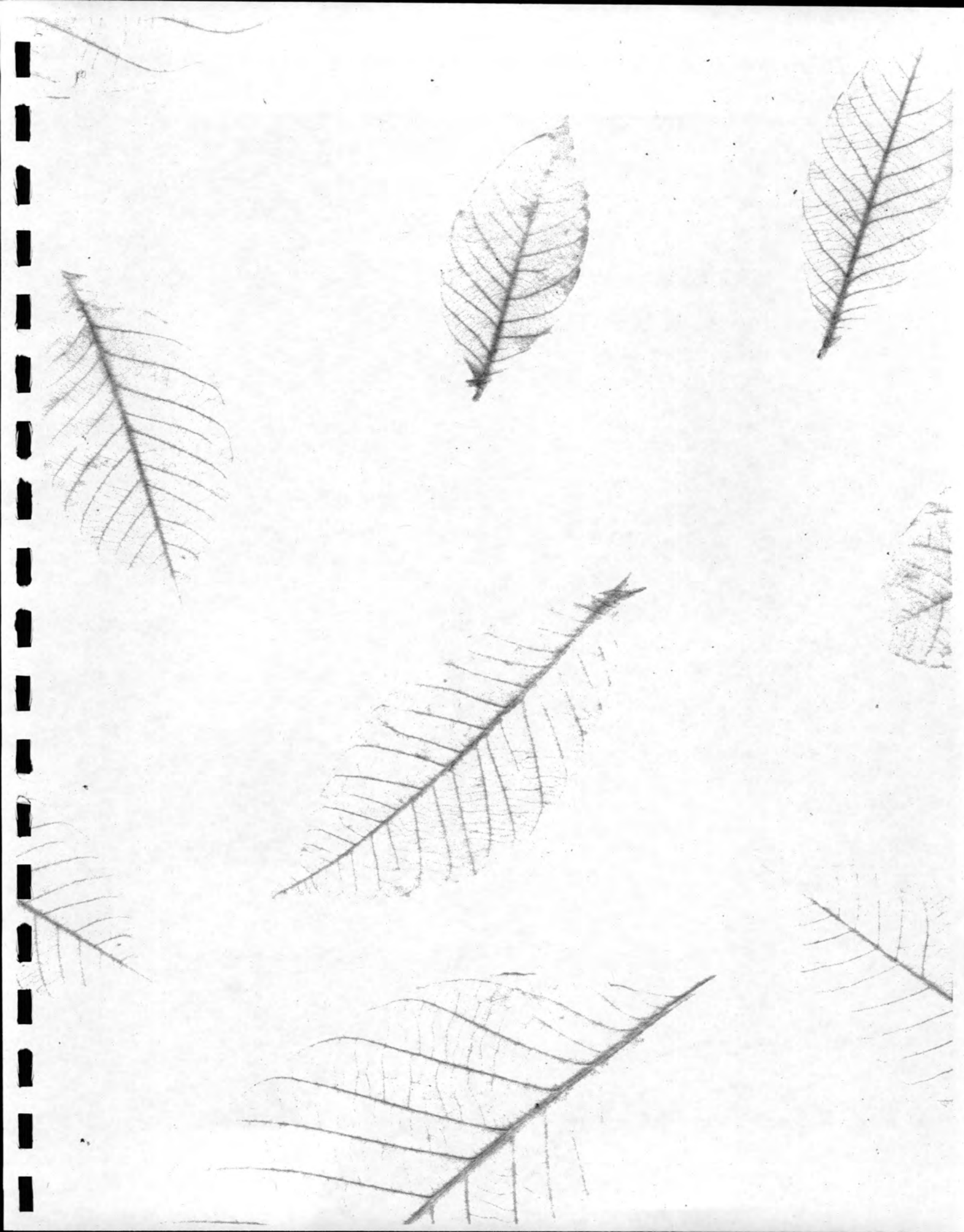


Occasional Verse

from Robert William Wissler





This book is dedicated with love and gratitude
to Grandpa & Grandma Wissler.

CONTENTS

THE TRUE MEANING OF PLAQUE REGRESSION - 1978 p. 1

A Tribute to Howard C. Hopps - 1982 p. 7

A POEM OF THANKSGIVING.

TO

MARY POLK IN KANDERSTEG

Sept. 3, '83

p. 9

PROFESSOR WISSLER'S RESPONSE - 1988 p. 11

A GIFT FROM THE ANIMALS - 1989 p. 15

ODE (OWED) TO TOWADA LAKE - 1989 p. 21

Epic Poem of Celebration - 1991 p. 23

OWED TO A SMOOTH MUSCLE CELL - 1990 P. 27

OWED TO JACK STRONG - 1990 P. 29

WESTWARD BOUND - 1991 p. 31

TO EVELYN - 1991 p. 34

OWED TO NAT - 1991 p. 35

Ode to the Birthday Boy Bob - 1991 p. 37

A TRIBUTE TO PDAY - 1992 p. 39

Owed to Gardner McMillan - 1992 p. 41

Early Days on The Farm - 1992 p. 45

Holiday Letter - 1992 p. 49

Ode to Frank White on his 75th Birthday - 1993 p. 52

A Hearty Tribute - 1993 p. 53

A Tribute to K.T. Lee - 1993 p. 55

Life Begins at 40! - 1993 p. 59

Owed to Blue Water at 77 in 11 - 1994 p. 60

Dear Friends at Montgomery Place - 1994 p. 61

Holiday Letter - 1994 p. 63

When Grandpa Turned 78 - 1995 p. 67

An Invitation – 1995	p. 69
Dear Charles – 1995	p. 70
Some of Bob's Ditties to go with his Fresh Veggies – 1995	p. 71
Seventy-Nine Years Revisited in Seventy-Nine Lines! – 1996	p. 73
<i>For a Housewarming in Roselle – 1996</i>	p. 77
<i>Hooray for Henry's Dual Personality – 1996</i>	p. 78
<i>Some Thoughts When the Grant Runs Out – 1996</i>	p. 79
On Hilary's Great Day – 1996	p. 80
A TRIBUTE TO SUMNER KRAFT – 1996	p. 81
A Small Boy's Bluebird of Happiness – 1996	p. 83
Dr. Bob's 80 th Year Diary – 1996	p. 84
Owed to Mary Wissler Graham – 1996	p. 85
To Seilers So Dear – 1996	p. 88
Holidays in December - 1996	p. 89
A Christmas Greeting – 1996	p. 90
A <u>brief</u> glimpse of '96 – 1996	p. 91
Impressions of Grandeur – 1997	p. 93
My First Year of Retirement – 1997	p. 95
The Students' Illusion of Spring in Chicago – 1997	p. 98
The Magic of the Wooded Dunes – 1997	p. 99
APC Forever – 1997	p. 101
Administration - Dread Disease - 1997	p.103
Photos for Laura – 1997	p. 104
To Eleanor, my dear sister – 1997	p. 105
A Toast to Our Caravan Maritime Tour Guide and Driver – 1997	p. 107
For Friends and Family Thanksgiving '97	p. 109
Dear Zdenek – 1998	p. 110
A GOLDEN KEY FOR ZDENEK - 1998	p. 111
<i>Lucy Love is Leaving - 1998</i>	p. 113
<i>To Johnny and Cathy – 1998</i>	p. 115
Our Farewell Prayer – 1998	p. 117
To respond right after the award is presented – 1998	p. 118

Coming Home to Earlham – 1998	p. 119
<i>To Katie Dobson on Her 90th – 1998</i>	<i>p. 121</i>
<i>To Mary Polk, The Retired Realtor – 1998</i>	<i>p. 123</i>
08-20-98	p. 125
A Thanksgiving Poem – 1998	p. 126
How to Clean Up and Edit a Manuscript Quickly – 1998	p. 127
Ode to the Hickory Nut Finders – 1999	p. 129
Hooray for Blue Water – 1999	p. 130
"Owed to Thanksgiving '99"	p. 131
Happy 2000	p. 133
The Birthday Boy's Party - 2000	p. 134
The Problems of Getting from 82 to 83 - 2000	p. 135
To Will on his 23 rd Birthday - 2002	p. 136
"Beauty on the Beach" – timeless	p. 137

**Reprinted from: DRUGS, LIPID METABOLISM, AND
ATHEROSCLEROSIS (1978)**

**Edited by David Kritchevsky, Rodolfo
Paoletti, and**

William L. Holmes

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THE TRUE MEANING OF PLAQUE REGRESSION

Department of Pathology, University of Chicago,
Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.

Dear Friends, that I've known for many a year,
I want you to know that I'm glad to be here.
But can you imagine the pickle I'm in--
No projector's available for love or a fin.
So though I'm prepared with a talk and new
slides,
I'll not be showing them, Bill Holmes confides.
Sadly, no tables or graphs on regression
It's enough to bring on a deep, dark depression.
Unlike Bill, who can give a superb talk on any
title
Or Dave, who can sing up a storm and give a
recital,
I suddenly felt stranded in this city of
Brotherly Love.
I turned, in desperation, to the heavenly muses
above.
They said, "Just act natural, at ease, and at
home,
And convert your "after-dinner talk" into a
poem."

So that's what I've done for this banquet session,
I'll contrast Healing and Remodeling with Regression.

Some of my friends think I've a magnificent obsession
With this process known as atheromatous plaque regression.
"What is the evidence," they say, "that makes you think,
Than an atherosclerotic plaque can really shrink?"
It starts with studies of populations
With changes in death rates in starving nations.
Well, we must be frank; this evidence is not substantial.
It is retrospective, uncontrolled and largely circumstantial.
Epidemiological studies often leave us at sea,
While pathological studies give us something to see.

Are there pathological studies that seem to indicate
That human atheromatous plaques regress; to vindicate.
The view that plaques do decrease in size
And danger, so they will kill fewer gals and guys?
Yes, we find that such studies do exist,
And reports of age and sex-matched autopsies list

Aschoff's post-World War I observations to support the view;
And Vartiainen's Finnish studies after World War II;
And Wilen's studies of wasted New York patients do
Show benefits of decreased fats, to mention a few.

But these, too, can be criticized, according to my friends.

They're retrospective, semi-quantitative and only give us trends.

What we need are prospective, quantitative studies

Of non-selected living patients, to take away the muddies.

And, fortunately, at least two such projects are underway

With sequential arteriograms to show if lesions go or stay.

Dave Blankenhorn has published two papers now Of primary and secondary intervention to show us how

To quantitate the effects of lowered cholesterol On lumen size in coronary or femoral

Arteries of patients with early or advanced lesions

And now he is beginning to show us the reasons.

While Buchwald finds that lesions stop progressing or improve

In 85% of those whose cholesterol shows a downward move.

Whereas by arteriography 65% of those who are controls

Show a steady progression of plaque and lumens with small holes.

Added to this encouraging evidence in human beings,

The animal work is making the whole process easier for seeing.

Several models now utilized by epidemiologists Have remarkable resemblance to the human lesions studied by pathologists.

And monkeys, who often seem related to us in the end,

Now may really turn out to be our very best friend.

Since their advanced plaques look very much like ours

With similar components when studied at all microscopic powers.

With great skill, hard work and real good sense, Armstrong, Connor and Warner, in several experiments,

Have shown that coronary arteries will open up From 65% narrowed to 25% their lumen plaques interrupt.

And their chemical results when they came back Showed that most of the lipids left the plaque.

Lowering the blood lipids brought on this halt That's all they did to achieve this result.

This has now been confirmed in Chicago four times

And in Albany more graphically by using swine

And with variations of one kind or another, it's true;

It is also successful in Winston-Salem and at L.S.U.

Now I submit this is really regression

Since lipid comes out of the artery's possession.

But collagen and elastin are really another of the puzzle's piece;

They "remodel" more it seems than they really decrease.

As in wounds or fractures they change their alignment

And get smaller in size but denser in confinement.

So they may be increased per unit dry weight

But really they are smaller in the anatomical state.

So "remodeling" appears to be a right proper term
When arterial fiber proteins are becoming more
firm.

Of Giorgio Weber's studies using intimal scans,
plaques lose their "ulcers" when exposed to
therapeutic plans.

In fact, many of the changes that are called
regression

Might better be called "healing" if one makes a
confession.

I'm talking of monocytes as reported by Stary,
And Daoud's decrease in cells, it's a term we can
"borry,"

For the decrease in calcium that they have
observed

If this is confirmed, then "regression's" the
word.

Right now I must stop; I think there's no doubt
Because Wissler's regressing; the word will get
out.

Remember that "free speech" is part of our way,
And when you hear a "free speech" you don't have
to pay.

So thanks for not throwing your tomatoes and eggs
And when next I show slides, your forbearance I
beg.

Just remember, my friends, as you go to your
homes,

Wissler's lecture with slides outclasses his
poems.

A Tribute to Howard C. Hopps
(In the Epic Style)
November 12, 1982

To my dear and distinguished friend, Howard
Because of 40 years of knowing you I'm empowered
To state why it is that I think you're tops
Just as sure as your name is Howard Carl (with a
C) Hopps.

I've watched you since you were a fledgling
scholar
At the U of Chicago where we made a skimpy
dollar.
And you lived in a garret as a scholar should;
And we lived over a garage as well as we could.

Even then you were noted as a master teacher
Who made your points clearer than a master
preacher.
And you had started on your world-famed book
So that complex "Principles of Pathology" had a
simple look.

We were all sad when they woo'd you back to
Oklahoma City
To chair alma mater's pathology. We cried "What a
pity."
But we soon found out you knew what to do
'Cause against great odds that department soon
shone like new.

And then you took on an even tougher task
On to Galveston to build, you were asked.
And once again you came and saw and conquered all
But your feet still itched to learn more about
disease on this global ball.

And the AFIP at Walter Reed became your base of
operations for many a year
From here you could fly out to see and to hear
About disease processes with a geographical twist
And soon you knew more than almost anyone, I
insist!

About diseases, maps, vectors and high incidence
rings.
So it wasn't surprising in the natural way of
things
That you should get hooked on the geochemical
environment
And what it does to rates of disease attack
that's evident.

Or that you should get invited out to this here
state
Where they expect that you'll show them what's
new and up to date.
Now you've decided to move on back to the East
To help some young Buckeyes and fawn eyes from
ignorance be released.

So this young fellow Howard and his lovely bride
Hilda
Go back to the lake country to start in to build
a
New life, while Columbia does him tribute pay
And for "Holy Toledo!" It's their lucky day.

A POEM OF THANKSGIVING.
TO
MARY POLK IN KANDERSTEG
Sept. 3, '83

The places we like to come and play
Are Kandersteg and Oeschinensee.
We burn a path past Bern on the way
And sing a tune as we pass Thunersee!

A deep sense of peace descends on us in Spiez
As the Kander rushes to join the Aare.
And we sing again in Frutigen up the road a piece
Where the Swiss railroad is on one side not very far.

Like lemmings we gather on Wanderwegs near Kandersteg
Coming together from many parts of USA
A magnetic person draws us to this journey's last leg,
A merry Mary Polk to whom we dedicate this part of this day.

No way to repay this wonderful human being,
Love and a few trinkets a token of our affection will bestow
A heart filled with Edelweiss will reflect our esteem below.
A tinkling little bell will help us stay near her at Ermitage here below.

And this great Cantow pencil should last her awhile!
And maybe this dependable ice ax and pen
Will help her get to Hohturli with a smile!
So dear Mary we thank you and hope to meet you here again!

**PROFESSOR WISSLER'S RESPONSE
AT THE OPENING CEREMONY
OF THE SIENA SATELLITE SYMPOSIUM
ON THE BIOLOGY OF THE ARTERIAL WALL**

October 6, 1988

Tonight for all of us who come from far away
It is now time for us to have our little say
No matter if we measure trips in miles or
kilometers
We will express ourselves today using Iambic
meters

We know the work it takes to plan to have us all
We know you worked so hard in spring, summer, and
fall
To make this meeting great, as we are certain it
will be
And to be sure that all of us were greeted
pleasantly

And now within the lovely sunny city of Siena
With its old and learned university, Bello Bene
We're glad that we have journeyed far away from
home
To stop here for a little time en route to
ancient Rome

We'll spend two days discussing what we know
And what we need to learn about our greatest foe-
Disease of arteries that makes so many die
Of heart attacks and brain strokes, making widows
cry

And so before we start we'd like to honor you
Who made this meeting possible, and there are
quite a few:

To Giorgio Weber #1 we thank you oh so deeply
And Daria the Dauntless, who gave her time
completely

To Heinz her faithful helpmate who is always
there,
And lovely Donatella who helps Giorgio's burden
bear,
We say a heartfelt thanks for all you did and do
We're sure we wouldn't be here, if it weren't for
you and you

And to Rector Berlinguer who gave his full
support
And to Dean Professor Ricci a man who holds the
port
Of medicine at this great font of knowledge
We thank you both for helping us to meet here at

your college

And then we thank the staff who works most
closely with Giorgio

The Drs. Tanganelli, Resi, Toti, of the Istituto
Pathologico

Without their faithful help the meeting couldn't
start

And so we thank you all each from the bottom of
our heart

And finally we honor and pay tribute to the
robust organization

That Daria and Gotthard Schettler started, to
them congratulations

For their great courage, and initiative, and
20/20 foresight

That gave us IAS, Atherosclerosis VIII, and now
this satellite.

A GIFT FROM THE ANIMALS (1989)

Getting older some would tell us
We are going bad to worse –
That is better I would tell you
Than to go from bed to hearse.

But this evening as we sit here
Thinking that our tongue is terse
Suddenly we see real clearly
That we're going bad to verse.

After dinner of an evening
Filled with food and friendly talking
Let us not forget the others -
Chirping, grunting, barking, squawking.

Let us all remember fondly
All the furry, feathered creatures
Serving, while we studied deeply
Atherosclerotic features.

This widespread and most lethal process
Oft cannot be studied truly
Sans the help it must be granted
Of living models, not unruly.

Reactions of the artery wall
Are hard to study in our species
And when cells and time are called for
Models vital lessons teach us.

So for more than eighty years
Fatty plaques in great detail
Have been studied by so many,
Yielding knowledge without fail.

Thinking protein caused the plaques
Ignatowski fed some meat
And eggs and milk until the great
Anitchkoff ended this deceit.

Cholesterol was clearly making
Hyperlipidemic foul play
Filling arteries, - other tissues
With foamy cells which cause decay.

All the rabbits used to grasses
Fell to food that was quite wrong,
Bunnies' catabolic defect
Made cholesterol stay on.

Vegetarian Leperidae -
Suddenly their numbers grew,
As hyperlipidemic rabbits
Giving us some answers true.

Rabbits' research rapid progress
Recently leaped forward more
As Watanabe's model joined us
Making FH research soar.

Watanabe rabbits aided
Steinberg's group that showed with ease
That LDL is oxidized
And Probucol stops disease.

Other workers, Lee and Pearson
Helped us move a hare ahead
G-6-PD genetic factor
Also can be probed, it's said.

Rat and mouse, the rodent faithful
Were resistant, plaques elusive,
But with x-ray and transgenic
They really are more plaque conducive.

Rats emerge as useful models
Making plaques when fed cholate
By Hartroft, Thomas, Rene also,
As we did in forty-eight.

Recently the Jorls cohort
Revived this model in detail,
Guido with us, out there cheering
As the rat's return we hail.

Other rats whose genes are helpful
From Sy Koletsky to SHR
Open artery wall to athero
With diet many plaques go far.

For the nineties holding promise
Mice transgenic now appearing
So at last we'll have the small one
Available and most endearing.

Hamsters now are also likely –
Dietchy's work is most exciting –
Linked with work from Bucharest
Hamster models loom enlightening.

The assorted avian species,
Fleet of wing or broad of breast,
Susceptibility, encroaching virus,
Combined to bring them to the test.

Man's like chicken uttered Katz
We're foul like fowl when eating fat
So why not test the lipid theory
Using leghorn males, not rats.

Stamler, Horlick, Pick helped out
Studying the many causes
Risk factor concepts were developed
Slowly surely without pauses.

Minick and the Fabricants
Showed the Marek's virus counted
Intensifying chicken lesions
As human viral studies mounted.

Then Japan gave us a Quail
Whose gross plaques were seen with ease
Upjohn found them very useful
In fighting athero disease.

Of the many flying models
Pigeons should be rated highly
Racer and the Carneau show us
Genetic factors must be mighty.

Man's best friend, the loyal canine,
Left early workers in the dumps;
But plied with surgery and hormones
Once again he turned up trumps.

Furthermore the canine species
Resisted lesions from a diet
Till one with coconut was thought of
And Robertson and Mahley tried it.

Papio, the massive primate
Kept us guessing many a moon,
At last the genes aligned correctly
Voila, the athero-baboon!

Ah, for rhesus, loyal rhesus
Where, without you, would we be?
Plaque induction or regression,
Responding to our therapy.

Rhesus lesions hard or softer
Seem to be a function of
The type of food fat which we use, and
Peanut oil or butter love.

When rhesus lesions are compared
With Cynomolgus it appears
We find that there's a difference
That immune complex makes, one hears.

Concentric coronary plaques
Which are transmural it is clear
Result from serum immune complex
Regress most slowly, that we fear.

Other monkeys can be used,
Cebus, Stumptail, Nemestrina,
Squirrel and Nigra, quite a few
More than keys on concertina.

All the porcine models studied
Evoke the verdict "they're too big"
From mini pig to mini-micro,
With awe we greet the NANO-PIG!

The swine have also helped a lot
In Albany and other places
To give us quantitative data
On cell births, cell deaths, and their paces.

But the swine, I mean the big ones,
Have one other point to offer
Opportunity to study
Von Willebrand's disease they proffer.

Other models will appear soon
We are grateful and will try
To use them wisely and humanely
So that many of us and they won't die.

What I've tried to do this evening
Is give a current overview
Of a most important part of
Atherosclerosis work that's due.

So you can see as I do now
That many problems have no ends
And advances will not come
Except for gifts from model friends.

So thank you colleagues one and all
For staying up and wide awake:
When you study the artery wall
Keep in mind the gifts they make.

ODE (OWED) TO TOWADA LAKE *Robert W. Wissler 1989*

As we came to blue Towada Lake
We did not merely come to bake
In brilliant sunshine nor to try to take
Some shining silvery fish which crystal waters make

We came to share the knowledge we have found
In studies we have made the world around
Where work by many yielded data sound
And offered many facts with meanings which abound

With understanding of the atheromatous disease
Which often causes heart or brain to freeze
And not to function in a way to please
The afflicted person, thus he's ill at ease

And these new findings which will help us to prevent
Or to repair the catastrophic sad event
And so this knowledge gained will make a dent
That the monograph resulting is clearly meant

To spread like ripples when a stone is tossed
Throughout the world and not be lost
And we'll go home before the snow and frost
Will not allow a traveler's return at any cost

We'll settle down, we workers young and old
Some in climates warm and some in weather cold
To use the knowledge that we've gained to help unfold
More new results which will begin to mold

A concept new of form, standing the test of time
And yielding a clear cut plan to help us climb
New peaks of promise which some will call sublime
With much more meaning than this foolish rhyme

And then we'll realize fully and retain for evermore
That which we learned here and from Saratoga Springs before
So precious, and not merely for new knowledge gained galore
It is a sparkling esprit de corps that makes our spirits soar

With new relationships which this environment lends
And from us our thanks to Japanese scientists this note sends
As we indicate that which is owed to Towada Lake my friends
It is a new kind of friendship which never ends.

Rheinisch-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften

DINNER SPEECH

**Epic Poem of Celebration to Honor the 20th Anniversary
of the
Highly Successful Institute for Atherosclerosis Research
in Munster – 1991 (composed 8 October 1990)**

Robert W. Wissler, Ph.D., M.D.

In days gone by when I was young
I never dreamed about
Working days as full of fun
As this night is, no doubt.

I never dreamed that one day I
Would stand before a crowd
Of famous folk of repute high
To read a poem aloud.

And later on when studies took
Me into Earlham College
Professor Charles gave me a book
To teach me German knowledge.

I read a lot and learned the rules
And loved the German songs,
But even in this best of schools
My words were filled with "wrongs."

And so tonight I seek your time
To sit and not to fret
My message is not a German rhyme
It's English that you'll get.

So what I'll try to do tonight
For those of you who're here
Is offer you a little bite
Of dessert sweet and dear.

This evening I will try to trace
A fruitful twenty years
Of progress at the swiftest pace
As science shifted gears.

In 1969 I know
That Herr Professor Hauss
Urged all his friends to strike a blow
"Munster's not a mouse."

Research will move big stones he said
That block the open door
Preventing many being dead
Of heart disease and more.

He called for effort big and strong
To tackle heart diseases
Applying lessons brought along
By recent research breezes.

"Unspecific mesenchymal reaction"
Or "UMR" he stated
Will be the path for fastest action
To progress unabated.

For ills Westphalians endure
Research will be the drum
To find solutions real and rare
And march to overcome.

With help from Doctor Leo Brandt
The minister of research
The first one mil Deutsch Marks advanced
The first big forward lurch.

In 1970 on 10th of March
Came President Kuhn's report
The Institute began research
With Landesamt support.

This LVA* Westphalian progress
Like the conquest of TB
Predicts the Institute's success
It's marvelous to see.

Advisory boards began to show
For two important reasons
One which helps the system go
And monitors science's seasons.

To be as sure as sure can be
That balance is achieved
Between clinicians' basic science free
And no one is deceived.

With Hauss directing forward motion
Progress was very great
His scientific staff showed great devotion
In nineteen-seventy-eight.

Increased from 16 in seventy-one
To 50 scientists strong
And space and proffered space was won
Increased to 1737 m² wide and long.

Furthermore the DM support
Also increased 5 fold
From Land Nordrhein-Westphal source
Plus other grants of gold.

And all this effort has paid off
And yielded great results
So now we all our hats do doff
The Institute exults.

So most of what we see each time
Is progress on risk factors
On how the cells of mesenchymal
React to these bad actors.

To hypertension and to high blood fats
And nicotine abuse
The multifunctional mesenchymal cells of rats
Were caught in a big noose.

The Procam studies ever clear
Have yielded world wide praise
They offer facts we need to hear
To lift our hopes for days.

And so the early plan persists
And Werner should be proud
Clinicians make with scientists
A joyful noise out loud.

So on this great occasion now
Celebrating twenty
Professor Hauss should take a bow
For progress there is plenty.

The Institute is going strong
And many studies show
The worth of working hard and long
On fats and cells, and so.

We wish you all a long, long time
Of research very nifty
And maybe then another rhyme
When celebrating 50.

With apologies to all real epic poets, Robert W. Wissler,

*(LVA = Landesversicherungsanstalt)

OWED TO A SMOOTH MUSCLE CELL
(1990)

Oh, Smooth Muscle Cell!

We have studied you well!

And we have concluded

It makes a vast difference

If you have occluded

Coronary, carotid or vas deferens.

It is no surprise, we think, that Rusty Holman,
Pathology leader in atherosclerosis research, and
a whole man,
Should produce other leaders to combat the USA's
#1 ill
The first of these was the wise, hard working
Henry McGill,
And then in concert with Henry came Jack Geer
Who used his universal pathological powers to make
plaques clear
And not at all surprising that another Jack, a
strong man
Came to study this disease over a vast span
For paper after paper and for many a year
Under the authorship of Holman, McGill, Strong,
and Geer
The natural history of atherosclerosis was laid
out
So all could know what the human lesions were
about
And the IAP took on a new interpretation
When the International Atherosclerosis Project
appeared in Lab Investigation
And Jack went on to lead a Strong ISU group
When peerless McGill and high geared Geer flew the
coop
Jack's group set out to study in a very detailed
process
The factors in the Community which make the
plaques progress
He and his group have pioneered and paved the way
To study risk factors which act on the artery each
day

They've furnished new knowledge for all of us to
possess
From cigarette smoking to blood fats they've had
success
Discovering how plaques and heart attacks
Are related in the New Orleans parish, finding
facts
Which fit together and help to make it very plain
Many paradoxes that more work is needed to explain
And so when we started about 15 years ago
To plan a study that would enlighten with a glow
We knew we'd have Jack Strong
And his group to help us do no wrong

Into a major risk factor data generator
A smoking, lipids, and hypertension quantitator
And so before we tell you more about this study
I want to pay tribute to this scientific buddy
Who contributes so much to help the PDAY program
along
The one and only invincible Jack Strong.

WESTWARD BOUND FROM CHARLES U TO U OF CHI

June 7, 1991

Dr Hruban, I've been thinking,
What a sad world this would be,
If you hadn't thought of linking
Your life to The University

Of adding to great Charles U's MD
Knowledge which takes so much toll
A University of Chicago MD / PhD
Earned carefully and according to Hoyle

Dr Hruban, I've been thinking
Of BCH Harvey our beloved Dean
How you assisted him from sinking
With your help and mind so keen

What a joy his lectures were!
Did he sit you down and practice them?
With his delightful Scottish burr,
A really precious glowing gem!

Dr Hruban, I've been thinking,
Of early days at the U of Chyo
When we both were deeply drinking
At the fountain of alanine's B-3 thio

You found this analog would stop
Transplantable cancers in their tracks,
So that their mitotic figures pop,
And tumors developed necrotic cracks.

Yarka Hruban I've been thinking
What a sad world this would be
If you hadn't married Zdenek
And had those offspring one, two, three

What a family and how they've grown
With impact on the community
At national level as well as home
A wonderful gift to society

Dr Hruban, I've been thinking when,
As a rising research star
You studied, more than other men,
Morris hepatomas from near and far.

The widespread reputation you bore
As a hepatoma fine structure expert.
This led scholars to your door;
Many were helped, and none were hurt.

Yarka Hruban I've been thinking
You studied hard when time was ripe
Mastering knowledge that helped in linking
Scholars with the American School's knowledge pipe

What a lovely mate you've been
To this hard-at-work pathologist
Seeing him through thick and thin
Keeping him both loved and kissed

Dr Hruban, I've been thinking more
About your work on Peroxisomes
Your mastery of the world's knowledge store
Concerning microbodies cytoplasmic homes.

And how we worked with Hewson and Ben
On "focal cytoplasmic degradation"
To develop what was a new concept then
About injured cells' amputation.

Dr Hruban I've been thinking
About the great job you have done
Mastering those diseases linking
Zoo with human, not always fun

Especially when elephants are Involved
And the organ weights loom greater
And the problems to be solved
Are as large as St. Helena's Crater!

Yarka Hruban I'm thinking more
What a blessing retirement is paving
Having Zdenek there at home more
To do the things that you've been saving

Oh, but Zdenek you must tell us
How you'll fill those hours end days in
When you have no cases to discuss
We can't imagine you as lazing

But to both of you we send our praises
For the extra-special things you've done
And this event, we hope it raises
Your expectations of great fun

*With great admiration,
Bob Wissler*

TO EVELYN, OUR FRIEND AND NEIGHBOR
On a Very Special Day

October 13, 1991

We have a good friend named Evelyn
With whom we so enjoy revelin'
She's said to be eighty
But she's still a young lady
Bringing rough spots of life into levelin'

She's marvelous at baking fine bread
And many's the time we've been fed
With leek soup with tops
Which the taste bud adopts
Plus fruit cake that goes to one's head

Our dear, lovely neighbor Ms. Seidman
Beside whom we've enjoyed so residin'
We're accustomed to her face
So our move to Montgomery Place
Makes our hearts heavy and amindin'

But our sadness we always try to hide
And as usual we look at the bright side
'Cause we're not movin' far
And even without a car
We'll see you often without even a guide!

So today we pay tribute to this lady
Whose biological age is way under eighty
'Cause we like you so much
Betty and Bob will keep in touch
In weather which is both sunny and shady.

Bob Wissler – and Betty

OWED TO NAT

4 December 1991

'Twas early in the 7th decade
when this young gal her way she made
To Billings Hospital's 5th floor.
where this new chairman opened the door
To P510 and asked her in,
inviting her to flee the din.
And serve as cancer trainer's arm,
helping patients escape from harm.
And then for several years she worked,
never once becoming irked
Because the meetings and reports
involved great detail of all sorts.
Emphatically she helped complain
when floods above gave doggy rain.
So in the P-5 spot of old
this young lady of pure gold,
Long before computers ruled
helped us show "path" can't be fooled
Then as now she managed all
matters large and matters small
Salaries and personnel
all upon her doorstep fell
Then rules of NIH descended
and their demands were never ended
Grant requests sent by the SCORE
to NIH and many more.

Atherosclerosis SCOR
was served by her right to the core

With its ever-widening dealing
its progress reports reached the ceiling.

But this fine lady worked away
never complaining, nor saying nay.

Achieving always in fine style
as we'd expect from Nathalie Weil

She soon was blessed with 3 small grands
a boy to play clarinet in Daddy's band

Redheaded twins to amuse us all
with them around we'd have a ball

How one so young can now retire
how one that all of us admire

Can leave our midst in such a flurry
why oh why in such a hurry?

To leave the busy hive behind
the one she built with might and mind?

The bees will miss their Queen I'm sure
but their heartfelt memories endure

And so dear Nathalie Friedman Weil
we wish you much to make you smile

We hope that all your years and years
are filled with laughter and no tears.

Come and see us when you can
you're always welcome -- just as when it all began.

Ode to the Birthday Boy Bob

4 December 1991

Jumping jeepers and man alive!
How great it is at seventy-five!
To have fun at tennis and to drive
To meet family as they arrive!!

Tennis early with grandson #1
With Laura and Molly to enjoy the sun!
Greeting Jackie back from a 5 mile run!
Picking berries with Will, oh what fun!!

How did Bob reach 3 score fifteen?
Was it 'cause he was nice and never mean?
Probably not, nor 'cause he was lean!
What is the secret, he's got to come clean!

Ask his son John, whom he's enjoyed so,
Out in the garden with tiller and hoe!
Could it be that veggies which he likes to grow,
Are part of the secret that we'd like to know?

Ask Betty, his wonderful, beautiful mate,
What she's fixed for years, what was it he ate?
For at least 30 years, early and late,
She's fixed gourmet food that's right up to date!

Why did this galoptuos, prudent food
Do this professor so much good?
'Cause his blood cholesterol certainly would
Be so high, unless she understood!

All prepared with loving, skillful care,
A beautiful menu that was bare
Of fat and sodium, that dangerous pair
That work together to produce despair.

But most of all enriching his life,
Is family and a dear, dear wife
And four great offspring keen as a knife
Plus six grandkids, filled with fun and strife!

And his work, his interesting work!
So challenging to him that he could not shirk
Studying problems of heart disease which lurk
And bring life to a close with a great big jerk!

But even that wouldn't be much fun,
If he weren't doing it with so many young
Students and scholars of which there are none
Who aren't stimulating to be among!

So although my dad died at 74
A wonderful man who wished to live more
A great teacher who increased his students' store
Of facts of the world and the fruits that they bore!

He died needlessly really because of his heart
Which wasn't protected from the heart disease dart.
We hope for our kids and for their kids to support
The protective shield right from the start!

So that they too can live with great glee
At least until they're 103!
Having fun and enjoying the Blue Waters sea,
In good health and happy as they can be.

And I'm going to stay as long as I can
With my hoe and my racket in each hand
Enjoying working to understand,
Life's treasures with Betty so grand!!

Thank you for listening to this heartfelt tale
And not riding me out of town on a rail!
I'm offering my hickory nut cake, not for sale
And its low fat icing and low fat frozen dessert in a pail
And the berries I picked and which aren't at all stale.

"Bob" "Dr. Bob"
RW, Dr. Wissler

Madrid
October 1992

A TRIBUTE TO PDAY

In far off Buenos Aires, when this Congress was last held
With Jack Strong as president, and knowledge was propelled
At the president's own symposium on atherosclerosis
I read a poem then saying, "Jack is the mostest."

My views haven't changed, so I intend today
To start my talk in rhyme again, this time to say
That one good reason we're all still learning more
Is Jack's continued effort to bring results to the fore.

The Pathobiological Determinants of Atherosclerosis in Youth
Is the latest organized effort to reveal additional truth
Of how plaques develop and how they progress
This poem describes how PDAY developed and why it is the best.

Well, first of all the scientists are exceptionally first rate
And they've explored long and hard, since that very first date
In 1984 when the 14 center grants got approved
And the last obstacles to starting were at last removed.

But as a matter of fact it was more than a decade before
That McGill, Jack Strong, and Wissler first began to pour
Their energies and experience into the long range plan
Of how to make this study the best since time began.

They started with the premise that this research should yield
Quantitative data unspoiled, so they appealed
By the biases of chronic disease that mar so many
So they'd use sudden death forensic cases or they'd not use any.

The protocol was strict and the sampling plan so wise
That the data gave comparisons of the lesions' size
Between the "lesion prone" and the "resistant" sides,
Between standardized proximal and distal parts besides.

Risk factors are then measured at the top notch LSU
By Jack Strong's methods as practiced by his crew
To quantitate the fats in arteries and in blood
Also smoking, high blood pressure, glycohemoglobin include.

But the real enduring secret of PDAY's great success
Is the sustained interest and the efforts of the rest
Of the 100 or more scientists and staff
At those 14 centers working on PDAY's behalf.

The more than 2600 cases we've collected to this date
Make up more than 148,000 samples whose fate
Both arteries as well as blood end tissues are then
Preserved, processed, and distributed throughout the land.

Some are measured chemically and some made into slides
Many are grossly, microscopically, and morphometrically analyzed
At Chicago at present as you will all very soon see
We count cells and quantitate Immunohistochemistry.

So now in Madrid in 1992,
Just 500 years from 1492,
Our work makes it clear, when the lumen isn't round,
Then we can learn much, discoveries abound!

From studying young arteries which aren't very pretty,
We are reporting them in this beautiful city.
Jack gave you some; I'll describe several more,
Then Abel leads us to the New World's shore!

Thanks for your attention to my light-hearted piece--
Giving you some background about the contents of my speech!
I hope this little ditty will be considered witty.
Please give me your pity and don't subtract from my allotted time one
little itty-bitty.

Rob Wissler
21 Oct, '92

Owed to Gardner McMillan

October 15, 1992

We're gathered together tonight,
We're gathered to express our delight
Tonight we'll elaborate
And we'll honor and celebrate
What Gardner has done, we will cite!

On November 10th, 1918
A cute baby boy was first seen
Born in Lachine
All shiny and clean
From the first he was splendidly keen.

Following a carefully laid plan
At Lower Canada College from age 10
He prepared for McGill
And on up the hill
To complete the MD/PhD span.

His studies were studded with prizes
He excelled in anatomy, no surprises
Research training began
On effects of alloxan
That the diabetes artery devises.

Then Lois came into his life
Sweeter than honey smoothed with a knife
She added more pleasure
And fun in good measure
And before long they became man and wife.

Then off to the land of the Swiss
To study and to enjoy bliss
Zurich's the place
And von Myenburg's pace
What a wonderful Interlude this.

He returned to the Montreal ground
And a Markle scholarship found
A faculty appointment
His next anointment.
His research soaring around.

He pioneered with great Lyman Duff
Mitosis in plaques, it was tough
But working together
In all kinds of weather
With joint efforts they learned quite enuff!

He studied the lesions en face
With Richie and Lautsch it was posh
What cortisone did
Nothing was hid
With Kobernick, Gordon, he really learned much.

Weigensberg worked with great Gardner
On cholesterol studies his partner
With exciting approaches
Their knowledge encroaches
Into fields which need study farther.

Then studies with Stary and Silver
Gave artery research a strong pillar
Using tritium to tell
Lysine's effects on the cell
In '64, DNA was a thriller.

During those days at McGill
He served AHA with great skill
Led the Committee on Research
Forward without a lurch
Adopting methods that they use still.

The AHA used his talents to soar
Serving Central, Executive, Program committees and more
The Committee on Lesions
During those seasons
When its actions came to the fore.

Steering the international movement
From Symposium I, II, and III with improvement
With his infallible thought
Many errors were caught
Delighting and gaining approvement.

And so this young man named McMillan
Such a long time ago at McGill then
Impressed those who were watching
With the ideas he was hatching
And the wisdom his mind was distilling.

When his professor, the great Lyman Duff
Succumbed in '57, it was rough
Only one chairman choice
To make all rejoice
All knew that Gardner knew his stuff.

He labored so long and so hard
For McGill to score high on the card
To excel in Pathology,
Artery research, cardiology
He was soon held in highest regard.

The NIH wise men in sixty-eight
Heard rumors "this McMillan is really great
As a judge he's so wise
He knows how to organize!"
So they said "come aboard" on this date!

As consultant by contract he was named
While Director's Assistant then acclaimed
They needed one analytical
1969 was so critical
Director of the Sclerosis Branch was proclaimed.

Then this man who came from up North
Began making steady progress go forth
Things started to roll
Toward the ultimate goal
Of arterial cells and their worth.

And grants which were both large and small
From folks with many backgrounds all
Got fairly reviewed
With a fine attitude
Developing facts on the artery wall.

Program-projects, RO-1's and Athero SCOR's
Were considered, funded, and research soars
Heart research flourished
By Gardner well-nourished
Increasing our knowledge and opening doors.

Training grants funded along with the rest
Brought many preparing to meet the great test
Bright Scholars came forth
Displaying their worth
And then they emerged as the best.

Many meetings abroad and at home
Got approved and the scientists' tome
Was improved by a lot
When they sat in one spot
And there let their synapses roam.

As the scientific field went ahead
And molecular pathology sped
The NHLBI
Prioritized it high
It was atherosclerosis research which then led.

So tonight we can really give thanks
That Gardner filled up our banks
With directions so clear
To last many a year
So we really have almost no blanks.

It's the time when we all say well done
And hope that you really have fun
With Lois and friends
Even more than weekends
You have earned your place in the sun.

A little old fashioned Hoosier style verse
(maybe a lot verse) with apologies to
James Whitcomb Riley!

December 1992

Early Days on the Farm

"When the frost is on the pumpkin
And the fodder's in the shock."
That's what my father read to me
When we had barned and fed the stock.

On that farm in Indiana
Where I spent my early youth
And learned so many lessons
Bout country life and truth.

The memories are vivid
Of those lovely days of yore
Of making maple syrup and
Barn dances I'd adore.

We pumped our water, cooked with wood
And read by coal oil lamps
And went to outside privies
In the cold and in the damp.

And as I grew up taller
And we moved on back to town
First Hagerstown, then Richmond
It was quite a turn around.

I learned to love old Riley
James Whitcomb was my friend
The "Farm Poems" of the laureate
I could especially comprehend.

His simple rhymes they helped me
From ages 9 to 12
When I began escaping
From apron strings to delve.

I mowed the grass and shoveled snow
At other people's homes
Sold folks Saturday Evening Posts
No time then to write poems!

I grew up right across the street
From the campus of EC
And learned a lot about the students
Much more than "thou" and "thee."

My high-school days were full of fun
And many friends were made
And Science courses filled my days
I made the highest grade.

Those highest grades they helped a lot
To win a scholarship
To cross the street to Earlham College
And start my lifelong trip.

At Earlham we all studied hard
To learn and not to guess
With bio- and chem- majors
Sometimes I wished for less.

But college life was not that bad
And in between the tests
We learned 'bout drama, music, art
'Bout living at its best.

And best of all for some of us
We found a lifelong mate
For me this find was paramount
To make my life first-rate.

And so I'll stop my rhyming here
Neath Elm's and Maple's guard
You know the rest my Earlham friends
You know I'm not a bard.

So let's stand up and let us sing
The Alma Mater's song
And let us always keep in mind
How Earlham made us strong.



December 1992

Dear family and friends and those with whom I work
It's time for season's greetings, a task I must not shirk.

This letter follows Betty's edict to KISS each one of you
KISS stands for "Keep It Short, Silly," which I'm about to do!

In fact dear Betty doesn't know, t'was sure to be that way
Since when I lost my detailed log I lost my chance to say -

What was the high spot of each month, 'cause my memory is a
blank.
Not only should you thank my wife, you have my calendar loss to
thank.

We really had a great old time in the winter of '92
Both worked and played a while, up North and down South too.

About the time that March arrived the whole world came alive
The celebration started when I turned seventy-five.

So many relatives showed up on Holmes Beach on the Gulf Coast
That I was overwhelmed with joy and glad to be the host.

May brought another great event beyond our fondest dream
When two hundred gathered who'd been players on our team.

Former students, many colleagues, large numbers from abroad
To hear PDAY's early findings, and my 75th to laud.

We also celebrated then and all throughout the year
U of C's centennial--We all stood up to cheer!

In August on this birthday year with Starrs we flew up North
To view Alaska's grandest sights and we got our money's worth!

To Fairbanks, Anchorage, Sitka, and Yukon out of Skagway
As well as Ketchikan and Vancouver--awesome, I would say!

But now before I forget an important part of this report:
Three new gardens planted thrived, in this summer cool and short!

Broccoli and Brussel sprouts, kohlrabi, greens, and kale,
Even pumpkins, gourds, and Indian corn to harvest without fail.

Then busy autumn came along and work replaced all play
With meetings and some special lectures, it kept me hopping, hey!

While Betty convened the wellness group to make Montgomery
place
The place where all the residents can function with grace.

 Bob tried to help in his way too, a fledgling morning door check
And tried to boost the move afoot to get cable TV on deck.

And just about this time we lost a truly long-time friend
When Leon Jacobson died, with great deeds to the end.

The autumn trips were fun with Betty at my side
Like the Stowell lecture at UC Davis, he did so much to guide

And then on up to Burney where John and Cathy live
Enjoying their lovely garden and the happiness they give,

To Stresa and Osaka I in quick succession hopped
Each one was filled with learning, it really hasn't stopped.

Then off we went again to far away Madrid
To the IAP World Congress to tell what PDAY did.

And finally to Kandersteg, where Betty and I unwound
Enjoying that Swiss village where beauty and peace abound.

The AHA in New Orleans was short and sweet for me
The Atherosclerosis Council made me an honoree.

And then a lovely Thanksgiving at Don and Mary's farm
Those rolling stony-fenced-in fields with beauty quite disarm.

Our lovely family group of 12 gathered together there
Well, 12 1/2 really, counting the one Jackie soon will bear.

It was a joyous gathering, marking Barb's birthday too
And a fitting way to end this note that's sent to all of you.

We're wishing you our very best next year, let peace and joy abound
By then we hope a way to end hunger and anger will be found.

Betty and Bob Wissler



**Ode to Frank White
on his 75th Birthday
1993**

We're thinking of you as you arrive
At three score fifteen and seventy-five!
To reach this point and to thrive
With family around, man alive!

Family dear to enrich your life
And most of all a loving wife!
Beyond the din and daily strife
What a milestone in your life!!

And you'll look back, we hope with glee
On all accomplished, and happy be,
For hundreds of students, and for E.C.
Enough to fill two lifetimes or three!

It's not the end, we'll tell you now!
We're 76, still living and how!
So enjoy this day and take your bow
The spirit of '76 is upon you, wow!

*From two old classmates at EC
With apologies to E. Merrill Root*

A Hearty Tribute

(1993)

Robert O'Rourke

Was brought by a stork

With a silver stethoscope in his ears

He worked with great will

On his cardiology skill

In a way that startled his peers.

At Texas's Health Science Center

He's known as a great teaching mentor

With Iris there by his side

Heart fellows endorse

As they flock to his course

He's recognized far and wide.

To close this stellar conference officially in a fitting way, I'd like to read a few lines I composed in the Chinzan-So garden and edited in the beautiful surroundings at Urabandai--a perfect blending of the old and the new, of carefully planned and preserved urban natural beauty and the rustic natural beauty of a new lakeshore resort. Kyu Taik would have treasured this fruition of his dreams, his plans, and his work. He was certainly here in spirit. I'm most pleased that Sook Kyung, his beloved mate and co-worker for so many years, the mother of his devoted sons and daughters, was able to attend this product of K.T.'s labors. It was also wonderful that his daughter Mia was here as well. These words won't do him justice, but it is hoped that their message is clear.

A Tribute to K.T. Lee

This is a tribute to K.T. Lee
Scientist spanning sea to sea
Born in Korea in 'twenty-one,
Ageless and youthful 'til life's race was done

His MD from Seoul in forty-three
He crossed the Pacific the free world to see
While Korea was torn by internal strife
At Washington U. he led a scientist's life

A medicine fellowship his interests fed,
A PhD program filled his head,
A professorship giving knowledge sound
He served seven years in his home town

Then over to Albany in sixty-one
Helping pathology gain a place in the sun
As Tommy and he made a strong start
Studying the major disease of the heart

Continuing work from Washington U.
On heart disease came knowledge new
Many new facts about "heart-deaths" world wide
About folks who in East and West reside

They studied fats that make blood flow cease
In contrast to those that make plaques increase
These studies led to infarcts in rats
All due, they found, to those "terrible" fats

And then in mid 60's, a changing purview
To monkeys and swine to seek a new clue
Finding cholesterol fed to swine for three days
Caused smooth muscle cells' mitoses to raise

As work on "cell births" and "cell deaths" was increasing
And swine lesions were studied in depth without ceasing
Saratoga conferences began on the Lake
Causing "molecular path" to awake

As director, then dean for graduate work
Experimental research he never did shirk
From 1966 to 1988
His "bib" grew from 50 to 158

He edited a journal for twenty years
Served as visiting professor for his peers
In Russia, Tokyo, and Beijing too
He was a man who did the work of two

All of these jobs he did so well
NIH sought his advice to tell
Which program-project and SCOR to approve
And which animal models to keep or remove

It's no surprise that in eighty-four
After months of planning and many more
Saratoga Lake was the place that won
The Atherosclerosis Conference #1

It was a hit at once as we're told
So the New York Academy urged him to hold
A second one, in eighty-nine,
At Towada Lake, first rate and fine

But by then KT "retired"
For two new jobs he was hired
As dean of Koshin's graduate school
He increased Pusan's bioscience pool

And as professor at GW in DC
So that he and Sook Kyung could close be
To offspring and grandkids in VA
And have some fun near Chesapeake Bay

Then Saratoga number two
Took place in Japan so all that's new
Could help the Far East scientists learn
Of this disease and stem its upturn

Once again the "Proceedings" sold well
Since Towada Lake's publication had much to tell
Not to Far East alone but also elsewhere
Of much that is new and some that is rare

And KT started with Fujio's aid
To plan number three and plans were laid
With East-West participants sharing the stage
To bring up-to-date the fast moving page

Of research advances in this wide-spread disease
It seemed right to begin being busy as bees
And that's how it started and it went along fine
Until fate stepped in and forces combine

To stop K.T.'s efforts and seal his fate.
Several joined in to help meet the date
So all would gather to praise K.T. Lee
Fujio led us to Saratoga three.

July 24, '93
Dear Petra:-

When you have reached three score and ten
Or maybe even four score then
You'll realize full well as we do now
A truth your mind will not allow
That "life begins at forty"!

Meanwhile as you folks carry on
And as your lives, they go along
And as your lovely family grows
You'll find what this old family knows
That "life begins at forty"!

As great as kids and husbands are
As super as it's been thus far!
When grand kids come then you'll get wise
You'll find out then and realize
That "life began at forty"!

And so for all those months ahead
When you are spending days in bed
We thought we'd send some books your way
To help you laugh and maybe say
That "life begins at forty"!

So when you're tired and life gets hard
Laugh along with this old bard.
Don't hide your smile behind a cloud
Grab a book and read aloud!
Cause life begins at forty

3/01/94

Owed to Blue Water
at 77
in 11

My wife came back
I'm in heaven!
I'm so glad
I made it to 77.

And glad to be in 11 once more,
In spite of the awful Manatee's roar,
As they go and come from the salty surf,
Racing through sand and tearing up turf.

We'll put on a party and put them to sleep,
With Hickory Nut Cake they'll collapse in a heap,
With non fat, no cholesterol, frozen dessert,
It may calm them down and its sure not to hurt.

So welcome dear friends to our party today,
We'll see you next year, If God's willing we say,
We'll put on a party on this same date,
'Cause by then we'll be ~ 78.

Dear Friends at Montgomery Place

December 1994

It's true that Christmas is over and Hanukkah, too!

But the festival of lights, it surely's not through!

And since some of you ask often about our destination,

We've put together for you this extensive explanation!

So the curious ones at Montgomery Place

Might learn some more

About what happened to us

in 1994!

We hope that when you read it

You don't feel worse!

And think to yourself, "poor dears,

They've gone from bad to verse!"

*Dear Colleagues, Family, Friends everywhere,
To those who are bald and those with long
hair..., December 1994*

Winter

In the first day of nineteen ninety four,
Up in the air yours truly did soar,
To tell science writers what PDAY had found,
At the AHA forum, research highlights abound.
And then to Hong Kong, heart disease to prevent,
Shepherded by Jim, t'was an Asian event
To avoid further rise in West's number one killer,
As saturated fat becomes their dietary pillar.
Then on to Guangzhou, where none can compare,
With Olaf and Betty fighting leprosy there.
Then back to Chicago, PDAY cases acquiring,
At CCME, our goal was inspiring.
And then a vacation, our yearly delight,
Tennis by day and scrabble by night
With Dudley and Ruth, what wonderful friends!
On Anna Maria where nothing offends.
And there on March first Bob turned seventy seven,
Later in March, he spoke in D.C.,
And stayed with the Grahams, the grandkids to see.

Spring

In April we opened our house in Dunewood,
And checked everything to see how it stood
The cold snowy winter, one without pardon,
And we ordered our seeds, to sow in our garden.
Benjamin Patrick, our new great-grandson,
On April twenty-eight, he became one.
Betty and I joined Tulane's celebration,
Bogalusa's Heart Study, brought joy to the nation.
In May my dear sister became eighty-six,
It's wonderful to see her getting her kicks.
The two gardens were planted and had to be hoed,

One's here and the other's on Jericho Road.
In May Bob talked twice on heart disease,
The first in New York and once overseas.

PDAY opened the Hugh Lofland meeting,
Then to the Philippines' annual internists'
seating.

In Manila we almost went off on a tangent,
When we overlapped the Miss Universe Pageant.
May also brought another time of renown,
Little Ben's first trip to Chicago town.

Summer

In early June, down nostalgia lane,
To greet our old friends to Earlham we came.
Fifty-five years after our Earlham's degree,
So many friends we were happy to see.
In late June we served on the Lankenau board,
Picking goals in research that they could go
toward.

In July we were lucky, the two gardens flourished,
Neighbors and students were much better nourished.

August was studded with marvelous days,
A PDAY at Dunewood, all our spirits to raise.
And then a Graham visit for a glorious week,
What more could one ask for? What more could one
seek?

September started with a trip to der Schweiz,
With Betty along, the trip was so nice.

To Munster to learn more about HDL,
To celebrate Don Fredrickson's birthday so well.
We then went to Cleveland, our plans to fulfill,
So carefully arranged by maestro Cornhill.

Autumn

October came in with glorious hues,
Bob's career was honored, it was very good news.

The 10th Symposium became the event,
First the plenary lecture of PDAY's advent.

Then a wonderful banquet with so many dears,
Daria depicted Bob's earlier years.
The Fredreickson Award was then bestowed
by Tony Gott, the lovely plaque glowed.
The rest of the week was filled with great fun,
with Montreal's gardens, fall color and sun.
New knowledge, a Gala, and music mixed in,
'twas the best symposium to which I have been.
The rest of the month was anticlimactic,
But the fall colors glowed and the work was still
hectic.
At long last this autumn Betty's back pain abated
Thanks to Dr. Sinclair, who with us is top rated.
The month of November was filled with new joys,
Betty's and daughters' birthdays, no boys!
The AHA met in Dallas this year
With 28,000 who came there to hear
How to prevent, diagnose, and treat heart disease,
The nation's great killer we're helping decrease.
Thanksgiving was spent in good old D.C.
With daughters Barb and Mary, and six grandkids,
whee!
And great-grandson Benjamin, how lively is he!
A wonderful time for Betty and me.
Now Christmas is coming and the days are still
sunny
With Republicans ruling it sure will seem funny,
We hope they can wise up and do what is right
For all the poor folks who need help from their
plight.

With our very best wishes,
Betty and Bob Wissler
December 1994

When Grandpa Turned 78

2/18/95

How wonderful it is to turn 78!
With family on Anna Maria
How wonderful it is, how great!

Seventy-seven, to be sure has been great
At pleasant Montgomery Place
With a loving and caring mate!

But when 78 approaches we can't wait
Must migrate to Anna Maria
Certainly must not be late.

How swell it is to celebrate
This stepping stone to eighty
In a way that's definitely first rate.

To share the warmth of this sunshine state
With 4 generations of family there
Basking with those we love and relate.

So we gather on Feb. one and eight
All 15 of us plus Benjamin,
Having him there with love we elate.

And all of us fill our plate
Around the table in 123
Gathered, laughed, talked and ate!

And after our food and appetites abate
We all collapse in various places
Our winter weariness to deflate.

But the peak of the pleasure of becoming 78
On our Florida sunny Gulf shore beaches
Is to see our families integrate and operate.

That makes us feel so very very great
To watch the loving, respectful interaction
Then our spirits to new heights inflate.

So when your mood sinks to levels that you hate
We hope you'll always just remember
Our family fun when grandpa turned 78!

RW delivered at
party on 2/18/95

An Invitation

March 1, 1995

Dear Bluewater neighbors and friends,
Old "Lonesome Bob"* joyfully extends,

A warm and happy invitation,
To experience his taste sensation -

Hoosier Hickory nut cake
That he will most surely make,

To celebrate his seventy eight -
Years of life, more than fifty with his mate,

So on **WEDNESDAY MARCH FIRST**
Suddenly at **3PM** please burst!!

Upon the scene, near or in the lobby, rain or shine!
Even if you ate late lunch or plan soon to dine!

Our fat free frozen dessert,
Won't your robust appetite hurt.

Served with a slice of birthday cake
Eggless and prudent, the only kind he'll make.

Or an icingless angelfood for those who stick
To an almost fat free diet and pick,

That heavenly fare with fresh strawberries
Picked by Bob at Geraldson's Farm he carries,

Bags full back to the Bluewater's shore
So people can only ask for more!

Come and enjoy with some old time tunes
On Bob's big black box that **BOOMS!**

No presents **PLEASE**, just your presence, please.
Cards are enjoyed, but none about heart disease!

*Bob Wissler #23 and Betty too

Sept. 15, 95

Dear Charles:-

I know your birthday's come and gone.
I sadly know that I was wrong,
To not present this bouquet that day
I have no excuse and and just can't say
Why my poor old body couldn't be
Persuaded, on a busy day for me,
To fill your basket with these flowers
To grace your special birthday bowers
When your joy'd reward endearor.
But, dear Charles, "better late than never."

Bob (and
Belly-loo!)
The venerable
gardner!

**Some of Bob's Ditties to go with his Fresh Veggies
Mostly grown on the "Road to Jericho"**

(Near Bridgman, Barroda and Berrian Springs, Michigan)

September 20, 1995

Cukes are good with tomatoes too.
And besides that taste they're good for you.
Mild, Juicy, Crisp, and Sweet,
Rich in C, it's time to eat.

If you rate beet bottoms top
Or if tops make your eyes pop.
In autumn or in summer's heat,
Beets, my friends, just can't be beat.

March 1, 1996

Seventy-Nine Years Revisited in Seventy-Nine Lines!

"When the frost is on the pumpkin and the fodder's in the shock."
That's what my father read to me when we had barned and fed the stock.

On that farm in Indiana where I spent my early youth,
And learned so many lessons 'bout country life and truth.

The memories are vivid of those lovely days of yore,
Of making maple syrup and barn dances I'd adore.

We pumped our water, cooked with wood and read by coal oil lamps,
And went to outside privies in the cold and in the damp.

As I grew up taller and we moved on back to town,
First Hagerstown then Richmond it was quite a turnaround.

I learned to love old Riley, James Whitcomb was my friend,
The "Farm Poems" of the laureate I especially comprehend.

His simple rhymes they helped me, from ages 9 to 12,
When I began escaping from apron strings to delve.

I mowed the grass and shoveled snow at other people's homes,
Sold Saturday Evening Posts with no time to write poems.

I grew up right across the street from Earlham College, that's how,
I learned about the students more than Quaker "thee" and "thou."

My high school days were full of fun and many friends were made,
Science courses filled my days, I made the highest grade.

Those highest grades, they helped a lot to win a scholarship,
To cross the street to Earlham College and start my lifelong trip.

At Earlham we all studied hard to learn and not to guess,
With bio and chem majors sometimes I wished for less.

But college life was not that bad and in between the tests,
We learned 'bout drama, music, art, 'bout living at its best.

And best of all for some of us we found a lifelong mate,
For me this find was paramount to make my life first rate.

When we received EC degrees in nineteen thirty nine,
We headed north to U of C our studies to combine.

Betty prepared for social work at Chicago's famous school,
While Bob began the long hard road to join the MD pool.

Our parents wished we'd stayed nearby and thought it was a pity,
But we had scholarships and loved the windy city.

We passed out first exams with ease and took the forward step,
To prove that two can live for less than one, down the aisle with pep.

Then Pearl Harbor came along and Bob studied foods to stop infection,
The navy asked him to serve our troops to give them protection.

For nine long years we worked together near the poverty line,
And finally with Betty's steady help the MD sheepskin fine.

Came in a lovely convocation with all our four kids there,
We proudly showed them off, our accomplishment beyond compare.

While studies were rewarding and Bob's research helped humanity,
And Betty's medical social work helped many keep their sanity.

Our greatest claim to fame up to nineteen fifty five,
Was to have a lovely family and to help them strive.

And grow in their unique ways to find success in school,
To learn to love their fellowmen, to observe the Golden Rule.

Our careers as practitioner, teacher and research leader were sustained,
Betty's social work never weakened and her concern for kids never waned!

While I worked in preventing heart disease, Betty found foster homes,
For the chronically ill and abandoned, about that we could write tomes.

Our kids grew up and left the nest, they went their different ways,
Two lawyers, a fiber optics expert, a builder, seven grandkids, the next
phase.

I chaired a growing department for 15 years; it was highly acclaimed;
Then on to lead two national studies, each for 10 years, each became famed.

Lecturing on how to reverse heart disease took us all over the globe,
If traveling is broadening, to cover me requires a big robe.

The grandchildren grew in stature and accomplishment, law enforcer and
teacher,

Talented musician, emergency care provider, actor and public speaker and
international volleyball star! What, no preacher?

It's fun to watch these youngsters grow and see them find their way,
So well guided and supported so we'll know they'll have their say!

But maybe most rewarding in my 79 years, is our great grandson,
Benjamin, a gift from Josh and Jackie and a bundle of fun!

So now I'm turning 79 and obviously feeling fine!
Hope to see you all again next year, then I'll add a line!

Eighty should be a very special time with family dear!
I'll try to have a better rhyme, for Blue Water here!

It's a time to wonder and a time to care for the world as well,
Sometimes it looks to us as if it's going straight to hell!

With drugs, homicides, terrorism and family collapse pervasive in the
world,
We feel at times that humanity is in a Mix Master swirled!

"The world," it seems, "is waiting for the sunrise" my longtime favorite
tune!

Will it come in time to give us hope; for us it must be soon!

We trust we'll live to see the day when social problems leave,
Or at least improve enough for us, a relief sigh we'll heave!

And say to all around us then what we cannot say now,
We think our kids and grandkids will have much safer lives, and how!!

So now we've arrived at the 79th line in 1996,
(What will the 80th line be like in this sweet/sour mix?)

Bob

*For a Housewarming in Roselle
(At 23 W. 638 Goodridge Terrace)*

March 31, 1996

*What is it that makes a house warm?
Whether apartments in city or cottage or farm.
Is it the furnace that puts out the heat?
Or rays of the sun that on windows beat?
Or tones of the paint that is rolled on the wall?
Or insulation that the workers install?
Or the southern sunny latitude "clime?"
Or the season known as good old summertime?
Oh no my friends all these are not!
What changes the home from cool toward hot!
'Tis the warmth of the people who dwell therein!
Who live lives of love and joy with their kin!
Who welcome their friends who come just to sit!
Or to eat and drink and talk just a bit!
'Tis those from whom sunny rays shine!
Whose gracious welcome makes us feel fine!*

*That's the warmth that we feel now in this home,
So therefore 'twas easy to write you this poem!*

Composed by RW

Hooray for Henry's Dual Personality

1996

*My fine friend Henry Blackburn
Has no trouble to work and earn*

*A place in the worm Hall of Fame
Which must be run by a dame!*

*His work has captured-our hearts
Not only those important parts*

*That are concerned with heart disease
But especially the parts that appease*

*Our urge for the hot jazz of our time
Much better than this primitive rhyme*

*So Henry while you and Stacy are around
Please continue to make our hearts pound*

*With your wonderful jazz tunes
That we knew, when so many moons*

*Ago, we were able to play with big bands
And danced while you played in many lands*

*Please, please continue to play around
And live long lives in which joys abound!*

*Read by R. Wissler in Minneapolis on May 3, 1996 at
the end of the Symposium on "Primordial Prevention
of Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factors"*

*Some Thoughts When the Grant Runs Out
(Some Reminiscences Regarding Success)*

May 5, 1996

*What do you do when your grant runs out,
At the age of 79?
Do you rejoice or do you pout?
Do you jump with joy or pine?*

*In the case of this old Prof. named Bob,
Who still bobs along real fast,
It's certainly not a time to sob,
Nor a time to look aghast.*

*It's a time to celebrate dear friends,
And a time to look ahead,
A time when there is time one spends,
With family instead.*

*Of the treadmill of scheduled tasks,
And the crowded hours of work.
It is not the time when one basks,
No time to go berserk.*

*In my case, I reflect on my good luck,
In those with whom I labor,
How good to have colleagues who stuck,
And who are smarter than their neighbor.*

*The truth on which I reminisce these days,
Is an important one I think,
To succeed in academia's torturous maze,
Choose colleagues whose synapses link -*

*Much more rapidly and frequently than mine,
They show the guiding truth to be,
Have luck enough along the line,
"To work with those smarter than thee."*

On Hilary's Great Day

June 7, 1996

Today is for Hilary,
Who brings us good cheer.
Today she's a luminary,
As well as a dear!

Now she's a doc dear!
Who cares for our health.
We'll have nothing to fear!
As she builds up her wealth.

As a careful skilled doc,
Who labors all day
And fills up her sock,
With what people can pay.

We hope as she celebrates
She'll enjoy a pretty box,
And that it facilitates
Keeping precious pretty rocks.

But most of all we hope today
As her life's work extends,
That we will always stay
In her memory as friends!

OMNI ~ CHICAGO HOTEL

A TRIBUTE TO SUMNER KRAFT June 13, 1996

Sumner has been a serious student, conscientious colleague, a jovial, dependable and loyal alumnus, a man of letters, a gentleman and a scholar in our life since the early 60's when he first appeared on the third floor of the Pathology Department to begin to learn how to use immunological approaches to study inflammatory bowel disease!

To honor such a colleague as he approaches middle age is not hard to do! But there are very few if any episodes or antics to recall or to make fun of. Frank Fitch and I racked our combined brains (certainly Frank wishes he were here!) and we couldn't come up with any! I call a highly crafted tribute!

You folks may think that I'm daft
When I sing of a youngster named Kraft
Who in 1962
Did something new
With Fitch he gave rabbits the shaft.

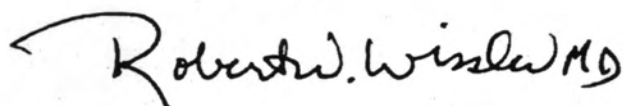
While working with Joe he worked out
The immunological response without doubt
The rabbit showed how
In disease of the bowel
Immune backfire brings colitis about.

But tonight is he honored for that?
Of course not you can bet on your hat!
We gather tonight,
So we all can unite,
To give his nice back a big pat!

As Doctor, Scholar, Alumnus, and Friend
He's earned our respect which we now extend
Not just for tonight
That wouldn't be right!
But from now right on till the end.

Thank you Pat and Sumner!

Robert W. Wissler

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert W. Wissler MD". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the printed name.

A Small Boy's Bluebird of Happiness

July 16, 1996

One of the earliest recollections of my childhood is related to spring time on the 80 acre farm in mid Indiana where I lived from age 3 to almost 7.

On sunny spring mornings I can recall sloshing down the long muddy lane that led from the even 'muddier' barnyard to the stately stands of sugar maples and other mature hardwood trees. There were almost 100 maple trees which at this time of year were tapped by my dad to collect the steadily dripping sap. Nearby was the "sugar camp," a long grey unpainted building, erected by my grandfather and his dad with its great long wood burning furnace and its great black kettles in which the sap was thickened to clear golden maple syrup! This was a highly prized product some of which was used later for making "maple sugar candy," for maple syrup "taffy pulls," and for Grandma's maple syrup flavored cookies.

But the event that sticks in my mind the most was the annual arrival at a fence post about half way down the long lane to the woods. Here, on or near my birthday there appeared each year two brilliant blue and gold bluebirds who made their nest for their family in a hole in that fence post. To see them suddenly appear each spring on a sunny warming day with their brilliant colors and their cheery "churup" was sheer magic to a little 4 year old boy.

I wonder if their descendants still nest their families in that fence post in mid Indiana.

Dr. Bob's 80th year diary - Began on
Monday August 5th 1996 page 1

(After a sleepless night at 35,000 ft)
Oh Kandersteg, oh Kandersteg
How I love to tap your keg
How glad it is to be here
As I rejoice in my 80th year

With family both great and small
Some are short and some are tall,
But all are a joy to this grand part!
But most joy of all is dear grandma!

New hips repaired the backache cured

So no more pain, like she endured

So now for fun with Mayno, Gerni & Polk

In the country, origin of the Swiss old Polk

Well yodeling and dance on hills & briars,

And some to Oeschinen will take

Owed to Mary Wissler Graham

August 10, 1996

Oh Mary, oh Mary, most generous Mary
Just as good as the fabled tooth fairy
How grateful we are, the entire Wissler clan,
That you could make and bring true such a wonderful plan.

The Wisslers, the Mayers, the Grahams and the Polks
All getting together, where the Wissler old folks
Started down the Rhine in 1766
To sail from Rotterdam, then to mix -

With other plain people in Lancaster County,
To gain from William Penn some land with its bounty
And then in 1876 to the County of Wayne
Came the covered wagons of Wissler, Wagner, Thomas, and Payne.

And our grandfather Wissler married a Wagner they say!
And with Grandfather Thomas, a Payne came to stay!
My dad and my mom met in Terra Haute
And learned to be teachers and went out and taught!

In Madison and Richmond, both county seats
And along came Eleanor and later Bob meets
The 1st light of day in Richmond he's born!
On March 1st, '17, in the land of the corn!

And then he lived there until he was three
Adored by his family, t'was plain to see
Then to the farm on "Lost Mile Road"
Where he started to school and the school bus rode.

Then into Hagerstown where dad "super"ed the school
And then back to Richmond, I was nine and no fool!
From grade school, to mid school to high school then,
Those school days were fun from the time I was ten!

Wonderful friends and much to be learned
I enjoyed school days and the good grades I earned!
And to college, oh college at good old E.C.
Right across the street very conveniently.

I found the right girl or did she find me?
Yes, Polk was her last name, Liz Anne was called she!
But right from the start she was Betty to me!
We went together as all could plain see.

A Wildman named Ed almost took her from me
But Hannah got him, Betty had the Key
To my heart and my mind and my soul
And off to Chicago we went to enroll.

I went to med school, Betty to SSA
At the U of Chicago in Bob Hutchens's day.
Mixing marriage, jobs and school all together
Was a very great challenge in all kinds of weather.

We loved the great Lake and we loved each other
Barb was born and Mary, with Betty their mother
We battled Barb's colic at 2 a.m.!
And Mary was stubborn, just like I am!

And along came David and John as our sonnies
So at the MD convocation there were 4 of those honeys.
But of course you can see it's not the end of our story.
There's much more to add to our days of glory.

Barb became Mayers and Mary became Graham
And John found a Cathy as sweet as a lamb.
Mary Polk, bless her, became auntie to all!
Wherever we went, we all had a ball!

None can surpass this adventure right now!
As we all get together in our homeland and how!!
Where the Swiss Wisslers started, so the story goes,
With its Farms and its Lakes and the Alps that arose.

So Mary we thank you for the wonderful days!
They fill us with Joy and our hearts are ablaze
We may never again get together again!
We really enjoyed as we hiked and we ran!

We'll never forget how this family did mix
In Kandersteg in August of 1996.
What a joy, oh what fun, we sing and we laugh!
At the venerable age of 79 and 1/2.

My lab is all closed and the family together!
We'll enjoy this reunion, no matter the weather!
Wherever we go, what ever we do,
We'll remember the dream Mary made come true!!

Composed by Bob Wissler in Kandersteg
on August 10, 1996
on the occasion of a dinner
honoring Mary Graham
before Don left for San Diego

To Seilers So Dear

August 18, 1996

Roses are Red and some are white too
We thank you dear Seilers for all that you do
For Wisslers and Grahams, the Mayers and Polk
From all the USA came these kindly folk
To celebrate my retiring 80th year
So thanks to Herr and Frau Seiler who are so dear!
Our reunion was perfect at your Alfa Soleil
Your wonderful staff and the food made us feel
"Right at home" in der Schweitz from whence, as we know
The Wisslers once started to US to go
So thanks to Dear Peter and Agnes we say
We'll be back we hope, even longer to stay
And we know you'll be here in your most friendly manner
To greet us and bid us and wave the Swiss Banner!

By Professor Dr. Bob Wissler

(When the Wissler, Polk, Graham, Mayers Reunion ended).

Holidays in December (The Festival of Lights)

November 21, 1996

December is a special time
Fa la la la-la; la-la, la, la!
For Christians, Jews, and those who rhyme
Fa la la la-la; la-la, la, la!
We sing and dance and drink and dine
With friends and kinfolk, we combine
Fa la la la-la; la-la, la, la!

To exchange gifts that cheer us up
Fa la la la-la; la-la, la, la!
At early dawn and when we sup
Fa la la la-la; la-la, la, la!
So raise your voice and raise your glass
Soon these precious days will pass
Fa la la la-la; la-la, la, la!

As lights of holidays grow dim
Fa la la la-la; la-la, la, la!
We find that days of joy are slim
Fa la la la-la; la-la, la, la!
Winter's biting cold is here
Tis the dark time of the year
Fa la la la-la; la-la, la, la!

We wait 'til spring with warmth and birds
Fa la la la-la; la-la, la, la!
And birthing calves among the herds
Fa la la la-la; la-la, la, la!
Bring leaves and flowers back to life
And cold takes leave and so does strife
Fa la la la-la; la-la, la, la!

**A Christmas Greeting
from Betty and Bob**

1996

Christmas comes but once a year, that's quite enough we think!
More often would be "muse abuse" and cause the muse to sink!
After all it's the birthday of God's gift to us of love.
And birthdays come but once a year, even if from above.
So now let's celebrate my dears, His birthday gift is here!
We'll add some multicolored lights to this dark time of year.
To give us hope and help us through the dismal days ahead.
Maybe even it will help to cheer us up instead.
After all we have each other and that's a lot to say.
That's a birthday present; folks, that none can take away.
It's a gift so very precious; it's worth much more than gold.
It becomes of value more and more as you and we get old.
Then those friends that we don't see come back through cards and notes.
We think of you and cherish you, both locals and remotes.
We greet you and entreat you to stay in touch with us.
Sure there's July 4th and Labor Day, but we'll take Christmas and its fuss,
To wish you Merry Merry and Happy New Year.
May '97 be filled with hope, peace and good cheer!

A brief glimpse of '96

WINTER

Sunny shores of Florida, celebrating 79 years
Hickory Nut cake and friends to shout out cheers.

SPRING

Retirement, Retirement, Retirement, Retirement at last!
We closed the Lab., and shifted to slow pace from fast.

SUMMER

Gardening, then to Switzerland with 15 family!
What a wonderful Celebration of the joy of being free!

AUTUMN

Writing poetry and prose with a Montgomery Place Group
Our first Grand Canyon trip, our first Caribbean cruise loop.

NOW

As Christmas approaches, the flu bug has got me
But that doesn't prevent us from wishing joy to thee!



Impressions of Grandeur

Draft #3

January 22, 1997

Up at the Northern border of Arizona near
Where it meets with Utah and California clear
There's a gorgeous gorge as you ever have seen
So grand that it is held in grand esteem.

What is there about this deep, deep cut?
That makes it more than just a rut?
Or a wrinkle on mother earth's old face?
It's not that it's deepest or greatest in space?

Or more than 12 miles wide in spots
It's not its age that makes it tops!
Even if 4 billion years seems pretty old to me!
It's other features that we come to see!

Two especially, it seems, stand out
As we gaze across this gorge and shout!
These are its colors and the way it's shaped
The latter, most say, can't be escaped.

Shapes do contribute to its magic effect
The mighty Colorado has sculpted and bedecked
As no other sculptor has or can,
Infinite shapes since it began.

Of its magnificent proportions one could write tomes.
Temples and shrines, tables and domes
Domiciles and mansions that almost daze
So original! The imagination of those who gaze -

Can hardly keep from picturing
A giant sultan or a "Near East" King
Entering or exiting with a string
Of Harem girls who follow singing!

And the sun and geological strata
Have clothed the entire panorama
With colors so varied with exquisite shades
Description in ordinary language fades.

Changing as they do as the sun we love
Makes its daily arch up high above
From delicate and subtle tints at dawn
To reds, greens, and purples, later on.

And then as old Sol sinks low with no hitch
The hues deepen, intensify, becoming so rich,
That cameras have trouble metering truly
Marking mere man's film unruly.

Oh great chasm, greatest of all
More countless ages you will enthrall
And millions of years from now they'll probe
Men and women on our decimated globe.

They'll wonder as we have wondered the majesty of this,
Grandest of all chasms and its greatest abyss
And hopefully feel a little more enriched
And even perhaps bewildered and bewitched.

By the giant forces that grace our globe,
Some well known and some to probe
And so dear friends as we snuggle on
To understand, appreciate and to belong.

Attuned to nature and its universal song
Let's treat our planet right, and not wrong!!

First Composed on September 25, 1996
while returning from my first trip to the Grand Canyon

**My First Year of Retirement
(or Why Didn't I Keep Working?
After March 31, 1996?)**

January 27, 1997

What a wonderful idea it was! I thought,
To retire at almost eighty for the joy I sought
For gardening all I wanted, not against the clock,
To travel for enjoyment, not just to lecture to the flock,
To play more tennis, more Scrabble, and some games new,
To start my German band again, and my saxophone too.

And so I gardened intensively through April and May,
I crouched and I knelt and bent over all day.
But the weather was cold, nothing sprouted or grew,
And all I produced was something quite new.
Two very sore legs where my hamstrings were strained,
And I hastened to physiotherapy when I pained.

I planted all over in June in the sun,
But somehow it wasn't nearly the fun.
My legs still hurt and all the plants were late,
I've never gloried when shoots missed their date.
But a wonderful celebration was planned by our Mary
To gather the family in der Schweitz so airy!

Where the Wisslers came from in 1767
They settled in Lancaster, William Penn's heaven.
Now back to Switzerland, all fifteen of us went
To several hotel rooms Mary helped us to rent.
It was fun it is true, but on the high paths,
My breath ran out and it was no laughs.

The PAR COURS proved harder than ever before
So when we got back I came in Doe's door.
"Chronotropic incompetence" or "sick sinus" he said
"It's not too serious; after all, you're not dead.
We'll put in a pacemaker and soon you can run,
Climb hills and play tennis and have so much fun."

So it was done and with pacemaker in
I could run, I could climb, and "fast walks" were in.
We went first to Grand Canyon with Dudley and Ruth
My first trip to view this world wonder, forsooth.
Took pictures in color, but all from "South Rim"
We took pictures in sunshine and when it was dim!

Then came Thanksgiving, that wonderful day
With most of the family, we wished it could stay.
We gathered at the Grahams' welcoming home
Near D.C.'s cathedral with its spire (but no dome).
Enjoying the family, plus Liz, Jeff and the kids,
But no walks up steep hills at the Zoo, on the skids!

Came home with the "flu," probably caught on the plane
We were supposed to avoid the "flu" with distain
How could I get it? When vaccine we got!
Then we found out good vaccine it was not!
It's Parke-Davis' batch that was apparently weak.
So we missed the protection that all old folks seek.

After the flu came a wicked infection
With H. influenza we found on inspection
Contracted while cruising on the Stella Solaris
Between San Juan and Curacao, it almost to wear us Out!, with such
coughing as you've never seen
And for Bob, dyspnea, so severe it was mean!

The ship's doctor was great and so were the nurses
They kept us from calling for one or two hearses.
But when we got home on January 2nd
We went straight to the hospital, so strongly it beckoned!
We stayed there 12 days with treatment so good
Drs. Siegler and Sorrentino, both understood -

The problems at hand! PLUGGED BRONCHI plus "tired heart" was described

Improved when the correct antibiotic was prescribed

A bone-chilled ride home from 12 days at Mitchell, U of C

Now Jean and Afeet gave PD and PT

That's "Postural Drainage" with "Percussion" to you

To me it helped greatly, their pounding ain't new!

PD and PT is an old fashioned way

To loosen up bronchi "plugged up," as they say

Before antibiotics it was used many places

With butt up and head down, you feel you're in traces

Anyway it does work and now I'm beginning

To breathe in and out, a gold star I'll be pinning -

On all those good people who pounded on me

The nurses, the therapists and my wife, so good, is she

She finally was able to beat me with force

Removing the exudate, right at the source

Well now I'm much better, getting ready to fly

To Anna Maria with the Gulf Coast nearby.

So now it's almost a year since retirement

And I wonder what else will mar the environment

Retirement ain't easy it seems to this guy

Soon I'll be 80, maybe then I'll just lie -

In the sun with sunscreen all over my skin

Rejoicing when nothing happens to me or my kin!

Robert W. Wissler

April 3, 1997

The Students' Illusion of Spring in Chicago

I work with students, smart as can be,
Who say, Dr. Wissler, can't you see
It's springtime right now, the calendar's right
Besides it's exam time we study all night,
To make our good grades and to have the time
To go on Spring Break, it's so sublime.

What can I say to these young and smart kids?
When it's 30 at night and then it just skids
Into rain and snow and a bitter wind.
It doesn't seem winter's about to rescind
March is like this in Chicago each year
Wind and cold one day then rain, shed a tear!

So maybe someday when these youngsters get old
They'll admit that March leaves us out in the cold
Calendar, exams, "spring" break set aside
Face up to the truth and by facts please abide
Wait 'til late April, mid-May, early June
And then dance around, make love, sing a tune!

April 3, 1997

The Magic of the Wooded Dunes

It's Friday! We leave at 4:30pm
To pass by our National Lakeshore rim
And then up a bit on the Michigan side
By New Buffalo where now no Indians reside
And into the magic of the wooded dunes shore
Warren Dunes, Warren Woods with their scenery galore

Untouched by tourists or residents either
Preserved for the future and ravaged by neither
Greedy developers, mad sand miners or loggers,
Caring nothing for dunes scapes, virgin forests
To nearby Dunewood and Bridgman next door
Where our spirits rise and our heartbeats soar

Fantastic terrain, many a fern-lined vale
Lovely trees of all kinds and wildflowers prevail
Laid out by Carl Sandburg who lived nearby
With his buddy Andreason who decided to try
To develop a settlement of 100+ homes
Without disturbing the dunes and their shaggy-leaved domes

These two rugged Swedes from Harbert nearby
Tramped over these dunes and swore not to defy
What nature had made and from far north seeded
It had all the attributes anyone needed
Their winding trails followed the contour
No digging or bulldozing to arrive at the shore

And so it was that "Dunewood" was born
No one can go there and feel forlorn
We go Friday for quiet weekends there
To escape the city's demanding fare
It's like a magic balm to sooth our frayed minds
And to tone up our bodies with moves of all kinds

Swimming and gardening, planting and reaping
Hiking the beaches, raking and sweeping
Canoeing or rowing or just floating sans sails
Jogging, fast walking the wooded dunes trails
Following the footsteps of our "people-poet" Carl
His magic fingers, tangled brains to unsnarl.

July 15, 1997

APC Forever

In the turbulent 60's when everyone thought
There were important battles needing to be fought
Our brethren in MEDICINE often wanted to operate
All the labs and the SURGEONS often tried to deflate
Our surgical path reports on the pieces of tissue
That they had removed and to not make an issue
Of what had been done by their knives so keen.
So pathology was challenged by some who were mean.
And then two pathologists, at Duke and Chicago,
Organized a concerted effort to clearly show
The importance of what pathology is and what pathologists do
And to restore the image of this keystone discipline anew
First they organized pathology chairs on a regional basis
Midwest and Southwest, then Northeast and the West oasis

Assembling all the nation's path chairpersons together,
In '65 in Chicago in sunny fall weather
To consider mutual concerns and their fondest dream
Better residents, research potential and increased esteem
And the meetings went on after Tom Kinney's death
From cancer at an age much too soon he left.
Yours truly first presided, setting the tone
And then passed it on to a Robert of Stone
He resigned very soon and then left, it is true
Next we had three "J's," all really true blue
An Ellis, a Strong one, and a Brunson all led
But the fourth of the J's named Layton was preceded it's said,
By a lively Scarpelli author of cheer
No "Inferno" could come from this Dante so dear

The mid-70's saw us Rolla king over the Hill
And then handy Andy helped our mission to fulfill
A Benson led us up a high Clinical Path
Erudite Gill showed us immunopath is no laugh
Stembridge, Hartman, and Lacey; giants as heads
And they gave APC pills to stay out of bed.
Then came Craigbead, Kirsten, and good old David Korn
Invigorating the chairperson's group like a lovely morn

Who can forget Roger Smith, W. Clarke, and Matsen?
What wonderful years those late 80's have been.
So the 90's go merrily humming along
With a Gardener digging in, and our "J. R.," never wrong
Will Taylor suture our wounds, will Clive keep us alive?
And what of the 21st century, will pathology thrive?
With strong pathology departments all over the land
We can hope that APC will serve as planned.

Anonymous
(in self defense)

July 16, 1997

Administration - Dread Disease

When those who've reached the highest peaks
Of professorial work and recognition
A terrible infection inside sneaks
Infects them with a sad condition,
"Administration - dread disease!"

Many of our illustrious brothers
Are infected with this vicious virus
A bad disease which often smothers
The traits which made them most desirous
"Administration - dread disease!"

Some succumb as a department head
That's not the most deadly ends.
It's those who need their ego fed,
As Deanship their natural resistance bends
To "Administration - dread disease!"

Pathologists can make good Deans, it's true.
They bridge the total med school span,
From most basic biology's new brew
To the specialized clinics, they understand.
But there's "Administration - dread disease!"

But is this good for our stalwart crew?
Does it make their heart bells ring?
Was this the best thing they could do?
Is this really their greatest thing?
Or "Administration - dread disease!"

With the short half-life that most Deans have
One questions where this disease path leads
We wish we had a magic salve
To kill the vicious virus seeds
And prevent "Administration - dread disease!"

Dr. Anonymous

Photos for Laura --- From a doting Grandpa

July 24, 1997

Happy Birthday, Dear Laura, this is our wish!
We send you some pictures of clouds, trees, and canyons!
My wonderful wife will fill up your dish
With cookies so good, they'll become your companions!

We hope our small gifts will give you a hint
That we are still active and thinking of you,
We await your return for another strong stint,
To learn on the Midway all that is true!

Young photographer, you have great-promise, we think
Your pictures will put ours to shame
But right now while you are still on the brink
We send you our poor ones, so tame.

To show you dear Laura not just clouds and trees
But to compare two great canyons we've seen
Very recently this year and hoping to please
And to compare these great sights where we've been.

Note that both of these gorges in the US of A
In our 48th and 50th states yet!
One in arid Southwest on a hot day
And one in lush Kauai, so wet.

The contrast in colors is easy to note;
The mainland Grand Canyon features pastels!
And in the mid-Pacific by plane or by boat
"Grand Canyon of the Pacific" vivid green in the dells!

Mostly it is red, from fairly recent lava,
Coming from the ocean floor very, very deep.
The red and green are lovely as we have a
Long, admiring look at its walls so steep.

That's all our photo art we could muster this year,
We hope to see more of yours real soon
For now we'll love to see you in person and hear
Your voice; we'll sing the Happy Birthday tune!

My sister was nine years older than I, and in many ways, she was my main guide and guardian angel when I was growing up. This was written as a tribute when she passed away in 1997 at the age of 89.

To Eleanor, my dear sister

July 29, 1997

When I was growing up in small towns in Indiana
I had one precious blessing that I'll treasure evermore!
A loving, caring sister who called me "top banana"
Her funny little brother, she took time to adore!

She became my second mother, in more ways than one
She rescued me from errors and helped me learn a lot
Eleanor Lindley helped me get my homework done.
She was a lovely sister, the best friend that I'd got.

As our kids grew up, Aunt Eleanor they'd go see
With her and husband Aaron, we'd all enjoy Clear Lake
All our four offspring were taught to water ski
They, with Cousin Bill, stirred up quite a wake.

We gloried in Bill's progress as a student at Purdue
Top honors in EE and a doctorate on top
Master of computer chips when they were really new
Radio "ham" preeminent, around the globe he'd hop.

With Eleanor's strong support, Aaron gained renown.
Among this state's best, school executives
Eleanor and AT were treasured in Indiana towns
And similarly cherished by all their relatives.

Then disaster struck in many, many ways
Eleanor developed cancer, a bad one that had spread
Although treated surgically and then with strong x-rays
One never knows the outcome; it's the unknown that we dread.

And Aaron's heart gave up from the country's worst disease
He was treated well and long to get his blood fats down
He worked for ten more years, apparently with ease
But finally it got him in Florida's Ft. Meyers town.

And worst of all we think was dear William's sad fate
Feeling bad at Christmas when visiting his mother
A quick visit to the doctor on Christmas, rather late
Leukemia was diagnosed, we wished it was another.

He left us and his mother just a few days after that
Leukemia was acute and nothing could be done
We stayed close to Eleanor helping her to get
Back and forth to Florida to have its winter sun.

But her poor health lingered, diabetes and a stroke
Heart attack, arthritis to make her movements slow
All these notwithstanding she kept her spirits up
With visits from her pastor and from the PEO.

Westminster's caring staff her comfort they sustained
No matter what her troubles, they helped her to enjoy
Her daily food and drink, the fun each day contained
The "Hour of Power" was relished; it was an hour of joy.

But most of all, in those days when she was wheelchair bound
She loved a sandwich, fresh from Arby's and a TCBY cup
Low fat, low salt, low sugar, but tastes that would astound
Those lunches and our visits helped keep her spirits up.

We will miss our dear, dear sister; she had a real long life.
Her loving, caring way will stay, it is always thus
Now she'll have no troubles, free from pain and strife
At peace at last she's resting, her spirit's here with us.

Robert W. Wissler, brother
for July 31, 1997

**A Toast to Our Caravan Maritime
Tour Guide and Driver – September 20, 1997
Greenwich, Nova Scotia**

To Blair:

So here's to Blair
With voice so fair,
And mind so quick.
It's hard to pick
A better guide
For this long ride.

So here's to Blair
With talents rare,
We want to tell
You guide us well!!
Your stories are great!
Your jokes first rate.

So here's to Blair
You've quite a flair!
So you must know
We thank you so!
And we are glad
It's you we had!!

So, so long Blair.
We do declare
That we do plan
To tell Caravan
To give you a raise
As we sing your praise.

To Bernie:

So here's to Bernie
For our journey,
To drive our bus
Without a fuss,
Over hill and dale,
Without fail.

Dear Bernie dear!
It's very clear
You love to drive,
And always strive
To keep us safe
And keep up the faith.

Dear Bernie fine,
You are so kind
To help us off
Our hats we doff,
To help us on
You're never gone.

So Bernie thanks
From all our ranks.
You are so swell!
We wish you well!
When next we take a bus
We hope you drive for us.

Composed by Dr. Bob Wissler
between 3 and 4 pm on the bus on 9/20/97
read at Farewell Dinner at Old Orchard Inn
Greenwich, Nova Scotia

November 27, 1997

**For Friends and Family
Thanksgiving '97**

As we gather together, our thanks to give,
From farms and cities where we live,
Let's pause a moment with those we adore,
To think of all we are thankful for!

For love sustained for many years,
That gives us joy and calms our fears,
For friendship found that gives us strength,
For that we'd go to any length.

For Nature's bounty and its beauty.
For work that challenges and our sense of duty.
To preserve our homes as special places,
Where we'll have fun and smiling faces.

For schools that help us learn a lot.
And teachers who stimulate, so our brains don't rot.
For food, for health, keeping our cholesterol low,
And drinks that help our blood to flow.

But most of all on this day of days,
We lift our glasses and sing our praise –
For friends we cherish and for those we love
We give our thanks to the Heavens above.

"Daddy Bob"
"Grandpa Wissler"

From the desk of
ROBERT W. WISSLER

1998

Dear Zdenek,

Thanks so much
For sending such
Excellent accounting
Of your brilliant mounting
Of very steep hills
To find new facts without frills
We are all very proud
And can really shout loud
In your well deserved praise
Our voices we raise

Regards,

Bob

A GOLDEN KEY FOR ZDENEK

1998

Dr. Hruban, I've been thinking
What a sad world this would be
If you hadn't thought of linking
Your life to this University

You've added to Charles U's advanced degree
Knowledge achieved with so much toil
A U. of Chicago MD PhD
So brilliantly earned according to Hoyle

Dr. Hruban, I've been thinking
Of our early days at the U of Chyo
When we both were deeply drinking
At the fountain of alanine's B-3 thio

You found that this analog would stop
Transplantable cancers in their tracks
So that their mitotic figures would pop
And tumors would show necrotic cracks

Yarka Hruban, I've thinking
What a sad world this would be
If you hadn't married Zdenek
And had those offspring, one, two, three

What a family and how they've grown
With Impact on the community
At national level as well as home
Wondrous gifts to society

Yarka Hruban, I've been thinking
You work hard and e'er cool
Helping students keep from sinking
And to graduate from the American School

Dr. Hruban, I've been thinking
When as a rising research star
You studied more than most other men
Morris hepatomas, from near and far

The widespread reputation you bore
As a hepatoma fine structure expert
Led many scholars to your door
Many were helped and none was hurt

Dr. Hruban, I'm thinking more
About your work on Peroxisomes
Your mastery of the knowledge store
Re: microbodies' cytoplasmic homes

How hard we worked with Ben and Hewson
On "focal cytoplasmic degradation"
We were a brand new concept introducin'
About injured cells' "amputation"

Dr. Hruban, I've been thinking
About the great job that you've done
Mastering those diseases linking
Zoo with human, sometimes fun

Especially when elephants are involved
And the organ weights loom greater
And the problems to be solved
Rival St Helena's crater

But to both of you we send our praises
For the extra special things you've done
And this event we hope it raises
Your joy about the course you've run

And so tonight we have the pleasure
To present to you the Golden Key
We hope it proves to be a treasure
For you to wear for all to see

We hope it will unlock the door
Exposing many deeds you've done
To help our staff and students soar
Enlightened by you, and towards the sun

Lucy Love is Leaving

February 16, 1998

All of Nature, alas, is grieving!
All of Nature abhors your leaving!
So, like us, its tears are flowing!
It roars like thunder, its anger glowing -
In lightning flashes, it's so sad!
Nothings good, all is bad!
Poor old Bob is saddest of all
He's so sad, he wants to bawl
Who'll rescue his lousy game?
With Lucy gone who'll his wild bulls tame
So long for now, Lucy and beloved Char
Take care of yourselves, let nothing bar,
Your coming next year to left court defend
Come and stay longer from old Bob, your friend!

Robert W. Wissler
9:30 am on 2/16/98
(right before Lucy and Char left!)

To Johnny and Cathy

for March 4, 1998

Johnny and Cathy were sweethearts,
And they were so much in love
That little Cupid's soft-tipped darts
Were like feathers from above!

Both of these professors' brats
Fled their campus homes,
To drink of life's delicious drafts,
Their stories would fill up tomes!

They went their ways and filled their lives
With families of their own.
Repairing houses, building homes, how our Johnny strives,
Cathy, as a flight attendant, in the air was flown!

And then when middle age appeared,
They met again and now
That little Cupid's arrow steered
A course to them and wow!

It strummed their heart strings as it struck
And made a lively tune!
They swam their love pool like a duck,
At midnight and at noon!

For sure a touching part of this
Love story is the way
They helped each other across abyss
When illness had its day.

Nephroliths produced such pain,
A rattler struck a blow
Fibromyalgia raised its cane
And laid poor Cathy low.

But through it all they sustained
Their love and their support.
Their tender caring ways remained
Against pain like a fort!

And so today they take their vows
For all the world to see!
That Johnny's & Cathy's love endows
All of us with glee!!!

From Daddy Bob

Our Farewell Prayer

March 31, 1998

Farewell Nancy,
Tall and Fancy.
Now as you leave,
We do believe,
That you should know,
We all bestow
A tender hope
That helps you cope
With family matters
(A task that batters!)
We hope that when,
At times again
You think of us
And all the fuss
We brought to you,
We hope your view
Includes some cheer
And some thoughts dear.
We who are present
At party pleasant,
Wish you well.
We pray and tell
God, "Bless dear Nancy,
Tall and Fancy."

Amen

*Composed by Dr. Bob Wissler
on the occasion of the farewell
reception for Nancy Kruse.*

To respond right after the award is presented – May 10, 1998

First, I want to thank the Alumni Association and Earlham for this great honor – I accept it with great humility and great joy.

I want to thank my long-time close friend, from boyhood to now, Dudley Starr and his lovely wife, Ruth, for their friendship and steadfast loyalty and I must pay tribute to Dud's gift of composing highly complimentary and remarkably exaggerated phrases out of often puzzling and dull lists in a curriculum vitae. It's no wonder that he edited the Earlham Post and the Sargasso and helped the Wayne Works achieve national leadership by composing and directing its advertising! This year his EC Class of 1938 is celebrating its 60th year of their graduation.

Now with your permission, I want to express some of my feelings in a bit of Hoosier Doggerel with apologies to James Whitcomb Riley whose Farm Poems I cherish.

I usually am moved to this type of creative writing by special occasions so I call my collection "Occasional Verse."

This one is entitled "Coming Home to Earlham."

Coming Home to Earlham

Kimberly Tanner called me one day
I couldn't believe what she had to say -
What she told me then has inspired this poem:
Earlham Alumni had invited me home
To receive a Distinguished Alumni Service Award,
For science and professing surely not as a Bard
I said I'd accept it, though it didn't feel right -
Many others deserved it much more in my sight.
But the chance to come home appealed to me.
I could open my heart so others could see
What Earlham has meant, I could attest!
From age 101 lived on National Road West.
So I went to Earlham for more than 12 years.
Most go for four, I was blessed it appears.

In these early years, selling Saturday Evening Post
To Bundy Hall residents, I never got lost.
In the late afternoon each week so it seems,
I'd go to the basement and visit the teams.
M.O. Ross and Blair Gullian took a liking to me,
A pro-football and basketball they gave to me,
They gave them to me at the end of the season,
These filled me with glee far beyond reason.
To professors' wives, many more than a few,
I sold Lady's Home Journals on College Avenue.
And later their groceries from Ashby and Hazen
To their backdoors, their kindness was amazin'.
I caddied on Earlham's nine-hole golf course,
In the Knot Hole Gang I cheered until hoarse
For The Fighting Quakers to urge them to win
Though they seemed to consider winning a sin.
I learned to play tennis on Earlham's clay courts,
And witnessed State finals of this queen of sports.

A scholarship for my grades at old Morton High
Helped me start college at Earlham nearby.
Then came four years of a wonderful time
With E. Merrill Root who taught me to rhyme.
Biology's secrets from Garner and Markle,
Wildman and Sherer made Chemistry sparkle.
And college was fun in so many ways,
In orchestra, band and so many plays.
But best of all were the friends that we made,
Earlham friends are faithful, their friendships don't fade.
And the greatest gain at good old E.C.
Was that I fell for Betty and she fell for me.
And we fell in love during these joyful four years,
This love has lasted through happiness and tears.

With four fine youngsters that our love has given,
Six grandkids and a great grand make life worth livin'.
Although tragic deaths took two away,
The joy with the others does more than repay
The struggles we faced in those early times,
And now in our 80's we still can write rhymes.
We still work as a team in all sorts of ways
To make Hyde Park better for the rest of our days.
At Montgomery Place, our retirement home,
And in parks and on campus where we like to roam.
No more science or teaching, only lectures and such,
We now have more time, which we like very much,
To use lessons of living that Earlham taught us
To transmit them to others without any fuss.
So thank you dear friends for what you have done,
I am blessed once again like no other one,
For this honor so great which we don't think we earned
We owe much to Earlham, we're glad we returned.

Robert W. Wissler '39 May, 1998

To Katie Dobson on Her 90th

June 4, 1998

Beautiful Katie, wonderful Katie
Dear darling Katie, who we all adore.
What a privilege, what a blessing
To have known you for three score and more!

Great Gyne Katie, physician for women
How many you've helped besides my wife.
Great OB Katie, attending the birthing,
Helping difficult pregnancies yield a new life.

But that's just one side of this complex lady,
Who has worked round the clock for so many years.
Her wit and her humor have always been there,
To bring on the laughter and dry up the tears.

Her love of great music and her talent to play
Her lovely violin, what a joy just to hear!
We still marvel she'd come to our German Band practice,
In the prefabs our umpas were served up with beer.

There's that generous side that few learn about
At U of Chicago, she's helping a lot.
What every school needs is just what she's doing
Aiding parts that she loves, no matter what!

There's a side to this lady all benefit from
Whether at dinner or just out on the street.
Her clothes are so lovely all chosen with care,
To just look at her is always a treat.

So now she's reached ninety, a marvelous feat.
We're here to pay tribute to her life with us all.
So we toast you, dear Katie, on this wonderful day
We'll eat, drink and be merry and just have a ball!

Composed by Dr. Bob Wissler, MS, PhD, MD
Your neighbor at Montgomery Place
and your life-long admirer.

To Mary Polk, The Retired Realtor

July 17, 1998

*Ex-Realtor, World Traveler,
Marvelous Friend, Family Supporter, and
The Best Friend of Darby and Amos.*

*This is a tribute to Mary Polk
From Wissler/Mayers/Graham Family Folk
We know her well, this energetic gal
We know her mostly as a real family pal
New Castle's most respected belle
Her truthful approach sold houses so well
She sold more homes than anyone did
If no realtor wanted it, she'd put in her bid.*

*But business isn't her only pleasure
Her other interests go on without measure
They take her to France and Switzerland too,
With grandmommy, then Martha and maybe us two,
She loves those old places where the French made wine
And the quaint Swiss villages suit her just fine
So we've named her truly, "A Traveler Great"
She's certainly earned it, we think she's first rate.*

*Her abiding passion is her family group
Her sister's offspring and the rest of the troop.
They treasure Aunt Mary for all of her deeds
They know that she's there to fill all of their needs.
They love her for her enthusiastic caring!
And for her interest in how they are faring.
They know that she's always quite available
To share goals and dreams, she's quite reliable.*

*And there's another passion that Mary shows,
An admirable one as everyone knows.
She loves "man's best friend," especially those nearby.
They bring joy to her and they in turn rely
On her for filling their days full of fun
Whether walking in rain or playing in sun
Whether Bootsie, or Darby, or Amos is there
When they are with Mary, they don't have a care!*

*So now, precious Mary, that you're fully retired,
While your energy's present and you're not even tired!
There'll be more time to record in your logs,
Traveling, family and precious fun with the dogs.
We hope that retirement will bring us together
In Europe or Dunewood, in all kinds of weather.
So treasure these years which give us more time
To do what we like, even composing a rhyme!*

*By Brother Bob on the
occasion of Mary's Retirement
as New Castle's Favorite Realtor!!*

08-20-98

Greetings to Gertrud

And to Maria too!

For Gertrud it's a special time

So happy day to you!

We know you're where love is

From your family true!

But please be sure you know

That we love you too!

Let nothing mar your birthday, dear,

Just enjoy this rhyme

And please come back to us

A blessing we rate sublime.

A Thanksgiving Poem

November 26, 1998

We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing,
For us and for others and the Turkey and dressing.

So much to give thanks for, where to begin?
For friends like the Silvas and for our next of kin.

We're thankful for little ones, Emily and Ben,
Anastasia and Graham and all under ten,

For loving grandmothers we give special thanks,
And for grumpy grandfathers who complain of their shanks,

For Nature in Washington and its Maryland gate,
For beauty in Dunewood in Michigan State,

For Chicago's bright splendor by Michigan Lake!
For its parks and its beaches, where we used to bake!

For the blessings of butterflies, and birds that eggs hatch,
As well as for flowers with blooms hard to match!

Most of all we give thanks for this day that fulfills,
We're so touched by these blessings we forget to take pills!

Amen

Dec. 31, 1998

How to Clean Up and Edit a Manuscript Quickly!

'Twas a breezy day by the lovely pool!
On Anna Maria sunny isle.
When I committed an act of a fool
Which is rarely a part of my style.

I was reading Mary's opening chapter,
On how environmental laws began.
It filled my heart with such great rapture
To see how her scholarship ran!

I find as my venerable body ages
I need a brief comfort stop.
So I weighted down the manuscript pages
By leaving Aqua Jogger on top.

I hurried inside to the bathroom.
Not a worry on my mind.
I returned to a scene filled with doom!
Disaster! I returned to find!!

It seems that a strong gust defying
Any that had gone before,
Sent my faithful Aqua Jogger flying,
Along with the chapter's pages galore!

All of the loungers who sat by the pool
Were scrambling to retrieve the pages
Except for the eight or ten in water so cool
Floating to where the effluent disengages.

I grabbed the Aqua Jogger, my failed paper weight!
And clicked it around my waist.
Plunging into the water at a great rate!
To rescue floating pages in haste!!

Out they came limp and soaked one by one
Some slightly torn it's true
But mostly intact, really a job well done
When dry, they'll all be like new.

Fortunately, we've read those that were soaked
And marveled at the author's skill!!
The research it took, the talent invoked,
So impressive we can hardly be still!

Thanks for favoring us, those who love you!
With the best reading we've had for a while
Looking forward to the book in a month or two
Depicting urban environment's trial.

When that book arrives, "hot off the press"
We'll not only read it avidly with glee!
But we promise you, earnestly we confess
We won't "clean it" in pool or sea!!

Old Dad Bob Wissler
At Harrington House by the Sea

Ode to the Hickory Nut Finders

March 1, 1999

When I was a youth out on our farm
In mid Indiana, away from all harm
Every March 1st, on the day of my birth
Mom's Hickory Nut Cake filled me with mirth
It was so good with its icing so thick,
It is a wonder that I never got sick!
And when I got older and dear mom was gone
And so was my dad who had sung me that song
"Back Home in Indiana" where we were all born
In the land of pigs and the fine yellow corn.
I then had to scrounge all over the earth
To find hickory nuts for the day of my birth.
Sometimes my sister would help with my search
By dear sister I wouldn't be left in the lurch;
But now she is gone and no one's around
Who knows where hickory nuts are found,
Except Jim & Marilyn from the Buckeye State
It's they who rescued me from a very sad fate!
So three cheers for these great Hickory Nut Finders
Their halos are bright so we have on our blinders
They seem to us to be sprouting their wings
And listening carefully, we hear angels sing
So Jim & Marilyn, this ode is for you
Birthday boy Bob's giving thanks deep and true!

By Dr. Bob Wissler, Written and Read on his 82nd Birthday

Hooray for Blue Water

March 1, 1999

Rub a dub dub, Rub a dub dub,
Hooray for the Blue Water Beach Club,
The lovely lawn and the heated pool
The pool is blue, but the water's cool,
The beach is white or nearly so
(At least it isn't cold with snow).
The finest asset of all for me
Is the lovely people that we see
When we come here, the salt of the earth
Fine folks, as they have been from birth.
So now that I'm turning 82
I'm glad we're here, where the water's blue,
And the people, ah, the people too
They're true blue, ah, yes, it's true.
Hooray for the Blue Water Beach Club:
Rub a dub dub, Rub a dub dub!

Dr. Bob Wissler

Written and read on his 82nd Birthday

"Owed to Thanksgiving '99"

We have so much to be thankful for,
So much to make our spirits soar!
First of all, it's our family
That's gathered here so happily.
Old folks still are raising cane
Or sprightly walking without pain.
Young folks who fill our lives with fun,
Who either can't walk or can only run.
And then the fine ones in between,
Offspring and grandkids from 50's to teens
They keep the ball rolling for us at extremes.
The ball moves so quickly, or so it seems.
Examples of how it rolls to enhance
Our lives so numerous; our spirits dance;
Like hosting this feast for us to enjoy,
Or raising a grandson who fathered a boy.
Or having granddaughters who fill our days
With love and laughter that truly amaze!
And then there are more blessings galore
That make us so thankful for so much more
Friends and neighbors at Montgomery Place
Friends at our church with its saving grace
Friends in Hyde Park where we've lived so long
Friends on the faculty so able and strong

And then there is nature that we adore
Its gardens and flowers, trees and lake shore
To enjoy with my mate, the love of my life
The one I'm most thankful for, my wife!!!
This old-fashioned verse, as poor as it is
Can't be blamed on him or her or Ms.
It's just that our hearts are filled with thanksgiving
So we have to express our joy of living!

By Dr. Bob Wissler
(Husband, Dad, Granddad, and Great-granddad)

Happy 2000

'Tis the last Christmas of the nineteens
At least the calendar says it's so
And we celebrate like kings and queens
As our blessings make us glow
We send our greetings; good wishes too
We hope that 2000 brings you gladness
Always with a vivid, rosy hue along with very little sadness
And for our millennium days
For four generations our spirits soar
When we gather, our eyes they amaze!
We really couldn't ask for more.
So we close our Christmas verse
("Mercifully short," my good wife cries)
By wishing that your days immerse
You in blessings of enormous size.

The Birthday Boy's Party

March 1, 2000

In Switzerland where the Wisslers came from,
Down the Rhine, across the sea to Indiana they did come.
They brought the custom of putting on the party on one's own birthday
And that's the way we've done it ever since, exactly that way
Now the USA Wisslers made it more special in another way
By always having hickory nut cake on that special day.
Now, hickory nuts are hard to find in these recent years!
And one has to reach out to wonderful friends like the Werlings, dears!
They found an old man in their neighborhood
Who harvested hickory nuts and they were good!
So today we celebrate as much as my 83rd year
The helpfulness to which Bluewaterclubbers adhere.

The Problems of Getting from 82 to 83 2000

Fiddle dee dee, fiddle dee dee

When one's approaching 83, it's not one jump;

Spinal stenosis sends pains in leg and rump.

Finally the surgeon's knife took the pains away,

But nerve weakened my right leg, sad to say.

Everything else worked all right or so it seemed,

So for a while I couldn't walk; physiotherapy intervened.

Then to Blue Water, Betty and I came!

She with her bad back and I completely lame.

We settled in an apartment, lovely 123,

And I took to aquajogging, fiddle dee dee!

AM and PM I jogged the deep pool,

Starting with fifteen minutes, when warm or when cool!

Then working up to two times 30 that was my goal.

Endurance strengthened greatly, good for my heart and soul.

So when you have your next lamenectomy, dear,

Take the waters at "Blue Water" to gain strength of a steer!

To Will
on his 23rd birthday

Happy Birthday Dear Grandson Will,
Maybe soon you'll have had your fill,
Of travel round this spinning globe,
You may feel some pain in your frontal lobe
Of your cranium and you'll head for home,
Wearied for the moment of the urge to roam,
And then we'll shout "Hip Hooray" and celebrate
"Will is home!" "Will is home!" That's great!!
I too have loved my time in far off lands,
Frankly often free of life's mundane demands,
But then I found it wonderful to return,
To friends and family and then to learn
That the travel is broadening and often fun
There's nothing like family and home under the sun!
So we'll look forward to welcoming you back
To the USA from your little grass shack!
We hope you'll have many tales to tell
Of native mamas with their daughters to sell,
And foreign foods and foreign drinks,
Of times of elation and when the soul sinks
Anyway Will dear we are all ears,
To hear of your fun and to learn of your fears.
Maybe you'll put down on paper your time abroad?
And your book will bring fame and a loud applause
Or maybe you'll go on T.V. to be specific,
And organize tours to small islands in the Pacific!
Who can tell what will come of this interlude,
At least a new appreciation of good American food!
From Grandpa Bob!

"Beauty on the Beach"

November Notes

And now it is November
And easy to remember
Because that multicolored kite
Is such a very brilliant sight
It floats so high and good
In the beach-side cottonwood
Not beauty and the beast
It's beauty on the beach!
Now that all the leaves-are gone
Its stark boughs sigh and long
For something to enhance
Its bare branches at first glance –
And so that multi-colored kite
Seems to us to be "just right"
Will it dangle in the spring
In the tree-top on its string???



COLOPHON

Occasional Verse is a compilation of poems written by Dr. Robert W. Wissler over 25 years. They commemorate family, friends, colleagues, nature, and even atherosclerosis.

The idea for this book came from Robert's daughter, Mary Graham. It was produced by his granddaughter Leah Mayers, and his daughter Barbara Wissler Mayers provided additional editing advice.

This edition of 50 was printed on 100% cotton paper. The binding is a traditional Japanese four-hole Kangxi style, sewn with waxed linen thread. The original fonts and formats have been preserved.

