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Frankly, I had planned to postpone giving an account of the past 50 years until Judgment Day. However, in the hope that even Carleton graduates may be less omniscient than my Maker, I will leave out most of the tackier details and attempt an expurgated vita with no sex, violence or strong language in the hope that none of you will read past this point. Arma virumque cano.

In June 1943, after a blissfully happy year at Carleton, I put youth, innocence and illusion behind me and began one of life's ultimate reality checks, the USMC. Was sent to Oberlin for a semester. After that things got serious. After OCS and tank school, I got to Okinawa for the end of that campaign. Spent the next two years in North China as tank platoon leader and company commander. And I kept doing this until 1956 in various garden spots in Korea and stateside. By that time I had heard a lot of loud noises and four letter words, but had learned a trade.

In late 1948 I married Joan Walters (Smith '45) of Rochester. Her 3rd, my 1st ! As some cynics predicted, this marriage did not survive the exigencies of the service. Four moves in six years, two overseas tours, during which two of our children were born in my absence, plus two years of night school may provide for the common defense but it does not promote domestic tranquility. The decree came through the day I graduated from Augustana (!) in '56. Spent the next five years as a used bachelor including another two years in the Far East.

In '60 I was selected for a year long graduate course at Stanford. Picked up an MA, made light colonel, met my present wife, Jane, got married in '61, regained custody of my children and was ordered to duty at Headquarters, USMC. At long last, things were looking up.

Second marriages represent the triumph of hope over experience. Since Jane had three children and I had four (the whole brood ranging in age from 7 to 17) we had some interesting times. Suffice it to say that we all survived and even flourished. Thirty three years, seven college educations and twelve grandchildren later, we and they are all still speaking and happy together---and apart! I should note, however, that none of these happy pairs lives within 300 miles of each other or of us!

In '65, I left Jane to cope with five teenagers and took my battalion to the relative peace and quiet of Vietnam, which was certainly easier than raising an assortment of hormonal explosions in a California beach town. On returning, I made colonel, was sent to the Advanced Management Program at Harvard and then back to HQMC. After another three years, I spent a year at State Department's Foreign Service Institute, a wonderful academic sabbatical.

My last overseas tour was as chief of staff of 3rd Marine Division (just back from Vietnam) on Okinawa and full of the usual post-combat morale and discipline problems. Things got sorted out, but it was a long year. Failing selection for brigadier meant my days in the Corps were numbered. After a brief farewell tour at HQMC, I retired in early '74. I had had a great run of luck in three wars, had wonderful educational opportunities, traveled widely and served in some interesting places with a lot of fine men and women. I learned to love it all and I miss then still, twenty years later. Tennyson's poem Ulysses says it best.

The day after I retired I went to work as administrative director of a law firm of thirty five attorneys. In the next fifteen years it grew to 85, which I came to regard as more than enough. I learned to speak with forked tongue, assuaged rampant male egos, protected the secretaries and paralegals from the partners and survived and prospered. Joined the country club, played tennis, went to the symphony, did the galleries and gradually became semi-civilized and marginally socially acceptable. Actually, I enjoyed working with the lawyers and the staff. but when they merged with another 150 attorney firm, I knew it was time to retire from the world of paid work.

We now descend on our far-flung brood at least once a year. I fight with my computer, do some weekly charity work at a local shelter and the jail and follow Dr. Pangloss' final advice to Candide " Cultivate thy garden".

Fifty years, three wars, two marriages and two careers all on one page. Q.E.D . Hi, Bette!