

I joined an art workshop and turned out quite a few portraits in pastel and several in oil. One year was spent as president of the local AFS chapter, a mutual international exchange program run for high school students. As service officer for the local American Legion, I was able to help a number of Veterans and their relatives -- such things as hospital applications, widow's pensions, etc. My retirement practice began to blossom and that made me unhappy. Then, one day I became careless and inhaled some metal grindings and some dental chemicals. These, on top of some Portland cement inhalation gave me quite a bad time, to the point where I almost stopped breathing three times. Ventolin, epinephrine, cortisone, antibiotics therapy and some other medicine was used.

Practicing two half days a week in retirement practice has its problems. It's a one man operation. Preparation, operation and clean up with no available assistance in emergencies. In addition appointments, bookkeeping, and ordering replacement materials takes times. Expiration dates created added expense. Eventually license fees, X-Rays fees, narcotic fees and insurance became prohibitive costs because there is no prorating system for one day of practice per week. Now, with the lifting of the ban on advertising, I feel that the legal profession who started the lifting of the ban has lost it's professional status. In addition, the large suits by the legal profession have escalated the insurance fees. This, plus the third party involvement in medical plans, has also reduced the medical and dental professions to a menial service status and to lay control uncertain areas in the care of patients. The most important factor in medicine and dentistry is integrity on the part of the doctor. All of the above facts are forcing a breakdown of such integrity and trust. Woe to the patient who is a lawyer or whose spouse is a lawyer and to the dentist or physician who needs a lawyer.

There a number of observations a person can make by listening to his own body. Put your pinky in your ear and you can hear all four beats of the heart. Also, if you then move your jaw, you can hear if there is any slight noise in the TM joint. Look at the stars at night and observe the double vision, if present in each eye. The worst eye is the one with widest double vision. Sit outside on a bright sunny day and observe the individual cells float across the eyes cornea. Palpate various parts of your body and compare them to the opposite side of your body. All these subjective observations are only available to you.

In the course of dental practice I made some clinical observations which could stand investigation. For example it seemed to me that when a child had all four first or second bicusps removed for orthodontic reasons, he or she seemed to develop dimples in their cheeks that would not have otherwise appeared. Another phenomena that I observed was that people with scrotle tongue had crowded arches so that the room for the tongue was greatly decreased, possibly causing it to squeeze back on itself. I also seemed to observe that ninety percent of sores and irritations in the oral cavity were originated by chemicals (such as ambesol) or by

mechanical means (such as sharp edges on teeth or restorations, or areas of roughness).

Another area of practice that fascinated me was the use of amazing remedies. When I had an automobile accident and thought that the nerves in three front teeth had been damaged as evidenced by the electric pulp tester. I went to see my dentist, Dr. Leon Gecker, and lo and behold, he applied chloroform to the gingival area over the apices of the teeth and, in a few days, the vitality had returned. The question was, would the vitality have returned by itself, was it the power of suggestion or was it the application of a counter-irritant that cured the problem? When penicillin first came on the scene, we used it to treat Vincents Angina in the mouth prescribing a mouth wash plus some topical application. In short order the condition disappeared. However, once the problem of sensitization was understood, this method of treatment was stopped. My son had a border collie as a pet and one day he developed a tumor on his ankle. We took him to the vet and he gave us a white salve to apply and in a few days the tumor was gone, as if an acid had eaten it away. I never discovered the contents but I still have the salve and hope to have it analyzed some day.

While the cub scouts in Huntington, I built a puppet theatre and some puppets, with some help, and wrote up a script copied from the old Punch and Judy shows so that the cub scouts could put the show on for the other cub scouts and their parents. Later, I improved the theatre, put in sound via a tape recorder, lighting and a one-way window. I did a few public shows for charity. Another project was the Marionette I made, Dr. Ah Chu from Korea, who was a calligrapher and would write out the first names of people in the audience in Korean.

When I had to take down my small swimming pool I used the aluminum wall to build a one man canoe that only weighs about thirty five pounds. Later I purchased a Grumman aluminum canoe so that my wife could join me. A mountain bike was added to the list of sports for exercise purposes. I did play some tennis for a while but it was hard to find a partner who just wanted to exercise without competing. Golf never attracted me because after standing at the chair all day long the idea of standing most of the weekend had no appeal. Finding a different restaurant every month also became an interesting form of entertainment. One talk I gave to a senior citizen group was, sort of, in memory of J. S. Wolf who had to quit CCNY to go to work and who was a portrait artist. He used to do portraits and short biographical articles for the magazine section of the New York Times. He used a gray paper with a black and white line drawing that was a very quick technique. I still remember the exhibit he had one week at CCNY of all the famous people he had interviewed and sketched.

My love for doing portraits still remains. There is a particular thrill when you reach the point where the portrait begins to come alive. Also there is something three dimensional that you capture that is unattainable with photography.

Just as there are no old bold pilots so there is no such thing as a dentist who does extractions who hasn't broken a root in the course of his operating. One procedure I use to minimize such a happening is the application of a cowhorn forceps to lower molars as a means of wedging between the two roots of a lower molar and the bone when there is sufficient spread between the roots. There were a few troubles that I ran into that stand out in my mind. One was an attempt to remove an impacted lower third molar with everything meticulously planned except that I failed to observe that the patient had microstomia which made it very difficult to gain access to an area that was difficult to work in to begin with. Another case was an impacted upper third molar that was very high up that couldn't be elevated because the tooth was completely inverted. Another case was a stomatitis of the buccal mucosal with ulcerations that I should have referred for consultation at once instead of attempting to treat it. When I first started practice, I had never done a flap and when I tried to extract an ankylosed tooth for my Uncle I ended up sending him to my friend who had an internship in oral surgery. In Maine, I had an urgent call from a dentist who had broken a syringe needle off while giving a mandibular block. I was unable to respond as I had no knowledge of the best procedure to follow. He finally succeeded in removing it himself. After that incident I devised a probe with a serrated surface that could be used to probe and locate the broken needle by touch. Some lower dentures were difficult to obtain retention with. By decreasing the size and by grinding lingual depressions for the tongue to fit into, I was able to improve the stability.

Chapter 11 Ditch Driving

When I was seventeen my father taught me how to drive a stick shift car and I failed my first test by backing into a telephone pole making a "U" turn in the middle of a narrow street. No side mirror in those days. After almost sixty years behind the wheel, I had thoughts of writing a book on safe driving. However, there have been several good books published on the subject. I do have a few impressions to add. When teaching someone, the first lesson I give is how to stop the car which is a two ton weapon. If the foot brake fails, try pumping it. If it still fails, try the hand parking brake. If that is insufficient, place the car in low gear (double clutching to do so if necessary). If still having a problem, turn the ignition key off but this may damage the motor. If still in danger, head off the road at the next upgrade.

I have had my share of dangerous moments. In Portland Maine I skidded on ice while traveling only 10 miles an hour. On the Grand Concourse I skidded going under the tunnel at Fordham Road due to bald tires (before the days of inspection). In the garage, in the Bronx, I had a bad gas leak in my gas tank and after the gasoline was washed down with water I drove the car out of the garage for safety reasons. Crossing the street with a green light I was hit by another car that went through a red light, and pushed my car up a small incline. Fortunately I had a heavier car and there were no trees in my path. On the New York Thruway, right after crossing the bridge over the Hudson, two cars ahead of me stopped and I couldn't pull to the right as there were cars passing. It was at night and I kept flashing my stop light by stepping on and off the brake but was still hit in the rear. Always alert and always keeping your eyes glued to the road.

Defensive driving is the best policy. In addition, I always look at the side of the road (Ditch Driving) to see if there is room for me to pull off in case of emergency. If there is a ditch or no room, I drive more cautiously and more slowly. Take care of your car and your car will take care of you. Check your tires regularly. Check your water, oil, battery and transmission and windshield wiper fluid and power steering and brake fluid and on new cars grease job every 2 - 3 years. Look under your car at inspection time for sources of trouble. Keep your windows clean for good visibility. On long trips keep your window open slightly to avoid fumes in case of a leak.

Never drive over 60 miles per hour. The human reflex time cannot handle emergency situations if you drive faster than that. In addition, there is something about the new cars that creates an ever present danger. The pick up and the drive is so smooth that you can no longer gauge yourself by the seat of your pants. The speed sneaks up on you and you find yourself going faster than you really wish to travel. Never back up further than you have to and always toot your horn and look

all around before backing up slowly. Change lanes slowly. Avoid backing up onto a main highway. Avoid playing the radio as the noise obscures any warning sounds that a car in trouble may give you. Never follow your passengers advice or back seat driving without first observing for yourself. The only passenger command I take cognizance of is stop and then I like to see why first. If necessary, ask your passenger not to talk to you.

If and when you obtain your first license, you should have an experienced driver next to you for at least six months. Every one should carry something to repair a flat tire or know how to put a spare on. Good highways have a natural camber to help keep the car on the road. Also, a good highway is banked in the proper direction around turns. There are no old bold pilots. The life of a car is about eighty to one hundred thousand miles. I never like to ride with anyone else unless I know their capabilities as drivers and I never let anyone drive my car unless I was the one that taught them to drive.

Here are a few automobile anecdotes that might be of interest. Sixty years ago my father locked his keys in the car accidentally. In those days you couldn't jimmy the door through the window but we were able to get in through the floor boards. While a counselor at summer camp in New Hampshire my friend picked up an old Ford and wanted me to drive him past the next town to see his girl friend as he did not have a license. I agreed and we took off. When we reached a steep hill on a dirt road (this car had no brakes) the car began to go faster and faster and was getting gas until I realized that the vibration was jiggling down the gas feed on the steering wheel (old model T's had that sort of hand feed plus a spark feed). Once I moved it back we were fairly safe again. When we approached Gilmanton Iron Works, known in literature as Peyton Place, I put the car in low gear and was able to creep through town without stopping. Needless to say, I was happy when we finally returned to camp safely.

Driving alone from New York to Decatur, which I thought was nine hundred miles I fell asleep at the wheel at about 4:30 A.M. Doing sixty miles an hour. The car went off on a thirty degree embankment, hit a small culvert and was turned back up on the highway so that it sat across the road blocking the highway. I was afraid to feed gas for fear it might stall so I waited two seconds and it had just enough gas to move off the highway and back down the shoulder by itself. A truck stopped and notified the State Police who had me towed back onto the road and I finished the rest of the trip without even a flat tire. I did however have to have my wheels realigned.

Before they made the cut through Wurtsboro hill cars used to get stuck because their brakes would start to burn going down such a steep grade. One night I borrowed my fathers car and took my friends out for a joy ride. About five miles away, the clutch linkage broke (it was a stick shift) and I had visions of not getting home. Then I remembered my friend the engineers advice. I started the car in first

gear, picked up just the right amount of speed to shift into second without need for using a clutch and similarly put it into third gear just making all the lights which were staggered.

One day, when streets were icy, my father backed his big seven passenger Buick out of our garage and it slid on the ice into a tree which we usually had to back around. The car was so heavy that even sand and chains would not let us get it up the slope. My friend Donald Jordan the engineer came along and had me sit in the car and work the brake while the car was in first. He used the hand crank and cranked the car back up the slope taking advantage of the mechanical advantage and the slow motion. New cars (small size) are difficult to use for teaching purposes since you cannot get your foot across the center divider to use the brake unless it is a front wheel drive. The essential features that you should look for when purchasing a car are: (1) the length of the wheel base (the longer the less chance of turning over); (2) a strong frame construction; (3) a strong roof construction; (4) high grade tires; (5) convenient servicing.

New cars have so many new gadgets that you need a special college course to understand them: terms like sun gear, electronic distributor, etc. In the old cars, if something went wrong you might be able to find the trouble and repair it. In the new cars, complicated machinery costing thousands of dollars may be needed to diagnose the trouble. It is called an engine performance analyzing instead of a tune-up. A car might go completely dead just because of the malfunction of an electronic unit. Also, unfortunately, even American cars may have foreign parts in them. It reminds me of the cry in the old days "get a horse" and how everything made in Japan broke very quickly.

Chapter 12

The Edentulous Years

"Your outline forms terrific, your a crowning joy to see. Your developmental lines and contours far surpass the curve of Spee. So come let's wax romantic, let's invest our hopes divine. Amalgamate, oh triturate you toothless gal of mine!" So went the song for the graduation class of 1940. We had our own dance orchestra. Yours truly played the drums (just about able to keep the rhythm).

The chapter title reminds me of one VA patient who was quite ill up in Maine and had very bad teeth. I removed all of his teeth and made him a set of dentures. The change in his health was spectacular. There are some dentists who make a living traveling around to nursing homes. Some of the facilities are pretty bad. Some of the facilities for migrant workers are also very poor. Dentures have a tendency to be lost in nursing homes and having the name and social security number in them helps prevent this. My set of dentures have been constructed in advance and are waiting for me. Which brings me to the statement that "a lawyer that pleads his own case has a fool for a client." This sounds very neat but only because "a lawyer who does not plead his own case does not have a fool for a client" does not sound as pat. What I am leading up to in the case of the dentist who had a bad toothache and called another dentist to make an appointment to have it removed. The other dentist said he was busy and referred him to an oral surgeon. The first dentist became so angry he went into his own office and pulled the tooth himself. Since then he has been doing most of his own work: fillings, crowns, etc. Yup, yours truly. It's done with mirrors and it helps if you are ambidextrous.

For several years I thought I smelled gas in our kitchen and I had the gas company come to check it out. They found nothing. Then I had trouble with the kitchen plumbing not draining and had new piping put in place. Actually the cause of these two facts was the settling of the corner of the house due to the foundation being built on fill. I started to jack the house up myself, shimmying the space above the sill. In addition, I built concrete pilings using a unique shoot to facilitate the mix going under the footing by way of a hole in the cellar floor. Eventually, after several years of this, since the house corner kept settling, I called in an architect and had the whole corner foundation replaced. As an aftermath of breathing in the concrete dust, some metal filing while grinding a stainless steel case in my lab and some chemical fumes I succumbed to a serious case of bronchial asthma. Three series of antibiotics and cortisone and bronchial dilators later I began to snap out of it but I am still on some medicine.

Two books added to my determination to complete my biography which I started during the war years. "Memoirs of a Town and Country Doctor" by Emma L. Bellows M.D. an autobiography and "The Life and Works of James Leon Williams"

one of the pioneers in the use of porcelain to make artificial teeth a biography. Sometimes I ponder the future of dentistry and I see things like holograms for the study of anatomy, diagnosis of caries by a single photograph of the entire set of teeth through fiber optics, a dental drill with the speed adjustment controlled by the pinky instead of the foot, a plastic nasal mask protecting the dentists lungs and eyes, a hand skin dip instead of clumsy rubber gloves, a full mouth S-Ray taken with a small intraoral device run by remote control and shooting X-Rays outward to a single film over the lips and cheeks with no panographic motion required possibly with NMR instead of X-rays, electro anesthesia using a capacitance effect from a fluorescent loop or an electrolyte solution, replacement of damaged nerves with conductive plastic wires, discovery of a plastic with all the properties of gold, etc. etc.

My bronchitis, asthma gave me a peculiar insight into the cost of Medicare and Health insurance. The greater and more numerous the bills from the physician the more Medicare expands and collects from the government, the more people it hires and the higher their salaries. Also, the greater and more numerous the physicians bills the less the patient pays after the deductible. This is a snowball effect and something must be done to reverse it.

Phanatology is a strange subject. I like the epitaph in Plutarch's Lives -- "(Reiss) the misogynist lies below, go and revile me stranger, only go." Not that I would want it on my tomb. I prefer my solution to the trisection of an angle with straight edge and compass using projective geometry and the secret of the pyramid (special case of trisection). In what may have been parallel invention I dreamt up the "container cargo" idea during WW-II, the overhead hinged door for autos (sent to GM about 1929), the bypass valve now used on Elmers glue (circa 1947), a new concept for World Constitutional government based on weighted voting and utilizing the causes of war as a source of representation percentage, the first concept of the use of electrons for a microscope (1935 at CCNY), and the three pronged pliers for picking up ball bearings.

There should be a new profession called informationist. People should be trained to record all the improved knowledge and new ideas hidden by doctors, dentists and others like in the dark ages because of the money value involved (similar to industrial secrets) and to store them away so that after the inventor dies they will not be lost to the world. With modern computers this would be very feasible.

There have only been three or four sets of perfect teeth that I have run across in my experience. One was owned by a classmate who flunked out and went to Medical School. The other was possessed by the ENT Physician, Dr. Pierre Provost, who was my friend in Maine. Oddly enough, he never chewed his food. He would use his teeth to take a big bite and then immediately swallow. The third set belonged to a gentleman of color and I had to call other people over to corroborate what I saw.

He had a perfect set of 32 teeth plus four more fourth molars all well formed and positioned.

I have written a few dental articles for the local Dental Journal and also made a few cover drawings (ILLUSTRATION # XXIII) and one cartoon (ILLUSTRATION # XXIV). There was another odd patient I saw up in Maine. The whole side of his jaw was pushed in and you could see the imprint of a horseshoe on his face. He had been kicked by a horse when he was a child and survived.

In the course of my practice I have put in some time as a volunteer: (1) Oral Diagnosis department at N.Y.U part time for 5 years; (2) Radiology at SUNY part time for 2 or 3 years.



14US#XXIII

~~XXIV~~

Chapter 13 Swan Song

How does one bow out of this veil of tears gracefully? I did see the Swan Song at the Met (the old Met, in the third balcony, half-way behind a pole). In WWII I looked to my elders for guidance. Now I find myself an elder. The echoes of WWI making the world free for Democracy have faded. The concept of self defense in WWII no longer has merit because the whole world can be destroyed. Where then can we place our banners without blemish? There must be a world government that is equitable and just and representative.

Although Germany and Japan lost the war, they have survived very well. Some reparations to survivors was made. Unfortunately the mis-education of their youth will last for more than one generation. Japan has not had to expand its money on armaments and has forged ahead economically. There has been an international movement by doctors and other groups for nuclear disarmament. This gets sticky because of psychological warfare and political overtones. Before WWII, there was a play called Professor Mamlock which left no doubt that doctors could not insulate themselves from politics. Today the U.S.A. is in the position of King Of the Hill and everyone wants us down. Only if we fight for the idea of a better world for everyone can we survive. To do this we must have a plan to win peace through World Government and law.

Economic forces lead to war. New regulations for national and international corporate responsibility must be devised. Emotions run high before a war. Just as the American Firsters were extremists, so were the McCarthyites and so were pro-Communists. Fortunately, we gave those groups enough rope to hang themselves.

Once we get into the realm of world peace and philosophy, we deal with tough questions. Judge not lest ye be judged. John Marshall's "The Spirit of the Law" versus the Old English "The Letter of the Law" is recalled. How do we persuade people. Benjamin Franklin said "Teach people as if you taught them not." The point being to make them think it was their own idea. I was giving a lecture to service men on the Galapagos Islands after VE day. The subject had to do with democracy and the liberation of Greece from Fascist control. The question was "Now that Greece is liberated why aren't they permitted a free election?" My reply was that a state returning to freedom has to approach normalcy first. Herein probably lies the essence of democracy; the secret ballot, a social contract and an expression of the will of the people. But, how were we to determine what a state of normalcy should be? There is no exact answer, but the point is to remove the Quislings and Petains put in power by the Nazis before having free elections. War begins in the minds of men and for two countries or ideologies to exist together

requires mutual sacrifices and a state of mind directed in a peaceful, constructive direction not only in the body politic but in the corporate economic and religious structure.

Some of my memories that others may not know or may have forgotten are those of Chinese heads rolling down the street after being cut off by the Japanese; of babies tossed in the air and caught on Japanese bayonets; of people driven from their home in the middle of the night and taken to concentration camps by the Nazis. The Sino-Japanese war began in 1929. The Japanese in order to control China took control of the cities along the railway lines. The Chinese have a good luck emblem which is not to be confused with the Nazi swastika in the fact that it turns counter clockwise.

(A dental medical note of caution that I just recalled. When I was in Panama I opened a bottle of iodine and due to the high temperature the iodine sublimated and attacked my eyes which were sore for a week). I have never believed in Machiavelli's principal espoused in the Prince that "The end justified the means." Lincoln's quote is preferable "Let us hope that right makes might" or the poets quote "none goes his way alone, all that we give unto the lives of others comes back into our own."

Only if Universities are free, can men be free and pursue truth. Extremists try to subvert university students. But freedom and truth are relative. When two brains get together and there are differences they are usually a question of degree.

It is interesting to note that, in Dr. Bellow's book, she believes in God partly because it raises some natural inner strength which causes the body to send out endorphins to cure disease. It is also interesting to note her belief that when you are ill you tend to forget reason and rely on faith. On the other hand, James Len Williams says "No chemist has ever breathed the breath of life into a single particle of matter; none ever will." Like Dr. Bellows, he does not believe in superphysical forces or extraorganic principles. Also, he uses the term vitality since endorphins as such were not known in his day. Instead of my term, tooth carpenter, Dr. Williams is more poetic and refers to tooth tinkers. Dr. Williams was also an artist. He was also an optimist and believed that humanity will prove itself equal to the task of destroying individual and race conflict, and improving the quality of the individual. "... the great destiny of man will be fulfilled." Although we look to philosophers for philosophy and dentist and doctors for health care it is interesting to note the latter's opinions on philosophical matters since they are in contact with so much in the way of modern science. As for my philosophical thoughts, I prefer Mother to Mother Nature, Logic and Scientific Method to metaphysics, and Faith to Mysticism when we go beyond a belief in reason. I am aware of the great storehouse of knowledge in the Bible, old and new and those writings of other religions. I like the Silver Rule: Do not unto others as you would not have others do unto you. I like the application of the Golden Rule up to a point. I believe the

impossible takes a little longer. Although I do not believe that is absolutely necessary to have a purpose in life, I like the concept that "lives of great men all remind us, we can make our lives sublime and departing leave behind us footprints in the sands of time." I believe that one good person can make a difference. I believe that everyone can be that one good person.

Serenity
(by RR)

Oh, come with me on winged words
To lands beyond this realm
Where love can linger and rejoice
And God stands at the helm
Where all can see the light of day
Spread over the peaceful world
There you and I shall kneel and pray
For whom the bell has tolled