

ROBERT STEWART CARTER

1883 - 1960

AS REMEMBERED BY HIS SON, HUGH MUNRO CARTER

Revised March, 2005



MY FATHER - ROBERT STEWART CARTER (BOB)

As remembered by Hugh Munro Carter

BEGINNINGS

More than once my father said that he had never worked for anyone but himself since he was 21. More than once he said that he had never earned less than \$500 a month during the Great Depression. These were more than simple facts. They were key facets of his personality - proud but not bombastic, positive but not thrusting, and almost always bright and cheerful. He was an honest straightforward person, who enjoyed his business and the company of his family and friends.



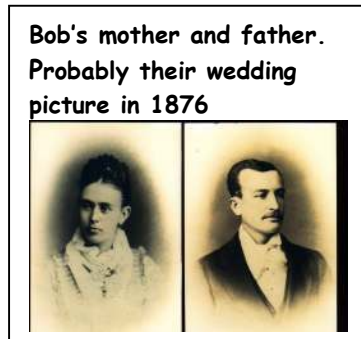
He seldom referred to his early life, probably because he was rarely asked. (How many people wish they had asked their parents more questions?) He arrived in this world in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan on 31st May 1883. We know the family remained there for

at least six more years because his brother Hugh's birth certificate of 1889 shows that he, too, was born in Prince Albert. According to the chronicle of their father (William Jesse Carter), they lived in Calgary from 1890 to 1892 then in Montreal from 1893 to 1903 where William Jesse was in charge of the construction department of the Montreal Street Railway.

Although he wasn't talkative about his boyhood, three anecdotes linger in my mind. Once, when I asked why he couldn't swim (he appeared nervous as he stood in water up to his waist at Locarno Beach in Vancouver, and wouldn't venture into deeper water), he said that he and friends were "down at the river" in Montreal and some were swimming. They threw him in thinking it the best way to learn to swim and he almost drowned.

The second story was about his first job, which he told with some relish. He started at sixteen (1899) as an office boy at the Montreal Street Railway. His pay was \$25 a month. His costs for room and board and other necessities took almost everything, but 25 cents was left over which gave him a seat "in the gods" once a month at the local theatre. I suspect that "room and board" was at his parents' home for which he had to pay, now that he was an earner.

The third anecdote was in response to my question about his lack of knowledge of French since he lived in Montreal for a few years and went to school there. According to him, and it was probably true at the time, the English didn't need to speak French, but the French needed English for all but the most menial jobs. Montreal was the financial heart of Canada but English-speaking people were in control owning the principal institutions. (How times have changed!)



Little is known about his mother, née Catherine Stewart (Cameron), and I never heard him speak about her. However, we have records showing she died at the age of 44 in May 1901 when Bob was 18. She is buried in the Cameron cemetery in Asphodel, a farming township in Peterborough County, Ontario where she was born and grew up. She died either when visiting her family, the Camerons, in Asphodel, or in Montreal and then taken to Asphodel for burial.

GO WEST YOUNG MAN

Soon after his mother died Bob joined the great surge westward. Possibly he went on his own or he might have travelled with his father who moved from Montreal to Edmonton, Alberta in 1903. He turns up in Winnipeg at about that time as a salesman with nearby towns as part of his territory. Legend has it he returned to Winnipeg after each trip on the road with several new shirts instead of laundering those he had.

He lived in what he called a "bach", a large house shared by six or seven men. By pooling their resources they "lived like kings" with a housekeeper, a Chinese cook, and each with his own room. The cook could buy their food more cheaply than they, and still have a little extra to line his own pocket. They took turns as manager, which consisted of reviewing the accounts with the cook, supervising and paying the housekeeper, and settling bills.

Either just before or just after Winnipeg, Bob's wanderings took him to Trail, B.C., a mining town (still today one of the largest producers of base

metals in the world). In later life he liked to say with some pride that he had carried a hod on his back in Trail to earn his living. He also visited Spokane, Washington in his travels.

Hod:- a tray or trough that has a pole handle and that is borne on the shoulder for carrying loads (as of mortar or brick)

This wandering indicates an unsettled youth, roaming around from about eighteen to perhaps twenty-two. Other influences would be his mother's death, the lure of the west opening up, and his father's decision to leave Montreal. "Carrying a hod" reveals that he had no money and would live from job to job. He finally drifted back to Calgary influenced no doubt by having gone to school there from about age seven to nine, before the family moved to Montreal.

He made Calgary his permanent home about 1905 and except for time out in the army in WW1, remained there until 1925. His exceptionally good sales personality, together with an inquisitive mind and lots of initiative assured him a good living for the rest of his life. Until he joined the army (and possibly after the war), he was the representative in Calgary for the Dominion Bridge Company of Montreal, while his brother Donald was their man in Edmonton.

In the early 1900's Alberta was a frontier; tens of thousands of immigrants were pouring in from Britain and Europe; roads were being built and construction was booming; large-scale irrigation projects were being developed, and farms established. In this thriving scene Bob did well selling steel for bridges and buildings. He represented The Dominion Bridge Company for southern Alberta in Calgary, while his brother, Donald looked after their interests in Northern Alberta in Edmonton. Surprisingly, the big money earner was not steel for construction but the ordinary culvert, as roads and farmlands were opened up. He learned a great deal about Alberta, immigrants' problems, farmers' needs, and construction. It was a pioneer life in a pioneer country, and Bob enjoyed it to the hilt. He lived the good life - a young bachelor in a frontier country with opportunities galore.



Calgary 1892

In 1907 when he was 24, he came down with typhoid fever and was in bed for a month. When finally the fever lifted he was emaciated and one leg was useless. He couldn't walk. His doctor decided the only choice was amputation. Bob was trying to come to grips with this horror when a friend suggested a second opinion, a practice not common in those days. The second doctor said, "Nonsense! That leg simply needs exercise." In a few weeks his leg was back to normal. For the rest of his life he would always quiz doctors closely to satisfy himself about their competency.

He was a gregarious man and made many friends within a robust, non-intellectual society which suited him well. He and his buddies enjoyed bird-shoots and poker, a game that was to be useful later when he was overseas in the army. Also, he honed his sales skills during his early life in Calgary, which served him well throughout his business life. It is tantalizing to conjecture how his life would have developed if he had had the opportunity to go further in school. In midlife the *Encyclopædia Britannica* was a treasured possession which he pored over incessantly. It was evident he thirsted for knowledge. He was also inventive and innovative, continually

seeking new or better ways to get things done. If this type of mind had been nourished at an early age what sort of life would have unfolded?

MARRIAGE AND THE WAR



About the time of the outbreak of WW1 he met his future wife, Evelyn Munro. She was from London, Ontario, and was visiting her sister Florence in Calgary who was married to George Clark, a pal of Bob's and the representative of Champion Spark Plugs in Alberta. Bob and Evelyn were married on the 12th of July 1916 when Bob was in the army on his way overseas. Supposedly, at the age of 33 he was developing thoughts about settling down and the appeal of marriage was strengthened by going away to war. An additional factor may have been that he didn't know many young women in Calgary such as Evelyn: educated, charming, and

accomplished. Also, her father, Sam Munro, was a man who, like Bob, had started with nothing, had many of the same sales talents, and had prospered. The two had much in common and got along well, in spite of an age gap of about thirty years.

In 1914, the impact of war on Canadians was quite different from that of WW2 a quarter of a century later. Canada was designated as a Dominion within the British Empire which meant it had progressed beyond a colony, and was self-governing for internal matters but had little control over foreign affairs. The population was largely British (except in Quebec) who referred to Britain as "the old country" or as "home".

With the outbreak of war, patriotic fervor was sweeping most of the country. Although conscription was not then in sight (it didn't happen until 1917 because of the opposition of French Quebec) the pressure to join up was strong. It's not surprising that when Bob enlisted in 1915, more than a year after war was declared, and went to Edmonton to tell his father, the

reply was; "It's about time". (He addressed his father, in correspondence at least, as *Pater*). Bob's younger brother, Hugh, had enlisted in November 1914, shortly after the war began. Sadly he was gassed, resulting in an early death in 1922.

Perhaps Bob delayed enlisting because of his age or because of his business, but who knows? In any case he was judged to be officer material and was trained at Sarcee camp near Calgary from which he emerged as a second lieutenant. He was instructed to grow a moustache to look older (supposedly age equates with authority?) He was assigned to the 31st Battalion (Engineers), probably because of his construction experience. He also served in the 137th battalion, and the 13th from which he was discharged on the 21st of May 1919.



A few weeks after he and Evelyn were married in her hometown, London, Ontario, on July 16th 1916, he was sent off to France. He was 33, she 30 (although the marriage certificate said 29). I've often wondered why she married so late in an age when most women were considered "on the shelf" once they reached 22 or 23. Perhaps in one's hometown once a young woman was considered past her prime for whatever reason, her chances further declined with each succeeding year. It would probably take a trip to some other place, as in Evelyn's case, to shed the undesirable image of being regarded as an old maid.



In those days officers had privileges long since gone. One was to have a batman. Another was to arrange passage for one's wife on a troopship. As a result, Evelyn sailed to England late in 1917, and on the same ship was Florence McMordie, the wife of Bob's colonel. They may have met before, but on this trip they became fast friends. I remember her well when I was growing up in Vancouver. Colonel McMordie

returned to Prince Rupert after the war and managed (and owned?) the local cinema. When it went the way of many small cinemas in that era, the family came to Vancouver where the Colonel promptly died. I recall that hard times ensued for Mrs. McMordie and her two sons, and that my father helped them out which was not untypical; he helped many friends financially during the depression and at times of family crises.

I can recall vignettes told by both my parents about life overseas. My mother told about living in a hotel in Purfleet (now part of "docklands" on the north bank of the Thames, downstream from London), and when the German zeppelins came over at night dropping bombs, she and Florence McMordie ran down to the beach and huddled there hoping the Germans would not be so stupid as to bomb a beach!

Evelyn returned to her parents' home in London, Ontario, probably after Christmas, 1917. Bob and Evelyn's first born (me, undoubtedly conceived in Purfleet) arrived in this world on the 20th of August 1918 while Bob was still overseas.

My father didn't particularly like the French; in fact with a touch of disdain he often referred to them as *frogs*. Unlike many soldiers on leave, he didn't head for Paris; he never saw it until 1954. He always headed for Calais, catching the first ferry to England where he felt comfortable. On one occasion he was invalided for a few weeks (what he suffered from I have no idea) and sent to Pitlochry in Scotland, and billeted with a Scottish family. He loved it. He discovered and enjoyed true Scottish hospitality.

Because Queen Victoria found the principle of poker interesting, it had a brief vogue in Britain in the 1870s, but its acceptance came chiefly in the decade 1911-20, undoubtedly influenced by the Canadian and American forces in World War I (*Britannica*)

He liked to play poker, particularly with English officers. They were loaded with money (those were the days when commissions were still bought in the British army), they drank whisky while they played, and were quite fascinated with this "American" game. As a result, they handed Bob a great deal of cash for

the privilege of trying to learn. He told me he signed his total pay over to Evelyn and lived on his winnings. She did quite well, receiving an officer's

spousal allowance plus his pay, so they had a small nest egg when he returned.

He seldom talked about his experiences in the army in France, so I only heard fragments from time to time. Fortunately he was part of the Canadian railway troops and wasn't often right at the front. His unit was responsible for building bridges and laying railway track. The British built their railway tracks to last forever, laying them on concrete ties (or sleepers, as the British call them). Canadian tracks are laid on wooden ties. As a result, the Canadians could lay track at unbelievable speed in British eyes, and therefore were entrusted with the job for all the British armies. Railway troops generally were no nearer than a mile or two from the front lines, although Bob spoke about being in a muddy dugout in the front-line trenches and sleeping there on occasion. Thank goodness that he had this railway-troop role and didn't have to "go over the top" where such large numbers met instant slaughter.

I once heard him telling friends about Colonel McMordie whom he described as fair but very hard. One punishment he meted out to a deserter (he could have had him shot) was to tie the man, spread-eagled, to the wheel of a gun carriage. What this did to the man physically or mentally as the carriage rolled along (albeit slowly in those days) can scarcely be imagined. The way my father described the incident it was quite evident he considered it one of the harshest punishments. Today it seems incredible that such a hideous punishment would have been allowed.

He usually referred to the Germans as *the Boche*, or *the Hun*, or more often *the Gerries*, which was sometimes in the singular as "*Gerry attacked that night*". I once heard him refer to a Vancouver businessman as a *squarehead* and when I asked him what it meant, he looked surprised, and replied that all Germans were squareheads "you only have to look at them to see that." He often saw people as stereotypes of their nationality or race. "The Chinese make damn good citizens." "The Italians are spineless and almost useless, and not to be trusted." "He's a Jew but I think I can trust him." "The Japs are good hard-working people." Today, such statements are unacceptable, but in those days were commonplace.

Major Robert Stewart Carter, DSO, Mentioned in Despatches, was "de-mobbed" on the 21st May 1919 from the Canadian Expeditionary Force. His Certificate of Service says

**He served in Canada, ENGLAND and FRANCE with
the 137th Battn., 21st Reserve Battn., 31st Battn.,
Alberta Regt'l Depot, 13th Batt., Can.Railway Troops,
Can. Railway Troops Depot.**

I once asked him why he won the DSO (Distinguished Service Order) and was Mentioned in Despatches which is tantamount to receiving a medal, but his reply wasn't very informative, something to the effect that you didn't have to perform an act of bravery, and that these honours were simply for good service.

BACK TO NORMALITY

He headed for London, Ontario, gathered up Evelyn and infant Hugh at her parents' home, then on to Calgary, where he started picking up the threads of his business. Canada was returning to normality. Ex-soldiers were quickly absorbed into the young, growing country, especially in the west. Alberta's population now exceeded half a million! Natural gas had been discovered at Turner Valley near Calgary, immigrants were flowing in to be allotted their own land, and the resulting growth and prosperity stimulated everyone.

In the next few years, the family grew - I was joined by Evelyn in 1920, Mac in 1921, and finally Bob in 1923. Quite likely Evelyn said "Enough!" at this point. Our first home at 511 23rd Ave., W., was where my earliest memories were recorded. The house has gone, replaced by an apartment building.

The family had only recently moved to Scarborough Avenue, when disaster struck - Bob went broke - at 42. Years later, when I was in my teens, I heard him say it was a blessing, because it resulted in a decision to try his

luck in Vancouver, where he prospered. He and Evelyn enjoyed Calgary, but they had heard many good things about the west coast, and now was the time to try something new.

He went broke because a company he represented in Calgary - The Pedlar People Ltd. of Oshawa, Ontario, - defrauded him. He placed his faith in them after he had invented and patented a gate made of heavy chain to replace the traditional farmer's gate that swung on hinges. The Carter gate, on the release of a hook, collapsed to the ground, and the farmer could drive his horse and cart over it. Hooking it back on a swivel arm to tighten the gate across the entrance was easy, quick, and simple.

Our exuberant inventor signed a contract with Pedlar giving them exclusive manufacturing and sales rights, and obliging them to pay a royalty of two dollars for each gate sold. In addition, he would earn a commission on each sale in Alberta, since he was their man there. They would also use their extensive organization to sell the gate across Canada. A jubilant Bob Carter returned to Calgary and proceeded to use his savings to promote the Carter gate, principally at farmers' fairs. He was on a high, certain of success and prosperity.

On sending orders to The Pedlar People, he was puzzled by the lack of shipments. They repeatedly advised him of production problems. Finally, exasperated and frustrated, he travelled to Oshawa (by rail in those days) to try to unravel the mystery of why the company should have problems in manufacturing a simple product.

In the confines of their boardroom, they told him the brutal truth: they had manufactured one Carter gate, and handed him a royalty cheque for two dollars. They claimed they had now fulfilled their obligations under the contract. They revealed that when he first approached them, they had plans to make and sell another gate and they didn't want the competition of the Carter gate to be a spoiler, so they knowingly put together a contract to sidetrack our inventor and his chain gate. The contract gave them exclusive rights to his patent, thus thwarting him from manufacturing his own invention.

He sought the advice of the renowned Calgary lawyer, R.B. Bennett (later to become Prime Minister of Canada) who advised that a lawsuit would eventually succeed if he had the financial resources to fight it to the Supreme Court. The Pedlar People had much at stake and would be prepared to resist to the limit. Bennett's opinion was that it would need \$50,000 for a long battle. Bob was beaten. He was 42.

THE BURGEONING WEST COAST

The result was a complete career change. He sold the house, borrowed \$500 from his pal Charlie Morris and, armed with introductions, set out for Vancouver. One introduction to Fenton Mather, president of Kingsley Navigation Co. Ltd. which operated ocean freighters between B.C. and California, proved to be the key for a good start to Bob's ultimate success. Always on the lookout for more cargo for his ships, Mather gave Bob free passage on a freighter to California, suggesting he find companies he might represent in Vancouver, preferably those with heavy tonnage prospects.

Success in getting three key agencies - Arden Salt Company, American Potash and Chemical Corporation, and Great Western Electro-Chemical Company - was the foundation of what grew to be a large and diversified business. He was launched into a new career, exciting, stimulating, and potentially prosperous.

Bob returned to Calgary, and moved us to Vancouver. I remember travelling to Edmonton first, staying for a few days with Bob's older brother, my uncle Donald and his wife aunt Elsie, meeting my grandfather, then on to our new life. It was October 1925. I was seven, Evelyn five, Mac turning 4, and young Bob turning 2. I can recall that on the train we all crowded into a drawing room to sleep, rather than in berths.

My father threw himself into the new arena with zest and enthusiasm. He donned overalls to learn how salt was used to cure hides, chill and preserve fish, and provide diet supplements for farm animals. He visited the mines

and smelters of Trail, Kimberley, Britannia Beach and others to understand how chemicals were used in ore concentration and smelting. He went to soapworks, dye mills, and electroplaters to see how they used the chemicals he was importing. His hands-on approach was a major key in building a customer base, in making many contacts and friends, and in giving him additional confidence to beat the competition. He was soon importing industrial salt by the thousands of tons, and other bulk materials and chemicals in impressive tonnages.

As I remember, his largest sources of income were industrial salt, and many chemicals for the mining industry. Salt tonnage grew rapidly such that he was a hero with Fenton Mather of Kingsley Navigation, and with Mac McDaniel of Arden Salt. By 1928 Arden was building a grading, sacking, and shipping plant on False Creek at 85 First Avenue West. (This building is still there, and has been declared a Heritage Building by the city of Vancouver.) The company, Vancouver Salt Co. Ltd. was owned by Arden (later absorbed by Leslie Salt) and managed by Bob.

Chemicals manufactured by Great Western Electro-Chemical Company (later part of Dow Chemicals) were also making a contribution to the growing business. Principal among these were xanthates used as flotation agents in the concentration of ores in the mining industry. The largest producer in the world of lead and zinc was not far away at Trail, B.C. Our entrepreneur was importing by sea, then shipping by rail in very large quantities. In my teens, I sometimes accompanied him on trips by car to Trail, the head office of this important customer, and it was particularly on these occasions, just the two of us, that I got to know him better, and learned some details of his life. I wish I had asked more questions!

It wasn't long before he was spawning new businesses. He had an office at Vancouver Salt and another in a warehouse at 1008 Maitland Street, the headquarters of all his other importing activities *Commercial Chemicals Limited*. It wasn't long before he asked himself, "Why am I bringing in goods by sea, having them off-loaded at a dock, trucking them to my warehouse on Maitland Street, and selling them from there? Why don't I warehouse them on a dock? In fact, why don't I operate a dock, get revenue

from the incoming ships, and ship to my customers from the dock?" This was about the mid 1930s.

So another enterprise was born: *Coastwise Pier Limited*. The Canadian Pacific Railway which owned large chunks of the Vancouver waterfront had mothballed several docks because of the depression. One of these was an old wooden structure called "Pier H". Although antiquated, it could accommodate ocean freighters, and a rail track ran down one side of it. A ramp for loading trucks was at the land end. Perfect for importing, storing, and onward shipping by rail or truck. Bob leased Pier H from the CPR for what they were paying the city in taxes - a mere \$13,000 a year.

EXPANSION AND PROSPERITY

The port of Vancouver was suffering heavily from the depression. Vancouver's mild climate attracted thousands of homeless unemployed from the Prairies and Ontario causing severe problems. Unemployment payments didn't exist in those days and men begged on the streets for "a dime, please, mister" or for work of any kind. "Soup kitchens", operated by charities, were numerous. Many docks and other businesses were mothballed. At our home, there were knocks on the door every day, especially at dinner time, by men who pleaded for a meal, offering to do any job in return. The unemployed situation became so menacing that the mayor, Gerry McGeer read the Riot Act in Victory Square to a seething hungry angry shouting crowd. I believe that reading the Riot Act is a step short of martial law.

This bleak situation turned out to be an opportunity for Bob's new enterprise. The rental to pay to the CPR was low, and men were lining up for any going job. *Coastwise Pier Limited* at Pier H was soon humming with activity and Bob was in his element. It gave him particular satisfaction to be in a position of offering jobs thus making a contribution to alleviating the misery. He was also very pleased that he could help many friends with small loans as they tried to survive in a major economic disaster.

His importing business provided the initial tonnage for the dock operation, and it gained a lower cost base by not having to move the goods beyond the waterfront, as before, resulting in healthier profits. The importing business was indicative of Bob's business acumen in seeing advantage where many others couldn't. For example, in the 20's and 30's a large tonnage of goods flowed from the port of Vancouver to Britain: wheat, lumber, canned fish, apples and more. Very little tonnage flowed the other way. The ships were often in ballast on their return trip. As a result, ship operators offered low rates to try to attract tonnage.

Bob read this situation well. He travelled to the Gulf Coast - Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, to see what could be imported into the Canadian west. He was soon chartering ships returning from Britain and diverting them to gulf ports to load up with oyster shells, turpentine, pine oil, and fruit to be shipped to *his* wharf in Vancouver. He enjoyed high favour with the CPR and with the ship operators, and he loved the excitement, the hustle and bustle, and the growing prosperity.

The CPR never asked for an increase in rent beyond the amount they were paying the city in taxes. Bob's semi-annual reporting to them saw to that. When goods were shipped by rail from Vancouver a preference was seldom expressed by shippers to use CPR or CNR. Therefore Bob naturally chose the CPR. His semi-annual letter to the CPR (his own idea) typically would state "95 carloads via CPR, 4 by CNR." Naturally, he was very popular with the top echelon of the CPR, and recognizing they had Bob Carter as an excellent promoter, they "forgot" about increasing his rent.

The pace of activity at Pier H was infectious and stimulating. Ships unloading, trucks and railcars loading, the smell and the sounds of the harbour, the energy - all inspired a sense of fun and achievement. However, by today's standards it was backward, if not primitive. Gangs of men laboured in the holds of ships loading wooden flats which hung from a derrick which swung its load to the dockside where another gang unloaded the freight onto handcarts which were then hustled into the inside of the dock where another gang piled and stacked the goods.

At later dates, men would load handtrucks from the stacks of goods in the dock, and move them into railcars or to a truck-loading ramp, where once more they would be manhandled. Labour-intensive, it was. Typically, unloading a ship involved four men in each hold of the ship, four on the dockside, and four where the stacking was done, plus a foreman. Then to ship the goods out at a later date by rail or truck was the same story.

Bob revolutionized the process. A new device was appearing in large modern warehouses: the forklift truck. Many erroneously thought it had limited use because it required a wooden pallet which not only cost money, but occupied an appreciable amount of space. Bob started using it inside Pier H for loading freight cars and trucks, and subsequently for moving goods from ship's sling into the warehouse. Finally, he was lowering a forklift truck into the hold of a ship, thus eliminating the need for four men on the dockside. Bob's new methods quickly spread around the entire port. Moreover, it wasn't long before all cargo was loaded on ships on pallets, the pallets travelling with the cargo.

THE MAN - BOB CARTER

I know Bob regretted not having had more education. He started work at sixteen, typical at the time. His father was a farm boy turned carpenter turned contractor, also with limited formal education, who had no good reason to encourage his sons to go any further in school than was required. Bob, on the other hand urged us to go to university for as long as I can remember. His encouragement was undoubtedly sharpened by his need to attract a partner for his principal importing company, Commercial Chemicals Limited with a more advanced education than his own. A Scot, Jim Barr, who had a degree in chemistry filled the need.

So much for his accomplishments. What sort of person was he? It's hard for me to assess him. As his son, I knew him better than most, yet I was seldom his confidante. I feel certain it would have been impossible for him to reveal his inner self to anybody, not even his wife. That relationship with her was a warm one with seldom an angry word, but it was in the mould of the nineteenth century with the man as undisputed master of the house and family, with less of the give and take common today. As an example, we

lived in a very comfortable house on Balsam Street. One night he arrived home just before dinner and announced that he had bought a new house and wanted Evelyn to see it - before she put dinner on the table. He was bursting with pride and pleasure. "Bob! You bought it without consulting me!?" His smile widened, "I wanted to surprise you." My mother was astounded. As it turned out, the house, at 37th and Granville was a distinct upgrade and Evelyn was more than pleased.

I feel certain he would have liked to unbend more but was unable to do so. He had a quick temper which was part of his straightforward character, but the temper disappeared as quickly as it came, and he bore no grudges.

Mac, my brother, clashed with Bob. Mac very much wanted to work with him, but it couldn't be. Bob found it difficult to delegate, especially to his son with whom he couldn't let go of his parental role (or rule?) Mac told me that Bob sometimes acted as though he owned his son. An example which irked Mac was Bob's reaction to Mac's return from the RCAF with a DFC. Bob was so bursting with pride that he paraded Mac around to all his friends and his words seemed to say, "Look what I have done! I have produced this young man who has done so well." Bob would have been astonished if he were told of this interpretation. He undoubtedly thought he was paying Mac a huge favour by extolling him.

Bob and Evelyn had a wide circle of friends. Bridge was very popular with them, and they seldom spent an evening with friends without having a game. Bob's approach to bridge was perhaps revealing. Whereas Evelyn liked to develop a scientific approach to bidding, Bob's was more of a gambler's. Not infrequently he would open his hand and say, "Four spades!" More than once I heard Evelyn chiding him for "not bidding properly" and he would smile and reply "I usually make them, don't I?" Each had good "card sense" and played their hands well, but had a fundamentally different approach to the game.

He was quietly pleased that he was invited by Senator Stan McKeen to join the Vancouver Club. It was, and perhaps still is, the most prestigious "gentlemen's club." He had made the grade. He had arrived. Belonging to such a club meant much more in the business sense and socially than today.

It was a hangover from the London scene where clubs served a very important purpose in a society structured much differently.

Once a month at the Vancouver Club was family night which was considered, by him at least, as quite an auspicious social event in Vancouver, and it gave him a great deal of pleasure to take us all to dinner. Those were the days in the 20s and 30s when dining out, except at a friend's, was rare. Restaurants were few, and were primarily for the traveller. Until my late teens I can't remember eating out except when we were on a trip. The opening of the White Spot on South Granville was the beginning of buying something to eat away from home. It served sandwiches and hamburgers on a tray in the car, and many, especially the young set considered it "smart" to go there after a movie, while their parents snorted, "What is this world coming to?"

Stan McKeen was behind another invitation: "Come and join the Masons" On a business trip to Alberta, he told me that he was most disillusioned with this experience. He said he wouldn't break his Masonic oath not to reveal anything about the Masons, but going through the initiation rites was enough. To him it was ludicrous for grown men to be acting so childishly.

Having made his own living all his life Bob was not wasteful, but not in any way stingy. In fact, he was exceedingly generous with the family and with close friends, and with those he knew to be in financial trouble (not uncommon in the depression years). He was very proud of his family and of his accomplishments, but there was little outward manifestation of this. He and Evelyn made friends readily and were well liked in their circle. Most people who knew him would see him as an outgoing genial person, easy to get along with and lots of fun. But I doubt if any friend was a close confidante. It was much the same with the family. He tried hard to be a loving, caring parent, and in my opinion largely succeeded, but it was within a Victorian framework of family where emotions were only partly revealed.

All in all, he made his imprint in many ways. He was an innovator, a leader, and a restless doer. He put his mark on the Vancouver waterfront; he made countless friends and had many admirers particularly among his employees. He couldn't be put on his back, because like the bob-up doll, he would have

rolled upright instantly. He was an incessant optimist, a quality which infected many others.