THE WAGNER-TALPEY FAMILY ORCHARD

By Irma Talpey Wagner

Edited by Alexander Talpey McMahon

1976

Introduction

As we all know, Grammie has a wonderful memory for stories of her childhood and life. Last winter, the idea came up for Grammie to sit down and record some of these stories. In return I was to edit them and get them printed for any family and friends who wanted them. As we continued to talk about this the project became more defined as a collection of stories about the various family trees which have resulted in our collective presence on the earth. Thus, the "Wagner-Talpey Family Orchard" was conceived.

The whole project has been great fun for both Grammie and myself. We got together last summer in Florida and went over the stories which Grammie had written down. This fall has been spent getting them printed up. Grammie so enjoyed writing the stories that there may be a sequel yet to come of stories about her childhood.

We both hope that you will enjoy reading this collection as much as we have enjoyed putting it together.

Alexander Talpey McMahon
Christmas, 1976

A ROUGH SUMMARY OF THE TALPEY GENEAOLOGY*

Michael Talpey m. ?

Richard m. Elizabeth
(c. 1715-1793) (? - 1778)

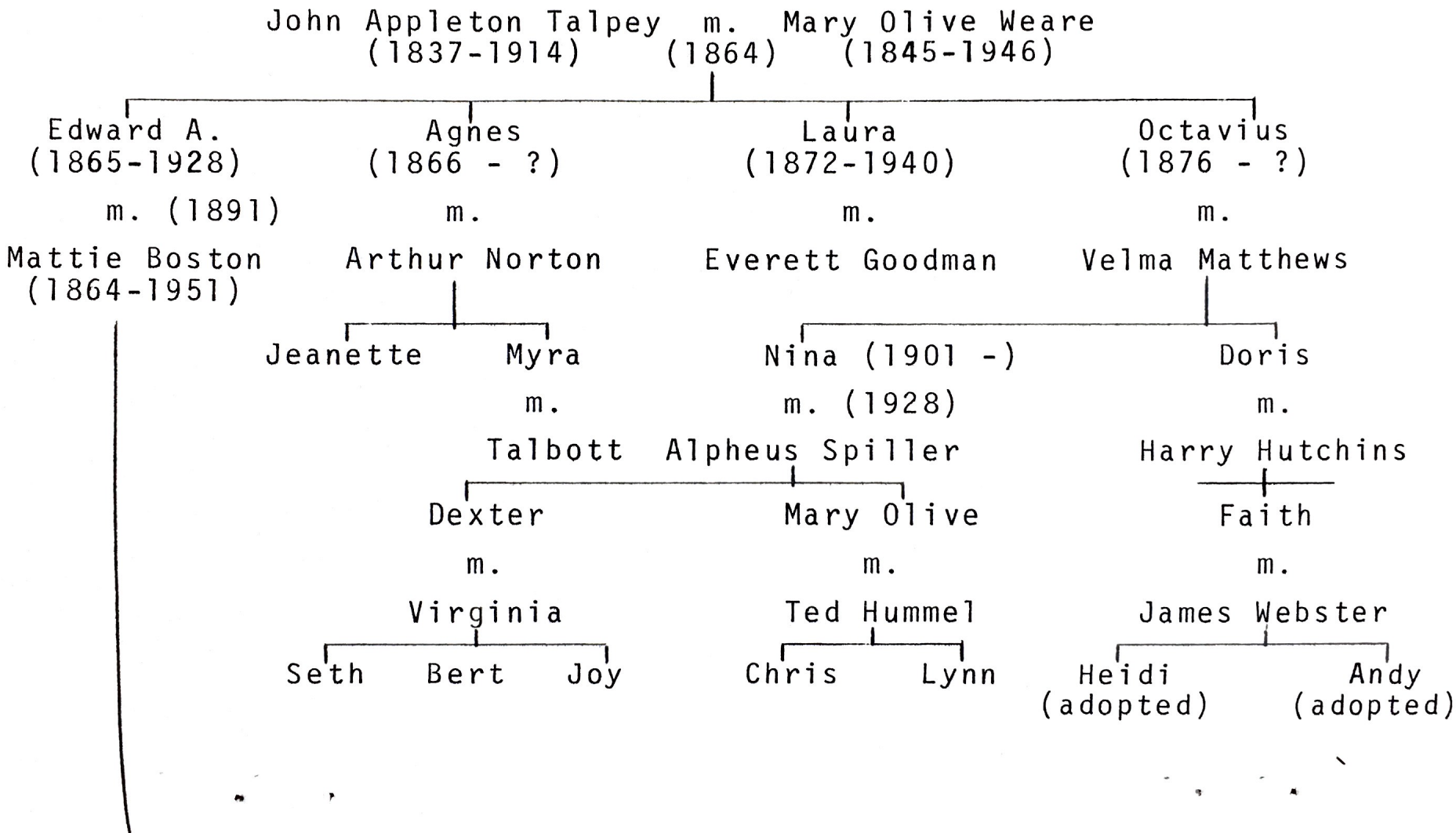
nine children, one was Henry m. Mary Berry
(Bapt. in 1746)

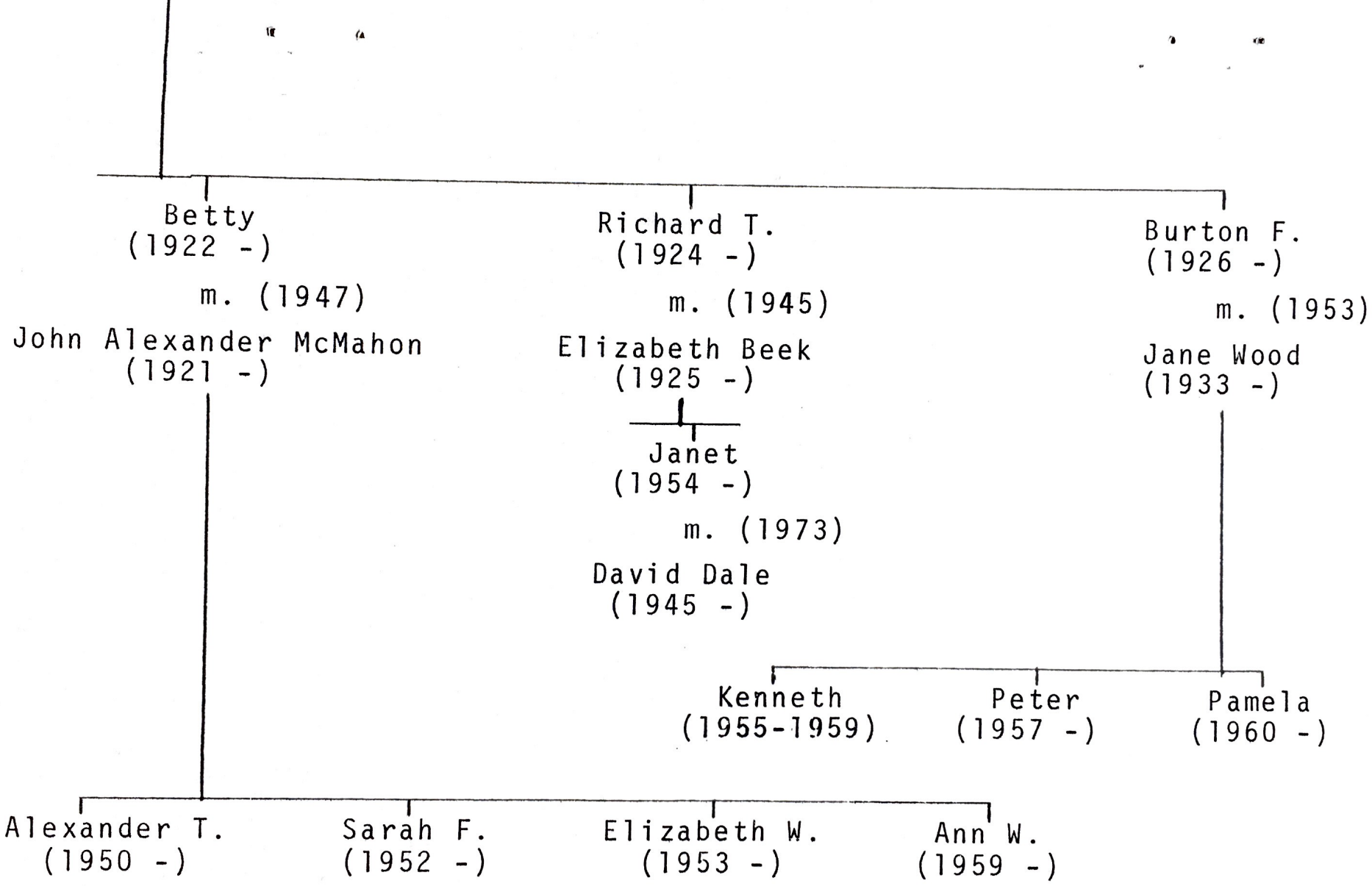
nine children, one was Capt. Jonathan Talpey m. Eliz. Carlisle
(1788-1863) (1796-1891)

eight children, one was John Appleton
(my grandfather)

*The complete Talpey geneaology starts before 1715 and covers a sheet of paper eight feet long.

RECENT TALPEY FAMILY TREE




Betty
(1922 -)
m. (1947)
John Alexander McMahon
(1921 -)
Richard T.
(1924 -)
m. (1945)
Elizabeth Beek
(1925 -)
Janet
(1954 -)
m. (1973)
David Dale
(1945 -)
Burton F.
(1926 -)
m. (1953)
Jane Wood
(1933 -)
Kenneth
(1955-1959)
Peter
(1957 -)
Pamela
(1960 -)
Alexander T.
(1950 -)
Sarah F.
(1952 -)
Elizabeth W.
(1953 -)
Ann W.
(1959 -)

The Talpey family history dates back to the late 1600's. The first known record is of a Richard Talpey who landed in his sailing ship on the Isles of Shoals. The story is that he landed with a "keg of money" -- but from where he came is unknown. He sailed to the mainland and purchased land which he later cut up into plots and sold. Finally he settled in Cape Nedick and sailed his ship, loaded with dried cod fish, to foreign ports. I have a picture of one of his ships supposedly with a Hong Kong background -- which I have never been able to identify as such. At that time the Cape Nedick River was navigable at high tide and along its shores there were ship's chandlers shops. In later years, when my father was a very young boy he worked in one of these shops. One of my cousins has the will of this Richard Talpey, in which he left one son only a shilling because he was "no account" (direct quote). To another son he left his "black boy, Tom" and to a daughter he gave his "black girl, Ann." (The name of this girl is uncertain.)

More recently, a descendant of the first Richard Talpey, also named Richard Talpey, married a woman, Florence McCarthy. She was his second wife, his first having died leaving him with three boys.

Florence became very interested in the Talpey history and she and Richard made many trips to France, England, etc., to try to find some trace of the family origins. Once she was convinced that the name had been spelled Talpé, French Huguenot. Then, on one of their later trips they visited the English fishing villages and found a community called TAPLEIGH with a neighboring town named APPLEDORE. Strangely enough one of the islands in the Isles of Shoals is also named Appledore. I recently visited the Isles of Shoals while visiting Maine and the guide told us the same story; that the men who sailed to the isles were from English fishing villages, and that the island Appledore is named for one of the villages.

There are many Talpey descendants living in the Cape Neddick area at the present time. This was brought home to me when Francis and I named one son "Richard Talpey Wagner." One of the relatives, a man I really didn't know at all, called on me and informed me that I had absolutely no right to spoil the Richard Talpey name by adding another name to it!

My grandparents were John Appleton and Mary Olive Talpey. We adored both of them and they were always called "Pa and Ma Talpey." He was a very fine looking man -- tall,

white hair and beard -- quiet and always ready to listen. She was delightful -- short, inclined to be fat and always wore a huge white apron which completely surrounded her and was tied with a big bow at the back. I never once saw her with a soiled apron.

One of the vivid memories of my childhood was when, at Christmas times, my father, mother and I would take the train from Manchester, N.H., where we lived, and ride to Portsmouth, and then to York Beach. The station was where the Post Office is now. Someone from the Talpey House would meet us at the station and take us to the farm house.

The tree was always in the parlor, a room which was never used except for very special occasions. The aunts decorated the tree and the children were not supposed to see it until Christmas morning. I well remember one Christmas when my mother found the key to the parlor door and took the five children, my four cousins and myself, in to see it the day before Christmas. I can also remember that my mother received a sound scolding from my grandmother.

The whole family gathered in the parlor the night before Christmas and all of us, including the children, played some sort of card game. I can't remember a thing about it except

that it was fun. My grandmother would allow card playing but NEVER on Sunday. One year all of this happened on a Saturday night and we were about to finish the game when it was almost 12 o'clock. One second after 12:00 was Sunday. So Ma Talpey informed us that we had to stop the instant that the clock started to "dong." Everyone begged that we be allowed to finish the game. No good! At the first stroke of 12:00, Ma Talpey picked up both lamps and walked out of the room, leaving all in complete darkness. Of course, there was no electricity in the house during those days. We had to feel our way to our rooms!

After Christmas dinner, tree, presents, etc., we would all go out sleding. The barn at the farm sat on a slope and before Christmas my grandfather would shovel a path through the snow and across the field. Then he would flood it with water to freeze. He had what we called a "double runner" sled and we would take turns trying to steer the sled on that icy runway. We always landed in a snow bank but nobody was hurt and nobody cared if we were covered with snow. The farm house and barn are still there -- in excellent condition and still in the family.

Both of my parents grew up around

York. One story about them which has always amused me happened just before they were married. There was to be a costume dance at York Beach. The hall was situated on a sand dune approximately where the Ocean House is now. All of the local people, young and old, went to the dances. No one was supposed to tell anyone else what costume he or she was to wear. Father and a cousin, Bert Talpey, looked very much alike -- same height, weight, size -- almost like twin brothers rather than cousins. So, the two decided to dress exactly alike. Just before the dance my father said to my mother, "I'll bet you any amount of money that you won't be able to pick me at the dance." Her answer was, "Eddie, I shall always know you anywhere and at any time!" When the two men walked into the hall, my mother walked up to my father and said, "Hello, Eddie." He was amazed and, no doubt, very much pleased! It was a long time later that my mother admitted that she really didn't know him until she noticed that he had on a ring which he always wore. He and Bert had forgotten to take it off or exchange it.

From all that I have ever heard about my mother, she could have become a very wonderful actress. So many of the older people who knew her told me this years ago. At that time it was quite a thing to do to put on plays -- all local people -- and mother always

had the leading part. My uncle, Sidney, was always the glamorous, suave, sophisticated city man. I have one of the play bills, "East Lynne." Admission was 25 cents and it was called "A Five Act Drama." The story was, of course, about the beautiful shy young country girl who can't resist the promises of the dashing city man. She leaves with him, being told by her father "never to darken my door again." She is abandoned by the city man when the baby arrives -- so -- she is forced to return home, trudging through the snow on a bitterly cold winter's night. The father relents but it has been too much for her to stand and in the last act she dies. I can still hear my mother say to me, "You know, Irma, at the end of my death scene there wasn't a dry eye left in the house."

In that time there was no electricity, no cars and everything about which I am writing took place in very small communities. The people were busy during the summer with farming, fishing, running stores, etc., but in the winter there was absolutely nothing for amusement or entertainment -- no T.V.'s or radios. So the people had to make their entertainment themselves, with the whole community working at it.

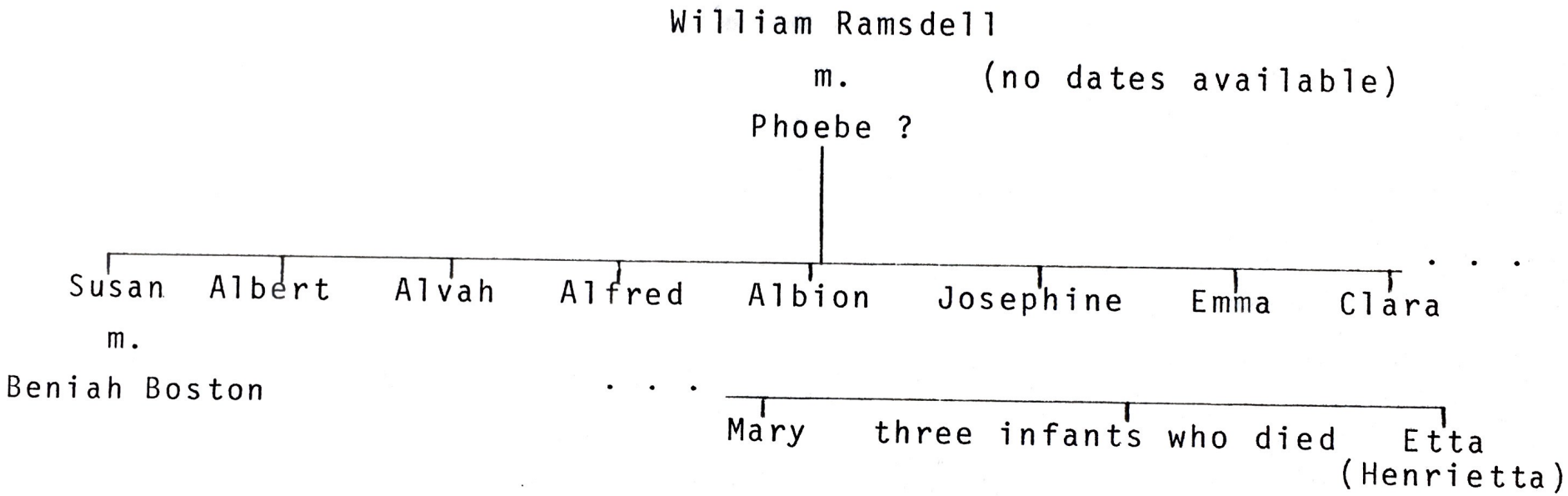
My father graduated from Berwick Academy in South Berwick, Maine. It

is still operating. I really don't know much about it but judge that it was like a junior college at that time. One of the traditions of the school was a form of hazing. Each new boy was thrown over a high board fence by the upper-classmen, then he joined them in throwing over the next boy, etc. My father, a strong farmer's boy, was the last boy to be thrown over. It took the combined efforts of all to get him over. He was quite the hero of his class!

When my mother was 17 years old she decided that she wanted to be a dressmaker. In those days a young person had to serve an apprenticeship in order to learn a trade. So my mother went to Biddeford, Maine, and worked with a dressmaker there for three years. When she returned to York Village, she lived with my grandmother and became known because of the beautiful dresses she made for all the local York Harbor and York Village ladies. In fact, one of the wealthier women took my mother to St. Augustine, Fla., as a companion for the winter.

Next I will talk about my mother's family, the Ramsdells. I have no definite date of my grandmother Boston's birth or death date but I have given an estimate.

RAMSDELL FAMILY TREE



My grandmother, Susan Ramsdell, was the first child born to William and Phoebe Ramsdell. The thirteenth child (Aunt Etta as she was always called) was born approximately the same time that Susan gave birth to my mother. The two girls were more like sisters than aunt and niece. Strangely enough, Aunt Etta's daughter, Phyrma, was born on May 7, 1893, and I was born on May 8, 1893. We were always very fond of each other. Phyrma is still alive and lives in Arlington, Ma.

I remember Alfred, Alvah and Josephine. Alfred was a farmer and delivered vegetables to the Goldenrod in the early years. Alvah was an excellent architect and built many fine houses in Dover. He became quite wealthy. He and my mother's brother, Sidney, were much alike physically and in their personalities, too. Visiting Uncle Alvah and Aunt Ida at their home in Dover was a big event for me as a child. Many of the descendants of the thirteen children still live in the Mr. Agamenticus area in York. There are Ramsdells and Bostons everywhere. Now I have led up to the Boston Family Tree.

BOSTON FAMILY TREE

Josiah Boston
(? -1881)

m.

Phoebe Littlefield
(1804-1881)

Beniah

m.

Susan Ramsdell
(c. 1843-c. 1923)

- Owen
  - m.
  - Dora ?
    - Ernest
    - George (Connors)
- Mattie
  - m.
  - Edward A. Talpey
    - Irma
- Sidney
  - m.
  - Inez Page

Josiah Littlefield Boston owned the old Boston Farm in York, almost at the Ogunquit line. On the town records it is called "80 acres more or less" and now belongs to Burton and Jane Wagner. It is almost inaccessible. There is a small river (Josiah River) on two sides of the farm but the bridge has been long gone. Originally it was a very successful farm but Beniah, Josiah and Phoebe's only child, was not at all interested in becoming a farmer. He married my grandmother, Susan, when she was very young. She had been obliged to work at a young age. Beniah had been given a deed to the farm by his parents but after he married Susan and had brought her to the farm, his parents realized that she was the one who would carry on the farm. So they took the farm away from Beniah and gave it to Susan with the provision that she would take care of them as long as they lived, which she did. The new arrangement didn't bother Beniah at all. My mother often told me how she and her two brothers adored their father. He loved them, too, and spent a lot of time with them. Susan was the worker and the disciplinarian.

Beniah stayed on the farm until the children were approximately 10, 12 and 14. He then decided to go to Boston to find work which was more to his liking than farm work. It was absolutely no case of deserting the family. He wrote and sent money frequently to them. But, suddenly,

the letters stopped coming and no one ever heard from him again. When Owen and Sidney were in their teens they went to Boston. They found the house where he had been living but nobody seemed to know what had happened. My grandmother always believed that there must have been an accidental death.

My grandmother would load the farm wagon with butter, eggs and cream and drive to Portsmouth where she would trade the farm products for the staples needed such as flour, sugar, etc., and all the materials she could find. She made all of the clothes worn by the family, even suits for the two boys and my grandfather. She was a proud woman and her boast was that the members of her family were the best dressed group attending the Ogunquit Church on Sunday.

One Sunday an incident happened which always amused my mother and uncles. It seems that they were on their way to church in the farm wagon. The wagon had a removable seat which slid in back of the front seat whenever necessary. My grandfather and the three children were all in the front seat and my grandmother was sitting in state on the back seat. I can picture her, a large woman dressed in her Sunday-best dress (as she called it), always with a hat and gloves and a parasol, small and very decorative.

Of course it was a country road full of bumps and hollows. When the wagon went over a particularly large bump the back seat slid off the wagon and landed on the road with my grandmother still sitting there, holding her parasol over her and yelling, "Whoa! Whoa!" My grandfather and the children burst out laughing, infuriating my grandmother to the point where she exclaimed, "You'd have laughed if it had killed me!"

By the way, those bumps were always called "Thank-you mums." Why, I do not know. My mother and father always said that the first words I said, after "Mama" and "Daddy," were "Thank-you mum." One day when I was riding with them the wagon went into and out of a particularly bad bump and I was almost bounced off the seat. They insisted that I said the word "darn" before the "thank-you mum," but I don't believe that!

After my two uncles had left the farm it was no place for my mother and grandmother to live alone, so they moved to York Village and bought a house where Burnett's Restaurant is now. Shortly after that the house and huge barn on the farm were completely destroyed by fire. No one knows why and how it happened. However, many wonderful records, furniture and china were destroyed at the same time.

After my mother married my father and moved to York Beach -- he was the Postmaster there at that time -- they lived over the office in the building which is now the linen shop, not too far from the Goldenrod. One half of the lower floor was the Post Office. The other was a grocery store and, also, an agency for farm equipment. A few years ago someone gave me a copy of a local paper which was published at that time and in which my father had placed an advertisement to announce that he had been given the agency to sell a very special kind of "tedder," a device to throw hay up in the air to dry it after the grass has been cut. Father went on in the ad to say that the United States government had just purchased 126 of these tedders and "if they are good enough for the United States, they are good enough for you!"

No story about my mother and grandmother at that time would be complete unless their pug dog, Punch I, is mentioned. He was equally fond of the two women and couldn't choose between them. So, after mother left the Village to live at the Beach in June, 1871, he would walk from one town to the other, summer and winter, and stay exactly two weeks at each place. Mother said that one could keep a calendar by marking the time of his arrival and departure. This kept up until the day I was born, May 8, 1893. He never went back to

the Village again. He took over complete guardianship of me.

I was three years old when father and mother bought the building, now the Goldenrod. Punch, of course, moved with us. I never remember owning or even being at all interested in dolls. I had my own living doll. My mother made a baby's dress and bonnet for Punch and I had a doll carriage, a mineature baby carriage. It was a very tight fit for Punch which didn't seem to bother him at all. Each day I would dress him in his dress and bonnet, put his front legs in the sleeves of the dress, tie a bow under his chin, and put him on his back in the carriage. Then I would proceed to walk all around York Beach. There were no automobiles then and everyone living there knew me anyhow. One day in the late 1950's a little old man came into the Goldenrod and asked for me. I met him and he told me that he had come to York Beach a number of summers when he was in his late teens and he had never forgotten seeing me pushing a doll carriage with a pug dog dressed like a baby in it.

In those days a pug dog's life span was only 8 to 10 years. My Uncle Sidney decided that Punch I wouldn't live much longer so, one day, he arrived at the Goldenrod with a pug puppy, Punch II. He was a wonderful dog, too, but I was never as

completely devoted to him as I was to Punch I. Now, it is easy to understand why, in the Fall of 1959, I couldn't resist a small -- 6 weeks old -- pug puppy who was to be Punch III. The Spillers, Francis and I had been invited to Tampa for dinner at the Officer's Club at McGill Air Base by a retired army officer who was a friend of ours. As Al Spiller was driving out 4th Street we passed a sign saying "PUG PUPPIES FOR SALE." All four of us saw the sign and wanted to take a look at the puppies. So, Al made a U-turn, against the law, and we found a card table with a shelter and blanket on one side and four darling little dogs. As I walked up to the table a little female crawled away from the other three and walked up to me. I put my hand, palm up, on the table and the puppy climbed on to it. I put the puppy down twice, but each time she came back. Al Spiller said, "Irma, that dog has chosen you. You might as well buy her because she is your dog." And so I acquired Punch III. It took all the money the four of us had to pay for her. For fifteen years, she definitely was MY dog.

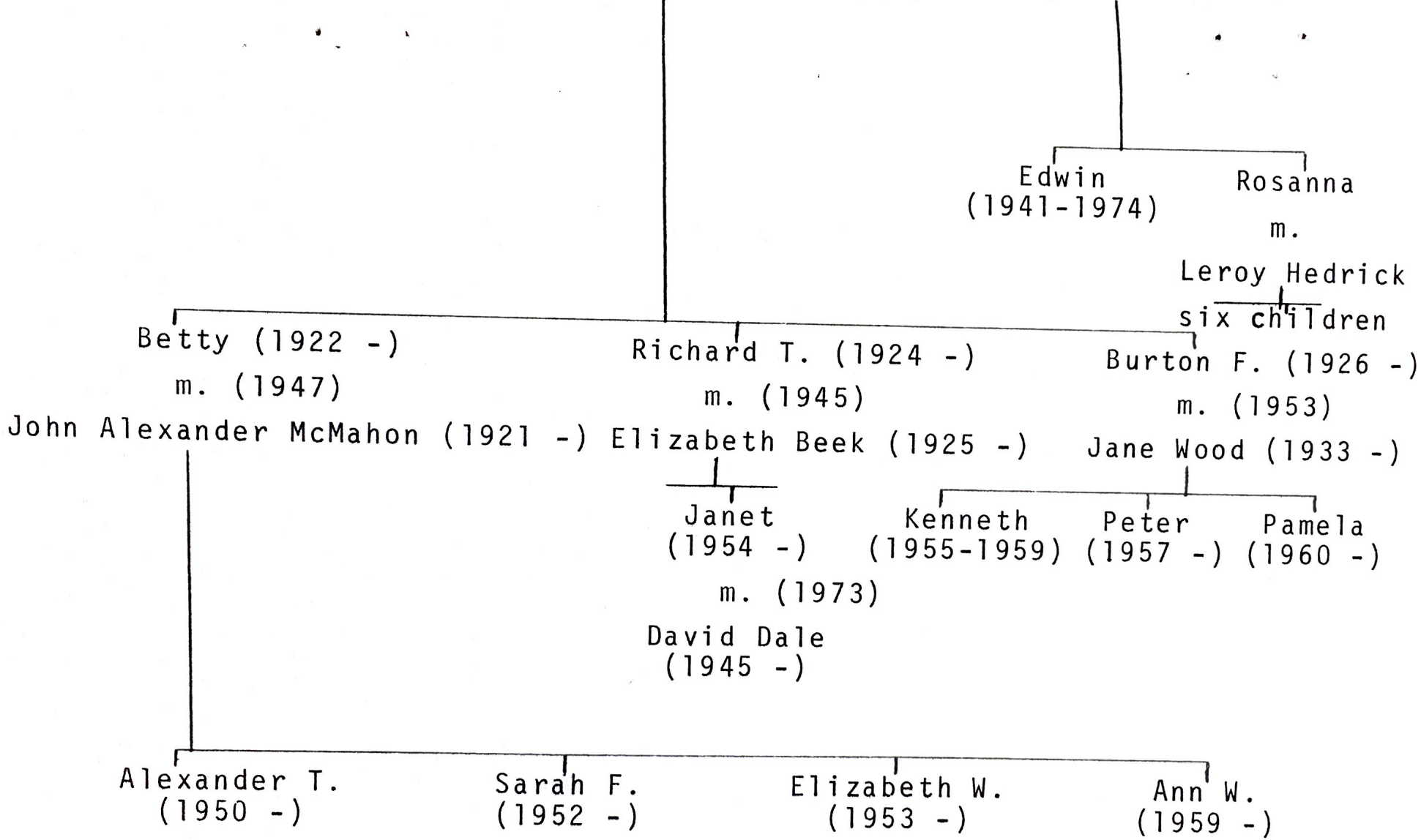
Now for the Wagner tree. As sort of a prelude to that tree I want to say that a member of the family, a lawyer named Scott Wagner who lived in Tiffin, Ohio, tried to trace the Wagner family history. He succeeded in establishing, to his satisfaction

at least, that the first Wagner was a Doctor A. Van Wagner who settled in Pennsylvania -- no doubt Pennsylvania Dutch. When Dr. Van Wagner moved to Ohio he dropped the "Van" and became Dr. A. Wagner. But, after that, there is no known connection with the Wagner family, beginning with a George Mitchell Wagner, born in 1782. That's where the tree will begin.

WAGNER FAMILY TREE

George Michael Wagner (1782-1856) m. Anna M. ?

- ? ? ?
- Johanna
- Levi
- Jesse Bryon (1829-1913) m. Nancy J. Gilmor (1838-1928)
  - Orton Dufay (1859-1948) m. Emily Beaver (1860-1927) (2nd wife, Harriet ?)
    - Jesse B. (1889-1967) m. Hazel Bower (1892-1966)
    - Francis G. (1891-1975) m. Irma Talpey (1893 -)
    - Merrick N. (1893-1965) m. Athene Reidmeyer
  - Retta M. ("Aunt Pet") m. Dr. Harrison Nobel


Edwin
(1941-1974)
Rosanna
m.
Leroy Hedrick
six children
Betty (1922 -)
m. (1947)
John Alexander McMahon (1921 -)
Richard T. (1924 -)
m. (1945)
Elizabeth Beek (1925 -)
Burton F. (1926 -)
m. (1953)
Jane Wood (1933 -)
Janet
(1954 -)
m. (1973)
David Dale
(1945 -)
Kenneth
(1955-1959)
Peter
(1957 -)
Pamela
(1960 -)
Alexander T.
(1950 -)
Sarah F.
(1952 -)
Elizabeth W.
(1953 -)
Ann W.
(1959 -)

Francis's grandfather, Jesse Bryon Wagner, went to California shortly after the Gold Rush of 1849. His main purpose in going was to see if he could find his younger brother, Levi, who had gone there earlier. He did find Levi but was unable to do any mining because while cleaning his gun one day it accidentally discharged and the bullet went through the palm of his hand. So, instead of becoming a miner he and another young man from his own home town in Ohio opened a store -- sort of a general store which sold supplies to the miners. Payment was usually made in gold dust or gold nuggets. I don't know how they received their supplies but, possibly, from wagons making the cross-country trip. Anyhow, they were doing just great in the store and all was well until Jesse began hearing from his family and friends in Ohio that the other man was sending a great deal of money, etc., to his own family. So, Jesse made a check and discovered that his partner had really been stealing. That was the end of the partnership.

In 1856, Jesse and Levi traveled East by boat from California to New York. Jesse kept a log of each day's sailing. Francis and I read that log during one of our visits to Wagner farm. It is almost unbelievable, and, sadly, the log plus other priceless things, including a daily account of the Civil War which Francis's

grandmother, Nancy, had kept and made into a book with calico covered card board for the covers, were all destroyed as worthless at the time when the farm was sold.

Part of Jesse's log was included in a letter written by father Wagner (Orton) to Jess (Francis's brother) in 1941, following a visit which Francis and I had made to the farm. At that time father Wagner was almost completely blind. When the doctor told him that soon he would be totally blind, father Wagner taught himself to type. Sometimes the results were disastrous but it was wonderful to all of us that he showed so much courage. The first part of the letter tells about our visit and how we spent one afternoon reading and talking about Grandfather's trip to California and about the trip he and Levi took returning to Ohio by boat. Sailing from San Francisco to Panama, to New York, and then to Ohio, the trip lasted over two months. Now to quote from the log:

> We reached New York late in August -- Levi being sick every minute -- Each had eight thousand dollars hidden in the pockets of buckskin under our vests -- which were rather uncomfortable around Panama. While in New York each of us bought a gold watch and chain for $150.00 apiece and a doe

skin suit and a plug hat and
came home -- This was in 1856.

Father Wagner's comment, "They were the envy of all the young people."

After Grandfather Wagner returned to Ohio from California, he began to buy land, a number of acres, in Fort Seneca, Ohio. This was the beginning of the Wagner farm. At approximately that time he married Nancy Gilmor, a school teacher. The records show three spellings of that name: GILMOR, GILMORE, GILLMOR. The "G" in Francis' name is GILMOR, but Margaret Sullivan, about whom I shall write later, insists that it should be GILLMOR. Just a matter of choice, I suppose.

I never knew Grandfather Wagner, but I did know Grandmother Nancy. She was Scottish, and very definitely the matriarch of the family. Not more than 5 feet tall and weighed between 80 and 90 pounds, and she ruled that family. There never was any doubt about that. Her only son, Orton (Francis's father), had no desire to comply with her wish that he become a Methodist minister. Instead he wanted to teach, but he didn't have a chance! He became a circuit minister, preaching the Sunday morning sermon in Ft. Seneca and driving (summer and winter) to the next community for an afternoon meeting, then preaching the third in the evening somewhere else.

Francis told me that he liked to go with his father on the Sunday trips. In the winter, his mother would heat what were called "soap-stones" for them to put in the sleigh to keep their feet warm, and his father would keep telling him "to wiggle your toes." Years ago I read a book with the title "One Foot in Heaven." I don't remember the author's name but it was almost a perfect story of the Wagner's life in those days.

The family's first visit to Florida occurred in 1907, approximately, when a Methodist minister in South Jacksonville wanted to exchange pulpits with someone in Ohio for a year. So the Wagners moved to Florida, a happy time for all of them. I believe that the very happiest days of father Wagner's life were when he was asked to teach English literature, as I remember, at Southern College, a Methodist sponsored college in Sutherland, Florida -- a town not far from St. Petersburg, and now known as Palm Harbor. Merrick and Francis went with the family and enrolled in the college. The town is on the shore of the Gulf of Mexico and I am certain that both boys spent more time sailing than they did studying. This all ended when a letter from Grandmother Wagner arrived telling them that they must come back to Ohio immediately -- that Grandfather was too old to manage the farm any longer. He never

knew that she had written to them and was very upset when they returned. A few years later all the college buildings and dormitories were burned -- completely destroyed -- and the college moved to Lakeland. It is now called Florida Southern College and has a beautiful campus. Some of the buildings were designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Some years ago I went there when the Smith Club had been invited for a one day's visit.

I never met any of the Wagner family until the Spring of 1922. At that time Francis's parents were living in a home they had bought in Tiffin, Ohio. On Sunday, Grandmother Wagner invited everyone for dinner at the farm. She lived alone in one of the big houses there. Each Fall she canned fruit and vegetables even though the cellar was already filled "with enough food to take care of a family of a dozen people for three years," as Francis told me. That Sunday morning Mother Wagner told me about the bed spreads Grandmother had made. There were all kinds of animals on the farm -- cows, hens, pigs, sheep, etc. Merrick was really managing the farm with the help of a man called a "tennant farmer" who lived in a house on the farm with his family and did all the manual work while Merrick provided the tools, wagons, horses, etc.

Before leaving for the family dinner, Mother Wagner told me that Grandmother

Wagner had made three bed spreads -- from scratch, too. She raised the sheep, sheared the wool, carded it, spun it and dyed the threads and, finally, wove the spreads on a loom. Two of the finished spreads were in dark blue and white, the third was red and white. When she finished them she told the family that if she liked the young women the three boys married, who would give each one one of the spreads. Francis was the last to be married -- Athene and Hazel had received theirs and mine was yet to be given, IF she liked me. You can imagine how I felt going to that Sunday dinner. The bed spread was never mentioned until just before Francis and I were leaving. Then, Grandmother Wagner issued a command -- "Irma, come into the bedroom with me!" And I was given my bed spread. So I was, finally, a member of the Wagner family.

Grandmother Wagner was a member of a very interesting family and when Margaret Sullivan heard what I was doing about the family tree she brought over some records of her own which I think are completely fascinating. So, I am about to make one more tree. This one concerns Grandmother Wagner's family.

FRARY AND GILLMOR TREES

Phineas Frary m. Nancy Cochran
(1795-1842)

eight children, one was Margaret
m. (1837)
Thomas Gillmor

Nancy
m.
Jesse Wagner
(Francis' grandparents)

seven other children

James A.
m.
?

Bertha
m.
? Clink

Margaret
m.
Russell Sullivan

Margaret Sullivan gave me. You will note that Phineas Frary's account uses the word "entered." It may be that he acquired the land by settling on it.

The following is a copy of an "Autobiographical Sketch by James A. Gillmor -- During the Civil War." (After the war, James acquired a large farm not too far from the Wagner farm and he was the first man to import and raise short-horned cattle in Ohio.)

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY

James A. Gillmor

Old Fort, Ohio

During the Civil War

In the fall of 1861 I, James A. Gillmor, was taken with a severe attack of War Fever. My father had a short time before placed me in college at Tiffin, Ohio, but the attack became so severe that I left school and went to Fremont and enlisted in Company F, unbeknown to my parents. A few days afterward, my father became aware of the fact and saw Col. Buckland in regard to the matter and told him I was only two months past fourteen years of age, and was

entirely too young and too small to withstand the hardships of a soldier. He was advised to take me back home with him. But my father had thought the matter over carefully and concluded to leave me in camp and told Col. to keep me continually on guard duty. I would soon get tired of it and come home on my own accord. On guard, I went, and thought my turn came pretty often and there wasn't a beat around Camp Croghan that I hadn't paced many times. Just previous to going to Camp Chase, I was placed on guard at the gate where they drove in and out, receiving orders not to let any soldiers in or out without a pass. Several buggies and wagons passed in and out on business and pleasure and everything ran along smoothly until a spring wagon came driving out on a smart trot and by the driver's side sat a soldier. I haulted (halted) them and stepped aside to let them drive up and expected that they would stop and show a pass but instead they kept right on, turning around to make gestures and fun at me and I confess a kid about my size was pretty hot. Presently, back they came, driving fast, and I wasn't long in making up my mind that this time they would stop. The closer they came the madder I got. Throwing my weight forward and

bringing my gun to a charge, I commanded them, three times to hault, but on they came and ran the horse against the end of my gun, then they stopped, jumped out, and came for me but I kept them back with my gun, until an officer came to my assistance. A crowd soon gathered. Some thought I did right and others thought the guardhouse was the proper place for me. While the officer hesitated what to do Capt. Moore came up and told the officer that I was one of his men and he would take care of me. We went to his tent which was soon full, and were all anxious to know what was up. Capt. told me to tell what the trouble was and how I came to injure that horse. I told him the orders I had received when I was placed on guard, and that they had payed no attention to me when they passed out, also they had tried the same trick when they came in, but it had not worked. Capt. patted me on the shoulder and said, "Jim, you are all right and will make a good soldier." Drum Major Nicholas Colwell and some of his boys were present. He told them to get their instruments and fall in and they gave me a little serenade. This is the nearest I ever came to being placed in the guard house.

From this time on I did no extra duty. Our Regt. was soon ordered

to Camp Chase, then on to Paducah, Ky. There I contracted a bad cold and had some fever. When the Regt. moved up to Shiloh, Dr. Rice told me I would have to remain behind with some more sick boys until I was able for duty. This went down hard and I tried to convince him that I was feeling better and would be alright in a few days. "When you get better the steward will pass you." Alright, so there it ended and I was very much disappointed but also determined that the first boat that came along and stopped at the landing would find me a ready passenger. A few days and the opportunity came and I waited until the hands were ordered to haul in the gangplank, then I walked over. An officer stopped me and wanted to know where I was going. I told him to my Regt. at Shiloh. Where is your pass? Expecting this question, I commenced to fumble in my pockets and no pass could be found, and I was at a loss to know what had become of it and commenced to unstrap my blanket. "Here young man, take your luggage back out of the way and when you find your pass, bring it up to the office." "Alright," I said, and the way I went. The boat went and we all were sorry to say the pass was never found. If this government allowed that boat more than steerage passage for me, they surely got left. Shiloh was reached and going back from the river a short distance, I

noticed teamsters loading wagons with commisary supplies and concluded that would be a pretty good place for me to go, as I was getting awfully hungry and there was nothing to eat. Recognizing one of the teamsters, I asked him if there would be any chance to ride out to camp. He thought there was, and I assisted him all I could in loading up. He soon swung himself into the saddle and told me to climb on the wagon. I did so and soon located a cracker box that looked like it would soon go to pieces. So I filled my haversack full and then some, which relieved the pressure, and it went through alright. Arriving at camp, about the first person I saw was a Dr. John Rice. I tried my best to get out of his sight but it failed to work and he motioned for me to come there and wanted to know who gave me a pass to come up here. "You little rascal, didn't I tell you to stay back there? I can't see how you got here without a pass." I replied that I was not aware I needed a pass to join my regiment. "You know very well that it is impossible for a soldier to go anywhere with a pass." Well I got here all the same. "Jim you report at sick call in the morning." Morning came, and I went on guard duty. Early in the first day's fight at Shiloh our Lieut. Col. Canfield was severly wounded and

Capt. Moore ordered me to go and help carry him back off the field. I hesitated, knowing that lots of the boys would jump at this chance but he said, "Jim, I want you to go." So I went to help carry him about two miles along a ravine towards the river. We were joined by several soldiers going in the same direction and I asked one if he would be kind enough to take my place and I would go back to my Regt. He did so and I turned and hastily retraced the distance. Hearing heavy firing to my left I concluded it was our line. I got out of the ravine and started in that direction and had gone about five rods when I noticed a Johnnie coming angling towards me, walking briskly carrying his gun at a trail. I drew a bead on him and let him come as close as he would to me then commanded him to hault and drop his gun, or I would shoot him. He did so and I secured it and gave it a rap around a saplin. I asked him where he was going. He told me back after ammunition. Where is your line? "Just ahead, we'ons are driving you'ns back." By this time we had arrived at the bank of the ravine and were about to descend when I heard a loud noise a short distance up the ravine and, glancing in that direction I noticed 20 or 30 rebel cavalry gearing right down on us. Fortune favored us and a large tree lay about 1/2 way down the bank and at right angles with it.

Below this we dropt just as they fired a volley at us and the balls zipped past my head and bark flew in my face and eyes and dazed me for a moment. Then, realizing my danger I raised my gun and aimed at my prisoner's head. I told him if he made a move I would kill him. Imagine how he must have felt looking into the muzzle of that gun! Then imagine how a boy of 14 would feel in a death trap like that, with a stout six-foot rebel a few feet away, twenty or thirty more almost above you, expecting every moment to be shot full of holes. I could stand the suspense no longer and determined to see what they were doing. Keeping my prisoner well covered, I backed up to the end of the log and peeked around. Behold, there was not a ------

This is the end of the Autobiographical Sketch by James A. Gillmor. No one knows why his story stopped at this point -- probably the remaining pages were lost.

Epilog

As I have looked through the pages I have written it seems to me that there is an over supply of I's, me's and my's. I never intended this to be a story of my life, but, some day, I just might write a short one of my childhood days, 1896-1900, at the Goldenrod -- if only to show how different mine were from those of my own children. I can't resist telling one delightful story about Francis when he was a very small boy, which has already been told to many members of the family.

There were three boys, with Francis the middle one. His hair was blond and curly and he HATED it especially since his mother didn't want to have his curls cut off. Thoughtless neighbors would call -- and, seeing the three small boys in the room -- wou invariably say, "What a shame that one couldn't have been a girl." Francis thought that was directly aimed at him and, one day, he exploded -- stood up on his two little feet and declared, "Well, who'd a bin'er? I wouldn't a bin'er!"

Irma T. Wagner -- Summer, 1976