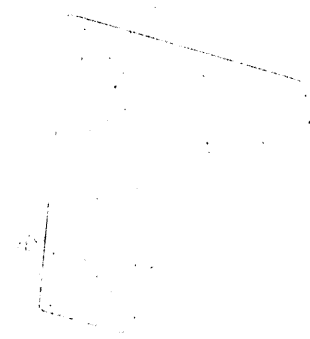


JAMES WILDER TRUHER, JR. - HIS EARLY LIFE

As Remembered by His Mother

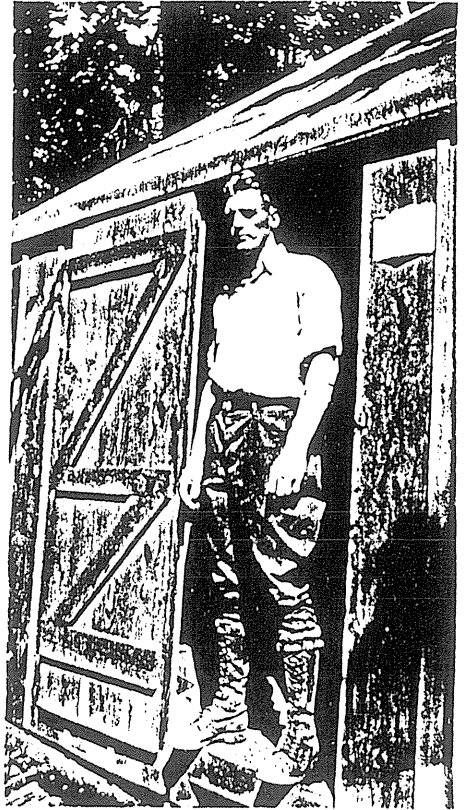
1980





SUMMER, 1934

This was the cabin your Dad built in 3 days. You can't see the front door, but the back door is open.



SUMMER, 1934

This is a close-up of the door to the office, and we had two little rooms behind.



FALL, 1934

This is the cabin after the snow fell and I was about to leave for Seattle. This is from the bank of the stream behind.

July 4, 1934 through December 10, 1934 - THE MOUNTAIN CABIN.

You and I arrived by train to meet your father at Berne, Washington, where your father had spent three days building a little house (a shack, really) of three rooms. He was employed by Coyle Construction Co. as a superintendent of highway construction. There was no place for me to live (with you) so he built this little place of three tiny rooms--the first was his office, the second was our living/dining room and the third was our bedroom (just big enough for a double bunk (you and I slept on the top bunk) and some orange crates to use as a dresser of sorts. Outside in the woods was the needed toilet. Also outside were beautiful woods and a delightful mountain stream. The house was built across the highway from two tents in which two of your Dad's foremen lived with their wives. A half mile or so down the road was the big camp for the workmen--about 100 of them who worked, at that time, for 50 cents an hour.

Your grandmother visited us during the summer for a few days and as I think of it now she must have worried about the circumstances in which her baby daughter was living, but she never complained. She enjoyed the beauty of the surroundings and so did I. Really, it was a very pleasant summer. We had a little excitement one day when they were blasting tree trunks for the new highway, and our little house could have been destroyed. One huge trunk (about 4 feet in diameter) was blown under the back door of our bedroom. From then on, I had a back porch.

But the big excitement came early in November when we awakened to see a beautiful white world. Snow on every branch of the evergreens, snow and ice on the road, snow on the rocks of the stream. I was very excited, but your Dad was worried, and with good reason, it turned out. The highway to the coast and to the east was closed and the train couldn't get through. I learned later that the two women across the highway began boiling water as soon as they got up, just in case you should decide to arrive a month early. But I wasn't a bit worried--I just enjoyed that snow. But that night there were avalanches all around us and the stream became a river. We stayed up a long time while Dad went out every hour to measure the rise of the river just in case we needed to get on higher ground. But the river went down before morning. And by noon the next day the train came through. And you know who was on it--you and your mother.

One of the women across the road had a sister named Nell Barber who had 6 kids (aged 2 to 20) and lived in Seattle. Arrangements were made for me to stay in Nell's house and pay board until Jim came home from the construction job. I missed your Dad a lot at that time, but there was a lot of distraction with the Barber family. They were very good to you and me.

On December 9 your Dad finished the work at Berne for that year. He loaded our car on a big truck and again, couldn't get to the coast over the shortest route and had to go a couple of hundred miles out of the way to get to Seattle. I had started into labor before he arrived at Barber's, so they took me to Providence Hospital that day (the 9th of December). However, my labor pains were spasmodic so I went to sleep. I had pains off and on the next day, and you were born about midnight. You weighed 7 pounds and 5 ounces and had a strong pair of lungs. The doctor had to make an instrument delivery (it was Johnny Marcks fault--really the nurses' fault) so your lip was cut and your head was kind of pointed. These things disappeared (the cut and the point) in a couple of days.

Your Dad and I were delighted with our new little son. In fact, your Dad was so excited the night you were born that he called my mother and told her that the baby was 7 feet 5 inches and weighed 20 pounds. Your grandmother and grandfather Truher and May were at the hospital when you were born. You, of course, were the first grandchild in that family and they were almost excited as your Dad.

December 10, 1934 through April, 1935 -- SEATTLE APARTMENT

On December 11 and some days following, I was in a state of euphoria because I sincerely felt that I had participated in a miracle. Here was this healthy, strong, cute little boy brand new to the world. I was in a room in PROVIDENCE HOSPITAL and my roommate was Helen Marcks. In those days mothers and babies stayed in the hospital two weeks, so you and I and Helen and Johnny Marcks got well acquainted.

While we were there, Dad scoured Seattle looking for a furnished apartment which we could afford. He found one at 1616 E. Howell, on the third floor. I'll never forget going home from the hospital. I carried you until we got ready to go in the apartment house and then your Dad carried you for the first time. He was so very, very careful of you that I had to smile, but I couldn't let him see me smile because he was so earnest and obviously felt such a sense of responsibility. I had a hard time walking up all those stairs (no elevators) because I had a lot of stitches and was all bent over. It was a nice enough apartment and we kept you in our bedroom (the only one).

The four months or so we spent there were pleasant and uneventful after the first couple of weeks. You and I had problems those first two weeks because my doctor insisted that I should nurse