

Editing Mother's journal has been a process that has opened my eyes and sent me soul-searching. As I read the memories recorded here, I was jostled up and down. Readers of this journal will probably experience similar thoughts and emotions. The recollections recorded here have been both good and bad, and I have felt enlightened, disappointed, hurt, regret, and guilt (for not doing more, for being a source of suffering, and for not doing small senseless acts of kindness, and for being torn between parents, siblings, and offspring). At times I felt anger at myself, my mother, my father, and my siblings.

In this journal we have a perspective from many years. For example, Mother deemed herself a failure when her children didn't do what she had taught them to do. It is clear that as soon as a child did not do what she thought they ought to do, she thought herself a failure. I can put that in perspective in my own life; I cannot take credit for my children's successes or failures. If I do my best in teaching them to be good people and instill in them a sense of morality, it is up to them to be in charge of the type of lives they are going to live. This is a specific example of what I have learned.

There are many lessons to be learned from what Mother has written here. If one approaches this book with criticism only, one is missing the point of what can be learned, for this book is a portrait of a life, and we get a glimpse into the greatness and illusions of that life. What better heritage can a parent offer a child?

I had my own ideas of what would be in these journals. (I think we all have ideas of what we hoped to see.) Some of the important events *to me* were not recorded here. I wanted them to be here, and they weren't. So, it wasn't as I had expected. It was a surprise, a letdown. I thought she would have said more about so-and-so or such-and-such that had to do with my own emotions or about a nice thing that I remembered I did. Oh, my!

Many events that happened in my family's life were not noted. I now realize that we need to keep journals of our own and include in them what *we* want to say. If we want to summon up our own past, as mother did here in her recollections of over twenty years, we must write our own memorial. Maybe we can leave a heritage such as this one for our own families.

We do not need to write great and wonderful events in a journal. When I read the historical events in this journal, it provides an interesting view of Mother's life. Every-day events are interesting and will be interesting to our families.

I am grateful to Mother for leaving her journals to me and for the opportunity that I have had to work on this book and share it with you. I would like to thank Rex for his dedication in typing the manuscript. There is no way that this journal would have been printed this quickly were it left to my own doing. No way would it have been published just a year after Mother died. I would like to give a special thanks to Craig Snow for his invaluable support and for his kindness to many people. He is an unsung hero in this process.

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