

WALK WITH ME



By
HARRY BRILEY

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WALK WITH ME

By Harry Briley

Walk With Me – Setting the Stage

For:
Family, Friends, and Believers
As the Story I needed Much Time to Tell

And:
Theologians, Teachers, and Pastors
As a Case Study of the Spiritual/Secular Nexus

And:
Historians and Archivists
As a Reward for finding these Chapters on the Web

CHAPTERS

- 1 Setting The Stage
- 2 My Mother and Her Family
- 3 My Father and His Family
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- 9 Hitting My Stride (1990 – 1999)
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- 11 Songs of our Faith (2006 - 2010)
- 12 A New Song (2011 – 2020)
- 13 Untitled (Chapter In Progress)

Walk With Me – Setting the Stage

Chapter 1- Setting the Stage

Revised 1/12/2022

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Walk With Me – Setting the Stage

Chapter 1 – Setting the Stage

Abstract

Overall, this memoir explores my adult focus upon viable faith while raised completely secular. It begins with research about my parents, their families, my wife's background, and her mother's family. It examines character formation in my peripatetic youth, computer advances and unusual roles during my 37-year career at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL), the technical explosion of early microcomputers with my woefully naive side-business called Briley Software, and various travel observations.

The faith aspects cover churches in which I taught adult Bible Classes of my own authorship for decades, 29 years as General Secretary for the Bible Study Groups at LLNL, and 17 years as High School Director in the AWANA program. I discuss my 35-year marriage with Anne during her daunting health dilemmas until her death. I wanted far less medical activity for Anne and far less family drama with our adopted teenagers.

Over the past twenty years (2002-2021), upon my mother's, Anne's, and mother-in-law's deaths, I uncovered estate archives that filled significant gaps with family data unknown to me. I am grateful for cousins and extended family who entrusted me to collate long-hidden family secrets judiciously of our parental and grandparent generations. This helped me learn about my mother's early life and comprehend my difficult father.

This 1000+ page project contains maps, diagrams, hundreds of photos, and hundreds of quoted external sources giving contextual background. Each illustrative component appears directly within the appropriate parts of the story.

Some might use my story to alter unfair stereotyping of Judeo-Christian values or lack of such values within the social milieu (for whatever decade you read this memoir). One of the Appendices lists recommended books with a brief overview of each.

Chapter revision dates reflects fresh information from relatives, their archives, estate papers/letters, or newly found photos. A memoir is never completed.

My personal web site currently offers these memoir chapters, Jack Rittenhouse memoir chapters, my apologetics seminar papers, and my minor papers on morals theology.

External Sources

The memoir uses hundreds of external sources to flesh out details. These sources observed an event better or defined an historical fact unknown to anyone born after 2000.

Instead of referential footnotes, I edited/redacted these explanatory sources for use directly within the story line, usually indented as boxed offsets with its bibliographic citation. I used [braces] for my overt changes made to the external material while retaining the intent and flavor of each original source. I dated photographs as best able. The many photos outside my own creation credits each photographer and/or publication.

Genesis and Motivation

My father-in-law impressed me by writing his memoirs, sending us a chapter (or portion) each Christmas. Those chapters sat unread as hand-typed first drafts for 20 years until a trigger point caused me to embark on editing his chapters and start writing my own.

In 3/2002, Anne and I celebrated erev Shabbat. As typical of that down time, we rented a video. That evening, we watched two Public Broadcasting segments: *The Secret Life of the Brain: Children* and the sequel, *The Secret Life of the Brain: Teenagers*.

That triggered a discussion about how our two lives differed from others in fundamental ways. We noted a social inversion where the outsiders as youth, became the intellects of society as adults. We observed that bullies or overly social insiders as youth, became mostly struggling adults. What caused that differentiation at such a young age?

Do terrors and hardships as a child make a person more successful as an adult? Does the unfair and horrid *Tom Browns' School Days* (a 1940 film) of youth create so large of an effect for building strong and godly character traits? We noted significant exceptions to this general pattern, but only because they were exceptions.

By 2010, friends and relatives died more often and more frequently than in my younger years. After the “last hurrah” at their memorial services, minimal and sparse written accounts became their only remaining legacy. I heard amazing stories when people verbally talk about their past or how their grandparents lived, stories worthy of print.

I wished for more time interviewing older relatives, now long gone. I found my father’s half-sister in 2011, an Aunt I did not know I had, and reconnected with a cousin of Jack Rittenhouse, my father-in-law. Since no one was getting younger, the motivation to continue writing memoir chapters became more palpable since that year.

Biography Blues

Popular biographies usually present the extremely wealthy, famous celebrities, or those with a bad notoriety. Many wind up on dusty thrift stores shelves. Only truly historical tomes reach reprint status. I own no fame, with no political, sports, or media aspirations. I am in the middling class without newsworthy credentials by worldly standards.

Another hazard of a biography hinges upon the epic novel sweeping through several generations. I made no attempt at fully presenting perspectives of other family members, although their stories inextricably intertwine here in limited ways. The overall story thus leaves many loose ends, which genealogists find appalling.

Genealogy Humor

Some who research personal histories encountered versions of this unattributed story:

A researcher discovered that his great-great uncle, a fellow lacking in character, was hanged for horse stealing and train robbery in Montana in 1889. The only known photo shows him on the gallows. The photo back was inscribed:

"Remus Starr, horse thief, sent to Montana Territorial Prison 1885, escaped 1887, robbed the Montana Flyer six times. Caught by Pinkerton detectives. Convicted and hanged in 1889."

The family biography cropped the photo to a head shot and the text became:

"Remus Starr was a famous cowboy in the Montana Territory. His business empire grew by acquisition of valuable equestrian assets and intimate dealings with the Montana railroad. Beginning in 1885, he devoted several years of his life to service at a government facility, finally taking leave to resume his dealings with the railroad. In 1887, he was a key player in a vital investigation run by the renowned Pinkerton Detective Agency. In 1889, Remus passed away during an important civic function held in his honor when the platform upon, which he was standing, collapsed."

Photos (when provided) that accompany this legend show Tom "Black Jack" Ketchum hanged for train robbery in 4/1901 in the New Mexico Territory.

Tom Ketchum, a cowboy, was named among robbers of an Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway train en route to Deming, New Mexico Territory in 1892. His gang supposedly robbed the train just outside of Nutt, at a water station twenty miles north of Deming. - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Ketchum

When I present difficult aspects of family history, I did not knowingly shade the obvious data. I strove for reasonably accuracy without overly telling other people's stories. Indeed, I could not and did not elaborate upon some family data. This selective approach hinders researchers since only essential stories inform my autobiography. Yet, there are enough enabling details for a deeper "pull on that thread" by later generations.

Brothers on the Move

My parents raised three sons and moved us frequently, anywhere from six months to three years per location, within California, Oregon, and Hawaii.

- Harry (1953-) born in California
- Michael (1956-) born in California
- David (1963-) born in Oregon

All three of us boys discontinued the constant moves and found a stable place to hang our hats. One appendix in this memoir lists many residences through those early years.

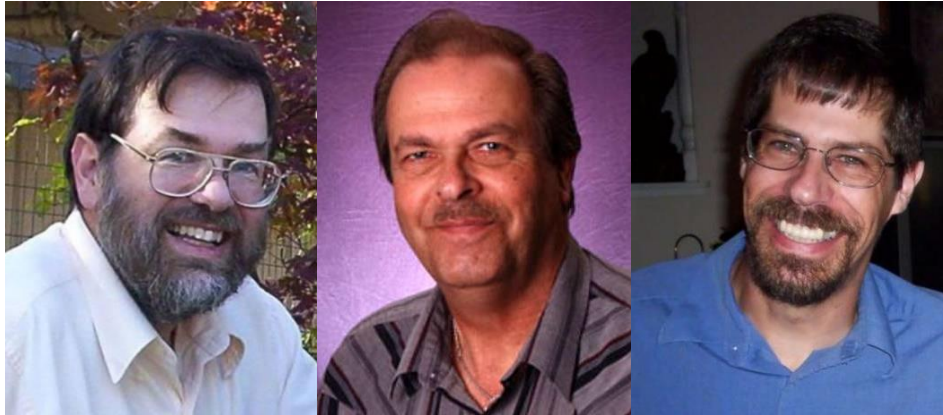


Figure 1 - Brothers on the Move

Harry (2009)

Mike (2009)

David (2007)

My story is the main content of this memoir. I left home (escaped?) at age 17 in Simi Valley, California for college with a full work/scholarship to New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, married Anne, and moved to Livermore California as a software and database designer. We bought a 1959 tract home in 12/1980 ... and stayed.

Michael (Mike) walked out of home in Carpentaria, California after his Junior year, later graduated, and enlisted in the US Army as an MP (Military Police). He moved to Orland, California, enlisted for a second tour of duty, later became a school bus driver in the mid-west and a portrait/event photographer in Wichita, Kansas ... and stayed.

Upon graduation in 1981, my father booted David out in Fremont, California at age 18. David owned up to a miserable showing in school after escapades with self-medication. As an able entrepreneur since elementary school and not afraid of hard labor, he found employment, earned his contractor's license, ran his own business, and later became an employee for a fellow contractor. He bought into a home with a large back yard for gardening in Newark, a few short miles from nearby San Francisco Bay ... and stayed.

Spiritual Component

This memoir initially started as an exploratory task of examining my memory as I aged, knowing events indelibly branded into my synapses became significant for framing character. However, my early life experiences had faded more towards oblivion.

Social and economic factors partly affect a personality. Spiritual threads and events vitally weave into anyone's life with the most profound impact, for ill or good.

A hardscrabble life with a rich spiritual walk yields incredibly uplifting stories. A moneyed scoundrel with a negative spiritual tapestry often yields tawdry painful stories. The spiritual component is the wildcard in any sociological evaluation.

I sought how those threads affected my life. I did not know which precursors made me sensitive and receptive in following hard after God. The 'odd-man-out' feeling, due to my spiritual fabric, dogged my life and relationships, affecting school, work, church, and family. That 'being different' aspect drove my explorations within this memoir.

Limited Jewish Nomenclature

Jewish culture touches upon my life throughout, starting with a summer kitchen job at a Reformed Jewish youth camp in Malibu in 1970; hearing Moshe Rosen in 1972 propose the brand new Jews for Jesus organization; and Brit Ahavah, a Messianic congregation.

Observant Jews uses hyphens (L-rd, G-d) to refer to the Almighty (El Shaddai). This respects the name (Baruch Ha'Shem) and drives the eye to the odd nomenclature.

I assume most readers are not Jewish. While there is a Jewish undercurrent, I chose the common Western nomenclature in this memoir for clarity sake.

Two Memoir Projects

While writing my own memoir, I continued editing and illustrating the memoir of my father-in-law, Jack Rittenhouse. He called his memoir “*Recollections*” as presented on my own web site. Some materials in one memoir project influenced the other. I will describe my work on his memoir first and then describe the efforts for my own memoir. **Bold** text identify chapter names within their respective project.

Project One: Recollections

Anne’s father, Jack Rittenhouse, published the first travel guide to Route 66, which the University of New Mexico sells through tourist shops along that ‘mother-road’.

He sent a hand-typed memoir chapter each Christmas, which contained no photos.

My early low-resolution equipment scanned his faint typewriter drafts with only 60% accuracy, forcing much re-typing and editing. In some portions, his memoir became a biography due to significant external source material and my own interactions during his later years. His first-person narrative takes precedence as expected in a memoir.

Jack wrote only briefly about his wife Charlotte and children. Therefore, the backstory for my wife Anne and her maternal family appear within my own memoir under the chapter **Anne and Her Family**.

Jack’s Early Years

In 4/2011, I edited, rearranged, illustrated, and distributed several initial chapters of Jack’s “*Recollections*”. These included **Mid-West Twenties**, **Boyhood**, **Boy Scouts** (covering the 1929 Jamboree in England), and **College Years**.

Later in 2011, I edited and illustrated **Wander Year** of his adventures as a railroad hobo and as a faux artist trying to survive the Great Depression in New Orleans.

In 2014, I edited **Magician**. As a magician side job, while in college, Jack performed a buried-alive stunt for a week that coincided with the 1933 Chicago World’s Fair. Customers paid 15 cents to peer down at his face through a viewing port into a coffin six feet below. He used a dim blue light to make his face look more pale than normal.

Charlotte, Anne’s mother, died at age 90 in 2012. Upon discovery of family Christmas newsletters in her estate going back to 1937, I transcribed crucial connecting details into Jack’s original chapters. With access to more estate papers in 2014, I completed a second edition of **Mid-West Twenties** describing his experiences in Michigan and Indiana.

Jack wrote this great line for his first chapter:

It was the middle of the booming 1920s, which some called the roaring twenties, but we saw no particular roar out at our edge of town.

Walk With Me – Setting the Stage

Two enthusiastic history detectives in 2015 collected data about his paternal grandfather and his Uncle Charles of Phoenix for 1890-1920. Their new material explained why his father Earl (and thus Jack) followed Charles to the barren Arizona desert in 1917-1921. I stored new genealogy data in my *Family Tree Builder* data file (and in 2021, the *Find-A-Grave* public website), as a fraction of my sister-in-law Susan Blair's genealogy binders.

Jack's chapters covering 1922-1930 lacked helpful details. The Anthony Wayne Scout Council and Allen County Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana provided some minor data. During my 6/2016 visit to Indiana, I photographed key locations for those chapters.

A retired teacher in Constantine, Michigan sought Jack's chapter for her town's historical binder in 2020. She offered background materials, which led me to their local historical society for a few period-correct photos of named buildings and details of that decade.

The Anthony Wayne Scout Council quoted from his chapter **Boy Scouts** within their souvenir book for 2017 to commemorate their own centennial.

Jack's Career Years

Using Charlotte's not-so-annual Christmas newsletters (1937-1968), I fleshed out confusing gaps of Jack's 1987 rough draft of **Settling Down on Route 66**. Originally, he gave only a limited background from 1933 as he chased advertising jobs up until he moved the family to Santa Fe in 1968. The cache of Christmas newsletters immensely helped pull this chapter into a cohesive biographical story line. This chapter describes the era of early Route 66 as the stage for his topic-specific chapters for those 35 years.

The late Judy Burgess, the nearest relative and encourager for my editing Jack's memoir, died in 8/2016. She was his youngest niece and the last of his immediate family.

My impetus then shifted for editing the balance of his memoir for those who valued him as a bookman, Southwest historian, and author of the first Route 66 guide. In 10/2017, an older oil-field friend of Jack sent me an audio interview of Charlotte done in 1999. I transcribed segments providing any new data throughout Jack's chapters.

My first edition in 2012 of **California State Guard** described the war years 1941-1942 with my intention of presenting it as a talk. In 2013, Jeff Kaskey, then Livermore Heritage Guild president, graciously marked up that draft in red ink. I presented the overhauled revision for their history lecture series in 4/2013 wearing the State Guard uniform from WWII (lacking the shoulder patch and Jack's insignia from his estate).

In **Advertising Years**, he described his pre-bookman career in several advertising agencies, including starting two agencies of his own.

In **Books and I**, he explains the people networks, authors, and pressmen up through his leaving Houston in 1960.

Jack intended to write **Stagecoach Press** but died before describing his artisan press. However, he referenced it often in other chapters and I own his entire set of signed first editions of his fifty published books. I extracted paragraphs from his other chapters, Christmas newsletters, flyleaf quotes, and discovered a seven-page commentary typed up five months before he died (never distributed to family and lost for 24 years).

Several of his printer friends from Santa Fe gave me background stories. The director at the Press of the Palace of the Governors sent photos of Jack's original typeset galley as displayed at the museum for his miniature book titled **Fort Union**. Armed with that wealth of material, background research, and snippets from dust jackets, I ghost-wrote about his handset letterpress southwestern genre books. This compilation yielded a decent posthumous chapter in 2014 about his artisan press output.



Figure 2 - Fort Union - Galley for Page 27 (Palace of Governors 2014)

I added an extract from Ollie Reed's 2017 fine article about the author of *Shane*, Jack Scheafer (in **Stagecoach Press**). Jack Scheafer was a long-term friend of Jack Rittenhouse; both were aficionados of fine pipe tobacco.

I received an 84-page transcript from David Farmer in 2020 of a rambling interview in 1989 when he visited Jack's collection of rare southwest Americana (that is, books costing over \$80 each at the time). He had over \$200,000 of such books on 15 shelves in his basement. Jack died in 1991 and this interview captured important book trade topics he wanted to discuss in his final years. I used many excerpts from this interview to fill in gaps in **Stagecoach Press** or motivated me to edit unfinished chapters about his years at UNM Press and as a noteworthy antiquarian bookseller upon his retirement.

Part of my fun was researching the backstory of Jack's own research, such as the French Socialist Colonies (1849-1898) in Illinois and Iowa (in his chapter **The West is Wide**).

In 11/2020, I completed editing **Bookman in London/Paris 1977** (about the book trade) and **Bookman in Spain 1989** (his final vacation).

Project Two: “Walk with Me”

My personal memoir started in 2002 and explored the thread of God walking with me unawares. The project expanded to include biographies of parents and grandparents of both Anne and I. The resulting illustrated chapters appear on my own web site.

Parents

After distributing **My Parents** to my relatives in 2010, three first cousins provided further family data gleaned from their own parents. That greatly expanded and split that background chapter of my parental families into chapters **My Mother** and **My Father**.

This new data led to my paternal family quest to Alpena and Atlanta Michigan in 8/2012 to collect more photos and background from previously unknown third cousins.

My brother David found an archival box in 2017 about our mother’s college years and her champion dairy goats in Oregon. That yielded a second edition of **My Mother**.

In 10/2021, John Satterthwaite, active at age 91 and my mother’s cousin/brother found me through the Internet. I had not seen his family for about sixty years. In my visit, he explained the convoluted family linkage between his mother and mine. Sufficient data and many family photos resulted in a third edition of **My Mother**.

Some of my father’s never-seen Navy paperwork was in David’s archival estate box. I discovered my father’s ship sinking in Okinawa and the closing battle on Attu Island in Alaska. He told me nothing except that he was “*on a ship in the Pacific*”. These Navy papers and the Canadian Census (newly available on-line in 2019) added to **My Father**.

On my 10/2021 trip, I met older cousin Lynn Schroeder unseen for more than sixty years. I was too young to remember Lynn when my parents visited his parents. I spent the rest of the day with Lynn’s family. He filled in a couple of gaps in **My Father**.

Childhood

While I already released **Childhood Passages** in 2010, an unplanned trip to Newport Beach, California in 11/2013 with two LLNL co-workers provided an in-person reunion with Ron Palmer from my high school for a photo-shoot. I spent the sixth grade at Newport Beach Elementary literally as a “beach kid”. I felt like a big little kid showing off my homeroom project. Refreshed memories invoked a fresh edit of that chapter.

During a rare road trip to Oregon in 8/2015, I completed a 35-year promise to locate my parent’s first farm in Mapleton. Anne and I could not locate it in a 1980 trip. All the 1956 buildings were gone and landmarks overgrown. I met the current owner of whom my mother took photos back in 1959! This surprise episode added to that chapter.

Walk With Me – Setting the Stage

My mother took color slides of her transition from suburban Los Angeles to Oregon farm life 1955-1960 using a format larger than 35mm, meaning these were unviewed by me for 60 years. A commercial photographer scanned the best 70 oversized slides for me. They revealed years never well explained to me. The photographer asked for specifics, but I had to respond, “*I don’t know, I have never seen these.*”

The wife of my mother’s favorite cousin/brother John Satterthwaite died in 2/2018. In his wife’s on-line memorial photobook, a 1962 photo shows her family upon my parent’s Ford 8N tractor near our Eugene farmhouse. While an 8-year-old, I have no memory nor had further cousin contact. I could not locate John himself until he found me in 2021.

Growing up on a dairy goat farm, I wanted to attend a dairy goat show as an adult for data, which I did at the 2017 Alameda County Fair. These unviewed slides and events caused a rewrite and expansion of my farm years in **Childhood Passages**.

In 2020, I discovered my mother kept all my report cards (gulp!). My elementary teachers commented that I was not likely to succeed in life (much less get into the next grade) since I was so inattentive, daydreaming, easily distractible, needed constant reminders to work, and had to be told six times within 30 minutes to stay in my seat. They all noted that I did quite well whenever I decided to complete the work.

This continued up through the eighth grade. My parents must have tired of hearing every school quarter about my wandering mind and unfocused behavior. I read of no anti-social problems. I liked the teachers and they liked me. However, my slow methodical work, constant dawdling, and zoning out during instruction time fully perplexed my teachers and parents. I scattered those somewhat embarrassing capsule summaries throughout **Childhood Passages** and **Coming of Age**.

High School

In 2011, I sent **Coming of Age** about my high school years to family. It addressed my new engagement with Jesus in the role of Savior, after years as only a casual Friend.

I did not comprehend the awfulness of sin as a child. God, always the gentleman, nudged me along the faith path only as I became ready. Even good kids need a Savior. It was not the kind of sin that God measures. Placing Him on a back burner becomes the primary sin from which all other sins spring.

That chapter detailed the supra-natural aspects of my water baptism, followed by a play-by-play commentary during one evening exactly forty days later, in which Jesus immersed me into his Holy Spirit. Being outside a Pentecostal framework, this event moved Jesus as my Savior (from the sin of distance) to the role of my Lord (for stepping up to the faith-plate). It was a light-switch moment. I distrust worked-up crowds and so the Lord lets me speak gently in tongues almost daily for over forty years. This non-manipulative and quiet approach encouraged many people from liturgical backgrounds.

Walk With Me – Setting the Stage

Ron Palmer, as noted, contacted me after 42 years asking about Royal High School. That newly built school started in the fall of 1968. Sophomores and Juniors from the west end of town transferred from Simi Valley High. Ron's own risqué memoirs had reached that same age as my then current chapter. This sent us both scurrying to our archival boxes.

We swapped scanned images of teenage drama workshop brochures, news, and yearbook photos. We assembled a slide presentation that is the only formal collection of teenage theater material from the initial three years of that brand new high school. I pulled out many long forgotten photos, clippings, and papers for scanning and spent two weeks in 8/2013 on a marathon re-write of that chapter with this newly uncovered teenage data.

Ron graduated a year ahead and yet still purchased the yearbook for my senior year. My dad lost his truck-driving job in 4/1971 before my graduation, and I could not afford the luxury of a yearbook. Ron shipped his unmarked copy of this high school yearbook as a gift, believing he became its steward on my behalf for over four decades.

College

First drafts about Livermore became more “We” instead of “I”. I had started a separate biography about Anne in 2010. However, the more I separated out her story, both of our story lines lost continuity and comprehension. I wove them back together in 2014.

In 2014, I first posted **College with Purpose** with many alumni quotes. Half of the chapter focused upon my multi-church spiritual community. Robert Kirby of that crew crosschecked my accounts that summer and added more insights. We both experienced professors who encouraged our faith and still held us to high academic standards. I added photos and located more brief testimonials by other college-level Jesus Kids.

My first ever trip to Indiana in 2016 (noted above for Jack's memoir), let me converse with former high school and college friends not seen for decades. Their input added to **Coming of Age, College with Purpose, and Glory Years**.

I finished Anne's biographic background using a life summary that she wrote in 2008. It fleshed out her early life unknown to me. I found her Girl Scout sash of merit badges.

Richard Freer, curator for Anne's maternal side, provided fresh data in 2015. Quotes from her Fuller Seminary journal, the Freer material, parental estate photos, and her expanded Girl Scout data appear in her chapter. In 2021, more data appeared in estate papers about Anne and her mother. Anne saved several biographic-specific essays I had not seen before she died; of which some now appear in *Anne and Her Family*.

Early Rittenhouse Christmas newsletters revealed more of Anne's backstory for a second edition of her chapter. In both 2019 and 2020, I found more of Anne's papers kept by her mother, which neither of them ever mentioned. These papers lay hidden for fifty years. I added portions to **Anne and Her Family, College with Purpose, and Glory Years**.

Career

I first released **Glory Years** in 2015. Anne’s reflective journal of class reading at Fuller Seminary filled in many gaps (1976-1989). I described my early years at LLNL (when they might have fired me), Anne’s role in starting Tri-Valley Haven, faith activities, the rise and fall of Briley Software, earthquakes, inklings of Anne’s ill health, and our six-year foster-adoption process. I recounted living through three revolutions of computer technology, microcomputer wars, and diabetic insulin pump improvements.

After my incompetence as a father and husband in the 1990’s, I finally tackled that difficult decade in 2019, covering my professional and church transitions in **Hitting My Stride**. I struggled with that chapter, which covered highly fascinating years for my brief international work with nuclear weapon materials but the deeply worst family years. Our marriage during our nineteenth year bordered upon divorce and suicide, mixing angry teenagers with my much more peaceful hours at work.

I warn families about such a rocky year as it puts the seven-year itch to shame. On this side of 35 years of solid marriage, that solitary divorce-probable year was not easy for me to encapsulate or describe in the chapter. I excluded the painful anger-management and family relationship issues that headed us towards that near-divorce.

Songs of our Faith, also released in 2015, described our “other life” beyond health care during Anne’s final five years. The collected raw material about her health and our responses to cancer and dying might appear in a proposed chapter **Declining Health**.

I next released **A New Song** as a suitable five-year chunk (2011-2015). In 12/2020, a second edition wove in the rest of that decade (2016-2020) to that same chapter.

As soon as I read Kent Philpott’s book *Awakenings in America and The Jesus People Movement* (2011), an e-mail exchange resulted in a 3/2019 interview in Marin County for his YouTube channel called *Why We Are Christians*. Material from my chapters filled the two-part interview. I linked the videos to my web and YouTube sites.

- (Episode 129) 1 - "Jesus became my friend at age 9"
- (Episode 130) 2 – “Baptized into God’s Holy Spirit”

Personality Measures

Unlocking Childhood Secrets

After writing my initial chapters, I discovered *Unlocking the Secrets of your Childhood Memories* (Leman and Carlson, 1989). They proposed that character traits form by discovery of “what worked” in early childhood. According to my first-born status and farmland childhood, certain traits seemed predictable.

They extracted some material from *The Givers and Takers* (Evatt and Feld):

Takers are assertive, more attractive, less service oriented, and in control. They break away [from any situation] and often break off relationships.

Givers [as I feel that I am] are less assertive, less attractive, service oriented, and less in control. They hang tough [if possible] and seldom break off a relationship.

Their short quizzes demonstrated my selective (“what worked”) or blocked (“what did not work”) memories. They asked about the following specific memories. Some of these memories appear in detail within the appropriate chapters, but these following memory joggers by Leman and Carlson helped me quickly explore my childhood past.

- I did not remember childhood birthday parties, although held yearly. I did not recall any elementary or junior high teacher by name, appearance, or interactions.
- Our first family vacation went from Eugene, Oregon to Albuquerque, New Mexico for a Dairy Goat convention. As a Fourth grader, I recall nothing except through home movies. Yet, the American Southwest attracted me for years.
- I first rode a bicycle in the Fifth Grade. That delayed experience opened up an exploratory nature briefly hinted at with my saddled burro on the Eugene farm.
- My Christmas memories focused upon the Sears’s toy catalog and endless televised commercials promoting materialism. I felt sorry for myself whenever my wish-drive exceeded reality. Nothing of Christmas hinted about faith.
- My first bedtime ritual memory came at age nine. My parents let me quietly listen to a clock radio for thirty minutes once I was in bed. They left the station choice up to me. It appeared that this radio aspect easily got me off to bed.
- In that same year, my father enjoyed mild horror television shows like *The Twilight Zone*, *The Outer Limits*, and *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*. It was the best way to scare me upstairs to bed. I could not handle even the opening credits of those series. The horror genre still grates against my sense of rationality. I detest fright-induced mental incongruities and intentional fright even as a prank.
- As a farm family, we rarely did anything together for joint entertainment. At times, we played board games like Monopoly. Otherwise, we kids made up our own games outdoors, sometimes risking or sustaining injury. The farms overall felt safe and happy. This contrasted with stresses after we moved to suburbia.

Walk With Me – Setting the Stage

- My usual mood as a young child was upbeat, exploratory, and mostly observing from the sidelines. It appeared that I became data-focused from an early age.
- My brothers felt “just present” unless they annoyed me. We ran on separate tracks with no common interests. They both begged and received early privileges that I only recently earned, robbing me the honor of “growing up”. With driving permits set at age 16, I felt that I finally gained a privilege not quickly usurped.
- My parents seemed part of the background tableau and mostly around meal times. They did not spend time with me. Instead, they provided the tools I needed for education (string bass, transportation, swim lessons, summer camps) or childhood accretions (a burro, a bike, camp clothing, scout uniform, and sandbox toys).
- Neither parent promoted the tooth fairy, Santa Claus, nor Easter bunny to be later unlearned. Their words were both law and believable. I argued about fairness but such efforts were short-lived. They never portrayed themselves as more than reality, good or bad. As a terrible bluffer, I could not devise believable lies even when needed. The trait at home was truth, even with key data withheld from us.

Leman and Carlson next moved into negative sensitive areas and fears.

- My mother proudly boasted of spanking me often as a toddler, much to my chagrin as an adult. I only recall a single spanking, an event for cause and I felt the punishment justified. My parents discovered that sending me to my room was the most effective punishment. I enjoyed being alone but the act of being sent away against my will meant being excluded from our rare positive social times.
- Heights frightens me without safety gear. The feeling of vertigo becomes intense when peering over ledges. During the Lane County Fair in elementary school, I found an affixed ladder to the roof of the empty Rodeo Announcers booth. All aspects felt exhilarating looking up and reaching my goal. The unexplained pull over the roof edge when I looked down jellied my insides. Panic rose while stepping onto the ladder to get down. I feared remaining trapped on that remote roof with no one nearby to help. As an adult, when stringing Christmas lights on my nearly flat roof eaves, I feel uncomfortable looking over the edge. A wave of fear occurs while swinging my leg out to the first ladder rung for getting down.
- My few embarrassments included just punishment (as noted above) with a three-year old brother dancing about me with glee while being spanked. Through a 3/1962 photo, I recall a visit at age 8 with Herzog cousins in Los Angeles. We played so long that I found myself too far from a bathroom. Not wanting to miss any fun, my bodily needs decided my fate adding to the dilemma of no spare clothing. On the other hand, some positive embarrassment turned me a happy shade of pink whenever I stepped into an inadvertent verbal faux pas that yielded good-natured ribbing. However, I avoided situations that risked overt rejection.

Walk With Me – Setting the Stage

- Solitary times rarely made me feel lonely unless in danger beyond potential help. Being alone brought solace and centering. True loneliness occurred during direct rejection by others during a stressful enterprise. Stress tests character and I was not happy with how I reacted. Those tests defined my lonely times.

Leman and Carlson then compared first-born issues with the childhood environment.

- Not having older siblings, my perception of adult expectations became rather adult-measured. The authors correctly tagged my perfectionism, always believing I could do better, feeling no hope of being a success, severe self-criticism, biting off more than I could accomplish on time, and a definite case of procrastinating on difficult jobs (thus making matters worse).
- My childhood environment was benign neglect. My parents seemed pre-occupied with their problems with little time for us. I picked up those workaholic aspects of overscheduling so as not to be the quantitative parent for my own children.

I felt none of the environments these authors labeled as overprotective, competitive, materialistic, pressured, or authoritarian (although my father was authoritarian).

Leman and Carlson remarked:

First-born children are guinea pigs without cages for novice parents. First-borns discover right from the start that the world is challenging and everything they do is a “big deal” to mom and dad. They quickly learn the rules for fitting into the forest of adult kneecaps. They take life seriously and grow up reliable and conscientious – seekers of approval who want to win good citizenship awards.

First-borns can commonly become Controllers and my adult lifestyle included that aspect even though I did not observe it quite that distinctly in my childhood. I followed the second form of that personality strain, called a Defensive Controller. That strain controls out of fear of domination by others.

The authors noted my tendencies:

Controllers see the world as a serious place and often have difficulty with relaxing and just enjoying life. Much of their energy is spent trying to keep others in line with their own expectations of what is good, right, and needed. Controllers set unrealistic expectations for themselves and others. This often leads to real problems in relationships, especially with spouse and children.

In their self-quiz about Controller tendencies, I needed to be in charge [of the work under my direct responsibility]. I preferred working alone and placed high expectations on others. A bad temper surfaced under debilitating stress. Anger and a short fuse caused many if not all of my downfalls. I do not enjoy surprises since I definitely want to know when, where, why, and how. I often wished other people took life a lot more seriously.

Personality Stereotype - ISTJ

Myers-Briggs personality types intrigued me, not such for the testing predictability and ease of spoofing it, but that an honest self-evaluation exposed four easily understood dimensions of personality. Regardless whether each dimension truly linked opposite poles, it was clear that I felt more strongly one direction than towards the alternative. The poles might be independent attributes with high/low preferences for each attribute.

Wikipedia negatively reviewed Myers-Briggs (edited):

The Myers–Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is an introspective questionnaire designed to indicate preferences in how people [live] and make decisions.

The MBTI by Katharine Cook Briggs and daughter Isabel Briggs Myers is based on the typological theory by Carl Jung. Although popular with businesses, his theory was [only] based upon subjective clinical observation, introspection and anecdotes, all regarded as inconclusive by scientific psychology.

Psychometric specialist Robert Hogan wrote that "The MBTI as little more than an elaborate Chinese fortune cookie." However, it remains popular because many people lack psychometric sophistication and it is [easy] to understand.

[Each of the four dimensions is a range that likely fits a standard bell curve.]

*[Range of] **Extraversion/Introversion**: Extraverts learn by interacting with others. Introverts prefer quiet reflection and privacy. Information processing occurs for introverts internally. [A useful indicator focuses upon situations where a person feels invigorated or worn out. Extroverts get energized around happy noisy people and introverts recharge with quiet time away from such people.]*

*[Range of] **Sensing/Intuition**: Sensors enjoy learning in a detailed and sequential manner. These attend to the [data-centric] present and move to the abstract after a concrete experience. Intuitives learn with an emphasis on meaning and associations. They value [intangible] insight higher than careful [data analysis]. Pattern recognition occurs [more] naturally for Intuitives.*

*[Range of] **Thinking/Feeling**: Thinkers desire objective truth [following] logical principles and are [more] natural at deductive reasoning. Feelers emphasize issues and causes that can be personalized while they consider people's motives.*

*[Range of] **Judging/Perceiving**: Judges thrive under organization and structure. They complete assignments to gain closure and like to be [time-sensitive]. Perceivers flourish in [ambiguity and] are stimulated by exciting new ideas.*

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Myers%E2%80%93Briggs_Type_Indicator

Walk With Me – Setting the Stage

Even without a formal (or faulty) MBTI test, most people self-sort through casual observations. I consistently identified as an ISTJ (introvert, sensor, thinker, and judge). Anne sifted into INFP (introvert, intuitor, feeler, and perceiver). We both clashed with and improved each other over these lifestyle perceptions and preferences.

The introversion metric often surprises friends because of my roles leading or speaking in front of groups. Comfort among large groups is a learned trait. However, I quickly burn out when I do not follow up with quiet solitude to recharge for the next day.

Numerous resources probed common traits of my ISTJ clan. Two summaries remarkably matched my experience including my blind-sided aspects. I openly identified with both sets of strengths and painful weaknesses. These preferences started young in my life. These preferences correlate with first-born traits and my earliest childhood situations.

NERIS Analytics accurately described me (edited):

Strengths: Few are as practical and invaluablely dedicated as ISTJs. With reliability and hard work, they create and maintain a secure environment.

Honest and Direct – Integrity is the heart of the ISTJ. Emotional manipulation, mind games, and reassuring lies all run counter to their plain and simple honesty.

Strong-willed and Dutiful – They work hard and stay focused. Patient and determined, they meet their obligations, period.

Responsible – Their word is a promise and a promise means everything. They [exhaust] themselves rather than fail to deliver. Loyalty is a strong sentiment.

Calm and Practical – They make clear, rational decisions. They make best use of others, but [they decide and criticize] for effectiveness more so than empathy.

Create and Enforce Order – [Effectiveness occurs] when everyone knows what is going on and why. Unclear guidelines and [rule breakers] are rarely tolerated.

Jacks-of-all-trades – ISTJs are repositories of knowledge (but more of facts than concepts). They grasp details of new challenging situations as a matter of course.

Weaknesses: ISTJ's easily trip where their methodical approaches are a liability. [Successful ISTJs deliberately] develop weaker traits [to balance their lives].

Stubborn – They resist new ideas not supported by them. Their factual decision-making makes it difficult to accept [when] they are wrong.

Insensitive – They unintentional hurt sensitive feelers [as they] determine the most effective way to say what needs to be said [or chosen not to be said].

By the Book – They are reluctant to bend rules or try new things, even when the downside is minimal. Truly unstructured environments leave them paralyzed.

Judgmental – They do not respect people who willfully [discount stable data].

Unreasonably Blame Themselves – Since only they can see projects through reliably, turning away helpful ideas, they believe failure is theirs alone to bear.

<https://www.16personalities.com/istj-strengths-and-weaknesses>

Walk With Me – Setting the Stage

Indeed, I learned the entire range of each attribute dimension during my work career. The true value of these self-identified preferences occur when under stress. Stress induced an automatic pilot using my most comfortable preferences. That is, what worked for me in the past surfaced, even when not optimal, for a given current stress situation.

I did not perform well under some disorder or a lack of organization. If that environment existed, I addressed the lack of organization first by offering “move-forward” suggestions to get our team out of a chaotic standstill. All work groups go through a typical Form-Storm-Norm-Perform cycle. My role from a youth focused upon the Norm stage.

BSM Consulting likewise correctly noted my attributes (edited)

The ISTJ desire to execute known systems against concrete facts makes them chunk through large amounts of routine work. With their respect for rules and order, they value honesty and integrity. They have a "stick to it" attitude, are not afraid of hard work, and put forth great effort. This persistence helps them achieve any identified goal. Their value for social structure makes them more interested in [engaging socially] than is true for many [stereotyped] introverts.

Weaker ISTJ characteristics are due to their dominant Introverted-Sensing function controlling their personality, rather than for more balanced purposes.

They lack interest in other people or in relating to them.

They occasionally display inappropriate emotions.

They generally "look after oneself" [and appear aloof].

They dismiss opinions and perspectives before understanding them.

They judge others [first] rather than themselves.

They look at external ideas and people with [an eye first towards] faults.

They become slave to routine to the point that deviation is unacceptable.

They [rarely] communicate their feelings [and then with] difficulty.

Those who developed [their weak] Extraverted-Thinking [merge] their interest in concrete data with the welfare of [others] and enjoy these special gifts:

They move from an expectation that “others should follow rules” into [leading by] a dedication and willingness to work hard to uphold standards themselves.

They [usually] maintain relationships that respect individual differences.

They use their store of facts to benefit [others] rather than their own interests.

They become better at strategizing.

They can brainstorm multiple possible solutions to problems.

They are [still] uncomfortable with decisions based on values rather than [data], but they understand a value judgement based on a personal perspective.

http://www.personalitypage.com/html/ISTJ_per.html

Seven-Stanza Life Summary

People asked on Passion Week 2001, “*In all our years, we never heard your faith story. Could you? and, oh, keep it under 4 minutes.*” Here is an updated version:

BEFORE

I grew up as the good kid on a dairy goat farm.
Never attended church, with no knowledge about God.
At age 9, Jesus became my Friend through a Billy Graham radiocast
I made up songs to Him while walking the hills of the farm

Later, God used normal 16-year-old worries to define my need for Jesus as Savior.
I owned a Bible but ... no church, ... no help, ... so I began at the front of the book.
I struggled through the first five books of Moses and felt just plain miserable.
Like Luther, I prayed for forgiveness for everything and anything imagined.

TRANSFORM

Then my anti-church father invited me to church for the first and only time.
Sensing that this was my only immediate chance, I was baptized that evening.
God profoundly lifted the burden as I came out of the water. I felt fully forgiven.
Forty days later, I was introduced to God’s Holy Spirit and to his undeserved gifts.

I no longer lived for God on my own but let Him to live through me.
The Bible became alive. No more ink on paper. Genesis and Romans made sense.
My growing time in the desert was as a kitchen helper at a Jewish camp all summer.
I co-led an underground Christian club at school, but still forbidden to attend church.

AFTER

The first Sunday at college, I picked a church, eyes closed, from the phonebook.
Three weeks later, they selected me as interim small-town preacher for a year.
That was when I first learned the great hymns of the church.*
I was jail chaplain for a year, started a Christian coffeehouse on campus, and married.

Arriving at Livermore Lab in 1976, I jumped into their Christian community eagerly.
My calling over the years was teaching, always highly interactively with each class.
A brief foray at Fuller Seminary gave me some much needed Greek and basic classes.
Midway, we adopted a sibling-pair of preschoolers, but badly lost the teenage wars.

Those were Shadowland years for faith and marriage. My bipolar son went to prison.
My daughter is a single mom of two. My wife survived cancer, but died three years later.
I passed the leadership baton for the Lab Bible Study Groups after nearly 30 years.
A local mentor retired Pastor Roger Lewis, encouraged me since 1977 for decades.

* The beloved Passion-week hymns remind me not only the incredible cross ... but the profoundly empty grave ... which an old local Jewish Rabbi (Reform) angrily told me “ ... *was the hallmark of Christian faith and that if I did not believe Jesus was raised, then I had no business being a Christian*” - I. Cor. 15