

MAC TWEED

As Remembered by His Son-in-Law, Tom Caldwell

Note: This memoir consists of my memories of Mac's life, primarily from my observations and recollections of his stories. I have done no research. I did make a few notes about things he told me, mostly dates, people and places. I wish I had made more.

I have written this mainly for my wife, Janet, who loved her father more than I've known any child to love a parent; for our sons and grandchildren and generations to come; for Doug, his children and grandchildren and their progeny as well; for all of Mac's family and for those who knew him. It truly was a labor of love.

Tom Caldwell
22 August, 2016

I remember almost nothing about the first time I met Mac. It was in the spring of 1967, shortly after he returned from Vietnam. I think it was the first time Janet had seen her dad since he had come home. He and Mary came down to Greensboro where Janet was a sophomore at WC to take her and her boyfriend, me, to dinner. I guess I was up for inspection and I'm sure I wasn't ready.

Janet and I had been dating for over a year and I had met Mary a month or so before when I talked mom and dad into letting me take mom's Mercury Meteor to the Tweeds home in Virginia Beach over spring break. Bill Carr, my close friend since about the 5th grade when his dad came to be pastor at our church in Matthews and then my classmate and fraternity brother at Davidson, wanted to go visit a friend who lived in Newport News with whom he'd gone to Mars Hill College for two years, which Bill had attended for his first two years of college and, ironically, from which Mac had graduated almost 30 years before, and I left Charlotte, picked up Janet in Greensboro and her brother, Doug and his friend, Steve Corneliusson, at Duke where they were freshmen. I don't remember much about that visit except that Mary was a wonderful cook and hostess and that I hardly looked at the notes I'd brought to review before exams.

So, at the restaurant that night, my nervousness in meeting the Marine colonel whose daughter I was squiring pretty seriously might have been slightly allayed by having met Mary, but only slightly since I had no idea what to expect. I don't remember how I was feeling but I'm sure I was scared to death. I'd never met a Marine that I recall, much less a bird colonel, and especially one who had just returned from flying over 600 helicopter missions in Nam. I don't remember whether Mac was in uniform but I do remember him looking every bit as dignified, no, intimidating, as I had anticipated. But he was anything but intimidating, which of course he had every right to be toward this skinny young whippersnapper who apparently had designs on his beautiful, only daughter.

As I said, I don't remember much about that first encounter; not the restaurant, not what I ate, nothing at all of the conversation. I don't remember Janet telling me much about her dad or giving me any advice on how to impress him. I have no idea what he thought of me from that initial meeting.

Janet and I got married on April 29 of that year but I don't know if that was before or after the dinner in Greensboro; consequently, I don't remember if I knew I was meeting my newly acquired father-in-law or not. If we were married, he didn't know it because Janet didn't tell her folks until shortly after school was out and she was back home in Virginia Beach.

Janet and I met during Spring Frolics, a dance weekend at Davidson, one of three a year where female-companion-starved students not lucky enough to have a car bussed in their dates who were housed in a dorm (I don't know whose bright idea it was to put 1000 males out in the woods of north Mecklenburg Co by themselves) in the spring of 1966, her freshman and my sophomore year in college. She had become friends with a girl named Judy Davis who was going with my fraternity brother Jimmy McMillan and they had set Janet up to date another frat brother, Doug Rhymes, for the weekend, but upon meeting Doug, she declined. I don't know the details of how that went down. All I know is that McMillan asked me if I had a date for the weekend, which, not unusually, I didn't, and when I was invited to pinch hit, after getting a good look, I readily agreed. And thus began what is now, as of three days ago, a 49 year journey.

That inauspicious beginning led a year later to our marriage by a justice of the peace in York, SC, the same guy who, we later discovered, had married Mac and Mary some 25 years before. Bill Carr accompanied us on that trip, too, serving as best man, official photographer and chauffeur.

I don't remember the next time I saw Mac and Mary after the dinner in Greensboro. It may not have been until sometime in June when I went up to collect my bride and bring her down to our honeymoon apartment in Charlotte. I borrowed my dad's Ford station wagon to move Janet and that's when I first discovered the practicality of the Tweeds. Upon learning that I was coming, Janet called and asked if I would mind picking up Mac's mother, Dora Flowe Tweed, in Mint Hill where she lived with her younger son, Mac's brother, Dan, and his family and bring her up for a visit. Even though I had never met this 80 something year-old lady and wondered how I could entertain her for six hours, I couldn't very well decline. So, on a Saturday morning I picked her up and started up Highway 49 and then 64 toward Raleigh, thinking that this was a more direct route than I-85.

I still vividly remember coming down a long hill between Asheboro and Pittsboro at probably 60 or a little better and seeing a car's brake lights a good distance ahead of me go on. I applied my brakes and when the car signaled for a left turn and actually began a turn into a store at the bottom of the hill, I took my foot off the brake pedal and put it back on the accelerator. Then apparently the driver changed his, or her, mind and pulled back on to the road. By then I was bearing down on it pretty fast and I stood on the brakes. I don't remember whether Mrs. Tweed had on her seatbelt but I do remember throwing my right arm out in front of her when I realized we were going to hit the car. There was a fairly wide shoulder which I steered onto. It had recently rained and we sank up to the axles in mud. The shoulder was

level for a car width then sloped downhill pretty severely. I remember thinking “we’re going to roll down that hill and I’m going to kill my brand new wife’s grandmother” when abruptly and luckily we came to a stop. The car was leaning to the right and I was worried it might still roll down the bank.

Mrs. Tweed didn’t say anything and seemed to have remained calm, probably calmer than her grandson-in-law. I asked if she was OK and she said she was fine. Afraid the car might roll or slide down the hill, I told her we needed to get out. She was basically lying against the door. I opened my door and pulled her across the seat. Thank goodness it was a bench seat. Mrs. Tweed was a good sized woman and she couldn’t provide much assistance in her extraction. It was all I could do to keep the door propped open and pull her across the seat and out the door, all the while worrying that we might end up in the ravine.

Somehow I got her out, helped her through the mud and across the road, took her in the store, sat her down and got her a coke. She remained calm as a cucumber the whole time. I got the storekeeper to call the law and it wasn’t long before the highway patrol arrived and called a wrecker. He had to stop traffic in both directions on US 64 in order for the wrecker to pull me out. Traffic was backed up a good ways in both directions and I could feel the eyes on me and imagine the heads shaking, wondering how this young hotshot had managed this mess.

My first cousin was getting married in Tarboro that weekend and Mom had gone down early to make the wedding cake. I knew that Dad was leaving his house in Charlotte sometime after I left to drive to Tarboro for the wedding. I hadn’t thought about him until I looked at the line of traffic backed up heading north and, 8-10 cars back, saw a tan Oldsmobile that looked familiar. I quickly realized it was Dad with another cousin, Pat Hughes, riding shotgun. I was hoping he would pass on by without realizing that was his station wagon being pulled out of the mud because I figured he would think it was my fault, and Pop wasn’t big on bone-headed mistakes. As he pulled up even, I saw him do a double-take when he spotted me, and he pulled over.

Actually I was lucky he came along because I don’t think I had enough cash to pay the wrecker and whoever heard of credit cards in those days? He was just glad we weren’t hurt and the station wagon seemed to be OK. I collected Mrs. Tweed from the store. She didn’t seem to be afraid to get back in with me, and Dad followed us to Raleigh to be sure there was nothing wrong with the car and we headed on to Virginia Beach and he and Pat to Tarboro. I had only three hours to figure out how best to explain to my new father-in-law, a Marine colonel who had flown thousands of hours without a mishap, how this doofus, who had snatched away his daughter and was going to be the father of his first grandchild, couldn’t even deliver his mother for a visit without almost killing her. Good preparation for learning how to argue to a jury.

McDonald (Mac) Douglas Tweed was a mountain man, born September 27, 1920 at 1:00 A.M. in a 2-story farmhouse on Dry Branch, not far outside Marshall, NC. He was delivered in an upstairs bedroom by his uncle, Dr. Frank Roberts, the brother of his father’s first wife, Hattie. His father came downstairs and announced that Dora had delivered a boy “big as Ab and she didn’t even grunt”.

Ab was Mac’s half-brother, Albert. Mac’s father was Douglas Sevier Tweed, who was born in 1869. He married Hattie Roberts who came from a prominent and prosperous family, and they had seven children. Leo was the oldest. The other two boys were Carroll and Albert, the Ab who was smaller than Mac at birth. There were four girls: Mamie, Nettie, Annie and Hattie. I’m not sure if I’ve listed them in their proper sequence but whenever Mac would talk about them, he would always name them rapid-fire in this order, I assume to help him remember their names and chronology. Hattie Roberts Tweed died in 1915 of blood poisoning nine days after having Little Dan, who also died of the same ailment several months later. Douglas thereafter married Dora Flowe and Mac and his brother Dan were the products of that marriage.

Mac’s great-grandfather was Neely Tweed who was or had recently been the clerk of court in Madison County in April, 1861. Neely was a staunch Republican, a Lincoln supporter, as was a large contingency of Madisoncountyites. There was little, if any, slavery in the mountains-hard to grow cotton on rocky hillsides. Neely’s arch political rival was the sheriff, Ransom Merrill, a staunch Democrat. Apparently every county in NC voted on whether the state should join the Confederacy and secede from the Union. When the vote was held in Madison in April, 1861, the Rebs won by a slight majority. What followed would dramatically affect Neely and his family’s fortunes till this day.

The sheriff and his cronies had gathered around the courthouse on the main street in Marshall, probably drinking moonshine and shooting their guns and yelling “bring on those Yankees”. Neely’s youngest son, Elijah, 12 or 14, was milling around the crowd and Sheriff Merrill, apparently accidentally, winged him in the hand or leg or somewhere, a fairly superficial wound. When word of the shooting got to Neely, he took his double-barreled shotgun down off the wall, found the sheriff, who, by then had fled upstairs into a house, and cut him in two. Mac’s great- grandfather, the

clerk of court, murdered the high sheriff in cold blood in broad daylight. Neely packed up his sons, all but Elijah and Mac's grandfather, Albert, and headed for Kentucky to join the Union army.

Albert was about 20 when his father and brothers took off, and shortly thereafter, a Confederate soldier came up to the Tweed place to steal their cow. Albert shot him dead. His cohorts came looking for them and found them floating in the creek and somehow found out who had killed them. Albert hid out among a group of wheat threshers and then took off to join the others in Kentucky. Mac never knew for sure but assumes he got up with Neely and his brothers. Neely died during the war, Mac thought from the flu or some other ailment as opposed to a combat wound and was buried in Kentucky. Mac always wondered where he was buried. Several years before Mac died, he traveled to Kentucky with Janet and me to visit our sons, Tom, Jr. and Tim and their families. Tim and I took him to the Zachary Taylor national cemetery in Louisville where a lot of civil war veterans are buried but we didn't find him.

When the war ended, apparently the friction between the Tweeds and the Merrills had subsided somewhat and Neely's sons made their way back to Madison County. Maybe it was from traveling to Kentucky and back or maybe it was just in his bones, but for whatever reason, Albert had wanderlust. A story in the Marshall newspaper said that he and a fellow named Frisby decided to head west. When they got to El Paso, they got out of their wagon and, apparently undecided about where to go next, agreed they would go whichever way the mule turned. He turned toward home and that's where they went.

Albert married Sara Bryan and they had two daughters, Lula and Mag and his son, Mac's father, Douglas. Western fever must have struck him again. He packed up Sara and the three kids in a covered wagon, joined a wagon train and went all the way to California. I guess he was looking for gold but must have struck out. They boarded a ship and sailed around the tip of South America to Charleston. Eventually they made their way back to Madison County. God only knows how long these travels took and the hardships they must have endured.

We don't know how long it took for the adventure itch to strike Albert again, but he announced to the family that they were going west again. Sara said she and the girls weren't going; that they'd liked to have died before, having to trade their blankets and quilts to the Indians for food. So she took the girls to Knoxville where she worked in a hotel while Albert and Douglas made their way to Kansas. They must have stayed in Kansas for some time. Albert took a common law wife and possibly fathered a child. Douglas was worried in later years that his father might have another heir besides him and his two sisters but none ever came out of the woodwork. Mac remembers his father telling about a blizzard so bad in Kansas that they had to tie a rope to follow to the barn to feed the livestock.

Eventually Albert and Douglas came trudging back to Madison County and Douglas went to Mars Hill College where he was a member of some seemingly prestigious organization, the name and purpose of which I don't recall. He taught school for a while and began courting Hattie Roberts. They married and moved to a house owned by Hattie's family situated on a 60 acre farm on Dry Branch which Mac called the "Robert's farm".

The Robert's house is still standing. I've seen it several times. It has been renovated extensively and, as far as I know, is still being lived in. It is a 2-story white clapboard farmhouse with a porch all the way across the front. I've never been in it but I'm going to describe it as Mac remembered it from his youth.

The house had a center hallway with steps leading to the second floor. On the right side of the hall was the parlor with a fireplace. It was the sitting room when company visited. Left of the hall was a room they treated like a den. It too had a fireplace and a stove sat on the hearth. At some point Douglas' mother, Sara, came to live with them and she sat on one side of the stove the rest of her life. Much later, Albert also came to live with them as well and he sat on the other side. Albert and Sara never resumed the marital relationship but sat on opposite sides of that stove till she died. When Mamie got her first teaching job, she bought a hand-cranked Victorola and played it in the den.

Here's the first recording Mac remembers:

"Little Mary Fagin went to town one day,
She went to the pencil factory to get her usual pay,
Leo Frank met her with a brutal heart indeed,
Said to little Mary, you've met your fatal creed..."

(My memory's not that good. I wrote the words down as Mac sang them).

Another song was "The Death of Floyd Collins". It was about his dying in a mine. Apparently there was more tragedy than comedy in the songs of those days.

The center hall went on through to the dining room. The kitchen was off to the right. It had a cookstove and a table where they ate breakfast. The backdoor led to a screened porch which was connected to the smokehouse where

meat hung and where a box in back contained corn and wheat. After Douglas married Dora, she took some of the money she had inherited from her father and hired Jim Deaver to cut a door beside the fireplace in the den and add a bedroom for them. The room had tongue and groove paneling on the walls and ceiling. Mac's crib was in that room.

Upstairs were two rooms. Albert lived in one of them when he moved in. The other was the guest room. Leo, his wife Elva, and their son Emmitt lived in it for two years. Leo had lost his arm at the saw mill when he was 17. He had gotten a job there to make a little spending money against his father's wishes, who thought, correctly, as it turns out, that it was too dangerous a place for a boy to work. Douglas sent him to Mars Hill and he taught school for a while. After he and Elva married, they moved to Asheville where he tried selling insurance. He lost his job and when his father heard about it, they all drove up to Asheville to check on them. Leo had sold everything they owned except a straw tick mattress on the floor. Douglas, Dora, Mac, Dan, Leo, Elva and Emmitt all climbed in Dora's T-model with all their remaining belongings and drove back to the Roberts farm.

Douglas never learned how to drive an automobile. He either walked or drove his buggy. Dora went down to the service station in Marshall where there were a couple of cars for sale and bought a used T-model four door sedan for \$400. The station owner drove it down Main St with Dora in the passenger seat. Dora drove it back to the station, picked up 6 or 7 year old Mac, who had cautiously remained there during the test drive, and she drove it home.

The Robert's farm is located off a road that runs from the Robert's Mountain Road, which is a continuation of Main St in Marshall and was the only road from Asheville to Knoxville. Big trucks lumbered up that steep, curvy, gravel road, climbing from Marshall and the French Road River valley up and over the mountain toward Hot Springs. The road wasn't paved till after the Tweeds moved to the Nelson farm in 1933.

Dry Branch ran between the road and the Roberts house. There was a foot-log across the creek, but horses and wagons had to ford it. When Dora brought the T-model home and the creek was low, she would drive it across the ford and park it in the barn. But often the creek was high, so eventually they built a garage on the road side of the creek. The outhouse sat on two logs across a branch behind the house, which flowed into Dry Branch below the house. It was a two-seater. The Asheville Citizen served two purposes in the outhouse!

Once, Douglas decided to drive the T-model. It was parked in the barn and Albert had jacked up the rear end to grease the wheel bearings or something. The wheels were still on but he had taken the lug nuts off. Doug got in the car, cranked it, put it in gear and gave it some gas. The rear wheels came flying off and made such a racket it scared the peaturkey out of him and he never got behind the wheel again.

Mamie, Nettie, Annie and Hattie went to boarding school at Dorland Bell in Hot Springs. I'm not sure what grades they attended there (I assume through high school) or whether they were attending when Dora became their stepmother or whether she started them. Dorland Bell was a school started by northern Presbyterian missionaries to provide mountain girls with a decent education. Doug, Dora, Mac and Dan would frequently drive over the mountain on Sunday afternoon to visit the girls and take them some homemade goodies. Once, on the way home, the T-model got stuck in the mud. Dora, of course, was driving and Doug and the boys were pushing when Doug shouted "pour it to her, Dora" which she did, slinging mud all over them. I've heard Mac tell that story a hundred times and he always laughed so hard he cried.

Dora was born August 19, 1885 in the Clear Creek community in far eastern Mecklenburg Co, NC, not far from the Cabarrus Co line, to J. McDonald Flowe, who went by J Mac, and Elizabeth Mullis Flowe. Dora was the oldest child, followed by Lilly, Carrie, Lawrence, Ira, Ester, Olin and Ethel. Mac absolutely idolized his mother. She was a strong woman in every sense and was the acknowledged leader of the Flowe brood, except to Ester, I think it was. Once, as all the kids were hoeing cotton and it was getting late, Dora told them they could finish before supper if they, to use Mac's words (of course, who else's?), "mended their licks", which I took to mean speeding up, to which Ester replied, "I'll not mend my licks". I don't know if they got finished before supper or not.

Dora was a strong believer in education. I guess she finished high school at Clear Creek. She and Lilly began teaching at some of the one room schools in the area. Apparently the only credentials that were needed for teaching was some book learning yourself. Eventually the standards for teachers were increased in Mecklenburg and Cabarrus Counties. Dora and Lilly learned that their credentials were still adequate for them to teach in the mountains, so these two adventurous country girls took the train to Marshall. One would assume they had contacted the school officials there and had a job waiting for them, but who knows, maybe they just struck out on faith. We don't know why they picked Madison Co.

They lived with a Mrs. Bell near Redmon Dam. For a while Dora rode a horse to teach over at Dry Branch. I think Lilly taught nearer where they were living. Douglas Tweed may have delivered the mail to Mrs. Bell and that may be where his and Dora's paths crossed. When Hattie died in childbirth, who better to help Doug raise his tribe than the

school marm. I don't know the ages of the motherless Tweed children but I expect the older ones were at least Dora's age, maybe older. Talk about stepping into the unknown! No wonder her oldest son could and did become a Marine pilot and her youngest a Marine sgt who drove landing craft onto the beach at Iwo Jima.

I don't know what motivated the Tweeds, as far back as Neely and maybe even farther, to become Republicans but Doug carried on the family political tradition. The Roberts were strong Republicans as well. And, even though the Democrats/ Confederates lost the war, Madison County remained in their control politically. I don't know all that Doug did for a living but I do know that he taught school, carried the mail and farmed tobacco on the Roberts farm. He lost his school teaching job at some point after his marriage to Dora and she wondered why so she asked around. She was told a contribution to the local Democratic party would help. Doug refused to comply but Dora did and she got a job. Were Dora and the Flowes as devout Democrats as the Tweeds were Republicans? We don't know, but her willingness to do what was necessary to get a job shows her pragmatism, and that apple didn't fall far from the tree with Mac. He told me more times than I can count that one of the main reasons he served in the Marines for 33 years was remembering the federal pension his grandfather received from serving in the Civil War. Pretty practical motivation!

Dora taught school in Marshall after Mac was born and took him with her when he got old enough. Before then he stayed home with his grandma Sara. I think the school was up the hill behind the courthouse on Main St. He remembered going out with the kids during recess and playing in and getting covered in mud and getting a switching for it. I don't know where he started school, but at some point a new school was built on an island in the French Broad River. It still stands and is now an arts and crafts center. He and his buddies, the Geezentanners (sp?) and others whose names I don't recall, loved to shoot marbles at recess. Cats eyes and steelies were coveted. After a brouhaha over a game, someone, I think it was a Geezer, pushed Mac down and broke his left arm. It wasn't set properly and Mac had a crook in it the rest of his life. When WWII broke out, Mac applied to get in the Army Air Corp but during the physical, they noticed his crooked arm and rejected him. Good thing- chances are he would have died over Germany. He started carrying a bucket of sand around with that arm, hoping to straighten it. A few months later when he applied with the Navy, he stuck his right arm out to get his blood pressure taken and they didn't notice his crooked left.

I'm not sure when Mac got to know Liston Ramsey and the Ponders. I know that he and Liston walked/thumbed from Marshall to Mars Hill. Once a female professor there called "the boys from Marshall" (Mac and Liston) to the board to do some math problems and kept them standing there the entire class period as they struggled, unsuccessfully, to figure them out. I don't know what Liston did for a living but he got involved in politics, worked his way up to become a member of the NC House of Representatives, eventually being elected Speaker in the 1980s. But the real political movers and shakers in Madison County, which in the 20th century was, like most of the south, heavily Democratic, were the Ponders. Elmus was the longtime sheriff but the kingmaker was his brother, Zeno. Both were Mac's contemporaries. Mac had heard and loved to tell the story of Zeno walking into the Speaker's office in Raleigh and telling the receptionist that he was there to see to see Liston. When she asked if he had an appointment, he replied, "I don't need no appointment-I put him here!"

One way the Ponders kept the reins of power was distributing confiscated moonshine to constituents. Alcohol played a negative role in Mac's formative years. He would say in his later years, with barely stifled resentment and sadness, that his father was an alcoholic. In addition to his refusing to bow to the Democrats, Doug's drinking surely added to his chronic unemployment. Dora wouldn't let him keep liquor in the house but he usually had a bottle hidden in the barn. Mac and Dan discovered one and poured out its contents; they urinated in another. Papa, as Mac called his dad, was always going to Marshall to have a beer or two or more. Frequently he didn't have any money. Once, Dora bought several calves to raise for sale. She took out the back seat and brought them home in the T-model. They must have been practically newborns because Mac and Dan put milk in something, I don't remember what it was, maybe a balloon, and fed them as though from a teat. They soon were eating spring grass and growing rapidly. Someone came along and complimented Doug on them, and, without giving any credit to Dora or acknowledging that they were hers, he sold them to the admirer for much less than they would have been worth had they eaten free grass for a few more months. And did he put the money in the family pot? No, he used it to buy alcohol.

After the Tweeds moved to the Nelson farm, Doug and a couple of the boys, probably Albert and Carroll since Leo was married, got to drinking and started pushing Dora around. Dan, who probably wasn't but 9 or 10, got the shotgun and leveled it at them and told them to get their hands off his Mama or he'd kill them. Apparently he meant it or at least they thought he did because they stopped immediately and never bothered Dora again. When Mac would tell that story he would get a little misty-eyed and I got the impression that he was somewhat chagrined that his younger brother stood up to them instead of him. That story and several others he told about Dan illustrate why, at Dan's funeral, Mac said "he was the best Marine I ever knew".

One other story of how alcohol affected the Tweed family. The McElroys were a prominent family in Marshall. One was a judge and another the doctor who sewed Mac and his buddy up after their wreck on the River Rd. The doctor's son, Pender, is a founding partner of the James, McElroy and Diehl law firm in Charlotte. Several years before Mac died, I set took him to lunch in Charlotte with Pender and Randy Phillips, also an attorney in Charlotte with Moore and Van Allen, one of the largest firms in NC, a year behind and track teammate of mine at Davidson, a Rhodes scholar, graduate of one of the Ivy League law schools, and a descendant of Ransom Merrill. Mac entertained them with Madison County stories. Pender is named for his uncle to whom one of the Tweed girls, maybe Annie, was engaged and who was killed when he drunkenly drove his car off the road and into a big rock coming home one night from Asheville. Mac showed me the rock still standing by the River Rd.

The Roberts farm was about 60 acres. I don't know how much was cultivatable but they grew tobacco, some wheat and corn for the chickens and their two horses. The horses were used to plow, pull the wagon and Doug's buggy and, occasionally, for Mac and Dan to ride. Mac didn't tell me much about everyday life on the farm, I guess because I didn't ask. The boys worked some in the fields and knew how to hook up the horses and plow. Once, when Doug was in town, probably imbibing, they thought they would surprise him with their industriousness and plowed a big field. Rather than praising them, their father lambasted them for working the horses too hard. Of course, for every step the horse took, its handler took two but that didn't seem to matter to Doug. The tobacco crop was taken by wagon to Newport for sale. Once, Doug wanted a drink so bad that he sold the whole crop as soon as they got there to the first bidder. If he had waited till the next day he could have gotten substantially more but he would have had to wait another day for that drink.

I don't know if Doug was much of a hunter or fisherman but Mac loved both, particularly the latter in the years I knew him. Mary loved to fish, too. He was a good shot because he had such good eyesight. He used to bird hunt with his father-in-law, Vernon Mullis, who thought Mac was the best shot he ever saw because once, luckily, according to Mac, he shot two quail on the same rise in a thicket. That sealed the deal with Vern. Mac told me about but I don't recall the guns he grew up with. I do remember that J Mac Flow gave the boys a .22 but it would often misfire and Dora was afraid it would put out their eye so she made them get rid of it. I can still see, in fact, I think we have a picture of Mac sitting in the backyard with Tommy and Tim at our house shooting a BB gun. One of the Tweed's neighbors at the Nelson farm was a deputy sheriff whose name I don't recall, but it was one of those back in the holler names that Janet and I used to think were so funny. He came over one day to show off his skill as a sharpshooter with his service revolver. Mac said he "couldn't hit a bull in the butt". So much for his gaining the Tweed boys' respect as a lawman.

Mac's teenage ambition was to be a guitar playing singer. He did love music. We watched Ken Burns' "The Civil War" several times together; in fact, someone gave him the cd set for Christmas or his birthday. Every time the song "Lorena" would be played, Mac would sing along. He knew all the words. His musical interest may have been stimulated by the piano lessons Dora made him take. I don't know from whom or where he took the lessons or for how long, but he was good enough to play in a recital for the teacher's students one night in Marshall. His mother had just bought him a new pair of shoes, probably for the occasion, and she and Mac set off walking to town for the recital. I wondered why Doug didn't take them in the buggy but didn't ask. The new shoes were tight and rubbed a blister on his foot and he began to cry and complain. Dora told him to climb up on her back and she piggybacked him to town. He, and probably Dora as well, were too embarrassed to be seen traveling that way so she put him down before anyone could see them. He played in the recital and walked home barefooted.

I don't know much about the comings and goings of grandpa Albert after he and Douglas came back from Kansas. At some point he owned a farm near Old Fort. Mac and Dan must have heard their father tell stories about Albert, and what stories! They would have been more thrilling than the story of the escaped slave crossing the frozen river in Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin" that Annie read to them. I don't know much about Doug's personality traits; whether, for instance, he was a good storyteller or even much of a talker. But we can certainly imagine him telling Mac and Dan tales about their great-grandfather, Neely killing the sheriff; and about Albert: his killing the Confederate soldier and fleeing Madison County to fight in the Civil War; and then his own memory of: the trip by covered wagon to California and meeting Indians along the way; what gold rush California must have been like; the voyage by clipper ship all the way around Cape Horn to Charleston (I wonder how long that took, what kind of ship it was, what their accommodations were like, etc); the trip to and stay in Kansas. What amazing adventures, lived by their own father and grandfather. Fiction couldn't have been as exciting!

We don't know when Mac first met his legendary grandfather. What we do know is that around 1927 or shortly thereafter, when Mac would have been 7 or 8 (and we know this approximate date because Mac remembered it was not long after Lindbergh's flight across the Atlantic, which they first heard about on neighbor John Ball's radio or by

reading about it in the Asheville Citizen which they got in the mail), Mac and his dad were in the yard at the Robert's house when they spotted an old man walking down the road toward them. "Laud, here comes Marsh Tweed", Doug said and Mac replied, "No, Papa, I don't think that's Uncle Marsh. He doesn't have a cane". And Doug said, "it's Paw. I'll go tell Dora to set another plate". And so this almost mythical hero walked into Mac's life.

Albert told Douglas that he needed a place to stay and asked if he could stay with them. Douglas told him that he would have to talk to Dora. When he asked her, she replied, "He's your father. Of course he can stay with us". And he did, for the rest of his life.

At some point Albert began receiving a check from the federal government related to his service in the civil war. I never was clear whether it was a pension, which doesn't seem likely since he didn't make the military a career, or compensation for injuries he received, though I don't remember Mac talking about his being wounded. In any event, when the Depression hit in 1929, Albert was receiving a fairly substantial sum. My impression is that it was probably at least \$100/month. He didn't believe in banks. I suppose that could have been because of their failure during the Depression, but since he was getting the government check before then, it may have been that he just didn't trust other folks with his money, or thought that when he went to withdraw some that they would give him Confederate money. But for whatever reason, when he got his monthly check, Dora would drive him to the bank and he would cash it and demand gold coins. Then they would go to the A&P and for several weeks, the Tweed household ate well on store-bought food. When they got home, Albert would put his remaining gold coins in a chamois sack he kept under his bed. Mac said he learned early on that family didn't mind taking in old folks if they had money, and that the memory of his grandfather's pension is what kept him in the Marine Corps for 33 years.

By executive order, in 1933 FDR called in the private ownership of gold. Apparently it was widely known that Albert Tweed had a stash. The sheriff told Doug that his father was going to have to bring his gold in. Doug took Albert to the bank to open an account but he refused to let them have his gold. Instead, he asked if the bank had any land for sale. The Nelson farm, consisting of over 300 acres on Hayses Run, had been foreclosed on by the bank and Albert negotiated the purchase of the farm for \$13,000. He paid for it with his sack full of gold coins which, I think, was a little short, so the bank loaned him the balance. We might wonder why the bank would loan an old unemployed man any money during the Depression? Why wouldn't they? He had 300 acres as collateral and a monthly government income with which to make the loan payments. Albert's was probably one of the safest loans the bank had on its books.

Mr. Nelson had cut much of the probably virgin timber on his farm to sell to pay his mortgage shortly before the Depression hit. He couldn't sell the timber and lost the farm. Mac said they watched the cut timber rot in the fields over the years and his and Dan's dog chased rabbits in and out of the hollow logs. There was a house, barn and several outbuildings and a good spring and spring house on the farm. I guess the spring and spring house at the farm Mac and Mary bought and on which they built their last house on Bridwell Heights in Kingsport reminded Mac of the spring he drank from and spring house that kept their milk cool on the Nelson farm. The house was still standing and in pretty good shape when Mac took Janet and me on a tour probably 6-8 years before he died. We went throughout the house looking for an old chair with the two rear legs shorter than the front two. It was Albert's and he had worn the legs down dragging it around the house to sit on. For Mac's sake, I wished we had found it, but we didn't. When Albert died, they laid his body out on the side porch for viewing. Albert wanted to be buried on the Nelson farm but Doug buried him in the nearby Bryan cemetery beside his wife, Sara, who had died before they moved from the Roberts farm to the Nelson farm.

The Roberts farm was in Hattie Roberts Tweed's name. I don't know if she had a will but whether she did or didn't, the farm descended to her seven children. Doug may have had a life estate in it. Dora was worried that if something happened to Doug, she and her two boys wouldn't have a home, so she advocated for moving to the Nelson farm (Mac would call it by that name and also by the Seminary which was the name of the Presbyterian church nearby which they attended and where Mac and Dan were baptized). Doug insisted that they wouldn't move as long as his mother was living since the Nelson farm was in Albert's name. Leo scrounged up the money to buy his sibling's interest in the Robert's farm after Albert, Doug, Dora and the boys moved to their new home on the Nelson farm. The Roberts house, especially after Dora added on to it with her money, was much nicer than the Nelson house. I don't know but I doubt if she was ever reimbursed.

I'm not familiar with the Presbyterian requirements for salvation or even church membership, but they do, at least they did at Seminary, practice baptism. Mac and Dan were baptized in the creek near the church. Others may have been baptized at the same service. There was a crowd gathered for the occasion. Some of the Tweed girls were there and maybe even some Flowes had come all the way from Clear Creek. The tradition was for the witnesses to go back to the church following the baptism and the baptizees would dry off, get dressed and go up to "receive the right hand of

Christian fellowship", as Mac called it. Mac and Dan didn't go back up to the church with the others. When Dora came to find out why, she found them laughing and splashing and swimming around in the baptismal pool, having a good time, and had to shoo them out and up to the church. When Mac would tell that story, he would usually follow it with the story about the minister preaching about going to heaven, in which, after painting a rosy and vivid picture of the trip, he would ask who was ready to go. Everybody raised their hand but Dan. When the preacher asked him if he didn't want to go to heaven, Dan said he thought he'd wait on the next bus.

Unfortunately, most of the stories Mac told about his father weren't the kind you would like to remember about a parent, but maybe it's human nature to remember the bad more than the good. Fortunately, this didn't make him cynical. Once, Mac and Dan walked a girl home one night from church. She may have been his friend, Geneva, who, after Mary died, Mac talked with on the phone frequently. Douglas demanded to know why it took them longer than usual to get home, and when they told him, he whipped them both, Mac the worst since he was older, with a razor strap. He hit Mac so hard on the back that it raised welts and stopped only when Dora intervened. Doug's justification for the beating was that some girl, maybe she was the sister of the girl they walked home, had gotten pregnant and he wanted to instill in Mac and Dan the dangers of fraternizing with the fairer sex.

Both boys played some sports in high school. I think Mac played end on the football team and ran the mile in track, though he might not have started track until he got to Mars Hill. Dan played basketball. Somehow they got some boxing gloves and learned to box against each other. Apparently Dan got pretty good and developed somewhat of a reputation. There were some boys at school who fought all the time. Dan got egged on into fighting the oldest and toughest one. Dan hit him in the nose so hard that some adult who saw it, maybe the coach, said Dan "knocked snot out of his nose that had been in there for years". Some punch!

Mac and Dan were as close as brothers could be, spending most of their growing up years side by side. When Mac first started school they were living on the Roberts farm and Leo's wife, Elva, had their first child, a son and he got sick. The principal came to Mac's class and told him that he'd have to go home because the little Tweed boy had died. It was Leo and Elva's baby boy who had died but Mac thought it was Dan. Brother Albert, who was also at school and was told the news as well, also thought it was Dan. Albert walked home with Mac and said he would play with him since he no longer would have Dan to play with. Mac cried the whole long walk home but when he got there, Dan was out playing in the yard. Mac said he had never been so happy to see someone as he was to see his brother in flesh and blood. When Mac went off to Mars Hill, Dan was working after school at the A&P. When Mac came home one weekend, Dan asked him if he had any money which, of course, he didn't and Dan gave him all the money he had, which probably wasn't but a dollar or so, but was a king's ransom to a broke college boy.

Mac graduated from the eleven-grade Marshall High School in 1937 in a class of nine boys and eleven girls. Just prior to graduation the senior class took a trip to Cherokee, riding in the back of a big truck with side planks. The main thrill for the boys was poking the chained up bear with a stick. Their teacher was Dr. Sam's daughter, Katy, who was about 20. The principal was Guy B. Rhodes, whose claim to fame was that he married Ava Gardner's sister. Mr. Rhodes later became superintendent of the Madison County school system and when he died in office, his wife took over.

Doug had graduated from Mars Hill College and Dora wanted Mac to go there as well, but like most mountain folks during the depression, the Tweeds didn't have the money to send him. Dora went up to see Dr. Blackwell, the president and explained their predicament. He told her not to worry, that they would find a way for Mac to come to Mars Hill. His first year, Mac lived with a family and milked the cow morning and night for his room and board. Several years before his death, Mac showed me the house where he lived, pointing out the window in his upstairs room, and the barn where the cow lived, still standing after all those years. Several times during that first year, he would come home discouraged, saying he wasn't going back but Dora would cheer him up and take him back to school.

At Mars Hill, Mac entered as fully into college life as a boy with no money could. He was too small to be a regular on the football team so became one of the managers and worked his way up to being a backup end. He began running track and discovered he was a pretty good miler, so good in fact that he was offered scholarships to Furman and Lincoln Memorial. The coaches gave the young men instruction in hygiene. Mac particularly remembered their lecture on the cure for venereal disease which involved the use of a rubber hose upon the offending member. I suspect that lecture had its intended effect.

There were a good number of pre-ministerial students. Mac was not fond of most of them who, he thought, were big hypocrites who talked righteousness but then tried to put the make on the coeds, which was rather difficult since the only fraternizing permitted was holding hands while strolling on a sidewalk designated for that purpose. He was self-conscious about his wardrobe and appearance. When some guy told him he ought to wear a different pair of pants on some occasion, he responded that it was the only pair he had. When his mother bought him his first suit, he

proudly wore it to a function where someone was wearing the same suit, which was not so discreetly pointed out to him.

One of his buddies was "Bugsy" Mitchell whose father was a banker from Winston Salem. Another classmate was CC Hope who became something of a bigwig at a bank in Charlotte, I think it was Bank of America's predecessor, and also a leader in Charlotte's First Baptist Church. Bugsy and Mac went over to Asheville to see some girls at Asheville Normal, which is where several of his sisters had gotten their teacher's degrees. They missed the last bus to Mars Hill so ended up walking most of the way back, finally hitching a ride and getting back just in time for class. One of the pitfalls of week day dating.

During at least one summer Mac measured tobacco for some government agency. But after graduation from Mars Hill there were few jobs to be had in Madison County for a 19 year old college graduate. Mac's only long trips from home were when Dora drove Dan and him down to Clear Creek to visit her siblings and their families. Aunt Lilly had married a Trexler whose family ran a store in Wadesboro, so they usually made a side trip to Anson County. The Trexlers had several children, at least one of whom was a boy about their age named Flowe. I think he went to NC State and became an engineer and was living near Columbia when Mac lived with Janet and me. They talked fairly often on the phone and we intended to take Mac down for a visit but never did. Once I went down to Wadesboro for the visitation for a college classmate's mother's death. Mac and Janet went along for an outing and we rode all over Anson County looking for the old Trexler home place, but Mac couldn't pick it out.

One at least one occasion, maybe more, Dora and Lilly and maybe some of their other siblings took the kids to Myrtle Beach for a day or two. Mac remembered them staying in an old house and sleeping on pallets on the floor. Just imagine what it would have been like to have ridden in a T-model all the way from Marshall to Charlotte and then on down to the beach. Highway 74 was the road from Asheville to Charlotte, two lane, of course, winding like a snake around Lake Lure. And think of the flat tires they must have had, which to fix meant taking the wheel off, taking the tire off the rim, finding the hole in the inner tube, gluing a patch on, wrestling the tire back on the rim and pumping it up. I expect Mac and Dan got pretty handy at fixing flats; probably also in fetching water from a creek to put in an over-heated radiator.

I seem to remember that once Douglas went with them to the beach. He got out of the car, walked down near the water, then turned around and announced that he'd seen enough and was ready to go home. Douglas visited Clear Creek at least once. Dora's brother, Olin, came up to the mountains to visit her and her family and met, fell in love with and married Douglas' daughter, Dora's stepdaughter and Mac and Dan's half-sister, Mamie. Olin then moved her down to the Flowe family farm in Clear Creek. Mamie had some trouble with a childbirth, maybe her first, and the Tweeds all drove down to check on her. Apparently Douglas didn't think she was getting proper care and wanted to bring in a doctor, which, of course, would cost money, and Olin, tight as he was, refused. Douglas and Olin got into a scuffle resulting in Olin pulling a pistol and running his father-in-law off his property. Dora and the boys stayed at Olin and Mamie's but Douglas went and to stay at Nettie or Annie's. Don't know what happened with Mamie's pregnancy or if the Douglas/Olin feud ever got patched up, but knowing Olin, I doubt it ever did.

Nettie went down to visit her sister, Mamie, and met and married Robert Beaver. He was a quiet, hardworking man and he and Nettie eventually built a house on a dairy farm I think Robert inherited which is located on Highway 601 just inside Cabarrus County from Union. They never had any children. Nettie confided in some of her sisters that they couldn't because of Robert's impotence. Nice thing to have spread around about you by your wife! Mac said he asked her once if she was lonely and regretted having children and she said no, that the cows were like her children and that she loved living on the farm. Eventually Annie also came down to visit and began teaching school at Bain in Mint Hill. She married Baxter Bigham who worked for the railroad. He was also a quiet, extremely nice gentleman. I probably say that about him because he was president and sole member of my fan club; whenever he saw me he would bring up hearing my name when he listened to Davidson football games on the radio. Mary once remarked that Baxter was the only saint she ever knew.

When Mac was 18 or 19, Robert, Nettie and Annie drove up in Robert's pickup to Madison County to visit and get a load of apples. Apparently without much forethought and without discussing it with his father, though I think he had told his mother, Mac threw all his belongings in a paper sack and jumped in the back of the truck with the apples, his legs hanging out the back, and left the mountains, which, it turned out, was for good. When they drove through downtown Charlotte, Ann was ashamed to be seen, I don't know by whom, riding with her barefoot brother's legs hanging out of the back of the truck, so she made him climb in the cab, which was already crowded with the three, till they got through town and then he got back in the bed. I don't guess it bothered Ann for country folks to see those bare feet.

They dropped Mac off at Mamie and Olin's and the next morning at daybreak, Olin had him in the field hoeing cotton while Olin went over to visit a widow who lived close by. After several days of this, he decided he didn't escape the mountains to become Olin's slave so he asked his cousin, Homer Flowe, to ask his mother if they could borrow her car to go to Kannapolis to get a job at Cannon Mills. I don't remember Homer's mother's name but she was the widow of either Lawrence or Ira. Homer told Mac that his mama wasn't going to let them have her car and besides, no one had been hired at the mill all summer. So Mac approached his aunt directly and was summarily rebuffed just like Homer had predicted, but if the boy from the mountains was anything, he was persistent and eventually wore her down. He and Homer drove up to Kannapolis and waited in the bullpen outside the mill with a crowd of men who came there every day in hopes of being called in to work. They heard from these hopefuls the same thing Homer's mother told them, that no one had been hired in months. Mac asked who lived in the big house up on the hill behind the plant and was told that was the plant manager's, who's name Mac still remembered but I don't, house. At lunch, he and Homer, against Homer's strong advice, drove up and parked beside the big man's driveway. He drove up in a big chauffeured car and thought they were neighborhood boys who probably wanted to cut his grass. Mac's instincts took over and he made a life changing decision on the spot. He spit out, as fast as he could talk, his name was, that he had just finished two years at Mars Hill College, that he had come down from the hills to get a job and that he would do any job and be the best worker Cannon had. The plea didn't seem to fall on sympathetic ears as they were told in no uncertain terms to get back down in that bullpen where they belonged, which they did.

Shortly after lunch, the door opened and a man asked if there was a Tweed and a Flowe in the crowd, and as the men looked around at each other, Mac and Homer raised their hands and were summoned inside. I wonder what those men, probably all older than these two young whippersnappers, many with families, and who hadn't seen a paycheck in quite a spell, thought when these interlopers disappeared behind closed doors. Mac never said what, if any, recriminations came as a result of their being hired over these locals but there must not have been any to speak of.

These two green horns were asked where they wanted to work. Mac asked what paid the most, and when he was told weavers made the most, he said he wanted to be a weaver. They were asked for their social security numbers. Mac and Homer not only didn't have one, they didn't even know what they were talking about, so they had to drive to Salisbury to get SS cards. Mac kept his job at Cannon till he joined the Navy after the war started. I think Homer worked there his whole career.

A good number of folks from the Clear Creek area and Union County as well worked at Cannon and many didn't have transportation. A cottage industry to furnish rides to work had sprung up and Mac and Homer started riding with a fellow who charged them 50cents/day, I think it was, to take them to and from work. This mass transit pioneer had two or three other riders in addition to the Tweed and Flowe cousins. After several weeks or months of this, Mac stopped in at Beatty Ford at Hell's Half-Acre (don't know how it got that name-must have been a rough place at one time-now there's an ice cream stand on one corner), the intersection of US 601 and NC 24-27, just outside Midland. It must have been on a Saturday; otherwise he would have been working. I don't know how he got there; he may have walked. He went in the showroom, just browsing, and Mr. Ford asked if he could put him in a car. Mac told him he couldn't afford a car and on being asked, told Mr. Beatty who he was and where he was living and working. Mr. Beatty told him that his mother, Dora, had taught him in school and showed Mac a car that a doctor had bought for his son who immediately wrecked it and they had fixed it good as new and he could give Mac a good deal on it. Mac remembered to the penny what it cost, but I don't.

When Mac told Mr. Beatty that he didn't have any money, Mr. Beatty told him that Dora Flowe's son didn't need any money, that he would finance it for him without a nickel of down payment. Mac was too young to sign a note and Mr. Beatty said his father and mother could sign for him. Douglas refused but Dora signed and Mac got his first car. I don't know whether he had to make a trip to the mountains to get Dora's signature or they handled it by mail, but before long, Mac had become a transportation entrepreneur, driving paying riders to Kannapolis himself. Between his wages at Cannon and his rider revenues, he paid the car off in fairly short order, even while paying Mamie room and board.

Mac was most likely a very careful driver. While he was in high school, he was driving the family car (I don't know if it was Dora's original T-model or whether she had bought a newer one) with a buddy, speeding down the River Road in pursuit of a car load of young ladies. They came around a curve and collided with a big Packard driven by Judge McElroy. Apparently the Judge's car was across the centerline, but Mac was driving too fast. The Judge's whole family was in the car. Mac had cuts from the windshield which his buddy went through. When he got out of the car, Mrs. McElroy was screaming that he'd killed her family. There was a young child in the Packard who appeared to be cut and banged up pretty badly. The River Road ran from Asheville through Marshall alongside the railroad tracks which ran

alongside the French Broad River. Mac said that as he surveyed the scene, he thought seriously about just going over and jumping in the river. But after a moment's reflection, he said "let's get them to the doctor". Shortly, the police arrived and they all went down to Dr. McElroy's, the Judge's brother and Pender's father, for treatment. Mac said to treat everyone else before him. It took over 100 stitches to sew up his buddy's face.

Douglas was afraid of a lawsuit. The police concluded that both drivers were at fault so nothing came of it. There was another reason nothing came of it though I'm not sure what it was. It may have been that the Judge had alcohol on his breath. It was another McElroy brother, Pender, who was killed driving drunk, and the McElroys probably didn't want that dredged back up. Dora got the car repaired and Dan later wrecked the same car driving too fast and was almost killed. I think he was in a coma for several days. These episodes likely contributed to Mac's flying over 10,000 hours in three wars without a mishap. He was the most careful driver I ever rode with. Every time he got in the car, he checked it out just like he was getting ready for take-off in a plane. And every time we visited Mac and Mary, before we headed out going home, he checked the engine belts, oil and tire pressure in our car. I'm a much more cautious driver and more conscientious about vehicle maintenance because of him. And I think those qualities have gotten passed to my sons and hopefully will to my grandchildren.

One last note about Mac's driving caution. After Mary died, Janet and I took Mac to KY to see the kids and grandkids for Christmas. We drove Mac's little Mercedes station wagon which Janet still drives today. I drove most of the way but got a little drowsy before we got to Lexington so Janet took over. I climbed in the back seat. Mac was riding shotgun. It had started to rain and it began to freeze but you couldn't see any ice on the road. We were in the inside lane next to a concrete barrier which separated us from on-coming traffic and there were two other lanes to our right. All three lanes were packed with traffic. Coming down a hill at probably 65 mph we hit an icy spot and the car started sliding toward the concrete barrier. If my eyes were closed, they popped open suddenly, in time for me to think we were going to hit the barrier and yell something. Mac, without saying a word, reached over and grabbed the steering wheel with his left arm and the car instantly straightened up in our lane. Maybe we just came out of the ice; I don't know exactly what happened. All I do know is that before Mac's instantaneous reaction we were just inches from crashing into the concrete, and afterwards, we were straightened back up like nothing happened. You can imagine Janet's, and mine, too, I have to admit, excited reaction and praise for Mac's quick action, but he remained calm as could be, crediting German automotive design and craftsmanship with saving us from probable disaster. Janet sure slowed down. Not much further up, they closed I-75 and rerouted us.

Mac continued to live with Mamie and Olin as he learned the weaver's craft at Cannon. There's a towel I've seen from a batch that he wove which gives the scores of an undefeated Duke football season. I don't recall the year, around 1939 or 40. He was enamored with Duke, I think because Dr. McElroy or some other prominent person in Marshall had gone there. He listened to their games on the radio. When mentioning Duke, he would usually mention their punter, a guy named Eric Tipton. In fact, Tipton is the only Duke player's name I remember him mentioning. I wonder whether that was because Tipton was from the mountains and Mac knew of him, or he was the leading punter in the nation, or because I was a punter and Mac thought I might relate to the story.

This might be a good time to mention Mac's slightly superstitious nature. When he would say something that he hoped would remain intact or true, he would always knock on wood. I've seen him get up out of the chair he was sitting in if it didn't have any visible wood on it and go over to the closest piece of wood and give it a knock. His methodical nature may have been somewhat akin to his superstition, the idea that if he did things exactly the same way each time that the results would always be the same. He planted his garden by the signs. We took Mac and Mary down to stay at Frank Griffin's house at Long Beach one summer and I pulled our boat down. Mac, and Mary too, loved to fish. There wasn't much happening in the surf but we noticed small boats had been gathering each afternoon not far offshore. We learned they were catching Spanish mackerel so we, Mac, Tommy, Tim and I, went to the tackle shop and bought some spoons we were told they would hit, got in the boat tied up in the marina located off the inland waterway and started toward the inlet which leads out to the ocean. The water in the inlet was pretty rough. I had never taken the boat out in the ocean before and I was a little nervous as ocean waves were breaking around the boat. But we got out and eased our way down to where the boats were gathered. They were trolling slowly so we did too and we began catching mackerel. I drove in circles to stay in the catch zone and we caught 8 or 10, if I remember correctly. When they stopped biting, I changed the direction I had been circling but we weren't having any more success. Mac said we were circling in the opposite direction when we caught the fish and felt sure changing direction would be the key, but, alas, it wasn't. They had quit biting. The other boats headed in and eventually we, one of the last remaining, did too. Despite the sudden shift in our fortunes which couldn't be reversed by our reverting to previously successful patterns, Mac declared that it was one of the best days of his life, and he meant it. You should have seen his delight in cleaning those poor

mackerels and sharing some with the neighbors, primarily, I think, so he could tell the story of their catch. It was one of the best days of my life as well, not just because of catching fish, though that certainly helped, but just being on a grand adventure with my sons and their life-loving grandfather.

And how he loved life! Marines flying in the south Pacific in WWII were told never to be captured alive by the Japanese if their plane went down. In training they were shown a movie of Japanese soldiers cutting out the heart of a downed American pilot and passing it around so each could take a bite out of it. In addition to a service revolver, each plane crew member had some poison pill to make sure that wouldn't happen to them. But Mac said he had decided that if he was shot down, he would figure out a way to make himself so useful to his captors that they would let him live, planting them a garden, washing their clothes, whatever it took. But, on the other hand, he had no hesitation to risk his life for his country. During Vietnam, some of Mac's contemporaries were retiring from the Marines rather than going. At a party in Virginia Beach, Lil Nicolay, the wife of his close friend, neighbor and fellow Marine Colonel pilot, Stan, asked Mac what he would do if he got orders to Nam and, without hesitation, he said he would go home and start packing. He said that's what the Marine Corp had been training him for all those years.

Well, back to life at Mamie and Olin's in Mint Hill. Mac got himself a guitar and spent his free time (I don't guess Olin made him work in the fields anymore since he was a paying border) practicing to be a singer. Anne, who by then was teaching at Bain School in Mint Hill, said a young, good looking boy like him shouldn't be just whiling away his days sitting on the porch, that he needed some female companionship. That sounded good to Mac but he said he didn't know any girls. Somehow, Anne knew a pretty, fun-loving brunette named Mary Mullis who lived over on Idlewild Road. I don't remember the specifics of Mac and Mary's first meeting; they may have gone out on a double date with Anne, but it wasn't long before he was making his way over to Vern and Ludie Mullis's farm by himself. But there was a problem. Mary had another suitor who was older, had more money and a newer car. She was working with a couple of her sisters at Hudson Hosiery, across the street from Oakhurst School and probably dreamed of getting off the farm.

One of Mary's dreams was to go to college. She had been an excellent student who graduated from Matthews High with my uncle, Ervin. She was a friend of Dr. Reid's daughter, Nancy. The Reid family lived in one of the nicest houses in Matthews on John St., the main drag, where it still stands and is used as an events center. Mary took piano lessons from Mrs. Reid at the house. Mac always said that Mary was much smarter than him, that he was a plodder while it came naturally to her. He said he didn't think Mary's mother could read or write but that she was smart as a whip. She was a Ford and her family ran a little country store. Mac said she really knew numbers. I guess she learned that from making change in the store.

If Mac was anything, it was determined. He won over Miss Mullis with his good looks and charm, I'm sure, but probably as much by his ambition. She saw a young man looking for a better life and she wanted one, too. And besides, the other suitor had a withered arm and maybe she thought he had some kind of hereditary condition that caused it, and didn't want to take any chances if they should marry and have children.

Mac and Mary got to be a pair pretty quickly, having a good time together. Mac remembered a trip with some other young folks down to Rocky River to fish and have a cookout. The S&W on West Trade became their favorite place to eat out. On Sunday, December 7th, 1941, after church they had eaten at the cafeteria and gone to a movie and coming out they heard the news about Pearl Harbor. Their young lives, like so many others, changed forever that day.

Ed Rector, five or six years older than Mac, had been a football hero in Marshall. The Marshall team scrimmaged Asheville, which was anchored by a center who would go on to star at Duke, and Ed dominated him. He went on to play at Catawba and thereafter joined the Army Air Corps and became a pilot. Then he dropped out of sight and nobody seemed to know what had happened to him. One of the popular magazines of the day, Look or Life or Colliers, hit the newsstand one day and there was Marshall's own Ed Rector on the cover. He had become an ace with General Chenault's Flying Tigers flying with the RAF against the Japs in China. So when the war broke out, Mac knew what he wanted to do; follow in Ed's footsteps.

Mary took the train with Mac to Atlanta so he could apply to become a Navy pilot since he had been rejected by the Army Air Corps because of his crooked arm. The screening was very rigorous. Eyesight was critical and Mac's was 20/15. The only part he had trouble with was testing whether he would get dizzy in a plane, turning and twisting and rolling at high speed. He failed a time or two and someone advised him to focus his eyes on one spot during the maneuvers. He begged for one more try, followed the advice he'd gotten, and passed. The Navy preferred college graduates. There were boys there who had graduated from Duke and Carolina and other top schools and Mac was afraid he didn't stand a chance, but at the end of the day, he was one of the few chosen to go to Navy preflight. I don't remember Mac telling about the preparations he made before going off to war. I guess he went home and told his folks and probably sold his car. He was assigned to Navy preflight in Chapel Hill but there weren't any immediate

openings so he was sent to pre-preflight at a field between Asheville and Hendersonville, probably where the Asheville airport is now, flying with civilian pilots in small, single-engine planes. I know Anne, and maybe Hattie, came down to see him fly.

At Chapel Hill, Mac's Forrest Gump-like pattern of his path intersecting with the paths of famous people began. In the class just before him was George H W Bush, who claimed to be the youngest pilot in the Navy, though Mac said he knew of at least one younger. Mac never did like the Bushes. He said Bush was breaking the rules by having his eventual wife, Barbara, come up to the Carolina Inn most weekends from Columbia where she was in school at USC. A drill instructor for Mac's class was Lt JG Gerald Ford and in his class was Colonel/Astronaut/Senator/presidential contender John Glenn. Following preflight, he went to flight school in Pensacola. About all I remember him saying about flight school was that he had trouble with the slow roll, but someone, it may have been his friend for the rest of his life, a Davidson, town, not college, boy named Charlie Armstrong, helped him with it. Upon receiving their wings, cadets were given the choice of the Navy or Marines. Mac wasn't crazy about landing on carriers so he chose the Marine Corps.

Marine aviation was fairly new. I think Mac's next stop was at a base near Havelock, NC. The Marines used the Navy flight facilities and there were several in the area. One was called New River. I'm not sure whether that was the one near Havelock or whether it was the one close to Camp LeJeune, near Jacksonville, NC. A large number of B-25s had been built for the Army but with only two engines, it apparently was too light for flights from England to Germany. So the Army gave them to the Marines. Mac said when he arrived at his new base, there were a large number, maybe a hundred or even several hundred, brand new B-25s lining the runways, coated with cosmoline, a type of grease to keep them from rusting. Their first job was to wipe off the cosmoline which was covering the entire plane, inside and out. Then he learned to fly the B-25. I don't know how long that took and when I would ask him questions about various aspects of his career as a pilot, he might say he didn't remember for sure but that "it's in my log book". I thought that might have been a diary of sorts he kept for himself and wondered, frankly, if they even existed because he never showed them to me and when I would ask about them, he would say they were packed away somewhere. How delightedly surprised I was when, a few years before his death, Janet found them among his papers. If I remember correctly, there are five official hard-covered flight record books, all methodically filled out by his hand, which log every flight he ever made in his career, giving the date, time and place of departure, destination, time in the air, type plane, co-pilot, if any, and purpose of the flight. Over 10,000 hours, meticulously documented in his own hand. What a record of a career in service to his country.

I'm typing this on Saturday afternoon, May 28, 2016, Memorial Day weekend. Before I turned on the computer I turned on the TV to see what kind of military movies might be on and Turner is showing "They Were Expendable" starring John Wayne, Mac's favorite actor, made in 1945 about PT boats holding off the Japanese fleet as we were evacuating the Philippines. I've watched it a number of times with Mac. Every time they would show the scene where the skipper and several crewmen, including Big John, visit a fellow crewman who they've just been told that he didn't have but a few days to live, Mac and I would tear up, and I did again just a few minutes ago, as much from remembering Mac and his love for men who put their lives at risk for their country as from the scene, probably more so.

And how he loved the Duke! I'm sure he'd seen all of his movies numerous times. He could and would quote much of the dialogue before the actors could get it out. One of his favorites was "True Grit". When the girl comes to town looking for someone to avenge the murder of her father and she's told Rooster Cogburn is her man, Mac loved saying along with her, "Where do I find this rooster?" Running neck and neck with "True Grit" was the "Searchers", followed closely by McClintock, where he enjoyed Maureen O'Hara about as much as Big John, and "Rooster Cogburn" where Katherine Hepburn rides the raft down the river and helps Rooster blow up the bad guys with kegs of dynamite. When Mac was director of security at Vanderbilt, Ronald Reagan was governor of California and preparing to run for president by going on a speaking tour at colleges across the country, including Vanderbilt. University Chancellor Alexander Heard, who, by the way, had been my friend Jim Griffin's political professor at UNC and encouraged him to go to Harvard Law, was supposed to pick up Reagan at the Nashville airport and squire him around until his speech. Heard called Mac and told him an emergency had come up and asked Mac to substitute for him. Another Gump moment, Mac spend several hours with the Gipper and said he couldn't think of much to say to him except to tell him that John Wayne was his favorite actor and to ask Reagan questions about Big John.

Well, back to Lt Tweed's training. I don't know how long he trained in eastern NC but he moved on to some base in Arkansas and then to Bunker Hill in Indiana. I remember that they were learning visual flight by following rivers at one location and bombing techniques at another. While he was training, Mary was living at home and I guess still working at Hudson Hosiery. The Marine Corp either prohibited or strongly discouraged pilots from getting married during training but Mary was anxious to tie the knot before Mac got sent overseas. He was afraid to break the rule as it might get him

kicked out of the pilot training program, but he chanced it and they were married on May 29, 1943 in York, SC by the same justice of the peace who married Janet and me on April 29, 1967. I think Anne and Baxter went with them and served as witnesses. They honeymooned at a hotel in Charlotte. As an example of Mary's efficiency, Mac said that the morning after their first night as newlyweds, he went out to get a paper, planning on spending the morning in bed, but got back to find that Mary had made the bed.

The war had reached into the hills of Madison County by then. Dan joined the Marines and Leo's son, Emmitt, joined the Army. Someone, it might have been Leo, said to Douglas, "you know we won't get all of them back." Douglas told Dora to kill an extra chicken and he invited their preacher and some other preacher, maybe a visiting evangelist, over after church for Sunday dinner. Dora later told Mac that his father and the two preachers stayed over on the hill all afternoon praying so loud and fervently that they could be heard all over the holler. It must have worked. They all came back in one piece.

There was a shell plant in Charlotte where munitions were made. Hilliard Teague, who had married Hattie, and brother Albert or Carroll, or maybe both of them, came down to guard it, which got them exempted from military service. They may have been a bit old for the draft, although my dad, twelve years older than Mac and married with a child was drafted in late '42 or '43 and served in the Navy till the war ended. They carried weapons of some kind. One night it must have been more boring than usual and when a rabbit or fox or some other critter jumped up and ran as they were walking guard, one of them, just like he would have if he'd been in the mountains, shot it and all hell broke loose. The real cops came roaring up with sirens blazing, lights flashing and guns pulled, ready to confront saboteurs, only to find the Madison County boys admiring their kill. I think they were put on probation for a spell. They were lucky their marksmanship didn't get them drafted and sent to the front as sharpshooters.

Dan had enlisted with some buddies from Marshall in the Marines and trained at either Camp LeJeune or Parris Island, SC. They boarded a troop train taking them to Camp Pendleton in California from which they would head to the Pacific to fight the Japs. During a card game on the train a fight broke out and somebody got stabbed with a knife. Dan was a witness and when they got to Pendleton, he got held back to testify at a court martial while his unit shipped out. Consequently he arrived for the invasion of Iwo Jima or Okinawa, I don't remember which, behind his unit. Apparently they were short of experienced landing craft drivers and since Dan had experience driving a truck and tractor on the farm, instead of hitting the beach on foot, he drove a landing craft. I think a good number of his original unit were killed or wounded on the beach.

The only knowledge I have of Dan's participation in the invasion came from a conversation he and Mac and I had on our back porch when Mac and Mary were visiting and Dan and his wife, Vera came down for dinner. I think maybe Dan, Jr and/or his sister, Brenda or brother, Charles were there as well. Dan wasn't a big talker like Mac and we had to drag the story out of him in bit by bit. It seems like that was the first time whichever of his children were present had ever heard the full story. My recollection is that he drove four different landing craft in the invasion because each was sunk or too badly damaged to continue and I guess he rode out to the ship in a returning craft and got on another one loaded with troops to bring ashore. I don't think he got a scratch.

At least once Mac flew a plane to Charlotte to see Mary. It probably wasn't a B-25 which required a large crew. He buzzed Olin's and got too low and almost hit a tree top before his co-pilot warned him to pull up. The plane brushed the top limbs. Mac said he never pulled that stunt again, though that wasn't his last buzzing incident.

From what I had read, I thought that there was a rush to get men into combat, including pilots, so Mac's training period seems especially long. My guess the reason for the extended training was that Marine aviation was fairly new and brand new with B-25s and they weren't geared up to run pilots through like the Navy and Army Air Corps. In addition, they may have been slow in deciding where and how best to utilize them. But finally, after a year and a half of training, Mac got in the war. He took off in his B-25 (I don't know if it had a name, maybe "Tweed's Tigers", the name that became well known in the Corps in Vietnam) with a full crew of, I think, five, from New River, headed to the south Pacific.

You would have thought his squadron, or whatever a group of bombers was called, would have flown in formation, or at least flown together, from destination to destination. But instead, he was simply told to be in San Francisco on a certain day. So, they flew to Charlotte. He wanted to see Mary for what I'm sure he and she thought could be the last time. She may not have known he was coming because no one met him at the airport. Of course, gas was being rationed and a good bit would have been burned between Idlewild Road and Douglas Airport. He got a cab and dropped off his crew at a hotel in downtown Charlotte and came out to the Mullis farm. I don't know how long he stayed, probably just one night. Don't you know Mr. Vern and Mrs. Ludie and that house full of Mullis children were proud of Mary's handsome Lt in uniform, headed to the other side of the world to fight the hated Japanese.

They took off from Charlotte and flew to Atlanta and refueled. From there they flew to somewhere in Texas where they spent the night. A western was being filmed nearby which Mac thought was "Duel in the Sun" and they met some of the actors and other movie people in a bar. When they told them they were flying out the next morning, the movie folks told them where they were filming and suggested they fly over the set as they were leaving. The scene they were filming was a wagon train (don't you know that excited the son and grandson of men who crossed the country in a covered wagon) which had circled up to ward off the Native Americans. Mac flew down to get a closer look. The horses weren't used to the noise of B-25 engines and stampeded, turning over wagons and generally wreaking havoc. Mac said he worried all the way to California that the sheriff was going to be there to arrest him when they landed.

The planes were loaded onto an aircraft carrier by crane and they sailed to Hawaii. From there they flew to Emiru, which would be his base for the rest of the war. It was a long flight across the Pacific. They stopped to refuel at Midway and maybe another speck or two in the middle of the ocean. On this flight Mac's plane was flying with others. Someone had heard that at a landing strip on some little island, the only inhabitants were military personnel but if for some reason it would be dangerous to land there because of weather, there was an alternate field on a nearby island inhabited mainly by women, as the men had been killed by the Japs, and that they dressed in accordance with the tropical climate. It was a beautiful, clear day as they approached the primary island but the pilot of the lead plane came on the radio saying that it was socked in and they would have to land at the alternate field, and when he peeled off, they all followed, enjoying the native scenery while they refueled.

From Emiru, their prime target was the Japanese stronghold of Rabaul, which they bombed primarily at night. Ace, Pappy Boyington, immortalized in the TV series "Baa, Baa, Black Sheep", was shot down over Rabaul and was being held in a POW camp in Japan when the war ended. Boyington had also joined Chenault's Flying Tigers before we entered the war. When we did get in, the Navy wouldn't give him his commission back because they were miffed had resigned it to fly in China. He was parking cars in San Francisco when a senator or congressman recognized him and asked why he wasn't flying in the war. When Boyington told him the story, he said "we'll see about that". He must have had some clout because Pappy got back in and was lucky enough to survive being shot down and imprisoned. Unlike Louie Zamperini he must not have had as sadistic a guard as The Bird or we would have heard about it in "Baa, Baa Black Sheep".

After Iwo Jima, Dan's group was sent back to Hawaii to train for the invasion of Japan. Mac got some leave and flew back to Hawaii where he found his brother and took him and a couple of his buddies up to see the island from the air in his B-25. That's the only time that I know of that Dan ever flew with Mac. Fortunately, the war ended before Dan had to go back into action, but Mac returned to Emiru, where he was on August 6, 1945 when the Enola Gay dropped Big Boy on Hiroshima. When they were told the war was over, Mac said he thought there would be at least some debriefing or other wrapping up, but they were simply told to fuel their planes and go home. So he flew back to Hawaii, then to California. He seriously considered staying in the Marines and making it a career, still remembering his grandfather's military pension and also probably thinking that there wouldn't be a war that would put him in as much danger as this one had during the rest of a career. I don't remember where he was stationed in California, probably El Toro, or what kind of duty he was assigned, but whatever it was, it wasn't to his liking. And Mary was wanting him to come home, so he resigned his reserve commission and caught a military plane to Charlotte and made his way back to the Mullis farm.

Mac had a cousin named Frank Fowler Roberts who was from the Hattie Roberts' clan. Mac called him his cousin though they really weren't blood kin. Frank Fowler joined the Navy and became a pilot in the Pacific. I don't know where he was stationed or what kind of missions he flew. He was trained to fly a Corsair, or as it was known by Navy and Marine pilots, the "bent-winged monster". It was a heavy, single-engine, solo piloted fighter-bomber, fast and durable, but, because of its size and design, difficult to control. The war was just over and Frank Fowler was bringing one in for what may have been the last time, somewhere in the Pacific, maybe Okinawa, when, to show off, he did a slow roll as he came in for landing. He crashed on the runway and was killed. I think Mac had flown a Corsair before and said it must have "scooped" on him, which wasn't unusual for that plane, but unfortunately he was too close to the ground to come out of it. Imagine, surviving all that training and combat and then getting killed after the war was over because of a frivolous stunt. Mac always regretted not accompanying Frank Fowler's body home.

Mary was still living at home and Mac moved in with the Mullis's and immediately started looking for a job, which were hard to find. He finally found one at Standard Oil, later Esso then Exxon, at a company station, changing oil and greasing cars and trucks. CC Hope, his Mars Hill classmate, also took a job with Standard Oil as a management trainee. He must have gotten a four year degree somewhere or had some connections. He showed up at the service station for Mac to instruct him in being a grease monkey, but unlike Mac, who apparently was going to be stuck in that

job long term, CC was only getting a taste of it as part of his training program. They were down in the pit (in those days, few stations had hydraulic lifts; the vehicles to be serviced pulled over a pit in the ground and the mechanic climbed down a ladder into the pit to work underneath the vehicle) and Mac told him to "pull the plug" to drain the oil. CC took a pair of pliers and literally tried pulling, not unscrewing, the oil plug out of the oil pan.

Finally Mac was promoted to driving a gasoline tanker to fill the tanks of Esso stations in and around Charlotte. He was down in Wadesboro late one afternoon and somehow got his truck stuck in the mud. He worked and worked to get it out but it just sank deeper. Nervously, fearing for his job, he called headquarters and they sent a wrecker down to pull him out. By the time he got back to Charlotte it was almost the next morning so he just stayed at work after being up all night. He wasn't about to risk endangering his job by asking for a little sack time.

I think Mary took a job for a while in the office of Standard Oil. Mac became part of the Mullis family. I'm sure Mr. Mullis enjoyed having him as a hunting companion. Vern had a butter, egg and vegetable route in Charlotte and some of his customers were doctors and others with money, some of whom loved to bird hunt, so they would come down to hunt on the Mullis farm. Some even had dogs that he trained and kept with his. He was a teetotaler. Several times he accompanied a group of Charlotte hunters somewhere down east to hunt. He would tend the dogs and serve as guide and designated driver. The Mullis's were faithful members of Wilgrove Baptist Church where Mary played the piano.

One Sunday after church and Sunday dinner, Mac went into the parlor and turned on the radio to listen to Kyle Rote playing in a big NFL game. Mary heard it and came in and told him he'd have to turn it off because papa didn't let them play the radio on Sunday. So Mac went out to his car and started listening. Mary followed him out and again told him he'd have to turn it off, it was still Sunday, even in the car. Mac drove off and found a spot to listen to the game. Several weeks before, Mac had gotten a letter from the Marine Corps advising that if he were interested, because of his good WWII record he was eligible to come back in and seek a regular commission. When the war ended, most of the pilots returned to civilian life and the aviation ranks were depleted. At the time, everyone was tired of war and just wanted to get home and the military wasn't thinking so much about the Soviet threat since Russia had just been our ally in defeating Hitler. But they soon realized we needed to build back our military strength, and thus, the invitation. The next morning Mac took the letter down to the Marine recruiting station and told them he was ready to rejoin. I don't know if he even told Mary beforehand. Mac would later say that there were two things that motivated him to go back in and make the Marines a career: 1st was remembering his grandfather's military pension and 2nd, he said he'd be darned if would've have gone half way round the world and risked his life fighting the Japanese if he'd thought he couldn't listen to the ballgame on Sunday. How you gonna keep 'em down on the farm, after they've seen Parree!

So, Mac went to Quantico to begin studying for a regular commission. Mary wanted to go with him but he told her that he had to completely devote himself to getting that commission and would send for her as soon as he had it. He said some of the regular officers who had stayed in when the war ended resented these guys who were invited back in. He handled that like he did most things; he just worked harder to succeed, and he did. Of course he knew how to fly, but now the Marines were training him to be a leader. He said the work was hard for him and it was extremely competitive. Mac the plodder's plodding paid off with a regular commission.

I don't know when he got his commission or where he was first stationed after he received it, but Janet came aboard on September 4, 1948. Soon after she was born, they took her to Marshall to visit his folks. Mac was stationed in New River then and after they drove most of the night getting home, shortly after climbing in bed, exhausted, they got a knock on the door and were given the news that his father had died. They got a few hours sleep, he got permission for leave, and they headed back across the state. I think they dropped Janet off with Mary's folks. Dr. Hoyt Blackwell, president of Mars Hill, attended and, I think, spoke at his funeral. Douglas Sevier Tweed was buried in the Robert's cemetery beside Hattie, his first wife. I don't know who decided that. I wonder if Dora was consulted. As they were taking the casket up the hill to the cemetery, Mac looked up and there were several of his friends, I don't remember if WWII, New River or local buddies, in uniform, helping carry the casket.

The Nelson farm had been in Albert's name since it was bought with his money. He died without a will, survived by his son, Douglas and two daughters, Mag and Lula, who was living in the state mental asylum in Morganton. She apparently was a bit high strung and once, in a rage, raked the coals from the fireplace out on the wood floor and liked to have burned the house down, so they had her committed. Mac remembers visiting her with his mother and she seemed normal to him. When Albert died, he was afraid the state would put in a claim against the estate for Lula's care and he was also concerned that there may have been another, unknown heir from Albert's stay in Kansas. Douglas consulted a lawyer and he advised Dora to put in a claim against the estate for the value of her services in cooking, washing and ironing, and generally caring for Albert. As a result, a special proceeding (that's actually the name of a legal

proceeding in NC) was brought and the farm was sold at public auction to satisfy Dora's claim. Title should have gone in her name but Douglas said that since it came through the Tweeds it should stay in the Tweed family, so it was put in his name alone. Thereafter, Dora pleaded with him to make a will, but he never did.

Since Doug died intestate, legalese for without a will, the farm descended to his nine children, with Dora inheriting, if I remember the laws of descent and distribution in effect at that time correctly, only a life estate in a child's part, which would have been of little value. Mac lobbied strenuously for his mother to receive more, at least a child's part outright, but his half siblings, particularly the boys, bucked him. He consulted an attorney, I think it was Landon Roberts, probably some kin to Hattie, a Madison County boy who had become a prominent lawyer in Asheville, who told him that despite his and Dan's jury sympathy as war heroes, the law was clearly against them. Nevertheless, Dora's boys threatened litigation and negotiated hard on her behalf. The tobacco crop was still in the field and they argued Dora should get it, but Albert or Carroll, I don't remember which, insisted on his share. When Mac would tell this, he would strike a pose like the greedy brother, puffing out his chest and speaking in a snarling voice. The seven siblings even argued that they should get a share of the vegetables Dora had canned till Dan ended that but telling them that before they'd get the first jar he'd bust them on the rocks in the creek, and they knew he meant it.

Finally, the boys negotiated a share for their mother equal to the shares of the nine children. Hilliard and Hattie borrowed the money and I think had to sell half to someone out of the family in order to be able to buy the farm. Mac gave his share to his mother and she and Dan pooled theirs and bought 4-5 acres on NC Highway 218 in Mint Hill and built themselves a house on it. I don't know who built it. One of their kinfolk was a builder who later built Mac and Mary's house next door; he probably built Dora and Dan's as well. After I started practicing law in 1971, Dan, probably at his wife, Vera's, urging, brought me the deed and it was still in Dora and Dan's name. I drew a new deed which Dora signed putting it in Dan and Vera's name.

Mac was stationed at one time or another at most every Marine or Naval aviation facility in the country. Janet remembers living in Hawaii and going to the beach and in Santa Ana, California, near San Diego because she remembers going to the San Diego Zoo and also near Los Angeles because she remembers going to the Rose Bowl parade in Pasadena. Mac always liked to watch it on TV. While attending a Los Angeles Rams football game at the LA Coliseum, Mac and Mary sat near Marilyn Monroe and her then husband, Joe DiMaggio. They also lived in Pensacola where Mac was involved with a cadet marching band, once flying them to the Sugar Bowl in New Orleans. They were stationed several times at New River.

While at New River, Mac bought a boat with a 45hp motor which everyone in the family has ridden in and which Doug still has. Janet and Doug learned to ski behind it. Once Mary's sister, Pauline and her husband, DL Furr, visited Mary and Mac at New River and they all went for a ride in Mac's new boat. They were having a good time but it came 5:00, DL's customary supper hour, and he made such a fuss about being hungry that they cut the ride short to feed and shut him up. I've been on many a flounder fishing trip in the Chesapeake Bay in that little 17 footer when we would visit Mac and Mary in Virginia Beach. We would put in at the Little Creek Amphibious Navy base and ride out to fish around the pilings of the Chesapeake Bay-Bridge tunnel, anchoring at a good spot so as not to have to worry about drifting into the pilings but always on the lookout for an aircraft carrier or some other huge ship coming to or departing from the Norfolk Navy base. Often, Mac would have to crank -up and move, not only out of their path, but out of the immense wake they created. We caught a good many flounder but more skates, which Mac absolutely despised. When we would pull one in, Mac would lay him (or it could have been a her, he certainly didn't discriminate on account of sex or national origin as, they could have swum up the Chesapeake from a foreign land) on a board he kept just for that purpose and stab the heck out of him repeatedly with an ice pick also kept just for that purpose, before returning the carcass to the deep. When we got home, we always hosed the saltwater off the boat and trailer. He never backed the trailer in deep enough to get water in the wheel bearings. If Mac was anything about that boat, it was meticulous. That's why, after 60 years, it's still in good shape.

Preparing for a move to the west coast, Mac had someone help him build a trailer to pull behind the car. Its outerwear was aircraft aluminum. That trip was the source of many stories. They made a pallet in the back seat for Janet and Doug but the young stallion, Doug, refused to stay corralled and kept jumping the fence into the wide open plains of the front seat, just to be roped and returned. The trip took several days, so to keep the kids from getting too restless, they would stop at a motel with a pool early enough to let them splash off some energy. A permanent record of that journey is the log Mac kept, and still exists, somewhere, of every cent they spent on the trip.

Marine pilots were encouraged to get all the flight time they could. Fuel was no problem. The military probably tried to use up its fuel budget each year in order to be able to ask for more the next. Mac and Charlie Armstrong flew into Chapel Hill one fall Saturday morning in the late 40s or early 50s to see the Tar Heels play the Bulldogs of Georgia,

which was coached by Wally Butts, who must have flown in after the team because he was at the airport when the Marine captains flew in. I don't know what they were flying but Butts, a former Marine pilot, recognized the plane and came over and invited them to ride to the stadium with him and sit on the Georgia bench, which they did, silently cheering for the Heels. That was probably after ChooChoo Justice, the Carolina All-American tailback and punter, who Mac had known of when he starred at Lee Edwards High School in Asheville. (An aside, nothing to do with Mac but I couldn't resist getting in the story; when I played at East Meck, we played Lee Edwards in Asheville and were told ChooChoo was in the stands. I intercepted a pass and returned it for a touchdown. Always wondered if ChooChoo became a fan.)

Another time, after the Korean War, Mac and Charlie flew to Boston to see the Red Sox play the Yankees. They were standing outside Fenway Park in uniform when Ted Williams came by and saluted the now majors and asked if they had tickets to the game, and when they said no, he took them in through the players' entrance to the dressing room and introduced them around and they watched the game in seats reserved for the players' wives. After Janet and I were married and he was stationed in Norfolk and living in Virginia Beach, Mac grabbed a plane and flew to Quantico to buy me a blue dress shirt in my size for Christmas at the PX there since there wasn't one in the exchanges in Norfolk or Little Creek.

This is probably a good place to talk about Christmas, Mac's favorite holiday. If I'm not mistaken, we visited or, much more frequently, were visited by Mac and Mary since it was easier for them to travel than us after the boys were born, every Christmas that I remember. That is, except our first one, when Janet was in the Mooresville hospital having Tommy, born on Christmas eve evening, 1967. They were waiting at home in Virginia Beach, watching one of the space flights, I don't remember which one, when I called and told them of the arrival of their first grandchild. They didn't get there for Christmas but may have driven down Christmas day because they were there for Mary to help Janet bring Tommy home from the hospital a day or so after Christmas. Mac drove back to work in a day or two but Mary stayed for a week or so. Janet had gotten Mac to get me a pair of white golf shoes at the PX for Christmas. They were made out of some kind of imitation leather and never were comfortable and I eventually discarded them for Hush Puppies.

I don't know if it was the next Christmas or maybe the next, but I know I was still in law school in Chapel Hill, when Mac and I experienced the worst Christmas we ever had. It was a few days after Christmas and we had packed up Farfel (the name of the dog who sang "NESTLE'S, Nestles makes the very best, choccclette"), the name Janet had given to my dark blue 1965 Volvo, my first car, which Pop had bought me the summer before, to head out early the next morning. I woke up so sick with the flu I couldn't get out of bed. And then Mac and Janet came down with it. We were all worried Tommy would catch it but thankfully, he didn't. It took several days before I we were in traveling condition. And Mac, always searching for reasons for events, remembered that Harv Jenson, a colonel working in his office, had been sick a few days before and therefore must have been the cause of this plague, and thus, HARV JENSON, will forever live in infamy in the annals of the Mac Tweed family, and though the Tweeds may last for a thousand years, Harv will be remembered as the man who brought them to their knees and could have wiped out the line.

A few years later, Mac and Mary had moved to Nashville where Mac had become commander of the Naval ROTC unit at Vanderbilt and we had moved to Monroe. It was our second son, Tim's first Christmas. Mac had the time of his life playing with his grandsons on the floor of the sunken den in front of a roaring fire in the fireplace of their brand new home.

One Christmas Doug, his wife, Christie and their two girls, Jennifer and Jessica, along with Mac and Mary, spent Christmas at our house on Martha Drive in Monroe. I remember it being unseasonably warm and the kids and Doug (I was too out of shape) playing basketball in shorts and T-shirts. Mary showed them how she shot free throws in her high school days, playing with her older and taller twin sisters and basketball stars, Pauline and Alene. I think the favorite part of Christmas for Mac was watching the grandkids open the presents he brought. Their sleigh, either the white circa 1972 Mercedes he bought on the overseas GI plan or later white Volvo station wagon, the purchase of which was inspired, Mac said, by Farfel, was always packed to the brim. And Mac was an expert packer. Everything had to fit just right. And the presents he brought: basketballs, footballs, baseballs, bats and gloves, a BB gun, everything boys loved. He knew what made kids happy. Overseas, I don't remember whether in Japan in the 1950s or Vietnam in the 60s, probably both, he organized Christmas parties with presents for the kids.

I expect he would have like to have given Tommy his first car but I got that honor. We hadn't planned on Tommy having a car at 16 but he was having to use Janet's to go to ball practice and summer jobs, so it became something of a necessity. Mac had bought a VW bug for Janet and Doug to drive in high school and I thought about one for Tommy, but I decided a bug was too small, that it wouldn't win in a collision with a truck or telephone post. Lee Potter, my accountant, was selling his mother's car, an olive drab (surely she hadn't picked it out for herself) Plymouth that must

have been 40 feet long. At the time, I apparently didn't pay attention to the fact that it had a huge engine in it which got only 10 mpg or so and would make that behemoth fly. The car's size may have been helpful in a collision but probably not so much if it was going 100 mph! I parked the car a street over on Christmas eve and when Mac and Mary drove in, he was excited and anxious to see it but I wanted to surprise Tommy on Christmas morning. So we waited till the boys had gone to bed, which was pretty late since they, particularly Tommy, were getting too old to go to bed early on Christmas eve in order to be up at daybreak on Christmas, and Mac and I rode over to see it. It was freezing cold, below 20. But we cranked it up. Mac wanted to look under the hood, why, I don't know in the freezing dark, but I pulled the hood release and it was so cold the cable snapped. He was so apologetic. I drove it home and when Tommy went out and saw his first set of wheels the next morning, he seemed to be wavering between unbelievably ecstatic at having a car of his own and woeful at the sight of a vehicle that, had a machine gun been mounted on the roof, could have been sold to the army as a tank.

Which reminds me, when it came to the maintenance and repair of cars, no challenge was too great for the man who Esso had trained as a grease monkey. Once I was trying to fix the radio on Farfel when we were visiting in Va Beach. I had fooled with it for a couple of hours, lying on my back across the bucket seats, maneuvering around the gear stick in the floor, to get to it under the dashboard. An electrical connection had come loose and I finally realized I was going to need a length of wire and a soldering iron to fix it. Just as I was climbing out, Mac drove in from work in his uniform and wanted to see what I was doing. When I told him of the problem, of my efforts to fix it and analysis of what was needed, he couldn't resist taking a look and crack at it himself. So, still in uniform, he crawled in and fiddled with it for what seemed an hour or more, but probably wasn't nearly that long, seeming longer because of my frustration in having to stand there and hold the light for him when I knew the situation and had so informed him, but he had to see for himself. Finally, he climbed out and announced that to fix it we would need a piece of wire and soldering iron. Another time, in Nashville, I think before Doug and Christie were married, she had a little Ford, a Pinto (wonder who was responsible for naming a car for a gas inducing bean), I think it was, and was getting ready to head out on a trip somewhere. Mac decided he should check her spark plugs before she hit the road and proceeded to unscrew them. One was on too tight but Mac kept trying to turn it. I don't remember what happened, whether the porcelain cracked or the plug broke off in the head, but whatever it took to fix it, whether it was something Mac was able to fix or whether it would still crank and had to be driven on three cylinders down to someone who could, it delayed Christy's departure. She may have ended up having to drive Doug's car. He loved to tinker, probably because poor boys from the mountains had to be self-reliant. I remember that he was amazed at the ingenuity of the Japanese peasants. When stationed in Japan and getting around by jeep, if something needed fixing or a new part needed, which, of course, weren't available out in the countryside, the peasants would jury-rig something to get it going.

Back to Mac's, and, by marriage, Mary's as well, career. Early on, at some base where there was a shortage of housing, they lived in a converted chicken coop. After that, quonset hut quarters looked pretty good. Mac and Charlie Armstrong were sent to Europe, or, as Mac said, the "Med" because they were flying around the Mediterranean delivering the mail to Navy and Marine personnel. I think that may have been during the time of the Berlin airlift and pilots who normally flew the mail were shifted to help with the emergency. They flew to Paris and saw the Folies Berge. I don't know if they had a mail drop there or the show was the main purpose of the trip. There weren't many in the audience and they had a stage side table. Sitting at the table next to them was Orson Welles. In one of the acts, a full size bear danced with the girls and Charlie said he wasn't real. Mac said "Yeah he is, Charlie. Look at his eyes." He probably remembered the look in the eyes of that bear in Cherokee. They also flew into London where they saw a Broadway performance of the hit musical, Oklahoma, played to a very sparse audience.

In 1956 or 7 Mac got orders for a year- long stint in Japan. He got them well enough in advance that he had time to build a house beside his mother and brother, Dan, on Highway 218 in Mint Hill on some of the land they had bought with their shares of the Nelson farm. Mac had gained some experience up to that point negotiating for cars, TVs and appliances, but now he stepped up his game as he negotiated for materials for the house. I think it was his Uncle Ira, or maybe it was Uncle Neal, who did the carpenter work on the house. Whoever it was, he was also kin to Mac's cousin, Aaron Ferguson, who also used that same uncle to help him renovate the old grocery store building beside our law office at 314 N Hayne St in Monroe into Ferguson's Furniture.

Mac must have built up plenty of leave in order to be so heavily involved in buying material for the house. I think they were living at New River on the NC coast, at least a 5-6 hour drive from Mint Hill. I don't know whether he drove or flew up. I'm sure Dan helped a lot. He bought the appliances from a fellow at McEwen Hardware in Mint Hill, who gave them to him at cost because of his military service. Mac always loved to get a deal. Me, too; who doesn't? After the war, he needed a new car and there weren't any available in Charlotte. Somebody told him that you could get one in New

York, so he and a buddy who had access to a car, drove up to check it out. Cars were just as hard to come by there, so, disappointed, he thumbed back to Charlotte and walked by the Chevrolet dealership in uniform, window shopping. A salesman came out who, I think, had been in the Marine Corp during the war, and within a few days, Mac hitched a flight to St Louis and drove back in a brand new Chevy.

Mary, Janet and Doug moved into the new brick house in Mint Hill and drove Mac to the airport to take off for a year in Japan. Mary had never learned to drive so Mac taught her in the weeks before he left. Driving home from the airport was the first time Mary had ever driven without Mac occupying the instructor's seat beside her. Janet went to the fourth grade and a little of the fifth at Bain School in Mint Hill where her Aunt Anne Bigham taught 4th grade, just across the street from Philadelphia Presbyterian Church where Dan, his family and mother were mainstays for many years. Dora held the walking cane given to the oldest member when she died in 1980 at 95. I was honored to serve as a pall bearer at her funeral. There were some rather husky nephews in the group and when we were given the signal to be seated in unison in the front pew, it was like squeezing a big foot in a two sizes too small shoe; something had to give. One of the Trexler boys had to twist in the pew and his shoulder popped out from the straight line of shoulders. Mac saw it and would break out in laughter every time he told about it. But he never did like the message spoken by the minister at his mother's funeral. It was a canned, generic sermon he probably had given at hundreds of funerals. I don't think he ever mentioned her name or said anything personal about her. Many years later at his brother Dan's funeral at Philadelphia, I don't know if Mac had any input, but the words spoken were all about Dan. Toward the end, Mac got up and said that Dan was a wonderful brother and "the best Marine I ever knew". There may have been a few dry eyes in the church; mine weren't among them.

Dora's brother Olin lived only a few blocks from Philadelphia Church where he, after his sister's death, became the cane bearer. Worried that nobody was going to come by and take him to Dora's funeral, as Mac was driving to the church, he came across Olin, in his Sunday best, hurrying along the road with his walking stick, headed to the church. I think Mamie had died by then, and Olin, who always enjoyed female companionship, soon married again. The new wife, whose name I don't recall, eventually developed alzheimers, and once when someone came to visit, upon hearing the doorbell ring and hurrying down the stairs to answer it, she fell. Olin answered the door and there she lay at the bottom of the stairs, apparently with nothing broken. When the visitor inquired about her, Olin said "oh, that's just ___-she's got oldtimers" and added, "she peed in my shoe in the closet". Usually when Mac stopped by to see him, Olin would have a chore of some kind he wanted Mac to do, but on one visit, he wasn't home, so Mac walked around back and picked the last apple on the tree and was eating it when Olin drove up. Olin looked longingly at the apple and asked Mac, "can I have the core, I want the seeds to plant". He was nothing if not an optimist and wasn't beyond using anyone or thing available to further his cause. Several times when I was practicing law, the receptionist would buzz me and tell me that my Uncle Olin, was there to see me. I don't know if he actually thought of me as a nephew or thought that saying I was would improve his chances of seeing me expeditiously and cheaply. I always came right out to see him. Against my advice, I drew deeds conveying his farm to his two sons, Lee Douglas and Olin ("Tweedy"). It was land he had inherited from his father and he thought it ought to stay in the Flowe name. When his daughters, Lucille and Barbara, found out about it, quite a stir ensued and if I remember correctly, Lucille brought him down to deed his house in Mint Hill to them. I think the girls also got his money when he died so I guess things evened out.

All the Flowes, and Tweeds for that matter, were, well, I guess I'll say, frugal. Soon after I retired, Lee Douglas called for some advice on foreclosing on a second mortgage he held on some property to secure a loan he had reluctantly made to a friend of his grandson. I made a few calls and got him headed in the right direction. He asked what I owed him and I told him I was retired and wasn't supposed to give or charge for legal advice, and I think I heard a sigh. But, I told him, Janet was having a birthday in a few days and that he might send her something, and, as Janet was gesticulating in the negative as she was listening to the conversation, to his inquiry as to what she might like (he was probably thinking a peck of home grown tomatoes), I replied that she liked money pretty well and to his further inquiry as to how much, accompanied now by wild arm waving by Janet, I suggested \$100. There was what seemed like an interminable silence, finally broken by his asking our address. A check arrived a few days later. I'm not sure I saw it but I can imagine it being speckled with dried drops of sweat that dripped off his brow as he wrote it out. Despite her previous protest, the next year, as her birthday approached, Janet said she sure hoped Lee Douglas had some more legal problems!

The house in Mint Hill was right beside Dan and Vera's and Janet and Doug's closest playmate was their cousin, Brenda, who they played with every day. I guess Dora was living with Dan and Vera then, but I'm not sure. Dora was one independent woman. When she learned she couldn't draw social security because she hadn't worked at public work and paid in to it, she went to work. I know that she moved in with and looked after an elderly lady in Davidson and I think

worked for a while as a cook at the college, probably at a fraternity house. She may even have cooked at the Phi Gam house where I would eat years later. I think she also worked in Virginia for a nursing home or maybe it was an orphanage. She worked long enough to become eligible to draw social security, which is probably all the income she had. When I first met Mrs. Tweed, which was when Janet and I were dating, she lived up the long narrow staircase in her second floor room in Dan's and her house. Mac bought her a TV for her room and an F-85 Oldsmobile which she drove well into her 80s, visiting friends and relatives. She loved to go. As her neck stiffened with arthritis and she couldn't turn to see where she was backing, someone told her she might back into something, and she adroitly replied that "that's what bumpers are for". Dan finally took her license when she dozed off, ran off the road, through a fence, and into a field. She hated being grounded!

The last year or so of her life, Dora was in Guardian Care, a nursing home only a few blocks from our house in Monroe, where Janet would go see her every day. I guess most folks who came up poor through the Depression remembered bare cupboards, and some would put away something to eat so they wouldn't go hungry. On one occasion, the nurses saw Mrs. Tweed on her walker heading back to her room from the dining hall, bleeding from her bosom, only to discover that she had stashed away some beets for a late snack. As I'm typing and reading this to Janet, she said "Look! I'm wearing a duster Mother gave Grandma". Frugality, at least in some respects, didn't miss a generation in the Flowe/Tweed family. Janet also reminded me of when Dora's sister, Ethel, who I've seen but can't picture but who Janet says looked like Snuffy Smith, came to visit Dora at Guardian Care. Dora had misplaced her false teeth and they had looked high and low for them. Ethel said to "tell the niggers in the kitchen" to search the garbage cans. They later showed up in the pockets of one of her house coats where they had been obscured by the hands full of Kleenex she kept there. Which reminds me of another story, which I don't think is apocryphal, of someone, I think Dora, dropping her teeth on the floor and the dog swallowing them. When they came out the dog's other end, the teeth, undamaged, were washed off and returned to their rightful owner and use. I can't top that story but I'll close the saga of Dora's nursing home stay by telling of the time she escaped and the police found her heading down Sunset Dr. She asked if anybody had seen Dan Tweed. If not, she was going to Mint Hill to find him. Just before she died, Janet called Mac and told him if he wanted to see his mother before she died, he'd better come in a hurry. He and Mary arrived just after she passed away. I don't know of anyone who loved, respected and appreciated his mother like Mac did his. He was so grateful for Janet's visiting her and helping with her laundry and other loving acts toward his mother that he named Janet as alternate beneficiary to Mary of his military life insurance and a savings account he had set up in New River and kept all those years.

Before the Korean War broke out, Mac was sent to an airline pilot school in Dallas to learn to fly four engine planes, and during the war he flew troop and cargo planes between Japan and Okinawa and Korea. He also was in California assisting in the training of reserve pilots called back into service during the war. One day he looked up at a new group coming in and there was Ted Williams and Johnny Pesky of the Red Sox. Williams was trained as a pilot during WWII and taught flying in Pensacola but never went overseas. He was called up for Korea during the height of his baseball career and flew combat missions. He would later say that he was prouder of his service as a Marine pilot than anything he did in baseball. Though Mac was his commanding officer in California, he loaned Ted his car for a trip into Hollywood.

I don't know much about Mac's tour in Japan, where he was stationed or what his job was. I do know that he admired and respected the Japanese people, quite a contrast with the attitude of many Americans of his age. I had a second cousin who wasn't old enough to be in the war but whose brother died in the Pacific. He wouldn't ride in a Japanese made vehicle till the day he died. But Mac owned a Mercedes and a couple of VWs, made, of course, by Japan's Axis allies. Mac loved the movie "Bridges over Toko-Ri", particularly the scenes where William Holden's wife and two little girls visited and were shown very gracious hospitality, which he said portrayed an accurate picture of the people he met. Of course he also liked the movie because it starred Grace Kelly and Mickey Rooney, who was born in 1920 like Mac, and also because it was one of the first movies to show the use of helicopters in war.

At some point Mac learned to fly jet fighters. In California, flying night fighters, Mac had probably the closest encounter with death that he'd had since the car crash in Marshall at 17. He and a radioman/navigator were flying training missions one night and lost radio contact with the field. The sergeant worked frantically to restore it without success as they ran low on fuel, flying in mountainous terrain. Mac said he didn't know what to do. The sergeant remained calm. In desperation, Mac said out loud, "God help us" and seemingly his prayer was answered as the radio crackled and came a voice from the tower: "Willie Howell 13, Willie Howell 13, come in, Willie Howell 13". Mac responded: "This is Willie Howell 13. I don't know where we are and we're low on fuel". The tower directed them back to the field and the plane was burning fumes when they landed. Mac always felt providence intervened.

After Mac returned from his tour in Japan, he moved Mary and the kids from their new house in Mint Hill to another post, I think Pensacola because there's a picture of Janet in a dance recital and she looks about 10, with legs as long as our granddaughter, Emma. After Pensacola they moved to New River where Doug joined the Little League team. Mac must have been away from home a good bit during the first year Doug played and didn't get to practice with him or see him play very often. But he saw enough to decide Doug and the team would be better the next season. He had someone make him a pitching target out of thick canvas. It was probably 3.5-4' wide and 4.5-5' tall with sleeves sewn along each side so that it would stand upright when slid down over pipes driven in the ground. It had a target probably a foot square cut out where the strike zone would be and a pocket sewn behind the cut-out so that a ball thrown as a perfect strike would be caught by the pocket. Doug threw at that target in the off season, and the next year Mac coached the team and Doug was the star pitcher, throwing at least one perfect game as the team won the league championship. The reason I can describe the pitching apparatus is that Mac kept it and my sons and the neighborhood kids used it in our backyard on Martha Dr. As I'm reading this to Janet, she asked what happened to it. What happened is that, unlike Mac, who took care of his things, I left it out in the weather rather than going to the trouble of pulling it up off the pipes, which was somewhat of a pain to do, and it eventually rotted. If I hadn't been so lazy, with the help of that catcher, Sam might have become a high kick lefty, Josh or Elijah a fireball righty or Mia, Emma, Sophie or Anna (for non-kin readers, those are Mac's great grandchildren), crafty softball flingers. You never know. Forgive me, Mac.

Mac loved to bird hunt, and while at New River bought an English setter they named Silver. The Marine Corps gave Mac the opportunity and may have encouraged or even required him to get a four year degree, so they moved to Silver Springs, Md and Mac entered the University of Maryland. Silver's barking necessitated finding him a temporary new home, so Mac took him down to Dan's where he got his collar hung up in the dog pen wire and choked himself.

To get into Maryland, Mac had to get a transcript of his courses and grades from Mars Hill. He had flunked French there and was going to be required to repeat it at Maryland so he made a trip back to Madison County and told Miss Nonnie, his French teacher and the daughter of the president of Mars Hill when he attended, of his plight. She was glad to hear how well he had done since he left Mars Hill and changed his grade on the transcript, saving him from having to take any more French at Maryland.

After he completed his degree in a little over a year, Mac was assigned to Norfolk and bought a house in the Thoroughgood neighborhood in Virginia Beach. Thoroughgood is named for the Thoroughgood house, the oldest brick house in Virginia, and has been preserved as an historic site. The house Mac and Mary bought on Wakefield Drive was still under construction when they first saw it and Mac negotiated to buy it from the builder, Jesse Noles, with whom he became good friends. The subdivision had been a farm and their lot was in a field, so Mac soon planted water oak and dogwood sprouts, which he dug up in the woods, in the front yard and long leaf pine seedlings along both sides and back of the backyard. Even though they had moved often and had kept their house in Mint Hill which provided them good rental income for many years (they finally sold it to Dan in 2007 for its tax value and, with a tax free exchange, helped Janet and me acquire the log cabin in which I'm sitting as I write this, situated on twenty acres overlooking the North Toe River near Penland, NC), and though Mac and Mary were to move several more times after Janet and Doug left home, I think all four of them considered their house in Virginia Beach as home.

Their next door neighbors on Wakefield Dr were Stan and Lil Nicolay who became probably their closest friends. Stan was also a Marine colonel and aviator like Mac, though he may have been a full "bird" colonel while Mac was a lieutenant colonel at that time. While landing, Stan had crashed a plane through a fence at the end of a runway decide to become a ground officer for the rest of his career. He was a very interesting man. He kept honey bees, grew hot house orchids and was a butterfly collector of some renown. On leave, he would hop a flight to Central or South America to catch butterflies, discovering several new species in the Amazon. Part of his collection is in the Smithsonian and we have some of his beautiful butterflies under glass hanging on a wall at our house. Mac and Mary kept and rented their house as they travelled to new posts, and after he retired from the Marines and as director of security at Vanderbilt, they moved back after being gone 15 years or so. Stan and Lil were still next door and they picked up their friendship where they had left it and remained close friends till their deaths. Mac and Stan fished together though not as often as Mac would have liked; he wasn't as avid a fisherman as Mac. They would go to the gym at Little Creek together where Stan played racketball well into his 70s, maybe longer, even after he had prostate cancer, and Mac would ride a bike and exercise in the pool. Mary loved Lil. They walked together and Mac said nobody could make Mary laugh like Lil could.

Another neighbor in Thoroughgood was MD and Navy captain, Dr. John Egan. He was married to the writer Pat Conroy's mother after she divorced his father, the Great Santini, of novel, movie and memoir fame. In Conroy's last book, *The Death of Santini*, he mentions Dr. Egan with admiration and thanks for giving his mother comfort and happiness after the turmoil of her marriage to Pat's father.

Not as famous as Mrs. Egan or as accomplished as Stan Nicolay was Sally Armstrong who lived across the street with her mother. She was a high school biology teacher who kept a number of animals, including rabbits in the backyard and a boa constrictor in the house. The boa escaped, apparently into the backyard and the bunny population started dwindling. Then he got out of the fenced-in yard and crawled up under her car. Unbeknownst to Sally, the boa, whose name I don't know but will herein call "Bob" (did you catch that, Anna?), accompanied her to the airport to pick up her mother. Bob decided to stay at the airport. Sally read about his decision in the Virginia Pilot the next morning and drove over and brought Bob home.

Mac planted a vegetable garden everywhere he and Mary lived. Janet remembers running over some cucumber tendrils when she was mowing the lawn and incurred some unusual, but I'm sure, mild wrath from her dad, the Colonel. Food was always important to folks who had grown up poor during the Depression and like Uncle Olin, who was looking forward to eating that apple that Mac ate, Mac missed those cucumbers that got eaten by the mower. Janet never did that again.

Speaking of the Colonel, I didn't realize the power of that rank until Janet and I visited Mac and Mary at Virginia Beach after we were married. Mac had a 1960 Pontiac with a colonel's sticker on the bumper. When Doug and I would drive it over to the Little Creek Navy base to play golf and stop at the gate, the guards jumped to attention and saluted us young civilian whippersnappers tooling around in a colonel's car. I've never been shown such deference, before or since. Kind of wish I'd have become a colonel, or at least a major.

At Norfolk, Mac was attached to the command center for the Atlantic naval fleet, or, as he called it by its acronym, FMFLant. He was involved with planning the Marine aviation participation in the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1962. I think he flew down to Guantanamo several times as part of the planning and, to use his term, "briefed" a number of generals and other high ups on the plan. For a period, he served on the staff of Admiral McCain, Senator John McCain's father. The Admiral took a liking to him, as most folks did, calling him "son", and confiding in Mac his concern and disappointment at how poorly John, the "Maverick", was performing at the Naval Academy, where he finished at or near the bottom of his class. John McCain was one of the few people I never heard Mac say anything good about. He said he drove his father to alcoholism and wouldn't have been shot down in Vietnam if he had been flying at the proper height, nor broken his shoulder if he had learned to eject properly. Mac wouldn't have voted for him for dogcatcher.

While speaking of McCain and Vietnam, Mac told me the story a number of times about a contemporary of his named Ernie Brace who had gotten into a lot of gambling debt and cooked up a scheme with his wife to get out of it. He sat a plane down in the ocean close to shore and swam in and disappeared. His wife collected his life insurance. The authorities figured out their scheme and caught Brace and sent him to Leavenworth. I don't know what happened to his wife. The CIA sprung him and sent him to fly covert, probably illegal, missions in Cambodia or Laos where he was shot down and imprisoned with McCain in the Hanoi Hilton. Frankly, I'll admit that I had a little trouble swallowing that story, but several years ago I met a guy named Porter Halyburton at a Davidson College reunion weekend. Porter was a resident of the town of Davidson, a Davidson College grad, and member of my fraternity, Phi Gamma Delta. He's 4 or 5 years older than I am. After Davidson he became a Navy pilot and while I was matriculating at Davidson, Porter was shot down in Vietnam and listed as missing in action. After a year or so, he was deemed dead. A funeral service was held for him at the college Presbyterian church and a monument erected at the local cemetery. We Phi Gams hung his picture in the fraternity house in his honor and memory. Several years later it was discovered that he was alive and a POW, being held in the Hanoi Hilton with McCain and later released with him. I asked Porter about Ernie Brace and sure enough, Ernie was there, too. Sorry for having doubts about your story, Mac.

Mac trained in helicopters at New River where he was stationed for two years. He learned to fly off ships and practiced to retrieve astronauts in the event a space capsule landed in the Atlantic. Mac got orders to Vietnam in 1965 while Janet was getting ready to attend her freshman year at WC so Mary drove her down to Greensboro without him. He bought her a small tape recorder so they could mail each other cassettes to stay in touch.

One would think that the Marine Corps had specific plans for a lieutenant colonel, especially one being deployed to a war zone, but that wasn't the case. I don't remember where Mac was stationed when he first got "in country" but wherever it was, he was so soft-spoken and such a good guy that the men thought he was the new chaplain. He was assigned the job of post maintenance. Under his jurisdiction fell the lowly job of keeping the latrine sanitary, which involved pulling 55 gallon drums containing the poop out from under the latrines, emptying them and putting them in a fire to burn them clean. The men couldn't believe Mac, their commanding officer, participated in that process himself. Another of his responsibilities was building and paving streets in the camp. After completing one, the men erected a sign naming it "Tweed Boulevard" without Mac's knowledge or consent and he had them take it down when it ticked off the post CO.

Mac assumed he was in Nam to fly helicopters, but it didn't look like that was going to happen, so he asked to be put on the list to command a helicopter squadron. After some time, I don't know how long, he was told he could have the squadron of a commander who was rotating home early, and he went to Okinawa to, as he said, "form a squadron". I wasn't clear about what that meant or why in Okinawa. It seemed to me that a new commander would simply take over command of an operating squadron but apparently that's not the way it was done. Mac had told his superiors that he would form a squadron only if he could pick his own people, so that was his first job. I don't remember the names of the men Mac would talk about but I do remember one 19 year old who had the reputation of a goof-off, and Mac was told that none of his pilots wanted this kid on their crew, so Mac said he could fly with him, which he did, becoming one of his best crew members. He may have been the guy who, when their chopper took some fire which damaged their rotor and Mac had to set it down, crawled out and beat the blade back into functioning condition with a ballpeen hammer.

So helicopter squadron HMM-361 was formed and came back in country. It soon took on the nickname of "Tweed's Tigers". Since what I'm writing is my recollection of Mac's life taken from the stories he told me, I am not including details about his record in Vietnam, but attached as Appendices I, II and III are three documents which Janet found among his papers: I) a brief summary of his career, probably prepared by Mac for use in some Marine, Mars Hill, or Vanderbilt publication; II) a write-up about Tweed's Tigers; and III) a story about a rescue by Mac's squadron written by its executive officer, then Major Kuci (the last sentence says the names of the participants are "listed below" but we don't have that page-Mac was the "Commanding Officer" in the story).

Mac didn't talk a great deal about the missions he and his squadron flew but I'll mention a few things I remember. Squadron commanders didn't have to fly every mission their squadron was called on to fly and apparently it was not uncommon for them to sit out a good many. If I'm not mistaken, Mac flew every mission his squadron was sent on. When he left Vietnam, Mac had personally flown over 600 missions.

Most of the missions Tweed's Tigers flew were putting troops into combat, evacuating the wounded and killed, and retrieving the survivors when the battle ended. On occasion they would be involved in relocating civilians whose villages had been destroyed by the Vietcong or sometimes by our own forces as they were thought to be harboring the enemy. The people would bring along everything they could get in the helicopter. One young crewman complained, "Colonel, they're bringing on chickens and pigs", to which Mac responded, "Sergeant, that's all they have". Mac loved and respected the Vietnamese people just like he did the Japanese. Once, Janet offhandedly made an unintended but somewhat disparaging comment about them and was severely chastised by her dad. Just as he had in Japan, Mac organized, as best he could under the circumstances, his own "Toys for Tots" for the Vietnamese children.

Mac's helicopter was never shot down or crashed and I don't think any members of his crew were killed or wounded. Other members of his squadron were killed, but his men were extremely loyal. Once Mac was trying to decide whether to take a certain action which would have been particularly dangerous to his squadron and commented about the risk when a crew member spoke up, saying about the squadron, "Colonel, they'll follow you into hell". After he retired, Mac received cards and letters from many, many of his squadron members, usually at Christmas. Rather than being the typical informational letter sent to all family and friends, most were personal, often handwritten letters of the kind normally sent to favorite teachers or other beloved mentors. He kept them all and, as long as he was able, replied to each of them. Several squadron members stopped by to visit him and Mary in Kingsport. One of his squadron, he may have been one of Mac's crew members, drove several hours to attend Mac's funeral and, during the time for personal comments, spoke of Mac like the well-loved leader he was. For a period, and maybe still today, the Marine Corps gives an annual award to its outstanding helicopter squadron. It is named for Mac.

Like most who have participated in them, Mac hated war. As time went along, he grew to especially detest the war in Vietnam. He knew it accomplished little if anything, saw bodies of soldiers "stacked up like cord wood" (his words) beside the landing zones and saw what it did to the peasants who lived and died in it. I don't know what his reaction was to protests of the war at the time they were happening or to the scorn returning troops received, but in later years he appreciated the role college students played in bringing it to an end. When talking about the war or seeing a documentary about it such as Fog of War in which Robert McNamara, secretary of defense at the time, laments his role in it, Mac would recite the chant that had arisen among students, "Hey, hey, LBJ, how many kids have you killed today". College student protests were still in vogue when Mac became the first Marine to command the Naval ROTC unit at Vanderbilt in 1970. At the first marching drill of the unit, the protestors wanted to get a look at and test the mettle of the new Marine colonel leading it, all decked out in his dress white uniform. Frisbees were being tossed about as the cadets marched and one knocked off Mac's hat. As all watched to see his reaction, he calmly picked up his hat and put it back on and then picked up the frisbee and walked over and returned it to the group of protestors. I want to remember

that he said "I believe this is yours", but that may just be what I thought would have been appropriate. He may just have smiled and said nothing, which would have been as, if not more, appropriate. In any event, the ROTC unit had no more problems with protestors.

Mac had hoped that Doug would follow in his footsteps and become a Marine pilot but Mary opposed that because of the danger, so Mac then hoped he would study premed at Duke and become a flight surgeon. But Doug went a different route and the summer before his senior year, joined the Marine Corps and attended platoon leaders corps training at Quantico. Unless he got a graduate school deferment, as did so many of that time, including Dick Cheney and me (which became unnecessary after a knee injury rendered me 4F) Doug would probably have gone to Nam as a second lieutenant in the infantry, a position much more dangerous than a pilot. After graduating from the Navy War College, Mac sought out an ROTC position at a university with a law school in hopes that Doug could enroll there. Doug did get in and graduated with honors from Vanderbilt law school and served in the JAG corps. Mac didn't want to lose his son in a useless war.

After Vietnam, Mac rejoined Mary at their home in Virginia Beach as he was assigned to a staff position in Norfolk. That may have been when he was on Admiral McCain's staff as opposed to my earlier statement that he served in that position before going to Nam. I'm not sure of the sequence of events. Janet and I had eloped in April, 1967 and she finished the school year and returned home for the summer before telling her folks. She told her dad first in the garage. He hugged her and told her he loved her and said "let's go in and tell your mother". His loving reaction to her news typifies Mac as much as any story I can tell about him. Loving, gracious, understanding, helpful; Mac, in a nutshell.

It was then that I made the fateful trip with Mac's mother to pick up Janet and her stuff and move us to a small duplex off Independence Blvd in Charlotte for a few months and then to a little house a few miles north of Davidson before I went off to preseason football camp in Brevard. At camp, I displayed unbelievable stupidity by quitting the team over what I considered belittling remarks by head coach, Homer Smith, not considering that my rashness would result in the loss of my scholarship. I don't know how that news got relayed to Mac and Mary. Janet may have been back in Virginia Beach while I was to be at camp and I may have called to give her the news after arriving back in Charlotte by Trailways. However Mac learned what I had done, I can only imagine what he was probably thinking about his newly acquired son-in-law and father to be of his first grandchild. I know what I would have thought had I been in his shoes; what kind of hot-headed idiot has wormed his way into my family. But I can only imagine what Mac thought because he never said a word to me about it, then or ever. Thanks, Mac. After I rejoined the team, he and Mary were in the stands when I ended my football career with a knee injury against East Carolina near the end of the first half. That was the only time he saw me play and I don't think I punted, so he never saw me kick in a game.

I don't think Mac and/or Mary visited us in Davidson after the East Carolina game (the third game of the season which would have been in late September) until Tommy was born Christmas eve, although they may have, since at some point we became the donees of a huge console TV after they got a new one. Knowing Mac, he probably got the new one just so we could have a TV. Janet began having birth pangs Christmas eve morning, a Sunday, and we went to the hospital in Mooresville, NC. There were several mothers who had delivered their babies still on the maternity ward but they all were discharged on the eve to be home on Christmas, leaving Janet as the only guest. They started coming back in late Christmas day. I remember it was Sunday because the NFL play-offs were on TV, which I watched while Janet was doing the heavy lifting. Tommy arrived around 7:00 P.M. I called Mac and Mary to give them the happy news. They were sitting by the phone while watching one of the astronauts in space events on TV (I don't remember which one; they saved the newspaper showing it as headline news, which we have somewhere). I think Mary drove down by herself to help bring Janet and Tommy home from the hospital since Mac had something pressing at work. I don't remember when he first saw his grandson or his reaction. He must have come down fairly soon and pulled his trailer hauling both a metal rung crib, which I think had been his as a baby, and a wooden framed one with a plastic screened top you could pull over to be sure the imprisoned tyke couldn't escape, which had kept Janet and Doug penned up. As I reflect on that event, I'm thinking Mac must have come down either with Mary or shortly thereafter because I can't imagine him missing Christmas with his first grandchild. As I've mentioned earlier, he loved Christmas, especially seeing the grandchildren's reaction to the presents he brought them. For Tommy's first Christmas, he must have brought the little wind-up bear playing the drums which I think he got in Japan. Tommy may have come home to a drum roll.

Mac stayed on the staff in Norfolk for a year or so after he came home from Vietnam and Janet, Tommy and I visited him and Mary in Virginia Beach several times. I don't remember talking with Mac about my experience trying out as a punter for the Cowboys but my guess is that he wished I had made it almost as much as I did. He would have loved to have met Roger Staubach and Tom Landry, as I did. On one visit, there was a cocktail party being held for some high up, maybe a general or admiral, probably for their retirement, to which Mac and Mary were invited and probably

expected to attend. Mary wanted to stay home with Janet and Tommy so I was Mac's escort. He introduced me around, making it sound like I was the second coming of Eric Tipton, the Duke punter, and that Dallas had suffered a great loss when they let me go because of my knee injury. He left me talking with the honoree's wife while he went and got me a roast beef biscuit, slathered, as he loved it, with horse radish. I took a bite and that horse radish lit me up like a ball of fire. Snot bubbled out of my nose and I spewed biscuit on the lady of the evening. Man, was I embarrassed but I don't remember Mac being embarrassed because of what I'd done but, he felt terrible for what he'd done to me. Wish I'd stayed home too.

At the time of that visit or maybe another, a Navy ship, the Pueblo, I think it was, was commandeered by the North Koreans when it ventured too close or into their territorial waters and the captain and crew were taken captive. It caused quite an international crisis and, of course, was a hot topic among naval and other military folks. The Nicolays were over visiting and the episode was being discussed. Colonel Nicolay was adamant that the captain had shirked his duty by surrendering to even a superior force, as he thought that the captain should have fought to the bitter end and, if necessary, sunk the ship and sacrificed himself and the crew. I took opposition, probably more forcefully than I should have, particularly since I knew nothing about navy protocol, and the discussion got a bit heated. I don't remember what Mac said but he cooled things down in a hurry, saving me from another potentially embarrassing situation. He may have remembered my impetuously quitting the football team and been worrying, rightfully so, about his son-in-law's temper, but whatever he thought, he never mentioned the incident to me. And apparently Stan didn't hold it against me either as he was always very congenial thereafter.

After being back in Virginia Beach for a year or so, Mac was honored by being selected to attend the Navy War College in Newport, Rhode Island for a year. Janet and Tommy rode up with one of them (I think I was in the middle of law school exams), probably Mac, as they drove both cars up I-95 to Newport. I say probably Mac because he was probably nervous about Mary driving in that traffic and I doubt that he would have trusted her hauling such precious cargo, not that she wasn't precious, too, but somebody had to drive the second car, and Tommy took Janet's attention. Tommy took his first plane ride when he and Janet flew home. Mac and Mary rented a beautiful old house in Newport and made quite an impression on their Yankee neighbors, who thought all southerners were shiftless no accounts, by working in the yard, especially the yard of a rental house. There was a long old stone fence which had fallen into disrepair and Mac worked hard restacking the rocks.

Mac and Mary thoroughly enjoyed their year in Newport. Several times the whole class took bus trips to NY to shop, sight see, attend Broadway plays and visit the UN. He was required to write a research paper, I guess really it was a master's thesis since he was awarded a masters upon graduation. Mac's thesis was on Mao Tse Tung, whom he grew to respect immensely as a result. He was understandably quite proud of his paper. I'm sure we or Doug still have it somewhere. Imagine, a Marine colonel who risked his life repeatedly fighting communism in Vietnam, coming to admire one of the great communist leaders during the height of the Cold War. I wonder whether he ever asked Stan Nicolay to read his paper?

Either in Vietnam or shortly after returning, Mac was promoted to full colonel. I'm sure being sent to the Naval War College for a year was quite an honor even for a bird colonel, and though I'm certainly no expert in military personnel matters, I would think that the Marine Corps had higher leadership plans in store for him, which eventually could have led to his promotion to general. In order to leave that opportunity open to him, Mac probably would have had to have gone to the Pentagon or back overseas. He could have gone to Washington instead of Norfolk after graduating from Maryland, which may have kept him out of Vietnam, but he knew too many friends who had gone to DC and whose kids ended up on drugs or in some other kind of trouble, and he thought Virginia Beach would be a better family environment. Still putting his family first over promotion and career, he knew that if Doug didn't get a graduate school deferment he was going to Nam, so he decided to pursue an ROTC command in hopes that the university's law school would admit Doug, knowing that an ROTC billet would lead to retirement, not promotion. When I asked him about his decision later, he said it really wasn't much of a career sacrifice since very few Marine aviators made general, but in any event, he realized he was putting himself out to pasture. He interviewed for the University of South Carolina job and talked to the folks at the law school who were noncommittal about accepting Doug. He liked it there because Columbia was less than two hours from where I had just taken a job in Monroe and less than that to the beach. But congressman Mendel Rivers got the job for someone he knew. Vanderbilt had a Naval ROTC unit but a Marine had never led it. He was offered the position and when the law school folks talked favorably about admitting Doug, Mac and Mary were off to Nashville.

They got a good deal on a new house in the River Oaks subdivision in Brentwood, a Nashville suburb. As the advance man on a new assignment, Mac usually scouted out the housing situation before bringing Mary in on the final

decision. In addition to being a house they could enjoy, a good deal pricewise, appreciation potential and ease of resale were key factors in their home buying decisions. They were a lot smarter in that arena than Janet and I have been. Not only did they love living in every house they owned, but each appreciated tremendously and sold easily, without even employing a realtor, except for the last one in Kingsport, which Doug and Janet sold after Mac's death. I'm sure that if he had been living and in charge, a realtor wouldn't have made a nickel on that sale either. And, of course, Mac and Mary's heirs have profited immensely by their wise home buying decisions.

One of the country stars, maybe Marty Robbins, lived on a street behind them. Mac shopped around for his first riding lawnmower because of the big yard. He found a Yazoo which had been used only a few times by a wealthy homeowner's yardman who didn't like it because it jumped a little when it was jammed into reverse, but Mac wasn't a jammer so that wasn't a problem for him. He loved that Yazoo, so much so that he bought us a used self-propelled walk behind. It was a cutting machine. Janet, my first yard person, and then Tommy and later, Tim, walked many a mile behind that Yazoo on Martha Dr. When I took over lawn mowing duties, I got a riding Snapper. Mac always liked my law partner, Frank Griffin, who was a co-developer and resident of Lakeview Estates where we also lived, and I think one reason why was that Frank mowed with a Yazoo just like Mac's.

Their lot in River Oaks was deep and extended across a narrow and usually shallow rock bottomed creek that ran across the back. There were trees on the house side of the creek so Mac put his garden in across the creek, which was easily forded, even with the Troybilt tiller he bought. I, or rather, Frank and I, had owned a Troybilt for a year or so. That co-ownership existed because John Neil Tucker owed us for some legal work I had done for him. I had wanted a Troybilt ever since I first saw them advertised in Organic Gardening, and when I saw a brand new one sitting outside John Neil's Tuck's Baitshop, I traded our bill for it. Since Frank was by far the majority partner in Griffin and Caldwell, he actually owned a much larger share of the tiller than I did, but it resided at my house and was used exclusively by me. The only time I remember Frank receiving any benefit from it was when his wife wanted a flower bed plowed up at their house and I took it over and did the plowing. Mac liked his Troybilt so well that his brother, Dan, bought one too. Apparently copperhead snakes liked that creek, to their eternal detriment, because we have a photo of Mac holding up two big ones on a frog gig. He, Mac that is, is grinning from ear to ear!

Janet and Tommy flew out to visit her folks shortly after they moved to Nashville and I drove out in our Belair Chevy to get them. It was the first time I had driven through the Pigeon River gorge on I-40 between Asheville and Knoxville. It's a curvy, narrow stretch of highway. The speed limit was 55 in NC but the trucks were flying past me and felt like they were going to blow me into the mountain on one side or the concrete barricade median on the other. So, I reached up and put on my shoulder harness seat belt (this was before wearing any seatbelt was required) and led the pack through the gorge. When we hit the Tennessee line, the speed limit went up to 75, and even though I was doing that and probably a little more, those tractor-trailers came around me like I was sitting still. I don't remember seeing the first highway patrolman. I guess I slowed down on the return trip with my precious cargo. A couple years later, after Tim was born, we wanted to drive out but we didn't have a very reliable car and Frank loaned me his Cadillac. That act of generosity further cemented Mac's respect for Frank, and mine too.

Mac was in his element at Vanderbilt. He loved college students. When Doug was at Duke, Mac would stop by whenever he had the chance and engage in bull sessions with his fraternity members, mostly about Vietnam. He was one of the few, if not the only, parent who did. Doug says that years afterward, his friends remembered Mac's visits, most likely impressed by the authenticity of a Marine colonel in uniform, a Vietnam vet, no less, walking into the seat of war protestors and talking about his experiences, probably expressing his doubts about the wisdom of US involvement. He also stopped by several times to see Tommy when he was a student at Chapel Hill, usually slipping a \$20 or more in his pocket as he was leaving and reminding him of 1) his and Mary's and Janet's and my love for him, 2) the importance of attending class and doing his best in his schoolwork, and 3) the Mars Hill coaches warning about the drastic cure for certain diseases, sometimes leaving him some protection therefrom.

Some of the Vandy football players took ROTC courses Mac taught. One of his favorites was Watson Brown, the quarterback who led the Commodores to one of, if not its only, defeat of Bear Bryant and his Crimson Tide from Alabama. Watson was the brother of Mack Brown who became head coach at UNC and then Texas, where he won the national championship and is now a commentator on nationally televised college football games. By the way, Mac enjoyed Vanderbilt football so much that when he was director of security, the team played Carolina in Chapel Hill and he and Mary came down and took us all to the game. Mac was not beyond giving the players a little boost in their grade point average since in his view they were sacrificing for the university, much like our service men and women. Later, while director of security, he was a soft touch when it came to athletes' parking tickets. Vanderbilt president, Alexander Heard, once told Mary that Mac was the most loved person on campus by the students, certainly more than he. What a

way to be remembered. The attached Appendix gives some of the accomplishments of the Naval ROTC unit under Mac's leadership.

When Mac had completed his three years as commander of the ROTC, the usual term for such a position, he was six months or so from reaching 33 full years in the Marine Corps, which, for some reason, maybe it had to do with his retirement pay, he wanted to reach. Vanderbilt had offered him the job of director of security upon his retirement. He received orders to be transferred somewhere else, I don't know where, for the last few months of his career, which he thought was ridiculous. Calls to Washington didn't help so he hopped a plane and paid a visit to the general who was in charge of such matters. He was Mac's contemporary in the Marine Corps. Mac called him by his first name, explaining how foolish it was to move him from Nashville for just a few months, when he owned a home there and was going to work for Vanderbilt after retirement. The general told him those were the rules and he couldn't make an exception for him. Mac walked over and closed the door and then, calling him "General", told him that he remembered the black market cigarette operation which he had run in occupied Japan after the war. He told the general that he had never told anyone about it, but that he wasn't going to move from Nashville for the last few months of his 33 years, and the general suddenly decided to make an exception for Mac. I don't know what he did in Nashville for the Marine Corps those last months but I feel sure he helped the new ROTC commander settle in, and, if the new guy had any sense, he would have milked Mac for all the advice he could get, which Mac would have gladly given.

Mac enjoyed being part of the university. One of his favorite people was a guy who was an institution at Vanderbilt, with a name like Rob Roy, or something similar, who was a dean or provost or some such. I think he, too was a mountain boy, a Davidson graduate, and a raconteur, especially when his tongue was adequately lubricated, and lubricants were readily available at the University Club, of which Mac was a member. He took us there on several occasions and, if I remember correctly, either the rehearsal dinner or reception for Doug and Christie's wedding was there. Mac got to know some of the university trustees and received investment advice from them, most of which served him pretty well. It seems like he bought stock in a shoe manufacturer headquartered in Nashville where one of the trustees was CEO and another company he invested in was Hospital Corp of America (HCA) which, I think, the heart surgeon and then majority, or maybe it was minority, leader of the US senate, Tom Frist's family started. Mac's investment strategy was to buy and hold stock in blue chip companies, particularly in those he like the products of, such as Coke and Disney. He didn't like it when HCA starting buying back some of its stock, even though he made a good profit on it, because that violated his buy and hold philosophy but also because he had to pay tax on the gain. His "buy good stuff and hold it" philosophy applied to most of his acquisitions. His 1972 Mercedes is still in the family, being held for one of Doug's grandsons, and his Volvo station wagon (not sure what year, probably late 80s) was passed on to my son, Tim, who drove it for years and is now being driven by Tim's stepson, Tai, who loves it. Doug still has Mac's boat and we have a fan and space heater of his that go back to the 50s, maybe even 40s, that still work fine.

After retiring as ROTC commander, Mac stepped seamlessly into the role of director of security at Vanderbilt. One of his proudest accomplishments was establishing an escort system under which any coed could request a male escort anywhere on campus at night. The university is located close to downtown Nashville and anyone from the city could and did enter the campus, day or night, and there had been several assaults on coeds before Mac implemented the escort system, the first on any college campus in the country, but which was soon copied by many. One of Mac's most trying times as Vanderbilt's top cop came when a coed from a wealthy family was kidnapped and held for ransom, receiving national attention. Most of the attention went to the recently deceased, Fred Thompson, the Nashville district attorney, he of later fame as US senator, presidential candidate, TV and movie star, and most notably, skill for reverse mortgages for senior citizens. The young lady was rescued without harm.

All three of Ross Perot's children came through Vanderbilt while Mac was there. I think the oldest, Ross, Jr, was in Mac's ROTC unit. After the coed's kidnapping, Ross became concerned about his childrens', especially his two daughters, security and was on the phone to Mac frequently. A townie tried to snatch one of the girls' pocketbooks but she wouldn't turn it loose and fought him off. After that, Ross wanted to hire a body guard for her but she came to Mac and talked him into convincing her father that wasn't necessary, which he did. No small task, convincing Ross Perot of anything. And think of the pressure Mac was under, worrying about if something did happen to her. When one of the children was graduating, Ross brought his elderly mother up to attend the ceremonies, always held outdoors. The sky looked threatening and Ross came up to Mac and told him that he didn't want his mother to get soaking wet, that they, he and Mac, needed to move graduation indoors. When Mac told him that he didn't have that authority, that Chancellor Heard would have to make that decision, Ross was insistent that the Chancellor would do whatever Mac told him. Fortunately, the skies cleared up and a constitutional crisis testing who had ultimate authority at Vanderbilt passed. Mac supported Ross for president.

One of the perks of Mac's job as security director was his association with other security directors at universities all over the country. He took trips to visit several schools' security programs, and he and Mary went to a number of annual gatherings of directors held at destination spots like Disneyworld and Las Vegas. They flew to Quebec, which Mary especially liked, inspiring Janet to want to visit there, which hopefully we'll get around to one of these days. Mac was a member of a number of Marine organizations, from B25 groups from WWII to helicopter units in Vietnam and most held annual get togethers. They attended a couple in Pensacola but one Mac probably wished he hadn't gone to was out west somewhere, maybe Las Vegas. It was a reunion of helicopter vets from Vietnam, maybe just his squadron, and he was the guest of honor. He and Mary sat at the head table. Rare roast beef was the entrée for dinner, one of Mac's favorite meals, and he dug in with his usual gusto. It had just the right amount of fat on it, which he savored, maybe a bit too much. His system apparently wasn't used to that richness and his stomach started to rumble, quietly at first, but with rapidly increasing ferocity. He excused himself quickly from the table. I don't know what, if anything, he told Mary. He headed for the latrine ASAP, but not quick enough, as the forces of nature unleashed a mighty torrent down his britches before he could get them down. In later years, Mac described the ensuing events in graphic detail, always laughing so hard he cried. He took off his shoes and socks, which were saturated, and then his under and over pants, cleaning himself as best he could with toilet paper. The time to recognize him was coming up on the program and someone was dispatched to check on him. Mac answered from inside the stall that he was OK and would be out shortly. He pulled his pants back up, put his shoes on, threw his under pants and socks in the trash can, washed up, and walked back in and unflappably received his recognition. Telling about that incident usually reminded him of the story he remembered from his boyhood days about a fellow named Peter, who, after spilling hot coffee in his lap, was asked "did it burn you Peter?", to which he responded, "no, but it sure burnt my foot".

We came up to visit in Brentwood a number of times and Mac always had something fun planned. He took us out on his boat on Percy Priest Lake several times. Boating there was much easier than in Virginia Beach because we didn't have to worry about getting saltwater in the trailer wheel bearings, flushing it out of the motor or washing down the boat and trailer when we got home. A significant piece of family lore occurred on one of the boat outings involving toddler Tim. If you're interested in the details, you'll have to ask Tim. We went to the Opryland theme park a number of times, which the boys loved. Once, when I for some reason wasn't along, Mac and Mary took them to Dale Hollow Lake where they spent a night or two in a cabin and caught a few trout. Dale Hollow is up near the Kentucky line and near the home of Sgt Alvin York, the most decorated US soldier of WWI, who is the subject of a movie starring Gary Cooper. I don't know whether Mac introduced Tommy to the movie or maybe I did, but it became and remains one of his favorite all-time movies, and through brotherly sharing, Tim's as well. They both can quote much of the dialogue. I think a little of their passion about it has been passed down to Sam. Tommy bought the movie for the chapel at the federal prison in Lexington, KY where he's a chaplain and has introduced it to most of the inmates who attend chapel, and he says it's become a favorite of many of them as well. It's hard to find a better role model than Alvin York.

Mac had a gas grill on the deck in River Oaks and he loved to grill hamburgers and steaks. When it came to steaks, Mac was a, I started to say "fanatic" but I'll use connoisseur or aficionado instead, although fanatic may be closer. Put it this way; he was very passionate about a good hunk of cow, from picking out just the right cut at the store, to marinating or seasoning it just right, to grilling it to perfection and then eating it with gusto. His favorite cut was the delmonico, followed closely by the ribeye. He bought us a little hibatchi grill and electric charcoal starter when we lived in Chapel Hill and every time they visited brought ribeyes and a bottle of Maetus rose wine. For a long time I thought that was the only wine there was. Mac always grilled the steaks. I could be trusted with his daughter and grandson, but not his steaks. We took a trip out west in 1984, stopping at Mac and Mary's in Nashville going out and coming back. The morning we left their house on the way west, Mac was so excited he escorted us to the county line. Coming back, he had steaks waiting for us hungry travelers. One of the boys still says it was the best steak he's ever eaten. You could always count on the boy who had grown up hungry during the Depression in the mountains to have good, or as Mac would say, "outstanding", vittles. And, by the way, if you didn't already know it, when ordering filet of flounder, always ask for the black side; it's thicker. Eating wisdom I learned from Mac.

It was a long haul from Nashville to Monroe but Mac and Mary traveled it religiously to see his mother in Mint Hill, hers on Idlewild Rd and our crew on Martha Dr. There's no telling how many miles they put on their four cylinder Mercedes and Volvo station wagon making that trip, always at Christmas, and several other times a year. Our boys still talk about their excitement at seeing that white car coming down the driveway. They could always count on a good supply of Goo-Goo bars, scrumptious chocolate covered peanuts in a round silver wrapper which were made in Nashville, followed by throwing the football or baseball or shooting the BB gun. And games of hearts at night, when we

could count on a least one “moon shot” from Mac, who always kept a “stopper” in case I wanted to try to escape earth’s gravitational pull, but which often resulted in his having to “eat” it, thereby keeping him earthbound as well.

They made several trips to the beach with us. One was to Kure Beach, where we stayed in a little old house off the beach that I think was owned by someone in Monroe, thereby resulting in a deal. Andy and Sue Boggs and their boys came down for a couple of days. Mac loved Sue’s jovial laugh and personality. I remember two things about that trip. The first involved our attempts at surf fishing, at which we weren’t having much luck. A lady next door caught one and when we walked over to admire her catch, she proceeded to give us a detailed lecture on and demonstration of her technique, which consisted of walking a few steps one way and then back the other. We quietly scoffed at her, but when she went in, there we went, walking back and forth just like she had, but without her success. The second involved Andy and I throwing the football to each other on the beach. I caught a long running pass which necessitated turning on what afterburners I still had, the first time Mac, and Andy, too, as well as the boys, had seen my “blazing speed” which Mac had read about, probably skeptically, and commented on in the Davidson football guide, and which he would often recall when we would later see a long pass completion on TV.

Yesterday I was reminded of something Mac loved doing, bartering. I hit a small bucket of golf balls at the driving range which cost me \$4. The range is elevated and just below is a wet area which used to be covered in vines and briars, concealing hundreds of topped shots. Several weeks ago they brought in a tractor and bushhog to cut down the growth and apparently it got stuck, so there were a lot of ruts with golf balls mashed down in the mud. I went down the steep embankment and plucked a large bucket of balls from the muck and went over to the pro shop and traded the muddy balls for tokens for two small buckets of clean balls. That brought to mind the German potato salad Mac loved which was made at a small deli near his house in Virginia Beach, for which he would swap his garden grown cucumbers. And in Kingsport he carried on the tradition at the Ingles supermarket. You’d be surprised the doors that were opened with the line, “I’m Mac Tweed and I retired after 33 years as a pilot in the Marine Corps and I flew in 3 wars”. Knock, and the door shall be opened unto you!

Speaking of Scripture, Mac’s most often recalled was the parable of the mustard seed. The Biblical story he had the most trouble with was the story of Abraham and Isaac wherein the father was called upon by God to sacrifice his son as a test of his faith. It was completely beyond Mac’s comprehension, and mine, too, that a loving God could ever ask such an unthinkable thing of a father, as a test of faith or for any reason. I doubt that Doug or Tommy or any Biblical scholar could satisfy his bewilderment as to why that story is canonized. To Mac, and me, it doesn’t belong in the same book as the parable of the prodigal son and unconditionally loving father. Though Mac kept the religious faith he learned as a child, there were two bits of skepticism he always remembered. The first was his mother’s comment on life after death: “It sure would be good if somebody would come back and tell us about it.” The second was the comment the Japanese made about the Bible: “Good stories”.

Mac and Mary had kept and rented their house in Virginia Beach for the fifteen years or so they were gone, but they stayed in touch with Stan and Lil Nicolay and decided to move back to become neighbors again. The two couples picked back up where they had left off, with Mary and Lil walking together and Mac and Stan going over to the gym at Little Creek. They had been back a year or so when Tim decided to spend a year as a post-graduate, high school that is, primarily to play basketball at Fork Union Military Academy near Charlottesville, VA. Mac drove over for a holiday tournament that Janet and I came up for and we spent a night in the local motel that had a pretty good restaurant. Janet and her dad got into a bit of a debate over who would pay for dinner and maybe even the rooms when Janet said, “Dad, we’ve got money”, to which Mac replied as he pulled out a roll of bills big enough to choke a camel, “money, I’ll show you some money”, and Janet then scolded him for flashing around that wad of cash. It may have been then the he told us not to worry about him because he kept a loaded pistol under the seat of his car, which, of course, worried Janet even more. Later that season, Mac drove up to Annapolis by himself to see Fork Union play the freshman team at the Naval Academy, where Mac would have liked to have seen Tim go to college; Janet and me, too; but if Mac ever even remotely put any pressure on him in that regard, I never knew it. Tim decided the one year in uniform at FUMA was enough of the military life for him. By the way, Mac’s line about showing you some money may have been inspired by one of Mac’s favorite movie scenes in “Crocodile Dundee” when a punk pulls a little knife on him in NY and Crocodile reaches in his boot and pulls out a real pig sticker, saying, in his Aussie accent, “Knife? That’s no knife. I’ll show you a real knife.”

A farm of 20 or so acres with an old farmhouse, barn and some outbuildings came up for sale across Bridwell Heights Rd from Doug and Christy, just outside Kingsport, and Mac and Mary bought it, primarily to protect Doug and Christy from having a housing development spring up in their front yard and, of course, as an investment. After 5-6 years back in Virginia Beach, Mac and Mary decided that it was probably wise to move closer to Janet or Doug. A beautiful

house on the back of our farm outside Monroe came up for sale after Robert Deese, who ran a men's clothing store in Monroe and with his wife, Donnie, an antique shop in Blowing Rock, died from cancer. Robert and Donnie had sold a huge old two story in town and wanted a show place for some of their antiques. They both had exquisite taste and designed a beautiful southern home, with heart pine flooring, beveled glass interior doors, a butler's pantry between the huge kitchen and formal dining room, a living room with fireplace and antique mantel, and a den with another fireplace with heart pine mantel and wainscoting. It's one of the most beautiful houses in Union County, sitting on 3-4 acres, one of which we sold them, and fronting on Lake Monroe. The price was reasonable and Janet and I thought it would be the ideal retirement home for Mac and Mary, 300 yards from our house and 10-12 miles from his brother, Dan, in Mint Hill. We were excited and thought they would be, too, but as soon as they saw it, Mac had no interest at all because its exterior is clapboard siding, in keeping with its colonial style. He said he had always had brick houses and wasn't going to change now. He was adamant. If Mary had another opinion, I never heard it expressed.

When we were living on Martha Dr, Mac and Mary bought a lot from Frank Griffin in Lakeview Estates fronting on Lake Lee with the thought that that they might eventually build there. They put the lot in Mary and Janet's names and when they sold it 8-10 years later, half the proceeds went to Janet. The 62 acres on Stack Rd where we now live is what's left of a 100 acre farm that friends of ours, Steddy and Martha Parris, and Janet and I bought together in 1974, thinking we would both built on it. We sold off pieces of it, including an acre of the parcel the Deese house is built on, over the years to help pay for it. Steddy's plumbing business got in financial trouble and to protect our investment, Mac and Mary bought the Parris's half interest. The first tract we had sold was 7.5 acres to Bill and Linda Nash. After Mac and Mary had bought out Steddy and Martha, Bill's sister, Willie, who had lost her husband and remarried, wanted to build beside Bill and Linda, but their property wasn't wide enough, so Bill approached me about buying an acre from us. Mac and Janet didn't want to sell, Mac because he was a buy and hold guy, plus he didn't want to have to pay tax, and Janet, well, I'm not sure why, probably because she's a lot like her dad. I had known Willie for years as she struggled through her first marriage to a real jerk and I was glad to accommodate her, but I was being strongly opposed. Tim, who had moved to Louisville to live with Tommy who was still in seminary, found out he was going to have to go back to school to be able to get a teacher's certificate. Neither had any money. So, I came up with one of the wildest plans I've ever devised. I suggested we give the acre to Tommy and Tim, both in the lowest income bracket, and let them sell it to Willie. Janet and Mac readily agreed, and thus Tim was able to pay for the masters he got at the University of Louisville and Tommy the remainder of his seminary expense. Anything to help children and grandchildren. Later, Mac and Mary gave their half interest in the remaining 62 acres to Janet and me.

Mac and Mary finally decided to build a house on the 20 acre farm across from Doug and Christy. They looked through house plan books and decided on a plan in Southern Living, a story and a half, ALL BRICK, quasi-colonial. They contacted Southern Living to find out where the house had actually been built, and they came down to Oak Island to spend a few days with us at Frank Griffin's beach house and we rode over to Southport or Wilmington to see one that had just been completed there. Then Mac began the odyssey of building Mary's dream house in Kingsport, commuting 400 miles to oversee construction. He situated the new house just behind where the old farmhouse sat, sleeping for days, maybe weeks at a time on a mattress he put on the floor of the old house. He used his 50s vintage heater to stay warm and fan to stay cool. He ate many a tomato sandwich there at the old kitchen table when he wasn't eating at Doug's or the Greenwood Market, where he discovered their country ham and pork loin biscuit. I don't know how many trips he made between Virginia Beach and Kingsport or how long it took to finish the house, but it was well over a year, probably closer to two. What a beautiful house he built, and what an accomplishment for anyone, but especially a 75 year-old. And most importantly, Mary loved it.

But it didn't take long for a cloud to come up. Across the road was a beautiful hay field whose view Mac looked forward to enjoying for many years from the rockers on the front porch of his new house. Doug knew the elderly owners and had been assured, or so he thought, that the property wouldn't be sold without giving him the right of first refusal. Then one day, shortly after Mac and Mary moved into their new and last house, bulldozers started grading a road into the hay field. To Mac's terrible dismay, the property had been sold without the owners even mentioning it to Doug and a subdivision was going in. He was horrified. It's all he could talk about. But this cloud eventually had a silver lining. As the houses were built and occupied, Mac began walking up the road which climbs a steep hill, ending in a cul-de-sac. A walk up that hill will really get your blood pumping. There's no telling how many trips he made up it and how many good years that, along with swimming in Doug and Christy's pool, added to his life. But maybe even better were the friendships he developed with the new neighbors, from Barbara and a fellow, whose name I don't remember, who planted a garden in Mac's garden spot beside his house when Mac got where he couldn't plant and tend one himself, to Terry and Debbie Whitson, who lived in the first house, just across from Mac and Mary's driveway.

Terry and Debbie deserve much more than a paragraph, probably a chapter devoted just to them. Maybe that's because I know them much better than the other characters in this story. I guess it was just coincidental that they built their house in the new subdivision on a lot beside Doug and Christy, but Terry and Doug knew each other before through a Christian ministry. I think it was called the Jesus Project, which had as its goal to place a video which had been made just for that purpose in every home in Kingsport and, ultimately, I suppose, in America and maybe even the world. Terry is a lay preacher and, between churches, was working for the Project full time and Doug was heavily involved as a volunteer.

Mac took a liking to Terry and Debbie for a number of reasons. 1) They're both mountain folks. Debbie grew up in Roan Mountain, TN, where her mother still lives and Terry's folks are from just across the mountain in Bakersville, NC, which they moved back to after raising their children in Kingsport where Mr. Whitson had gone for work. 2) Terry's a Marine. 3) Terry's a workaholic with more energy than the Bunny. He's been jogging several miles early every morning since he was in the Marines Corps, probably 25 years or more. Mac was highly impressed when Terry set out a row of balsams along the street and transformed a low, wet corner of their back yard into an oasis. Mac hired Terry to paint the outside of his house and loved the job he did. 4) The Whitsons are major family people. In addition to spending as much time as they can with their son and granddaughter in Knoxville and daughter and her husband and their new granddaughter in Kingsport, they are constantly over in Roan Mountain and Bakersville checking on and helping out their folks. 5) They are just wonderful, salt-of-the-earth people.

And how fortunate to have had them as friends and neighbors. After Mary died, Mac came to live with Janet and me for several years but when she needed a break, Mac went back to his house in Kingsport for a while and, though I think he enjoyed staying with us, it wasn't home, the home he had worked so hard to build and which held the ashes and memories of his beloved Mary. I think he enjoyed going home. But as he aged, it became apparent that he needed some help, and who should just happen to be available but Debbie and Terry, who had just sold their house to downsize but hadn't decided where to go from there. So, they moved upstairs at Mac's and stayed with him till he passed away, some three years or so. And what a godsend they were. Terry did the yard work and kept the house in tip top shape, took Mac to his doctors' appointments and did the grocery shopping and Debbie cooked (and is she ever a good cook) and cleaned. And both of them spent a great deal of time just sitting and talking and watching TV with Mac. He loved companionship. At Mac's funeral, during the comment time, which Doug has allowed for at all the funerals which he's conducted that I've attended, and, in my estimation, a great feature, Terry said it had been their privilege to know and help a man who so appreciated what they did for him. They were the only non-family to attend the interment of Mac and Mary's ashes at a service at the VA cemetery in Johnson City in April. The Whitsons really are part of Mac's family.

A few years after Mac and Mary moved to Kingsport, two things happened that brought them much unexpected joy. Doug's oldest daughter, Jennifer, had their first great grandchild, Josh, and then she decided to enroll at East Tennessee State in Johnson City to get a degree in physical therapy. For several years, the great grandparents kept their great grandson during the day while Jennifer was at school, Doug was in Kentucky (more about that in a moment), and Christy was working. If ever there was a win-win-win situation, this was it; Jennifer had free child care provided by the best, Josh was fortunate to be in such loving care, and Mac and Mary had a renewed purpose in life at almost 80. WOW!

Now, about Doug In Kentucky. Doug was a very successful partner in the largest law firm in northeast Tennessee. He did a lot of work in the healthcare industry and for Eastman and had become, according to Mac, not Doug, the top billing lawyer in the firm. Mac told me about being in Doug's office once when Doug had to hurriedly get out a letter of some importance, and Mac listened to him dictate it. Mac was astounded with the ease and speed with which Doug was able to write what was apparently a rather complex letter. Mac said it would have taken him hours, and even then, he couldn't have said it so eloquently. He always said Mary was much smarter than he and that fortunately, Doug had taken after her. Doug was also very involved in the civic and cultural life of Kingsport. He was an actor of some local renown. We went up to see him in the part of Clarence Darrow in the play, "Inherit the Wind", played by Spencer Tracy in the movie version. I think he was instrumental in starting a week long community festival called Funfest, which culminated with a variety show in the civic center, which Doug emceed for years. He wrote and performed (once, when we attended, as a Blues Brother) musical announcements and interludes. He had a mentor at the law firm, an older attorney, who may have been a Marine, that Mac got to know and like, and who got to know and like Mac, as well. For some years, Doug and Christy hosted the annual firm picnic at their house.

I've got to interrupt this narrative for a news brief. I'm typing this at our house in the NC mountains, about 30 miles from Marshall, the morning after Janet and I drove over on the Blue Ridge Parkway to hike down to Crabtree Falls, where we ran into a couple from Marshall. He's a Rector, some kin to Ed, the Flying Tiger ace, whose exploits, by the way, is told, along with his picture, on an historical sign near the courthouse in Marshall. She's a Norton. If I remember

correctly, the sheriff's deputy who couldn't hit a bull in the butt with his pistol was a Norton. I didn't bring him up in the conversation. It really is a small world.

Another of Mac's favorite words was "prominent". The Roberts were a "prominent" family in Madison County, as were the McElroys. The plant manager in Kannapolis who hired him was a "prominent" man. He admired "prominent" people, probably because they had become successful. Doug had become a "prominent" lawyer in Kingsport and Mac was rightfully proud of him and looked forward to watching up close as his prominence grew. But that all changed in a flash. At the urging of a friend, Doug went on a spiritual retreat called a "Walk to Emmaus" and shortly thereafter decided to give up the practice of law and go to seminary. Mac couldn't believe it. Why would anyone give up the prominence and financial success he had worked so hard for?

But like so many things in Mac and Mary's lives, what may have seemed like a negative turned into, or maybe more appropriately, they helped turn into a big positive. Doug commuted for three years to Wilmore, just outside Lexington, Ky to attend Asbury Seminary (coincidentally, our granddaughter, Phoenix, from whose wedding 7/14/16 to Jared Combs we have just returned, graduated last year from Asbury College, just across the street from the seminary, after deciding on that small, Christian school over a Kentucky state school, any of which she could have attended tuition free as a result of being a Governor's Scholar in high school). Christy went to work to help with expenses but Doug's leaving his law practice significantly reduced their income. So, what did Mac and Mary do? They paid off their home mortgage.

Doug wanted to be ordained as a United Methodist minister and remain in Kingsport but was told that he would be subject to assignment by the bishop, so he elected some other form of ordination which would allow them to stay. He was assigned to be pastor of a small, predominantly, maybe even exclusively, black AME Zion church into which he and Christy poured their love and devotion, which was quickly returned by the congregation of probably 50 or less. Mac and Mary became regulars, maybe members (I'm not sure) and probably the church's largest financial contributors. There was a small group of ladies in the church that Mary became friends with. One of their daughters sang in the Billy Graham crusade, which, to Mac, made her "prominent". Doug and Christy would have the kids from the church over to their house in the summer for vacation Bible school, swimming and refreshments. There's a large cemetery on Memorial Blvd, the road from Bridwell Hts back to town where the church is located. Mac was transporting a group of kids by there to or from VBS when one asked him, "Colonel, do you know how many dead people are over there in the cemetery?" and when Mac guessed a number, he was quickly corrected by, "All of them!" The first time we rode by that cemetery with Mac, he pulled the same riddle on us (we fell for it, too) and I expect that Janet and I, with or without Mac, have laughed about that every time we have driven past it over the years, and that's been a lot of times.

Doug performed the wedding of one of his daughters, I think it was Jessica, in that church which, if I remember correctly, is named St Marks. He conducted Mary's funeral before a full house there. Two of the attendants were my friend, Jim Griffin and his wife, JoAnn who had driven all the way from Marshville, NC. Jim had briefly met Mac once or twice when he was living with us. A couple of years ago, Jim's children asked me to make a few remarks at his funeral. I started by saying how sorry Janet was not to be able to attend because she was in Kingsport with her dad who was in the hospital, but that she asked me to tell them how moved she had been that Jim and JoAnn had come all the way to Kingsport for her mother's funeral. After Mary's funeral, family came over to Mac's for lunch, which was lovingly prepared and served by that little group of ladies from St Marks.

Mac loved to pass along, particularly to his family, information he thought would be beneficial; OK, call it advice. Over the years he would cut out and mail Janet newspaper and other clippings he thought would be helpful. In his later years, he would always keep a pen and pad beside his easy chair to make notes about things he considered important that he would see on TV, especially ads for health aides, many of which he would order. But one clipping he always saved was a bi-monthly column that Doug wrote for years, may still, on matters of faith in the Kingsport paper. Every time we visited he would share the latest column.

Janet and I enjoyed many visits to Mac and Mary in Kingsport, as did our sons and their families. For Jennifer's wedding, Tim and Sara came with Phoenix, Tai and Sam, in utero. Tommy and his new girlfriend Kim Mayberry rode with them. On the trip back to Kentucky, they had van trouble and had to spend the night somewhere and Kim bonded with them all, particularly Tommy. This was in September, 2001, shortly before the 11th (my memory isn't that good-I just called Kim Mayberry Caldwell, who remembered the date by tying it to 9/11, a date that lives in infamy for their generation much like December 7, 1941 did for Mac's and Mary's), and on December 15, Kim and Tommy were married. Mac and Mary drove to Louisville for the wedding where Mac brought his camera to make some pictures. We were talking about this, that is, wedding photos, just a few days ago after Phoenix's wedding and Janet remembered that Kim

and Tommy had hired a photographer for their wedding who apparently didn't want any competition and asked Mac to stop, but that didn't deter him one iota; he kept snapping.

Speaking of pictures, we have several photos of a visit Tommy and Kim made before they started their family to Mac and Mary's. A huge maple tree in front of their house had been struck by lightning during a summer thunderstorm. Mac had been out in the yard when the storm came up suddenly, and Mary called for him to come inside. I don't remember for sure, but I think he had just made it to the porch when a lightning bolt hit the tree and Mac got quite a jolt. That knocked the tree down and Mac cut it up and split it into firewood length by hand (this was after 2001 because Tommy and Kim's visit was after their wedding but before kids four years later, so Mac was somewhere between 81 and 85). Tommy helped Mac wheelbarrow the wood over and stack it out of the front yard and Kim helped Mary plant flowers around the stump. One of the photos is Mary watching with a big smile of approval as Kim's on her knees, digging in the dirt. With that act, Kim got the Mac and Mary stamp of approval and had her picture made receiving it.

Mac never got to burn that wood. He had installed a wood-burning Buck stove insert in the fireplace in their Virginia Beach house after seeing the one I had installed at Martha Dr, but Mary didn't want to burn wood in the fireplaces in their new house in Kingsport. Mac had dug out a small basement primarily for a tornado shelter and the brick chimney in the den extended down to the basement, so Mac put in a flue and fireplace down there to use in case of an emergency. I think he envisioned something of a man cave down there as well, but that never materialized. I don't think he ever built a fire down there. I'm not sure if that was because of Mary's veto or the steep stairs he would have had to carry wood down. As I said, we had a Buck stove in our house at Martha Dr and also on Forest Hills Dr, but like Mary, Janet didn't want any woodsmoke smell or dust in our new house, so the fireplace, with which I had planned to heat most of the house with wood from the huge oaks we had to cut to build the house, has felt only the flames from propane.

Mac and Mary visited Louisville again on mother's day weekend, 2002. Sam was born in April, their second but my mother's first great-grandchild. Mom was pushing 90 if not already there and I got to thinking it would be a shame if something were to happen to her before she got to see him. So we picked her up in Matthews and Mac and Mary up in Kingsport and drove to Louisville. Tim and Sara were living in their first house which had a small backyard and Tim had gotten a couple of tomato plants to set out in his, but probably not Sara's, first garden. Well, that was right up Mac and Mom's alley. I remember both of them, Mom with her walking stick, out there giving Tim plenty of advice, from where to plant them, to how deep, how much fertilizer to use, whether to pull off the lower limbs, etc. If Dad had been living, he'd have been out there, too. I don't remember Tim or Tommy being too interested in working in our garden as kids, just as I wasn't as a kid, but they and their wives enjoy it now, particularly Sara. She and Tim recently moved to a smaller house in the suburbs of Louisville located on 3 acres. A big reason for the move was so they could have a bigger garden, and chickens, which live in one of the coolest coops I've ever seen which they, primarily Sara, designed and built and into which they are herded by Wendell, their Australian shepherd pup, who has too much energy and not enough herding opportunities on her hands, oops, paws.

On our way home from Louisville, we went a bit out of the way to spend a night at the Homestead in Hot Springs, VA. Janet and I had spent a couple of nights there a year or so before in early March, actually, it may have been that March, just before the rates changed. The hotel has a nice library for patrons and on our first visit, I came across a book about the surreptitious mercenary and political ambitions of Pat Robertson and his organization, cloaked in Christianity. Robertson's father had been a US senator from Virginia and had a vacation house almost on the grounds of the Homestead, so I thought it was courageous of the hotel owners to have this book exposing Robertson's hypocrisy on its library shelves. I was in one of my spells of rising early and was able to read most of the book while there, but wanted to finish it, so I asked if I could take it with me and mail it back when I finished it and was graciously told to keep it, which I did. That book probably did as much to begin a change in my thinking about matters of religious faith than anything else I can put my finger on. I've always been a questioner, even, like Thomas the disciple, a doubter, and that book exacerbated my religious doubt. So, driving down I-77, heading for Hot Springs with my wife, mother, and in-laws, the conversation turned to religion and for some reason, possibly thinking about the book I had discovered at the Homestead, I began to slowly and hesitantly leak out but then, all of a sudden, let pour forth a stream of my misgivings about religious faith, and my inability to continue to say I believed in supernatural events that many feel are the bedrock of their strongly held religious convictions. And guess what; those three octogenarians, my only remaining parent and both of my wife's parents, all three raised in "Christian" families in the Bible belt in the rural south, having read for themselves and having taught and been taught and preached to about the ancient scriptures by people they respected, i.e. parents, teachers, preachers, Billy Graham, showed no surprise whatsoever when I said I did not believe that the virgin birth, the resurrection, the ascension, in fact, all the miracles told in the Bible are literally true. They didn't argue

with me or question my pontifications, instead, confessing that they had some of those same doubts themselves. I think we all agreed that what one believes or says one believes is not nearly as important as how one lives.

When we got to the Homestead, we stayed in adjoining rooms. Mac was a little disappointed that theirs was a little smaller and didn't have as many windows as our corner room, but his disappointment was somewhat ameliorated when he realized our room was a little larger because Mom was staying with Janet and me. I can still see Mac regaling Mom with his stories, sitting in the opulent lobby. Thereafter, whenever Mom was mentioned, Mac always said she was a good woman who reminded him of his mother. All I know is that at the Homestead, Mac thought we were going "first boat" and Mom that we "were in high cotton". If Frank Griffin had been there, he would have wondered "what the po folks back home were doin'!"

Those sayings remind me of a couple of occasions when Mac let loose with outbursts which were a little out of character for him. He and Mary were visiting us in Monroe and we were all loaded in the van headed out somewhere and pulled up to the Hardee's drive-thru to get some ham biscuits (on reflection, we were probably getting them to take to the Flowe or Tweed reunion in Mint Hill or Mullis gathering at Pauline & DL's). The car ahead of us was, in my opinion, at least, taking way too much time, handing stuff back in the window for corrections and asking for more napkins and condiments. I don't know why I was in such a hurry; on further reflection, maybe it wasn't an in-law reunion or I wouldn't have been in a hurry to get there, or, and this is my last reflection on this, I promise, maybe I was just hungry, which would have overridden my foot dragging to get to an occasion where I usually had to provide a free legal clinic for Janet's kinfolk (I wonder if that's why Doug seldom came?). In any event, I was voicing my growing frustration with the slowpokes ahead of us and Mac suddenly shot out, "Tom, what do you want me to do-get out and go beat the shit out of them?" I don't remember the reaction of the others, probably laughter, but mine was embarrassment over making such a big deal over nothing, a lesson I still sometimes, no, often, forget.

Another time was when I gave a surprise 60th birthday party for Janet at the cabin we had just purchased in the mountains. Janet's friend, Betty Birch and her husband, Steve, came from Monroe, and Bill, still recovering from open heart surgery, and Sylvia and Dan and Vera and their daughter, Brenda, and her husband, Larry, came up from Charlotte. Doug and Christy brought Mac and Mary from Kingsport. Tommy rode down with Tim, Sara, Sam, and, I guess, toddler, Sophie from Kentucky. Somehow, I had managed to keep the party a secret from Janet and to maintain the secrecy as long as possible and also because the gravel road back into our place has some steep hills and can be a little rough, I had asked all attendees to park at Lily Branch Baptist Church, a half mile or so away out on the hard surfaced road and asked Tommy and Tim to shuttle them in. I had even called the pastor of Lily Branch and gotten permission. The excuse to get Janet to travel on Labor Day weekend to our new place that was still contractually occupied by the lady we bought it from until she finished her new home in Asheville but who had moved many of her furnishings, was to pull a U-Haul trailer with some of our stuff, as we intended to sell our place in Monroe and permanently move into the cabin. I timed our arrival .5-.75 hours after the guests and we were right on time. As we turned onto Ladyslipper Lane, we saw Tim's Windstar van coming out, heading to Lily Branch to get Bill and Sylvia, the only guests who followed the parking rules. Janet said "who's that?" as Tommy and Tim tried to duck their heads below the dash, but she squealed, "that's Tommy-what's going on?", and the cat was out of the bag. We drove up to the cabin and all the cars but Bill and Sylvia's were there. When the boys returned with B & S, I asked Tim why they didn't adhere to my parking and shuttle plan. He replied, "Dad, grandfather said 'that'll ____-up (an official military term; compare 'SNAFU') everything!' What was I supposed to do? He's my grandfather and a colonel and it sounded like a direct order." (I'm not sure Tim included that last phrase, but he could have; it sounds like him.) Good reasons. I probably would have done the same; dumb parking plan anyway.

After the party, Mary's colon cancer, which had been in remission, came back with a vengeance and she died the following January at home, with the help of Hospice. Janet was with her the last week or 10 days, helping Mac look after her as best they could. Janet, naturally, still gets emotional when she talks about that time, especially when she talks about how tender and attentive Mac was to Mary. He said repeatedly that he should have been better to her over the years. Mary's ashes were kept in a box on a shelf in the den to be interred with Mac's and for a good while after her funeral, when Janet would peek in the den to check on him, he would be staring at her box. A video was made of Mary's funeral and Mac watched it over and over. Three months later, Dan also died of colon cancer. What a blow; losing his wife and only full brother, two of the most beloved people in his life, within three months. So, for the first time in 65 years, Mac was alone in his house on the hill, something he wasn't accustomed to.

Speaking of videos, let me mention two that we have somewhere. Mac and Mary celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 1992, I think it was, with a gathering of their clan at Doug and Christy's house. Tommy was in seminary in Louisville, Tim a student at Davidson and Jennifer and Jessica still at home. After stuffing ourselves on (I don't actually

remember but given the occasion, probably prime rib, though regardless of what it was, it would have been delicious, given Doug's culinary skills), the night turned to merry making, consisting primarily of dancing by those so talented. To a variety of loud tunes, the 3 Jays, Janet, Jennifer and Jessica, shook and shimmied disco style; Tim karaoked a Michael Jackson song, a skill I guess he honed in college (that's what Davidson tuition will get you) while the Jays juke in the background; and then Mac, not to be left out, took to the stage and jumped around like a green horn dancing as the rowdies shoot bullets at his feet, to the song "Rolling on the River" (you remember ..."big wheels keep on turning, rollin', rollin', rollin' on the ri-i-ver"). Mary is laughing riotously; Tommy is seen making some shoulder and head moves to the music, off stage, not sure whether a preacher-in-training should revert back to his Carolina fratboy days; and I'm sitting on the couch, seemingly oblivious to the raucous carryings on, flipping through the pages of what may have been a hymnbook, probably hoping I would be called on to sing How Great Thou Art since I, obviously the whitest person in the room, wasn't about to make a fool of myself. I wouldn't be telling this if it wasn't documented on video.

The other video is one made at Sunset Beach in September, 2000 where we had gone to celebrate Mac's 80th birthday and, while we were there, get Tim and Sara married. Janet drove Mary down and Mac, Tommy, Tim and I rode down together and had a ball telling stories, particularly Mac, leading what I guess would be considered Tim's batchelor party. I would love to have a tape recording of that trip. Bill and Sylvia brought Mom down and they stay in a house with Harry and family. Pam and Wayne, Sara's mother and step-father, came down from Louisville and after the wedding took Phoenix, who, at 8 or 9, served as bridesmaid and flower girl, back to Louisville while the newlyweds honeymooned. The reception was at a local restaurant called Crabby Oddwater, or maybe, Oddy Crabwater, where, after dinner we ate the wedding cake Mom had made and brought down. During toasts, in deference to the Baptists present, which at that time included me, though not a dry one, I decided to stick to tea. When Wayne ordered a martini, the temperance walls came tumbling down as he was followed by Mac and Harry. Things livened up. I hope Tim and Sara have a video of the wedding and/or reception. We have one I made a day or so later of Mac, Mary, Janet and Tommy fishing on the dock in the creek behind the house where we were staying. Mary caught a flounder and Mac cleaned it; a great how-to video.

Now, back to Mac alone in his house on the hill. After a while, he began craving some companionship. I don't blame him; I would have, too. After all, he was still a handsome, vigorous, healthy man, even at 88. It turns out his vigor was being aided by testosterone cream which his friend, Charlie Armstrong, had introduced him to. Charlie needed it because he had married a much younger phys ed instructor he met at UCLA while on the ROTC staff there, after leaving his first wife and mother of his children who had been either a grand or great granddaughter of Sitting Bull. Mac was rubbing it on his shoulders as directed by the instructions (Tim said, and I agreed, that it sounded like he was rubbing it in the wrong place), apparently pretty liberally. As a result, he began looking around for some female companionship and found her living across the street. Lillian was a divorcee in, I would say, her mid to late 60s, very attractive. Mac became quite attached to her, much to the dismay of Janet and Doug, particularly Janet, who worried frantically about the relationship which was developing and not know what to do about it. Her fussing at Mac about it wasn't helping. In the words of Ernest T Bass of "The Andy Griffith Show" fame (probably the all-time favorite show of my whole immediate family and one of Mac's favorites as well; for Mac, running neck and neck with "All in the Family"), "the more she was a' talkin', the more he was a' balkin'". When his birthday came up that fall, I suggested we get the grand and great-grandkids to come to Kingsport to help him celebrate it, hoping that surrounding him with the whole family would act as something of an intervention, reminding him that his blood kin were more important to him than an interloper. Following dinner and birthday cake at Doug's, we went round the table with each telling Mac how much he meant to us. He politely thanked us and excused himself and headed for Lillian's. He had been disappointed that she wasn't invited.

Janet's main concern was that if Mac married Lillian, the difference in their ages would be a problem and that she wouldn't want to look after him as he would need in his remaining years. She felt like Lillian was just looking for financial security. That didn't bother Mac. He talked with me about it. For the first years of Mac's career in the Marine Corps, military retirement was paid only to the retiree, not the spouse, upon the retiree's prior death. During his career, the rule was changed so that if the serviceman elected to do so, he could pay in so much a pay period and in the event of his death before his spouse, she would receive one-half of his retirement for the rest of her life, or maybe remarriage, I'm not sure about that. Many of Mac's peers didn't make the election, figuring, I guess, that it was too expensive, but Mac didn't hesitate. He wanted to protect Mary at all costs, and paid into the system the rest of his career. After he got interested in Lillian, he looked into whether the surviving spousal benefit would be available to a second spouse and found that it would after the veteran had been widowed for a certain period, a year I think it was. He also knew about prenuptial agreements and that one could be used to protect his assets in the event he remarried. I'm sure his interest in Lillian was primarily for companionship but I expect he also hated to think that all the money he had paid in so a

surviving spouse could receive the benefit of it was going to be lost. Janet decided the only solution, in addition to getting Mac off the testosterone, was to get him out of harm's way, so she moved him down to Monroe to live with us.

I think Mac enjoyed the 2-3 years he lived out on our farm. He loved our dog, Suzie. She soon gained several pounds from the extra doggie treats he slipped her when Janet wasn't looking, but she and he kept from getting too chubby by walking a half mile or so, sometimes several times a day, depending on the weather, on the paths I kept cut along the edges of the hay fields. Even in cold weather he would bundle up, put on his Vanderbilt toboggan, and make the trek. In good weather he loved to sit out in the carport. When not outside, he was usually in the recliner he bought in front of the big screen TV he bought, in a bedroom Janet converted into his den, which was beside his bedroom where he slept on the most comfortable springs and mattress I've ever felt which he also bought. He insisted on paying for the items I mentioned and he paid something for his room and board. I don't think I ever knew the amount ; Janet's the treasurer. He may have felt like he had moved back in with Mamie and Olin. When we would go out to eat, he always insisted on paying. While Mac was with us, Janet went on trips to China and Africa with her friend, Betty Birch and Mac insisted on paying for those. I didn't protest too loudly.

Janet just reminded me of a good story. She's a great cook and always prides herself on fixing not only delicious but also nutritious meals. Mac wasn't hard to please. But he did like a big slice of onion with most anything, but particularly with cornbread and milk. One night at supper we were having cornbread and Mac asked if he could have some onion to go with it. Janet was so apologetic for not having any. Disappointed but not wanting to show it, he plaintively asked, "well, do you at least have a radish?" I don't think Janet ever ran out of onions again.

While Janet was on one of her trips, I took Mac to the annual air show sponsored by the City of Monroe at the airport. I found out that a B-25 had been flown in and called the mayor and told him about my B-25 flying father-in-law. He not only gave us two tickets for the Sunday show, he arranged for VIP parking and had Mac transported around by golf cart. The B-25 was owned by, if I remember correctly, a dentist from Georgia who had restored it and had a crew to fly it around the country to air shows. They were delighted to meet a real WWII B-25 combat pilot and asked Mac to autograph the fake bomb hanging out the bombay doors which had been signed by a number of pilots. They offered to let him climb up into the cockpit but the ladder was a little too steep. There were a number of other WWII vintage planes, including a Navy Hellcat and Corsair, the plane that Frank Fowler Roberts had crashed and died in. But he probably enjoyed as much as anything meeting and having his picture made with three young ladies dressed as WWII Wacs, or maybe Waves, who sang several war favorites such as the "Boogie-Woogie Bugle Boy from Company B".

On Janet and Betty's return from Africa, they were expecting me to pick them up from the airport but I surprised Janet by bringing Mac along. She was happy to see me but overjoyed to see her Dad looking so well. I think she expected to find him unkempt and emaciated under my care. Janet enlisted the help of a great gal named Janice Stitt to help with looking after Mac on occasion as well as doing a little cooking and cleaning. While Janet was on one of her trips, we threw a little party. Janice fixed vegetable soup, cornbread and banana pudding and I invited my friend, Ricky Creech and his then girlfriend, Russian born Olga, and another friend, Vaughn Correll and his 12 or son year-old grandson over. They all had a ball, including Mac. Vaughn, an accountant who I got to know years ago when he was CFO of Cuddy Farms, a large turkey integrator, and who, after Cuddy sold out, went to work with my friend Andy Boggs (Andy, who was also a good friend of Ricky, and his wife, Sue, would have been there as well if he hadn't tragically died of a brain tumor, which, so ironically, took Vaughn as well a few years ago) was physically a little guy but had a deep, resonant voice, and he got to singing something, I wish I could remember what it was. Then Janice joined in, and before you knew it, those two were jitterbugging to their own vocals as the rest of us joined in, singing and laughing, Mac included. I doubt that Vaughn's grandson, who Vaughn brought along because he's a little different from kids his age in terms of sociability and Vaughn thought would benefit from being with some older folks, (Vaughn said he really looked forward to coming after Vaughn told him a real WWII hero and real Russian were going to be there) had ever seen his grandpa let his hair down like that, and actually, I hadn't either. After they had all left, Mac said it was one of the best parties he'd ever been to. It was for me, too.

Though I had known Mac as my father-in-law for over 40 years, spending a good bit of time with him and Mary over the years during visits back and forth and trips and vacations together, the years he lived with us on the farm gave me the opportunity to spend a lot of time with him. We went to baseball games at Wingate College. I took him to see "The Blind Side" and the remake of "True Grit"; Jeff Bridges was no John Wayne. I took him over to meet my half-brother, Joe and thereafter, Joe asked about Mac every time we talked. I took him down to Jefferson, SC to meet my cousin Shank Forbis, who drove us around to see his and his son, Ronnie's cows and farming operations. Afterwards, Shank, speaking of Mac, said "he really thinks a lot of you." I appreciated Shank's observation. Driving home Mac, speaking of Shank, said "he really thinks a lot of you." I appreciated Mac's observation as well. I drove him up to see

what used to be the farms where Mom and Dad grew up and through the subdivision of the 40 acres of the Caldwell land that Dad inherited and which Bill, Harry and I had sold to a developer a few years before. I pointed out the street names "Caldwell-Beaty" (Mom's maiden name) and "McCamey" (Dad's middle name and that of his father, as well as my brother, Bill, though his is mysteriously spelled "McKamie"-sorry, Bill, I guess you'll have to be memorialized some other way) which we asked the developer to name them in honor and memory of our folks. Mac was moved by that.

After Mary died Mac spent more time talking about where he wanted their final resting place to be. His father is buried in the Roberts cemetery in Madison County, his mother in the Philadelphia Presbyterian Church cemetery in Mint Hill, and his brother, Dan and his wife, Vera in a perpetual care cemetery near Mint Hill. He thought about the Roberts cemetery but was told they couldn't go there because they weren't connected to the Roberts by blood or marriage. Janet lobbied for Arlington National but Mac never really liked Washington because, as mentioned earlier, several of his peers who had been stationed there had kids get hooked on drugs and in other kinds of trouble. Consequently, he didn't want to be stationed there in life or after. He did consider the Marine cemetery at Quantico. Janet and I took him up there to see it. Stan Nicolay is there and we were able to find him. We also visited the, at that time, fairly new Marine Memorial which, if I remember correctly, Jim Lehrer of the PBS Newshour had led the efforts to have built and spoke at its dedication. We spent the night at accommodations on the base used for visiting military personnel; spartan, clean, and inexpensive. The next day we drove down through Virginia Beach and by their house on Wakefield Dr, the last time Mac saw it. Doug took Mac over to visit the veteran's cemetery east of Asheville near Black Mountain and I think he was fine with it, but Janet and I visited it and she didn't like it, with an industrial park jammed in beside it and its unkempt appearance. So Mountain Home VA cemetery in Johnson City became their final resting place. Mac and Mary had visited it together and she liked it, or, maybe a better phrase is she was "satisfied with" it. It did meet most of Mac's criteria: it honors veterans, is in the mountains or, at least, the foothills, near his last home and son, and suited Mary.

Well, talking about Mac and Mary's final resting place sounds like I'm at the end of the story, but actually, the last paragraph was intended to tell about our road trip to Quantico and Virginia Beach, not to end at the cemetery. Let me talk a little about these stories I've been telling about Mac. I knew Mac almost 50 years. He was very much an extrovert who loved to tell stories, especially about his family, and I heard those stories from him from the beginning of our relationship. I would sit and listen to them while Janet and Doug would get up and go do something else, offering the excuse that they'd already heard them. But I didn't have that choice, at least I didn't think I did. As his only son-in-law, and he a colonel, no less, I didn't want to be disrespectful. I listened, and now I'm glad I did. It would have been easier to follow the family stories, though, if I had had a program. For example, when Mac's mother, Dora's brother, Olin Flowe married her step-daughter, Mamie and one of their son's was nicknamed Tweedy and was partially raised by another of her step-daughters, Anne, after he contracted polio, it took me a while to decipher those relationships. And further confounding me was the fact that those two stepdaughters who came down out of the mountains to Mint Hill were joined in the flatlands by their sister, Nettie and brother, Leo. And how about two of Dora's sisters marrying brothers so that cousins had the same last name.

But I probably listened closer, I guess because I enjoyed them more, to Mac's stories about his Marine career. I wish I had asked more questions. Once I did. Soon after Mac and Mary moved to Kingsport, his hip began hurting so badly that he actually started limping and he finally decided to have it replaced. I'm not sure why he decided to have it done by a doctor in Charlotte. It may have been upon the recommendation of Uncle Olin's grandson, Steve Furr, an orthopedist in Salisbury. By the way, as an example of the Flowe's taking the bull by the horns, Steve was having trouble getting in Duke med school, so Olin found out which of the doctors who were his butter and egg customers in Charlotte had gone to Duke and lobbied them to intercede on Steve's behalf, apparently successfully, since he graduated from Duke. So Steve checked around and referred Mac to a Duke man in Charlotte, who Mac really liked, maybe because in addition to doing a good job, he listened to Mac's Duke stories. I think the doc may also have been a naval ROTC grad. To help insure that he receive good attention, Mac took him a bottle of a top grade of whiskey on his first visit, the same way he introduced himself to all his doctors over the years, even in the military. After his hip replacement, Mac and Mary stayed with us for a couple of weeks until he was able to travel.

Janet and I drove them back home, with me driving Mac in his Volvo station wagon, the one later driven by Tim and now Tai, and Janet driving Mary in our car. Of course I had known Mac for close to 30 years at that point but had never spent 5 straight hours with him and wasn't sure what we would talk about for that long. I knew the story of his journey as a Marine aviator pretty well but there were still some holes, so I decided to use this time to plug some of them. I asked him something about his career when we pulled out of our driveway in Monroe and he was still talking when we pulled in theirs in Kingsport five hours later, with me only interjecting questions along the way to keep the ball rolling. That's another time that I wish I had had a tape recorder rolling!

During the open mic time at Mary's funeral, I told about how coincidental it was, my growing up across Rama Rd from her nephew and niece, Mike and Gail Mullis and riding a school bus driven by her niece, Linda Kay Furr and then meeting and marrying their cousin. I closed by saying that marrying into the Tweed family was one of the best things that ever happened to me, and it is. The most obvious reason, of course, is because I was able to team up with a wonderful wife who has, with not as much help from me as she should have gotten, raised two fine sons who, in turn, have married wonderful women, and who, together, with our sons pitching in a lot more than their dad did, are raising fine grandchildren. Janet and I were very fortunate to each have had two wonderful parents and my sons are likewise fortunate in having had four wonderful grandparents.

But I have been especially fortunate to have had Mac as my father-in-law. At his funeral, I read a letter I had just recently come across from Mac to me, actually the only one I remember receiving from him (though there were many to Janet and me, most enclosing an article he thought would make us better parents). The letter thanked me for telling him, on a walk I took with him around the farm, that like Lou Gehrig, I considered himself the luckiest guy in the world and that I didn't know anyone who I would trade places with. He said that caused him to reflect on his life and to realize what a wonderful life he had lived. And he had.

I came across an article in the newspaper a few weeks ago about a business and civic leader in Charlotte and North Carolina who had passed away, and one of his associates said about him: "He was an ultimate professional, wise, dedicated and always kind to others." I cut out the article and underlined those words because as I was writing these stories, I realized that the same tribute appropriately describes Mac, especially to those who knew him professionally, though the last phrase describes how he treated everybody he ever knew. Kind, considerate, generous, compassionate, life and family loving-that was Mac. And he was young in spirit till the end. When someone would ask him how he felt, he would often say "I didn't plan on getting old." But he didn't have to. He raised two children who lovingly kept him in his own home until the last couple of weeks that he had to be in the hospital.

I wasn't there during Mac's last days. But when Janet walked in his room on one of those days, guess what he asked her: "Where's Big Tom?" Doug, I hope you won't mind me saying, "I think he loved me like a second son". And Dad, I hope you won't mind me saying, "I loved him like another father".

I miss you Mac! Thanks for the great memories.