drinking the three-two. The local ordinances said they could not sell the watery brew after midnight, but the same ordinances didn't care whether you were already in there and had already been served. Just don't ask to be served again that night. If it took you till dawn to finish up your current supply, fine. You couldn't get another round till the next evening.)

Exactly ten miles south of Burchard was Summerfield, Kansas, which became my school home in September of 1959. Then on December 22, 1961, it took on a whole new aspect. I was a senior in high school. I can remember high school sponsor and coach Carl O'Hare watching carefully in the tavern that night as I walked forth and back between table and bar with gallon pitchers of foamy three-two. His comments were that I seemed to be handling it pretty well; I showed promise. Summerfield, then the other Kansas towns around it, became our home on Friday and Saturday nights, all year long, for years.

As the members of my crew advanced in age past twenty, and we entered college and went back to Burchard for weekends, we maintained our familiarity with the little Kansas towns, especially Summerfield. We roamed farther afield in search of fresh territory. We had our own wheels and gas money. I was always navigating, especially when the crew consisted of Bill Rinne, Jerry Allen, and I, and sometimes Dale Lunsford.

Because of the frontier across the border in terms of drinking age the Kansas side of the state line was lined with roadhouses wherever there was a north-south highway crossing the border. These joints were wide open and loud, and each one attracted carloads of young people from both sides of the border for tens of miles around. They were actually country cafe-tavern-dance halls, real true roadhouses on the prairie. They always occurred where there was no town to otherwise attract such revenue. By their location, they were as country as windmills.

The entertainment in these places on Friday and Saturday nights was almost always a live country and rock band consisting of mostly guys between the ages of eighteen and their early twenties, to match the age of their customers as well as that of the operators of the roadhouse. Business was best during fall when college was on and there were college football games as well as high school games. College people came home for the weekends and they spent their weekend nights in the roadhouses. The crowds were always big, unless a major snowstorm or actual blizzard was visiting the area.

One could people-watch in the roadhouse, if one cared. You could sit in a booth with your beer and see eighteen-year-old farm girls learning how to go out in public and drink three-two beer, and dance. There were always two or three bouncers in the house; often, human bodies left the premises far faster than they had entered. Sometimes it felt good to borrow the keys to whichever car one had arrived in, and go out there and sit and relax in the relative quiet of the echoing din of the place. Some of your fellow townspeople would usually stroll by and, seeing you, come over to share their reflections on the fight they had just watched or participated in. Then, rested, you could relock the car and go back to the front door, show your hand stamp, and shove back in.

Bill Rinne and Jerry Allen and Dale Lunsford and I often drove forty or fifty miles or more out of Burchard on these nights to try just one more of these places, the farther away, the better. They all loved to drive, and the fact that ol' Cox always had a road map in his head made it even better. I recall a winter night in about 1964 when I was navigating Jerry Allen as he drove us back to Burchard through the thick fog of an otherwise dry night from a roadhouse that I think was south of Fairbury. It was Bill's little bronze

Buick.

I think my experiences with the roadhouses ended on a winter night in about 1965 that didn't even include a roadhouse. Dale Lunsford, Sharon Allen, Esther Boeding, and I had some money and we were hungry for a hamburger. So we gassed up Dale's car at Herb's and ventured out to find a hamburger -- along Poyntz Avenue in Manhattan, Kansas. It was a very dry, very mild, moonlit winter night, and we were restless. And it felt good to drive south so far that the Kansas flint hills surrounded us, and we came back over Tuttle Creek Dam. To make anything of a weekend night in a little town takes initiative. The roads were good, the flint hills were a delicious change of scenery in the moonlight, and that was a hell of a good hamburger. And at least one of us was now old enough to not need Kansas roadhouses, and the other three in the car that night would soon follow. But I will never forget the roadhouses. My experience with them extends from the winter of 1961-62 into the mid 1960's.

When one has been gone for awhile there is usually a happening staged to observe one's sudden return to the home turf. These are reunions.

I finally left the Burchard area in early August of 1967, bound for Arizona. I had made the initial leave about four weeks earlier in the form of a bicycle trip to Phoenix by way of Denver. Due to the inevitability of bad planning brought about by lack of the financial power to do the whole trip, the reality of which I had emotionally and mentally denied to myself for a long time, that trip got me no farther than Denver with a side trip to the Coors Brewery in Golden. It terminated in a return to Lincoln, then Burchard. The return was heightened by the presence of a girlfriend in Lincoln whom I could not emotionally escape. She didn't want me back, but I wanted her back, so back I went. This was made embarrassingly easy by the geomorphological fact that moving east across the Great Plains of North America means a long downhill bicycle ride. The effect of gravity is very noticeable when on a bicycle crossing this expanse eastbound.

My final escape was to southern Arizona, followed by a seventeen-month strategic retreat to Lincoln and Havelock in the early winter of 1972, leading into 1973 and the first months of 1974. In the meantime I had secured a job position with the Social Security Administration in Oxnard, on the South Coast between Santa Monica and Santa Barbara. So I would be Californian, after all.

The first return visit after my permanent move to California occurred in December of 1975. This included my first visit to Minnesota and also coincided with my 32nd birthday. In observance

of my return and the birthday, a contingent of my Burchard friends who were still Burcharders organized a welcome-home party for me in the Burchard tavern for mid-December of 1975. I got to Burchard with the help of Amtrak, Greyhound, and finally Rod and Sharon Baade, and the crew was waiting for me in the tavern. Accompanied by Mom and Doris Hart I entered, and in so doing I re-entered Burchard for a brief and joyous time. They had reserved the tavern for our party for the entire evening which resulted in the potential eighty-sixing of several regular customers, farmers who lived around Burchard and had been in there for their Saturday libations. My friends asked me what to do about these good regular customers at the bar of Burchard's tavern as our party was getting under way. I can recall telling them that I would walk from the side room where the tables and the shuffleboard and jukebox were, and ask these regular farmers to plan to stay with us. The bar patrons eagerly agreed, we closed off the side room and, as I remember, these three or four farmers happily sat there and had the whole bar to themselves while we proceeded with our reunion party in the other room. I was told later that all three or four of them enjoyed their Saturday evening with us.

Meanwhile, our party in the other room proceeded apace. It seemed like all of Burchard was there with us. In observance of my birthday the giant Burchard mug was brought out, filled to its brim with beer, and given to me so I could drain it in one draught. I did so, although I will admit to slowing down a few times during the tipping of the huge mug, to catch my breath.

The main organizer of this operation was my schoolmate Margie Oehm. I had met Margie when a few of us adopted Summerfield as our school home after Burchard's high school closed in the spring of 1959 due to dwindling enrollment and shrinking school district revenue. She was Jerry Allen's classmate, two years behind me, and we all had become fast and permanent friends. (Margie and I are still in contact. She already knows about these Recollection papers, and her word processor is a twin sister to this one.) Although Margie now lives in Pawnee City I still think of her as a Burcharder, with her approval.

The attendees at that party were: my Mom, Doris Hart, Chuck and Bernice Rinne, a lot of my Summerfield schoolmates such as Alice, Mary and Sherry Mitchell and, I believe, Margie's brother Jim Knowles, some of the Olberdings, Herb LeSeuer, I believe, and Larry and Eleanor Hart, Sharon and Rod Baade (who had driven me down from Bennett accompanied by one of their friends), and, I believe, Veronica Allen and, of course, Margie. I am sure there were several more. It was a magnificent time. Mom had driven me to the place in her green '61 Chevy (the successor to the famous '56 Ford); about two-thirds of the way through the evening -- 10:30 -- she and Doris Hart had given up and driven home as an ice storm approached the area from

the west. The rest of us couldn't have cared less about the approaching storm. I can recall Margie taking me back to Mom's house at some time after midnight and I recall walking from her car to the front porch, smashing through the thin ice crust on the branches of our redbud tree. My California mind was having itself a grand time observing my head plowing through the ice-coated branches. It was a long, long way from the palm tree-lined street along which I lived in Oxnard.

The other reunion that was held for me was in June of 1980. I was going back to Burchard from Oxnard to claim all of my share of the family's stuff in the Burchard house, before the family sold the property.

Again the main operative was Margie. She organized a beer party for me in her backyard in Burchard. This time I got there with Larry Boward and Keith Siegebarth (sic) in Larry's 1967 Mustang convertible. The convertible was a cherry car, sort of beige with a white rag top which was down, of course. It took the three of us half a day to journey from Lincoln to Burchard, a trip delayed by our having to visit every tavern in every town between Princeton, where Larry's folks had, and still have, the Princeton Tavern, and Burchard.

This party was a slow, languorous late-afternoon backyard party where we went through numerous cases of beer and a lot of news and events were brought up-to-date. It was the last time I saw Dale Lunsford and his wife. It took Margie and I only an hour and a half to clean up the site the next morning.

Some of my very early memories of Burchard are, as you'd expect, from around home. These include the memories of having a babysitter. My babysitter was Maureen Tegtmeier. Maureen, in those days, operated with the name of "Snooks." That was the only name that I knew her by, and Snooks was my surrogate big sister. My real big sister had graduated from high school and was living in Lincoln, developing a career for herself. Her Number Two little brother was in Burchard, about five years old, and he had to be accompanied by somebody whenever Mom and Dad were away somewhere for the evening. Since Maureen graduated from high school in 1955, that made her seven years older than me and, thereby, makes all of this very easy to date. What sadistic fun! I can remember Maureen being at our house to spend evenings with me for whatever reason was afoot. And she usually brought her trombone. It always seemed to me that nothing could be more easy or benign than sitting around home with your neighbor and listening to her practicing trombone. Then one time Maureen had some trouble making it to band practice, and the whole world seemed to be crashing down around her. Didn't seem too traumatic to me. Why did the folks, and Margaret and Marie, have the idea that Maureen was so distraught over band practice that she was in

a mood to junk the long, brass horn that had the big, long slide that went back and forth, and the whole thing produced that amazing sound? Who knows? Some weird idea that grownups get, sometimes?

It all worked out, and my memory of Maureen, usually accompanied by Yvonne Speier, went on to make my beautiful memories of evenings, and the evenings seemed to fill a lot of my overall memory of those years. They were the closing years of the 1940's and the first years of the 1950's. I have never figured out how two high school girls could find a way to have so much fun entertaining a boy who hadn't yet seen his sixth birthday, so that he would be wide awake, running around in the living room, and regretting having Mom and Dad come home so that Snooks and Yvonne had to leave and go home. I really was their surrogate little brother, so it felt to me. I can recall a night when they had grown tired of sitting around the Cox house and had embarked on a hike around the night streets of Burchard, with Jerry in tow. I spent that evening riding on the shoulders of Snooks and Yvonne, looking over their heads at the high school boys who wanted to be around them and talk to them. So all of us walked around Burchard, me riding on a girl's shoulder looking backward at the shadowy face of a male schoolmate wearing a letter jacket who wanted to be around to talk to Maureen and Yvonne. Notice how I interchange the names of "Snooks" and "Maureen"? I always knew her as "Snooks," a name that she hated, and I knew, in my small-boy way, that she was Maureen.

Yvonne and Wiladeen Speier were sisters, and those two and Maureen were my connection with the up-and-coming crowd of Burchard. Wiladeen wasn't usually around when Maureen and Yvonne babysitted me, but I always knew that Wiladeen was around town somewhere, doing more important things.

Yvonne and Wiladeen were the daughters of Ella and Frank Speier, the owners, occupants and operators of Speiers' Hotel Cafe, at the northwest corner of Main Street and Pawnee Street, downtown. A lot of weekend afternoons were spent in their presence, very quiet (so it seems in my memory), and very cordial. Speiers' Cafe was where I could go, all by myself, and have a big juicy hamburger with a lot of mustard on it, and wash it down with a ten-ounce bottle of Coke. And the bubble jukebox had a real live brand-new copy of "Bimbo," by Jimmy Wakely and the other artist, the name of whom I'll have to look up. The hotel was really there; there were upstairs rooms with real hotel beds with totally clean sheets. The hotel room windows overlooked the streets of Burchard (I remember that most of them looked straight south, out over Main Street; my memory of the angle of Sunday afternoon sunlight verifies this). My memories of Maureen and the Speiers are full of very easy, comfortable thoughts. Memory is almost always better than the historical fact was, but those really were halcyon days -- the turn of the 1950's in Burchard.

## RECOLLECTIONS OF BURCHARD

On an April night in 1956 Yvonne and Wiladeen were with Jerry Pauley and Gary Schlegelmilch (sic) riding in a car from Burchard to Lincoln. They had dropped Wiladeen off at some address in Lincoln, then proceeded across town through the railroad grade crossing at North 27th Street and the Burlington main line. It was late at night. In those days North 27th at that grade crossing was a narrow concrete pavement with rough, crumbly shoulders (it still was, into the early 1970's); it was a terrible place to drive through. They slowed and stopped, waiting for a freight to clear the crossing, then pulled out. They didn't see the Denver Zephyr approaching from the east (the right) on the next track, at about 55 miles an hour. The Zephyr's locomotive broadsided them.

The impact of this loss was tremendous. It was a couple years later when Ella and Frank Speier gave up the hotel cafe and closed it, and relocated themselves to Lincoln. A quieter time befell the affairs of our families.

During my seventeen-month hiatus in the Lincoln-Havelock area in 1973 and early 1974 I lived in an upstairs studio apartment in Havelock while working as a clerk in what was then known as Gibson Products (later to become part of Pamida) in Havelock. I spent a lot of my evenings in Arnold's Bar on Havelock Avenue, a drinkery patronized by a good many Burlington railroad men, including engineers. And I recall conversations with them when the memory of that grade crossing accident came up. The engineer driving the Denver Zephyr that night was placed on leave to give him time for solitude from the terrible experience of that night. The memory of the accident was as fresh as the night before, in those conversations, fully eighteen years later.

My last knowledge of Maureen dates to the beginning of the 1970's; she and Margaret and Marie were located around Leesburg, Florida. I have not heard from them for well over twenty years.

(An update: in a phone conversation with Mary in mid-March of 1993 I learn that in their recent car trip through the eastern and southeastern United States they successfully relocated Marie, Margaret and Maureen in the area around Leesburg; they are still there and doing well. The pictures will bear this out. That was very good news.)

There was an event that came to Burchard about once a year which I remember from my very early years -- the "town picnic." This was a carnival, like a road show that made a two- or three-night stand in town each year during summer. It was like a small county fair with a midway and rides. When the show came to town it always set itself up in what we knew as the "picnic grounds;" this space was about one hundred yards south of the gravel road that extends west out of town toward Wymore. The picnic grounds were parallel to the Burlington tracks and Plum Creek and were accessed via a narrow dirt road that reached south at a slight angle from the gravel road. My memories of this come no farther forward than the beginning of the 1950's. But it was a great time. My one cogent memory of the event was in s summer weekend in the beginning of the 1950's; Dad had figured that, since the rain had subsided and moved onward, there would be a clear night for me to go to partake of the "town picnic." So, long after dark, there were Maureen Tegtmeier, Yvonne Speier and me, searching for a suitable ride to get on board. There was

a carnival ride in that show known as "The Barrel." It was just that -- a barrel. It was about fifteen or twenty yards long and about as tall as a big trailer house, with lights mounted all over its bulk that would blink as the cylinder rotated. Inside, with all the appropriate upholstery, were seats to buckle oneself into, to ride there while the barrel's shell rotated around us and the seats swung back and forth inside in the flashing dark. A lot of noise, and there sat Yvonne, Maureen and I, buckled in and ready for anything. And the lights flashed inside the barrel and outside. About three minutes of fun. I have ridden many carnival rides in the State Fairs in Lincoln and Sacramento (I'm sorry I missed the ones in Phoenix that I could have indulged in), but I will never forget the Barrel. It was every bit as unique as the rides I have had with aerobatic pilots far above the rice paddies north of Sacramento. The difference is that with them, one has to wear a parachute. No such need in the Barrel. I described this in a letter to the Burchard Eagle News in the early summer of 1988 and the memory is still there.

I know that Ruth Donahue Mitchell has more memories of the picnic grounds which she has described to me, to date back several decades earlier than do mine. (Ruth Donahue Mitchell's memory of people is incredible -- she has never forgotten anybody.) I think there was an occasion when my Dad pulled her out of Plum Creek, into which she had fallen, one day. I wonder if the heavy wooden plank bridge is still there to extend that little dirt road farther south over Plum Creek south of the tracks. In a few years we'll find out.

The easternmost street in town is Saline Street, known to us as "Lovers' Lane." It was the darkest street in town; from its intersection with Second Street (one block north of its south end) north all the way to the top of town next to the grain bins and the Ullman property it was an unlighted stretch of dirt road: no lights, no intersections, no nothing. Just a long dark stretch of road along which to park a car, or a bicycle, or just sit and be undisturbed while you sat and drank beer and talked about everything that life involved, and looked at the stars overhead, or the cloud deck overhead, and heard just about nothing from the sleeping town alongside. It was a private place. Somehow we always left it just that way, with all of our junk hauled away with us and a clean dirt road of a street behind us.

A good way to get a visual idea of the landscape around town was to sit at the top (north) end of Lovers' Lane and look straight north through the break in the hedgerow on across the dip in the land north of town to the horizon farther away. That provided a good view of true Prairie, the way it looks there. Whenever I can come back there and bring with me someone who has never seen that country, that will be one of the first places to go, just to look

across the country. If the plans for Harold Lloyd's home come through there will be a lot of people there, over time. That particular view should NEVER be lost. It is a must. I hope it is still available.

I sit here in a would-be metropolis that is trying to grow an urban skyline in the midst of a major economic recession wherein the financing for major tall buildings (anything over 25 floors) is hard to come by at the moment, and I recall that the tallest structure in Burchard was the standpipe -- our version of a water tower. It was about 110 feet tall; that would be about eleven floors. I always wondered what it would be like to scale the standpipe. There was a ladder composed of grab irons and rungs bolted into the south side of this cylinder, and the lowest rung was so tantalizingly far above the ground. In my last two or three years there I shared the idea of a scaling of the standpipe with my crew: Jerry Allen and the Rinnes (Bill and Jack), and Dale Lunsford and a few other supporters. They were ready to be my ground crew. Too many other concerns were being dealt with and the project never got under way. But it would have been a major feat. With a mini-cassette recorder and a Polaroid, what a trip! The pipe was knocked down and replaced with a near-identical new one in the 1970's, the new structure looming tall and blue over the horizon. It was visible a long distance before anything else was as one approached Burchard from the north or south.

As another Sunday night closes here in the Sacramento Valley, I can sit here and recall Herb LeSeuer and the Sinclair gas station in Burchard.

My earliest memories of that corner (northwest corner of 1st and Pawnee) are of the place being the Phillips 66 station operated by Bill Tegtmeier and that memory is, I think, from the late 1940's. I do recall a small black-and-white photo of Bill Tegtmeier standing by one of the gas pumps with a hose and nozzle in his hand, looking southwest into a glaring sun, ready for everybody.

As I went through my years of high school the corner belonged to Herb LeSeuer; it was his Sinclair station and Sandy Bowman was the driver of the tank truck that supplied the station. I think that in earlier years Herb had been located at the other station alongside the highway a hundred yards farther west, but he was there at his corner when I was growing up.

Herb was like the big brother of every guy in the community. Whatever was going on, we always convened at Herb's, and his station was our headquarters. It was where I first learned how to pump gas, although I never learned how well enough to do it, even after I had been in California many years later. It was where we sat and ran

the station for Herb while he hauled livestock to the Omaha stockyards whenever he could. Hauling livestock gave Herb some very needed revenue and it gave us a chance to run the gas station and keep things operating. Herb's station was like our town hall. Whatever happened among us, Herb's was where it was analyzed and dealt with. (Herb's trips to the stockyards in Omaha are a major part of my memories of Burchard, and they are worth a whole chapter of the Recollections.)

Most of the trips I made with Herb to the Stockyards in Omaha were done during the summers of the very early 1960's.

They began with my asking Herb a few days ahead of time when he would be making a livestock haul to Omaha. We would meet outside his gas station very early in the evening. The truck would already be loaded with hogs or sheep, the bill of lading for the evening. The truck was almost always the "Jimmy" with the high stock rack sides.

The trip would start with a slow drive north along the highway to the junction three miles north of town, then east along State Highway 65 and north along State Highway 50 forever, until it seemed like half the night was gone, and KFAB in Omaha had maintained for the whole evening for us. That station was the eastern-Nebraska equivalent of Sacramento's KFBK, but with a lot less political viewpoint.

The ride north along Highway 50, two lanes of fairly wide concrete pavement, filled the evening as I sat in the shotgun seat in the cab of the truck and watched the lights of all of the towns of southeastern Nebraska reflected off the cloud deck, assuming there was a cloud deck.

On all of these trips we could always tell who else in the Burchard community was hauling livestock that night: ("Hey, your clearance lights aren't on!")

The trip north gave us a chance to try the chicken-fried steak on the menus of the truck stops in Tecumseh and Syracuse. The southbound trips produced the image of a full moon directly ahead and to the right of us, aimed at the white ribbon of Highway 50's concrete slab, rolling over the hills into the distance. Here in the Great Central Valley there aren't any hills for the highways to stretch over. They don't know what they're missing.

Herb's gas station's office was a corner in the front side of the building, with a real roll-top desk, a radio (always tuned to KFAB in Omaha), a pop machine, a big stove and a collection of shelves containing everything. Off to the right of the office was a back room that was historically cold during the winter months; it contained cases of pop for the pop machine and not much else.

To the left of the office was the real work area of the station -- the grease rack and all of the other accoutrements of the place. That is where the heavy wood stove sat, and that is where Herb and all of us sat and analyzed life.

I can recall that in that gas station I learned how to relate to the other people that made up the community of Burchard. It is where I spent my Saturday morning on the day that I turned TWENTY-ONE in December of 1964, and it is where I sat while I planned the move that would take me southwest out of Burchard, toward California.

A late-March Sunday night in 1993 in northern California goes on, and I need to concern myself with work tomorrow morning, but we are here right now, and I do know this: when my Dad went on, Herb LeSeuer was a buddy to me in the years that followed. This makes me glad to know that Herb is still there, and when Virginia and I go to Nebraska in a couple years, Herb and I will find each other and the memories will come back. Then he can correct any mistakes I have made in the recalling of details. Herb -- this Bud's for you.

Herb's station is where the plans were made to turn Jerry Allen into a professional driver, aiming him toward Indianapolis, and it is where his super-modified stock cars were built and where the smashed remains of same were taken apart and rebuilt while we planned his next successful race. The next race usually was successful, and a few more race cars were eviscerated and then rebuilt in Herb's back room. (I had better confer at length with Jerry where he now lives, in Carson City, before I let this proceed any farther. It really did happen, and the years of details are worth resurrecting in their proper identity. My memory is good, but his is better.) These were the summers of the early and mid 1960's.

As the human population of the Burchard area continued to slowly diminish during the 1950's, one fact became painfully evident. When the drive was on some years earlier to consolidate public school districts in the county to preserve the schools, Burchard had somehow let things slip by. Lewiston consolidated. Their school maintained its enrollment.

As the spring of 1959 came around the inevitable happened. That year would be the last school year for Burchard High School. For the first time in almost seven decades Burchard would exist without a high school.

I recall the community meeting that was held in the school gym one balmy weeknight in April of 1959 to which all of the students in town were told to not bother trying to attend. This would be

quick and dirty. There's no other way out. Let us get it over with in a hurry.

A group of us huddled together over the open window of the northwest corner of the gym, hunkered below the branches of the juniper bush and straining to hear the dialogue from inside, down below in the split-level gym. The speeches were to the point and urgent. I can hear Barney Hoffman making a statement that seemed to sum the whole thing up, and I deeply wish that I could remember his words, but I'll never forget his voice. It was like the audio track of a Norman Rockwell painting.

Knowing there was no hope for the high school and knowing that we were hurting for orthopedic reasons as well (there was very little room under the juniper bush, and there were several of us), we silently unfolded ourselves from the window and walked downtown to August Peetz's cafe to drink pop and eat bismarck rolls and reflect on what we had just heard. Resignation. What would happen now? I can recall Bonnie Garrett musing, as humorously as anybody could at the moment: "maybe I'll just kick the bucket"; nobody had to worry that far, because we all made it. But the loss of the high school scattered us into groups in several directions and I will always wonder in what way our friendships would have maintained into the future had Burchard High School stayed together. It would have been a whole different time stream.

In the case of several of us: Johnny Vetrovsky, Gene Wilson, Judy Kuhl, Patty Sejkora, Viola Frahm and I, we opted for Summerfield. I had a family motive; Summerfield was like another hometown to me because of the Transue family. Therein lay enough memories for a book, including the Pawnee County efforts to force us back north across the supposedly uncrossable State line, and the State school superintendent coming all the way from Topeka to welcome us into the Kansas school system, despite the unique and bizarre reason for our being there.

Now, how to get there every day? I could ride the bike. But that wasn't good enough for every day. Something more year-round had to be conjured up, for all of us, not just one. With the help of Marshall County the Summerfield school district hired Ellsworth Hart to drive us there -- two round-trips to Summerfield every school day of the year. Forty miles a day, two hundred miles a week. Ellsworth's big Buick didn't last much longer after the beginning of school in September of 1959. Then came one of the major cars in my young life -- the grand old gray 1951 Chrysler Windsor four-door sedan, gray with a brown interior and the classic Chrysler padded chrome curving dash -- and mile after mile of the early morning rock music sounds of WHB radio out of Kansas City.

The membership of our high school car pool shifted in the coming

years: Viola Frahm graduated and along came Jerry Allen. Then finally I graduated in 1962.

Now is the time to publish a couple or ten paragraphs about Lew Livingston.

In the central 1950's the Burchard school district found itself needing to hire a teacher to teach science for the high school level, and, hopefully, to be a coach. Someone (I don't recall who) decided that it might be the time to hire a black parson for the school system and the community. So they found Lew Livingston, from Kansas City. (I will never forget the details that he gave us: his mother's name was Mary Livingston, and she lived on Euclid Street in Kansas City.) Lew made a very large impact on the Burchard community. This was a little Great Plains town that had not seen people other than Northwestern Europeans since the Pawnee people left the area.

I do recall that there was somewhat of a flap over the issue of hiring a ("NEGRO"!) man to teach our tender young high school students biology and how to play basketball.

Here is how it went, as I remember it: nobody in town could find a room or apartment to rent to Lew. About one year earlier, the industrial arts addition had been built onto the school building. (It was now 1955.) So the idea came up to refurbish the north part of this addition and turn it into a studio apartment. That is where Lew would live. There were rumors and feelings around the surrounding area that Burchard was stashing Lew ("that BLACK man") into a little lean-to apartment. I can recall very clearly now that Lew was one of the most constructive and one of the most popular people to ever enter the Burchard community. His apartment was where those of us in high school who had the time available went on weekday afternoons to sit and watch TV (black-and-white) and spend the back half of every afternoon talking and relaxing. This was after gym practice wherein Lew tried to build a basketball team.

In 1955 the school district decided to drop high school football. There weren't enough guys to put together a team. I think that was Lew's first year. So he built a basketball team out of a collection of high school guys that might have had no other sport to go out for. Lew Livingston took his team to a lot of games and a lot of tournaments. He had the big yellow Dodge to do it with. I truly miss Lew Livingston. In terms of reality, it might be surprisingly easy to find him again. After Burchard hired Lew, there were more black people hired into the teaching staffs in the towns around the area. That is how Steinauer found Cleveland Jones. Now it was time to play basketball. Thinking back over all of this time, how stereotypical! We weren't that far developed back there, back then. To have a black person in the community was a very new experience.

This particular paragraph must go into the town memories: during a high school awards meeting Lew Livingston was called up for two or three very significant awards. There were some white long-time residents of the community who looked at each other and scowled. This is not really amenable to a feel-good idea for these town memories, but to leave it out would be dishonest. It happened. Mom and Dad came home from the meeting that evening and described it, with disgust.

There is a note that I wrote to myself a few days ago (this is now midnight:40, observed Memorial Day, 1993). It's time to recall the meetings I had with military recruiting sergeants during my junior year of high school. I had told each of them that I was a volunteer weather observor in Burchard, and what could they do for me? I will always recall a Navy recruiter who had gone back to his superiors and told them that this guy in Summerfield, Kansas, (a Burcharder attending high school in Summerfield) wanted to go to the Navy aerographers' school in Maryland, but he had low vision. The United States Navy told him "No Way," and to forget me and anything that I said. He looked like he hated that order.

On a warm, dry overcast Friday morning in March of 1961 the superintendents of Summerfield bussed all of us juniors and seniors southeast to Axtell to meet some recruiters from the United States Air Force. This would be great. I was with them, and I finagled my way up to the interviewers as did everybody else. I would be the Air Force's meteorologist! The Air Force recruiting team that day included a tall statuesque blonde lady that caught my eye right now. I do recall sidling up next to her in the afternoon and asking: "How do I get into the Air Force and how do I get to be a meteorologist?" Forget about the low vision. She looked at me coolly and said: "Well, you sign up and they will send you to Chanute Air Base, and .... " Damn! I didn't know there was an air base in Illinois by that name. Then she turned on her spike high-heels and walked away with the two male sergeants she had come with. Tom Bookwalter and Carl O'Hare and I went back to Summerfield in Carl's brown '61 Ford. I went back to Burchard that evening wondering about an Air Force lady who was so damn tall and blonde, and who walked around in spike high-heels and talked to high school boys about weather school and an air base called "Chanute."

At about 2:07 on a Sunday morning in central June of 1993, I see another note that I wrote to myself about a week ago.

I recall a number of years in the central 1960's that were marked by windy, dry weather in southeastern Nebraska. These were the years during which all of us guys were in college, but were around Burchard

during weekends. The prairie around Burchard was full of very tall and very dry grass (the original ground cover was Big Bluestem) and this grass was especially dry during the unsettled and windy weather of mid-spring. I spent a weekend at home with Mom in April of 1966 and for some reason it became necessary to drive the big, heavy 5-speed Schwinn to Beatrice to perform some errands. The shifting and gusting wind propelled me and the 5-speed to Beatrice in a hurry. Along about mid-afternoon the errands were done and the 5-speed and I began to bulldoze our way east along U. S. Highway 136 toward Burchard. That is, toward Burchard. I recall fighting my way east along the highway against a forty-mile-an-hour wind that would not let up, under a turbulent sky full of heavy cumulus clouds. Finally, Sharon Allen and her mother Veronica came along in Jerry Allen's beloved little red-and-white '55 Oldsmobile, a car that was not very big, but was very heavy and well-powered. Sharon loaded me and the 5-speed into the Oldsmobile so we could lumber our way east, then south, toward Burchard against the heavy southeast wind.

I learned that evening of the prairie fire that had started a few miles southeast of Burchard during the afternoon -- all of my friends had rallied to combat this fire, but not Cox -- he was busy trying to hammer the 5-speed back from Beatrice against the wind. The story they told me was a classic. They were out there, and so was the Burchard fire truck. The entire volunteer crew was running ahead of the fire line, hammering with fire hoses, their shirts, and anything else that was handy. This fire, as they told me later, could power its way a little farther northwest and gobble up Burchard like a tyrannosaurus proceeding with his lunch. They were very busy, and they were terrified. The fire truck wasn't much help. It was there, a little farther back, with the water tanks full and all of the hoses ready. But no one can do very much in the situation of a full-fledged prairie fire and a high wind. The fire will have its way. I don't recall how they achieved the upper hand over this fire, but they did, and the town was saved. In the retrospect of 27 years and a couple months, this comes across easy and maybe not worth all of the recollections, but it really did happen, and the immediate threat was there, Right Now. This is another thing that my fellow Californians don't realize the power of. As dry as the Valley is during the dry season, the very tall prairie grass isn't there, and the prairie fires remain a fact of another, far away, world.

A couple weeks ago, (June 1, 1993), I sent my renewal payment to the Burchard Eagle News and, for the first time in many years, I did not send along a letter for Raymond Pettinger to proof-read and forward to Russ Leger to publish in the paper. There has been too long a period where there just isn't any good news from the Nation-State to send back to Burchard. Our economy died in the very early 1990's and it took a while for us to realize this. (I guess

we thought it was more quick and neat to build guided missiles and military hardware than to build passenger trains, and the Rivieras sing about "that warm California sun".) When our papers are full of the news of people moving out of California to anywhere else that might be handy, this boy will say nothing. I invested my life, after Arizona, to the move to California, and I became committed to the place, and I take everything very serious. My lady friend Virginia, the self-made optimist, tries to tell me to "chill out" and relax and let the outside world destroy itself if it will, but I cannot. There is a possibility that our economy will pick up and some good times might return. But I will believe that as I see it happen.

# RECOLLECTIONS OF BURCHARD

Remembering back through a young lifetime in and around Burchard brings back memories of a number of people that I wish I had known better, seen oftener, had been older myself when I knew them, and were still around and accessible.

One such personality is Dolly Devor. The other personality associated with her is her Model A. Dolly and her husband Hank lived on a farm within five miles or so of Burchard -- I cannot remember in which direction. She made a living traveling around in the Model A and selling things. I don't recall just what she sold, but it was a number of things, and it was all legitimate. I am sure that it didn't include Avon Products, but it might have included Fuller brushes and maybe Amway. The folks told me once how long Dolly had owned the Model A, and how far it had gone. I met her at Herb's one summer afternoon in the late 1950's and there was the Model A. She said she had had the car for a very long time; it might have been new when she got it. Yes, the odometer had turned over: "I don't know, but it's been several times, and she just keeps runnin'. Yes, it's a hundred-thousand-mile odometer." I wish I had known her better. There would have been a lot of stories, all of them true.

I had always been fascinated by weather, and I was born and raised in an area where climate and weather are the most controlling and dominant features of human life.

In a science class in the seventh grade I was briefly exposed to the concept of keeping weather charts. I did so, for about a month. This did not continue, but the idea did.

Then came the night of Monday, January 11, 1960. A low-pressure area was moving through eastern Nebraska, full of warm subtropical air in its southern quadrant, the area of south winds and falling pressure as the cyclone moved along. As the center approached us that night, this cycling air had brought in a mass of fog as it rolled over the cold dry ground. At ten o'clock that night the temperature in Burchard was a balmy 49 degrees. The weather announcer on Channel 10 from Lincoln at that hour told us it was 64 degrees in Kansas City, 140 miles farther southeast of Burchard. This made me envious, as well as fascinated by the delightfully warm quadrant of the winter cyclone. Now, how to stop this air mass so that the wet balmy weather could just hang over us.... That night, I started the series of weather charts that would last into the third quarter of the 1960's before the force that was making me pick up everything and leave Nebraska caused me to let them terminate.

The format and content of the charts matured and expanded as time went on. I began writing notes from the TV weather reports,

resulting in a daily weather journal. This filled up volumes of three-ring notebook paper.

When Hurricane Carla moved across the Gulf Of Mexico in September of 1960 and aimed herself up the Mississippi River, her isobars wrapped around the entire middle of the continent, including Burchard. I was subscribing to the daily weather map from Washington DC then, and the maps showing that storm were breath-taking classics to behold. I think I still have some of them in storage. The rain shield of Carla engulfed us, and every stream in the area overtopped its banks. The sky was the color of gunmetal gray, with low scud clouds flying along on the wind below the massive cloud deck of the storm. I vividly recall an episode of Ellsworth Hart having driven us back from school at Summerfield one afternoon during the visit of Hurricane Carla's rain shield to our area. After everybody was delivered to Burchard the word went out that something was clogging the drains inside the dam at Burchard Lake. Ellsworth, Jerry Allen, and I took Ellsworth's fabled gray 1951 Chrysler Windsor and went out to the lake to see what the problem was. In the spillway behind the dam, in the creek alongside the picnic area, we found a picnic table awash, gripped in the spillway by what by now had developed into a whirlpool. The force was enormous, and very loud. None of us had ever seen, felt, or heard anything like this before. We retrieved some rope from the Chrysler and lassoed the picnic table and tried to pull it out of the whirlpool in the spillway. We failed. The wooden table was too big and heavy, and the force of the water was awesome. I don't recall how that one turned out, but Carla's rain shield moved on the following morning, and the rain slacked off. To have the rain shield of a real live tropical hurricane right over Burchard was a mental and emotional trip I will never forget. It was a meteorologist's dream, and a potential nightmare for everybody. Having by now turned myself into a self-taught weather observer heightened my awareness of all such things, and I was on top of everything.

Within a few years of starting the weather records I had accumulated some quality instruments: an anaeroid barometer (which I still have, although it isn't serviceable at present), an indoor-outdoor thermometer, and a pretty good rain gauge -- and lots of weather books. My knowledge of weather became authority around Burchard. When I talked, everybody listened and nobody ever laughed or ridiculed, ever. Sadly, the place I now live in is peopled with some weather skeptics who have never lived in a region where weather rules one's life every day, and their only knowledge of weather is through TV weather announcers, many (but not all) of whom are more concerned with their own camera presence than with the contents of the map. That is terribly disheartening.

Reading the instruments and maintaining the daily charts was a duty that superseded any family affairs. If I was gone and there

wasn't at least one family member left to read the gauges and write down the readings, there were neighbors who had keys to the house so they could come in and read the barometer and the thermometer at the designated hours, and write down the readings. They also knew to go down the embankment behind the house to read and empty the rain gauge and write that one down, too. The charts were supreme, and they went on, no matter what we did. I communicated frequently with the Weather Bureau in Lincoln, by phone or, if possible, in person. The staff there knew of the charts and their contents. If they had doubts about my readings, they had ways of checking things out, and I was always vindicated. I knew enough not to fabricate anything to make things seem more exciting. Being right and accurate was all the excitement anybody could want. Among all the heirlooms I lost during all of the moves between Burchard and downtown Sacramento, I somehow kept all of the charts, in binders. They are now boxed up in storage, under the freeway a mile south of here.

While learning how to maintain the instruments with which I maintained the charts, one unique lesson involved how to adjust the reading of a partially full rain gauge when the rain water inside was accompanied by a drowned inch-and-a-half grasshopper. How much rain water did he displace?

In early July of 1992 I hand-printed a letter for the Burchard Eagle News to send along with the long-delayed renewal payment. This letter was hand-printed because we had not yet acquired this word processor. It dealt with the names and numbers of the streets of Burchard. For the town memoirs, I'll paraphrase that letter here. As Raymond Pettinger tells me, the reason that Burchard town addresses still don't utilize metro numbers and street designations is that the town patrons all have post office boxes. Otherwise, the street addresses would be there. I wish they were.

I don't recall how I originally learned of its existence, but the street map of Burchard was in a picture frame, glassed, and was stored on a shelf behind the teller window in the bank. When I was young, in the mid 1950's, I would spend summer days in the bank, sitting on the bench in the lobby and poring over this map. I memorized the alignment and name or number of every street. I learned the exact outline of the town limits, which were exactly one-half block beyond the alignment of each street along the edges of town except for the south end of town, wherein the limit followed the alignment of the Burlington right-of-way.

The north half of town, a block narrower than the south half, consisted of one or two additions. One was called the "Gardner Addition," and I can't recall the others.

The north-south streets were named after politicians or Indian

nations: from west to east, they were: short Cass Street, the highway which is Otoe Street, then Pawnee Street (the west sides of the park and what is now the Recreation Center and the first-base side of the ball park), then Gage Street, past the Catholic Church, and finally, long, dark Lovers' Lane -- Saline Street.

The east-west streets, up the hill from south to north, were: 1st Street, past the lumber yard, the elevators, what was then Herb LeSeuer's gas station, etc. It was the gravel road extending west to Blue Springs and Wymore which we called "the Beeline." Then came 2nd Street -- Main Street. Next came 3rd Street. The north side of the "wide" section of town was 4th Street, from the north end of Cass Street up between the Methodist Church and the Harold Lloyd house. Then came 5th Street, past the south side of the schoolhouse block, then 6th, along the third-base side of the ball park, then 7th, past the north section of grain bins. The next street would have been 8th; for some reason, it was never cut through, and the alignment was still a fence and hedgerow when I left Burchard. It extended from the north end of Saline Street west to the highway.

While I lived in Burchard, I had my own wheels. This began with a two-wheeled hose reel, then graduated to a small wagon of the Radio class -- a Radio Super. Then, about 1953, after saving up huge amounts of coins for purchasing power, Dad and I went into Currey's store where Margaret Tegtmeier worked and made both the down payment and the total amount due, and I rolled out of there with the real wagon -- a Radio Flyer. This wagon was my main vehicle for a few years. It was repainted several times.

In the summer of 1956 Dad found a coaster-brake bicycle for sale in Pawnee City and bought it, to give me real wheels. This machine was a bicycle that would be a cruiser by today's standards, replete with a tank (a metal enclosure between the curving bars of what we now call the mast tube) in which was a horn that didn't really work. I drove this machine, and actually learned to ride on it, in the grass in the lower back yard west of the house. I think I may have driven it as far as Pawnee City, the town where it came from, and then sold it to Bill Rinne for ten bucks, which Dad later refunded to Norman Rinne after the whole drive train fell out of it. In April of 1959 I bought the machine that I would come to love -- a red Western Flyer -- from the always-ready Western Auto store in Pawnee City. I installed a Stewart-Warner speedometer and a set of saddlebags on this machine, and it took me as far as Lincoln a couple times. I racked up about eleven thousand recorded miles on this vehicle. It was eventually sold to Jack Roschewsky (sic) in 1962.

Some of my best memories of riding around the country surrounding Burchard were accumulated on the Western Flyer. I can recall coming

home from school in Summerfield on hot, dry late-summer nights in 1959 and putting this machine on the newly-paved highway through Burchard and racking up fifteen or twenty miles in the full moon of a September night, returning to Burchard feeling as if I could drive the machine for another hundred miles.

I think my ultimate headlight on the Western Flyer was the big sealed-beam headlight powered by a six-volt lantern battery in its case that Mom acquired for the vehicle in the late fall of 1959. The beam of that headlight gave me as much road to look at as if I was driving a Harley. That was total freedom of the road. It added a massive amount of weight to the bike's frame, but the trade-off was worth it. With my eyesight it was worth anything I had to put up with to have that much road visible ahead of me at night. The headlight threw a beam one mile ahead of the front wheel. I had that verified numerous times by people who had met the bike and me on the dark roads around town. A unique experience was to drive the bike with that headlight, equipped with the aluminum shield that blacksmith Paul Tegtmeier mounted above the light itself, out on the highway on frosty winter nights and watch crystals of ice form in the bike's slipstream as I moved at about fifteen miles an hour through the air on winter nights along an ice-littered highway, glad for the purchase that the wide tires gave me on the blacktop. The beam would reflect and shine through the ice crystals all over the front of the bike. Having a good, powerful radio station to listen to as I moved along the road helped. It made memories that I still cherish.

In May of 1962 I acquired the Schwinn 5-speed. This extended my range, although the headlights weren't quite as good. The gearing produced a lot more power for the road. It took a few years to learn what this machine would really do. Thinking back on all this time: if I had had the money to back myself up for all the trips I could have done, I could have pretty well done the central parts of North America with this bike, but there just wasn't the money, and I didn't have any job skills that would have produced such money.

But this bike took me to Lincoln many times, and it was what went to Lincoln with me so that a trip meant going to Burchard, not from it. I got this machine from Chuck Hohbein in Beatrice, and he and I became good friends. He was a licensed pilot and he knew meteorology. He also knew bikes and he kept the 5-speed going, as it had mechanical parts that were still virtually unknown in that part of North America in those days. I spent a lot of time in his shop on Ella Street in Beatrice.

Chuck Hohbein was enough of a business person, concerned about a customer, to give me a ride in his big Buick all the way back to our front door in Burchard from his Beatrice shop one time when the 5-speed would have to remain in the shop waiting for parts.

An example of Chuck Hohbein and the total road-worthiness of the 5-speed showed itself the day that I arrived at his shop in Beatrice during the return portion of my cycling trip to the wedding of my disc-jockey friend John Cutler to Mary Brownfield in Hershey, fifteen miles west of North Platte in western Nebraska. This was during mid-August of 1965. That trip was about 325 miles each way; I had shipped my suit and good shoes ahead of me both ways. In North Platte I ran into some rainy weather and had waited for this weather system to gain a day's traveling time on me before I started back east. North Platte and Hershey are in very sandy coountry, and there was wet sand jammed into the bike's gears. Hohbein hosed all of this sand out of the gears before the final 30-mile run into Burchard.

Less than a year after I moved to Arizona in August of 1967 Chuck died of lymph cancer; my Mom and his wife, Luanne Hohbein, stayed in touch for years after that date.

Beyond this point, the history of the bike trips goes far beyond the memories of Burchard. The history of them belong in a different set of papers, not in this one. The 5-speed is not what I ultimately went West with, but the machine that I did go West with came from Chuck Hohbein and his shop in August of 1966. It was the ten-speed.

At the moment these are my memories of Burchard. They represent my own personal share of what life was like in the community of Burchard. As time proceeds, there will be more that come around that I want to add to this portfolio. When that happens, I'll add them. Till then, this is it. I'll ship this manuscript to Minnesota so Mary and Bob can deliver it to Burchard in August of 1993. If we can establish a library of recorded memories of the community, possibly I can add a few of mine. To start such an effort, here is this. Let's give it a try.

So long for now from the Great Central Valley.

In the tradition of science-fiction authors, I will put this forth: All of this was done on a Brother WP2400 word processor, 1992 vintage, obtained through J C Penney, Sacramento. They always give credit to what hardware and softweare they used to produce their material.