

# **Introduction**

## **Memoir of M. S.**

I have learned that the writing of a life story is a serious and lengthy undertaking, not something to be done lightly. Mom was a great keeper of the family documents and pictures, storyteller of all the family tales, and she impressed upon me the responsibility, as her oldest son, and as one of the oldest grandchildren, for collecting and handing down the family history to generations to follow.

I first began this project ten years ago with the idea of incorporating all my hard-earned wisdom and philosophical ideas so that future offspring might benefit from my experience. I engaged M.M., who had assisted others in writing their family stories, to help me with the project. She spent many hours recording my childhood memories and family stories and transcribed the recordings into an unpolished first draft. Meanwhile I applied myself to the writing of various erudite and philosophical essays, some of which appear in this book in an abbreviated form. Unfortunately, Ms. M was unable to continue the project, and I became discouraged and the project languished for a year or two.

The urgency for continuing came from a desire to sort through and clear out all the boxes of pictures and memorabilia that have been stored in my house. With some reluctance to start again, I engaged Candace Wilson of LifeWoven Memoirs to work with me to organize the previous draft and assist with filling in the missing pieces. We have worked together for an entire year, with the last few months involved in my rewriting the entire book. It is a far different book than I originally envisioned. I couldn't resist passing on some of my life lessons and advice, but it is basically the lifelong adventures of M.S..

It is very hard to look back across so many decades and to remember loved ones who are now gone. Some of my "memory lanes" have been "dark roads," but reflecting on my life in the twilight years helped me acknowledge all the mentors and helping hands I have had along the way and also take stock of the many blessings and accomplishments in my life.

I am happy now to have finished this lengthy project and to have fulfilled my responsibility to future generations. I sincerely hope other family members will consider writing their own unique and personal life stories.