CHAPTER SIX

In the fall of my third year I started at the fraternity house, waiting on tables, but I knew I couldn't stay there and make enough to get through the year. I had worked a lot for Mrs. Carl Tenny each year and she told me a Dr. George Robbins who lived in College Hills on the west edge of Madison wanted a student to take care of the furnace, wash windows and do other work around the house for room and board. He came one afternoon to pick me up at the fraternity house and he had his sister, Grace Robbins, with him. I thought she looked funny, she had the first bobbed hairdo I had seen up to that time. Little did I know then that I would fall in love with her and marry her.

I moved out there and had a large room to study in, but with taking care of the furnace, washing windows, raking the yard, waiting on their table and washing the dishes I didn't have enough time to study. Dr. Robbins soon realized this and they got a Norwegian maid, Agnes, to do the house work and between us we got the work done. Agnes knew only a very few English words and when she took the food in to the dining room and the family would want something she would repeat it to me and I would show her what it was they wanted. Agnes was about seventeen years old and was fresh from Norway. A friend of hers who came from Norway on the same boat worked near the Robbins residence for another family. She also had a very jealous boy friend who didn't like the idea of she and I living in the same house. The doctor and his wife had two little daughters at that time, Jane and Dorothy.

Some years later I met her at a dance in Turner Hall in Madison and she told me she had married him but he made life so miserable for her because of his jealousy that she divorced him. She hinted that if he had not been in the picture she and I could have had some fun. There were times when the family would go to Mrs. Robbins' home in Troy Center and stayed over night and Dr. Robbins would ask me to stay at my fraternity house--which I did.

On Sunday mornings after I had completed my chores I was permitted to go in to the doctor's study (he made house calls on Sunday mornings) and read the Sunday papers. The doctor always brought his mother and his sister Grace to have Sunday dinner with the family, and I ate in the kitchen with Agnes. The first few Sundays I would go up to my room when Grace got there and study. I felt I had no right to sit in the doctor's study with his sister. One Sunday Grace stopped me and asked me if I had to study or was I scared of her. I told her I didn't think it was proper for me to socialize with the doctor's sister and she told me to sit down that she wouldn't bite me, and she wanted to talk to me. After that I always waited for her to come and we enjoyed each others company. Many times the doctor asked me to drive Grace and her mother home toward evening. I had learned to drive his cars which were gear shift cars while previously I had driven only a Model T Ford which was the one I bought from my folks. His wife had a Chandler with air brakes but I don't remember the make of the doctor's car.

One day the doctor said he had two tickets to a show in Madison and he would give them to me if Grace and I would like to go. I called her up and she accepted. The doctor told me to take his wife's Chandler. Everything went all right until we drove around the square and hit some ice and the car turned completely around and almost hit the curb. I was shaking because I was afraid the car might be damaged and a policeman came over to talk to us and he had seen what had happened.

"Now--now you are all right. Just take it easy and turn the car around, I'll hold the traffic back". I did as he told me to and parked the car and we went to the show. But the near accident shook us so and coupled with the fact that we both had colds we didn't enjoy the show and didn't have another date for six months.

In the Spring after I was through with school, I had a couple of weeks to wait until my summer job started so Mrs. Robbins asked me to paint their wicker outside furniture. While I was painting Grace and her mother returned from a trip to Omaha where they had visited Grace's sister, Harriet. She would come outside where I was painting and talk to me. One day I got up nerve enough to ask her what she was doing that evening, and she replied that she had no plans, so I said I was going to take a walk and she could come along if she wanted. She laughed at the way I had worded my invitation but she said she would be glad to.

After that we were together each day and evening whenever I was free and she got her house work done. She and her mother lived together in a house in Madison and took in roomers. We went to shows and one night we went to a dance in a dance hall across Lake Mendota. I still had the old Ford which I had bought from my folks. On the way back to town there was quite a hill and the car stalled. The problem was that I didn't have enough gas in the tank, which was under the front seat so we had to turn the car around and back up the hill. Before we got back into the car I reached for her to give her a hug and she gave me a kiss that nearly scared the daylights out of me!

Lightning struck us both and in two weeks we were engaged, and I was notified to come to work and I would be sent to Vilas County along with several other fellows, to look for barberry bushes. I also was told I would have to buy a new Ford if I intended to rent a car to the Government. I bought a new Ford Roadster which had an electric starter (1924 model) instead of the old arm strong starter. Grace was the first person to get a ride in the new car before I took off for Eagle River which is in the northern part of our State.

We stayed in Eagle River for awhile and found it to be very expensive. In those days the local merchants believed in soaking

the tourists and visitors during the summer as nobody went up there in the winter except when there was a three-day deer season. Later when our boss came up we convinced him to let us rent a cottage on Lake Buckatabon instead of rooming at the hotel.

One weekend I decided to drive down to Madison to see Grace. I left our cottage on Thursday after work and drove all night and got to Madison on Friday. I had to stop once in awhile and run up and down the road to wake up, and also stop at a restaurant for coffee. I slept a couple of hours and Grace and I went places Saturday and got very little sleep that night and started back to Eagle River on Sunday morning so I would be sure to get back by time to go to work Monday morning. Grace's brother Holden who was finishing medical school remarked

"I wouldn't do that for the Queen of Sheba!"

I got back to the cottage we were renting in the early morning and dropped into my bed and slept. When I woke up the rest of the boys were standing around my bed waiting for me to wake up. I asked them if it was time to go to work and they said.

"No, it is raining".

"Then what are you standing around my bed for? Let me sleep".

"Don't you feel anything at all?"

"No" I said, "should I?"

"Get up", they said, so I did.

They lifted the sheet on which I had laid and I saw the bed was filled with small pebbles, but I was so tired I never felt a thing.

That year I had to decide what my major would be and after going over the courses I had taken so far in the College of Letters and Science I had an equal number of credits in both history and

psychology, so I decided to major in psychology as I figured that would be more useful to me in my legal field than history. One of the courses I took was Animal Psychology in which we worked with white rats. We each had a partner, and my partner had a bad temper. We were supposed to teach our rats to run a maze and each took turns, but my partner scared the rat he worked with and it always took a long time to teach that rat to run the maze when it was my turn to work on the maze. Once a rat learned the maze (and my partner didn't scare it again) it would really go through the maze fast and retain this knowledge for weeks.

We also did some experiments with hypnotism and learned that you cannot be hypnotised unless you are willing.

Professor Hull became my advisor when I started to major in Psychology and I got along with him real well. At that time you had to write a thesis before you could graduate, but I decided that I didn't want to write a thesis because I did so much outside work to pay my expenses. I felt I couldn't write a good thesis so I dug in the University regulations and discovered a way to get out of writing a thesis. I went to Professor Hull and told him I wouldn't be writing a thesis because I had to work so much to earn my way I wouldn't have time to write a thesis.

"You have to write a thesis!" he told me.

"I'm sure I don't have to!", I replied.

"We have always required it, and you will have to write one!" he retorted.

"I'm dam sure I don't have to according to University regulations." I said.

"Show me!" he replied.

So I took out the University regulations I had studied and showed it to him, and after reading it several times he looked at me and said;

"You win, I've never seen that regulation".

After that he always called me "Carl damm sure" and I always got along with him and got good grades too!

During my last semester he called me into his office and told me he knew of a vacancy in the Psychology Department of Ohio State University and he would be glad to recommend me. I told him I was not interested in teaching and wanted to go on to Law School. He felt it would be a good opportunity for me, but I wouldn't be budged.

I decided not to go to commencement because I was broke and couldn't afford to rent a robe or pay for the commencement programs to send to friends and relatives. I had a running battle with the University for two years before I finally got them to send me my diploma.

I was a member of the University R.O.T.C. for each of the four years I spent in the College of Letters and Science. I also was on the pistol team for several years and became a crack shot and I was the recipient of a gold plated bullet given only to sharpshooters. Part of the four year military course was the requirement that you go to camp at Camp Custard, Michigan. I postponed my going until I had completed my four years of training. I was given a lot of shots and I sure had some sore arms. When I got to camp I was given the same shots again although I protested but they claimed they had no record showing that I had received them at Wisconsin. We were then put through a physical examination and they found I had a rupture and was sent home--all those shots for nothing. I was told I had to have an operation and return next summer. The army wouldn't pay for an operation and I didn't have the money to have one. I battled back and forth with the Army and they finally gave up on me and gave me a commission of 2nd Lieutenant and told the University to give me my diploma and forget the whole deal.

Later I completed the course for a Judge Advocate General, getting top grades but there were no vacancies so I decided to forget any kind of military career.