

**Betsy,
Happy Birthday**

**Love,
Barbara**

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I. Introduction

Bets, my dear “BetsyWoo”, I’m so glad to get to reminisce about our early childhood lives and adventures. We were both lucky to have had our birthdays just two weeks apart and lived just a few doors apart on the same street. I was particularly lucky because I don’t have any brothers or sisters. I hope and pray my reminiscing will give you a sense of joy, pleasure and

light that we both had in sharing a very close family relationship as children with our mothers/aunts.

~ Love, “Bardo”

II. Swanee River Music

Tap dance. It was what little girls did in our time period to acquire “grace and charm“, or so our mother’s told us. The dance instructor in Hutchinson, Kansas ran a very large dance studio, for that place and time; tap, ballet... all the dance things little girls were expected to accomplish. Group lessons, by age and style, were attended regularly once a week, then when our big dance program came along, we had to attend extra rehearsals. The tap shoes and costumes were bought from the dance instructor who ordered them from back east. The dance costumes for our portion of the Spring Dance program were made of metallic thread & extremely fuzzy trim. They were very itchy

and really rather risqué for the time period! Can you imagine dancing in these things to the music of *Swanee River*?

[See dance costume pictures of dance group, can you find Barb & Bets in picture?]

III. Uncle Will's Long Johns

Aunt Daisy and her husband, Will, periodically visited Hutchinson from Colorado. This of course prompted a family gathering of those Jones living in Hutchinson, KS at their sister Flo's house. Games and skits were the general course of these family gatherings. The one that sticks out in the history of their visits was of Uncle Will (William Barnes), Daisy's "plump", very shy husband, in red long underwear with a "wooden" toy rifle over shoulder parading around the room while family members sang the music "*Soldier, Soldier, Will You Marry Me?*" (see enclosed music). Aunt Daisy was trying to be a good sport, but was mortified but kept singing to hide her immense embarrassment. How Aunt Flo *ever* convinced Uncle Will to

march around the room wearing a pair of drop bottom red underwear while carrying a toy gun. The “Jones girls” were very persuasive.

IV. Flo Dillon’s Basement & Sand Pit

Aunt Flo had a new addition onto the basement in back of house. For a Halloween Party the attendees had to crawl on their hands & knees through a small window. This small window opened onto loose dirt, which then dropped about three feet to the cement wall and floor of the now basement. Barb’s long skirt got caught while crawling on her knees, the long skirt slipped down and off. I couldn’t figure how to get to basement floor without loosing my long skirt, and dignity, in the process.

The new basement, which had just been finished, was great for family gatherings, dancing etc. The walls & all the closet doors in the rec room were constructed of beautiful real knotty pine. Aunt Flo decided that it would be great to get a dance teacher for Paul & some of his guy friends, after all “a young boy should know how and be comfortable ballroom

dancing”. We girls were strictly forbidden from attending this lessons, which made it all the more hilarious. However, Bets & Barb found they could hide behind some of the closet doors in the “rec” room & watch these “clutzy” young boys learn to be graceful ballroom dancers!?!?!? Well, Bets & Barb couldn’t help from giggling and snickering, after all the boys were just learning from a teacher and could hardly be compared to Fred Astaire. The boys were furious at Bets & Barb after they realized we had watched them try to straighten out which was their right or left foot. And what was that thing called “the beat”? I wonder how much these lessons really helped, or did it make them run from then on when the music started?

Uncle John and his wife, Betty, visited Hutchinson frequently, towing their mobile home along with them. This mobile home was their actual home as Uncle John was a brick layer, traveling from town to town following his jobs. Aunt Flo bought a sand pit west of Hutchinson, whose underground waters originated from Cow Creek. This land allowed for the parking of house trailer and good fishing for Uncle John. The water was very soft, but the fish had a propensity for nibbling on toes. There was a roped off area indicating the swimming area, a necessary marking as there were underwater currents which could, at times, be dangerous. There was another sand pit across the road from Aunt Flo’s, it was not well fenced or supervised which allowed for an unfortunate accident. This ultimately led to

Aunt Flo's decision to sell her sand pit.

Aunt Betty dotted on Uncle John and kept the trailer immaculate. She washed and ironed Uncle John's work clothes every day. He would come home from work as a bricklayer, shower and put on the clean clothes she had hand ironed. Aunt Betty and her sister had been children of the orphan train, and she spent the rest of her life trying to find her sister. Aunt Betty was masterful at embroidery, with a house trailer there was not much house cleaning to do, so, one could spend time really developing one's interests. She taught this embroidery skill to her niece Barbara as a way of entertaining her. Bets, on the other hand, didn't really find this all that interesting. Aunt Betty had taught Barb to such an extent a Junior High teacher did not think Barb had embroidered her school project (a dog on a tea towel) herself!

Uncle John's other forte was teaching and working with dogs. He could teach a dog to do anything! The Jones' genes love of working with animals certainly came through in him also. He had this internal quiet calmness in his teaching as did Julia and grandmother Jones (Lura).

NOTE: Interesting further reading on the orphan train is a book by Andrea Warren, *ORPHAN TRAIN RIDER: One Boy's True Story*, Houghton Mifflin Co.,

Boston, 1996 (ISBN 0-395-69822-7)

V. North Side Grade School

Our grade school, North Side Grade School, was due South (?) of Betsy & Barb's homes. We lived at 229 East 16th, on the corner of 16th and Maple while Betsy lived a couple of houses down at 314 East 16th. We usually walked together on Maple Street to reach school. There were, of course, those times when childhood disagreements surfaced. When this happened our mothers, wise women that they were, made us walk different streets. During the course of the school day these disagreements usually dissipated. Leaving school we would be caught up in conversation, only to realize we had been instructed to walk on different streets! Quickly we would split and walk down different directions toward our respective homes.

Miss Bodkin was the principal & knew both of our mothers. Miss Bodkin told Julia, Barb's mother, if she called on Barb to answer a question Barb would say, "Betsy knows". Miss Bodkin knew Barb knew, so it was decided to place Betsy & Barb in separate classrooms from then on.

Each class room was heated in the winter by steam radiators along each school room. We hung our coats, scarves, gloves, and very wet snowy boots in a long hallway attached to each class room. You can imagine the odor of wet boots, gloves, wool scarves. It was not Channel #5. The windows in each school room were wooden & glass - I don't remember any kind of weather stripping - some leaked cold air, but could be opened to allow a little fresh cool air in in the spring.

There were wooden desks & chairs attached to wooden floors - no particular size. The students raised the seat so at day's end the janitor could clean at night. The wooden desk had an indentation for your wooden pencil so it wouldn't slide on the slanted desk. The slant was to help your penmanship, or so they said.

The bathrooms - one side of the school building for the boys & on the other side of the building for the girls - each down outside stairs to the basement, irregardless of the weather. The janitor was always hanging around for our safety (?) from outsiders.

VI. “Horse Liniment” & Other Such Cures

We didn't play much with dolls for fun, we were too busy being actually “involved” in doing things. Carving sounded like fun so Barb & Bets decided to try out a sharp knife to cut balsa wood (or was it a bar of Ivory soap). Bets laid the wood down on her thigh and made a really good deep cut. It turned out to be a very sharp knife! “Oh, look Barb, its not even bleeding”. At first it didn't bleed because it was such a deep cut in the leg fat - then it did bleed.....lots! Bets said “Oh, I know what to use”. We went to the bathroom where she poured a dark brown awful smelling syrupy liniment into the cut. As I recall, this was about the only medicine in the medicine cabinet. It must have stung like the heck - but Bets said it would be better!?! This “medicine” was the answer to any cut, scrape.....fixed anything that ailed man or beast.

VII. Betsy & Barb Go “Missing”

Hiding in the large wooden cabinets in Barb’s parent’s garage seemed like a rather fun and harmless prank. The cabinets were from one of the Dillon’s stores, which was updating. Dad (Claude Creel, Julia’s husband, Flo’s brother-in-law) was the warehouse manager and supervised a lot of the store’s updates, thus the employees could buy the old cabinets being torn out and replaced. The doors had the kind of locks that were only able to be opened from the outside. Of course the door clicked shut when we both crawled inside the cabinet. This prompted many giggles from both of us girls. Eventually we could hear the family & neighbors calling to try to find us. Then we got scared when we realized they were speaking of us maybe being kidnapped & maybe they should call police. Every parent has that worry in the back of their minds. Overhearing this conversation made us realize we had really done a “bad” thing. Initially we tried to push the cabinet door open, and, maybe be able to save face by sauntering back into the house! When this did not work we then started yelling & pounding to get out of the locked cabinets. What started as a fun adventure quickly turned into a very embarrassing situation! I don’t know who was the most

relieved, Julia & Flo or Barb & Bets.

VIII. Uncle Clyde and The Yeast Cake

Uncle Clyde always had a thin slice of cake yeast every day. He felt this was very healthful. Uncle Clyde's mother had been an herbalist in Missouri. This was indeed a daily ritual while seated at their kitchenette table; first he would slowly and precisely unwrap the cake of yeast, then out came his personal pocket knife. Having cleaned it first on a napkin, he would then use his knife blade to slowly slice a paper thin piece of yeast. He was always so meticulous and exacting in every thing he did. Well, of course, we girls decided we just *had* to try a slice of the yeast cake. One day after he had left the kitchen Bets got a knife out and the yeast back out of the refrigerator. She slowly sliced a piece off for herself and Barb. "*UGH*"! It had a very shocking flavor, not only that, it really, *really* stuck to your teeth! How could he eat it? This must have been a acquired taste!

IX. “And they swam, and they swam right over the Dam”

Grandmother Dillon had been visiting for a while and needed to return to Missouri. Aunt Rachael had also been in town, so it was decided that Aunt Flo, Aunt Rachael, Julia, Bets and Barb would drive Grandmother Dillon back to Missouri. Right then and there you can envision the ensuing trip that occurred with the three Jones girls (Flo, Julia and Rachael) at the wheel! Now remember, in those days there were no air conditioned cars, motels, let alone any kind of motels by today’s standards. The roads in many places were mere cow trails, winding around and fording streams. The “motels” would have to be checked to see if the beds had been short sheeted or *bed bugs* before agreeing to pay the night’s lodging price. You always checked along the mattress edges to see if any bugs were present, this told you whether it was a clean motel or run for your car and keep on driving.

The trailer we were pulling was Aunt Flo’s, an air stream type; a window on the front and two small side windows (?), but you couldn’t open them while driving or you risked tearing the trailer apart. We all had to take turns riding in the trailer as we could not all fit in Aunt Flo’s car. After leaving Grandmother Dillon and her sack of grapefruit off at her relatives in Missouri there was a little more room in the car. (No, we did not chuck her out on the side of the road!)

The best time to drive was in the cool of early morning, this necessitated prepaying for the room and turning in very early the night before. At one of the motels there were a bunch of drunken carousers in the other rooms, who, as drunks do, hoot, howler, and in general make themselves a nuisance till the wee hours of morning. This left our group with little, if any, sleep. So rather than try to sleep it was decided to just get up and drive. Aunt Rachael was the elected driver that morning and being the jokester of the three sisters decided to sit on the horn while doing circles in the motel parking lot, much to the horror of her two sisters and nieces! It was rather difficult within a few minutes to keep the hysterical laughter within the confines of the car however.

The road trip song, which was sung over and over and over....., was the then popular catchy little tune, “The Three Fishes”, which upon the millionth time of repetition resulted in the threat of immediate depositing of Betswoo and Bardo along side of the highway.

X. Rowdy

Rowdy was a Boston Bull Terrier mix who came to live with Grandmother

Jones. Julia and Rachael had been in Oklahoma; Julia (age 16) to train telephone operators on the proper “Number, please” phrase and Rachael to chaperone Julia. Rachael went to work for a married couple who owned a drug store and lived upstairs in that building. The couple had taken Rowdy on as a young dog, but, because they lived in the upstairs apartment and worked long hours downstairs, Rowdy had little outside exercise and other necessities. The veterinarian had to tell the couple Rowdy had to have a better living situation. Enter Rachael to Rowdy’s rescue. She knew a perfect home for him already existed in Hutchinson, KS., Grandmother Jones just didn’t know it yet. How Rachael and Julia got Rowdy back to Hutch. is somewhat obscured in history, no doubt Rachael charmed the train conductor into letting Rowdy on board. Rachael, with a twinkle in her eye, could charm anybody into anything! The next morning Rachael found Rowdy in bed with Grandmother Jones (Lura), and as they say, the rest is history.





Soldier, Soldier, Will You Marry Me?

Lively
mf *girl* *boy*

1. Sol-dier, sol-dier, will you mar-ry me, With your krap-sack, fife and drum? "Oh how can I mar-ry such a pret-ty maid as thee, When I've got no coat to put on?"

CHORUS

Then she ran a-way to the tal-lor's shop, As fast as she could run, And she bought him a coat of the ve-ry, ve-ry best, And the sol-dier put it on.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 2. Soldier, soldier will you marry me? etc.
When I have no shoes to put on.
Then she ran away to the shoemaker's shop, etc. | 4. Soldier, soldier will you marry me? etc.
When I have no gloves to put on.
So she ran away to a glove-maker's shop, etc. |
| 3. Soldier, soldier will you marry me? etc.
When I have no hat to put on.
Then she ran away to the hatter's shop, etc. | 5. Soldier, soldier will you marry me? etc.
"Oh, how can I marry such a pretty maid as thee,
When I've got a good wife at home?" |

Two children are selected to play the parts. The little girl sings the first half of the verse and the little boy the second half. When he says he has no coat to put on, she borrows one from some other one of the children and so on for each verse. The last verse, which is sung by the soldier alone, always creates great merriment.



Old Folks At Home

('Way Down upon de Swannee River)

(1850)

Piano introduction in G major, 2/4 time. The right hand features a melody with a trill on the first note of the first measure. The left hand provides a simple bass line. Chords are indicated above the staff: F, A, G, D, A7, D.

First vocal line in G major, 2/4 time. The melody is simple and folk-like, starting with a half note G4.

1. 'Way down up-on de Swa-nee Riv-er, Far, far a-way,
 2. All run' de lit-tle farm I wan-der'd, When I was young,
 3. One lit-tle hut a-mong de bush-es, One dat I love.

Bass line for the first vocal line, providing harmonic support with a simple rhythmic pattern.

Piano accompaniment for the first vocal line, featuring a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a simple bass line in the left hand.

Second vocal line in G major, 2/4 time. The melody continues the folk-like style with a half note G4.

- Dere's wha my heart is turn-ing ev-er, Dere's wha de old folks stay,
 Den ma-ny hap-py days I squan-der'd, Ma-ny de songs I sing,
 Still sad-ly to my mem-ry rush-es, No mat-ter whare I rove.

Bass line for the second vocal line, providing harmonic support.

Piano accompaniment for the second vocal line, continuing the steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and simple bass line in the left hand.

