

Things in Motion ...

All things are in motion and nothing is at rest...you cannot go into the same (river) twice. --Heraclitus (540?-480?)B.C.

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MY GREATEST HERO

CERTAINLY IT IS NOT unusual for a son to view his father as a veritable superman. In my own case, I always thought of my father as being a kind of rock; one which withstood any calamity calmly and could always solve the knottiest problem in the easiest way. For over thirty years I went to him with my crises and he never turned me away, however I often discovered that when I had found the answer to my problem, that answer came not from my father, but from me; he was highly skilled in leading his children to find their own solutions and his standing in our family was a mantle he wore with confidence—his siblings and their kids sought his counsel, as did neighbors and his many friends, and when he left us at the age of seventy-two, his place was never taken by another.

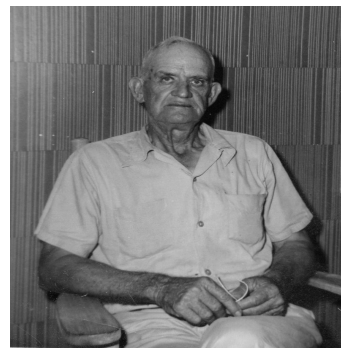
He began his life journey in 1891, the youngest of six children. His father, his grandfather, and several of his cousins were Confederate veterans who had been through the hell of war and tended to view life with a stern attitude. His early years were spent on the farm, where long days and little idleness were the rules of survival. Most of his ancestors were skilled in two trades, and by the

time he was considered grown, he was not only a farmer, he was a carpenter of note. As late as 1980, houses that he built were still occupied in several Georgia counties. He did not have the advantage of electricity and much of the lumber he used was rough cut.

His formal education consisted of seven grades of public school, followed by a year of study at Massey Business Schools in Montgomery, AL and Columbus, GA. That training was at the insistence of his father, who passed away in 1912, shortly after my father had graduated. It would be thirty years before his business training would be his sole means of support—but Grandpa was right to insist that he learn accounting.

Dad's first marriage lasted sixteen years. His wife became ill and subsequently died without her illness ever being diagnosed. He raised two children alone for four years, then met my mother. They were married in 1930 and I was born sixteen months later. My younger sister came along four years after me. Medical bills were often a part of our life, it seemed, but I never heard my father complain about that or anything else. He just took whatever came along and “kept on trucking” as the saying goes.

After surviving two heart attacks, he no longer had the strength to keep going, and on Halloween Day of 1963, the family gathered to say our last goodbyes. In summary, I consider his life to have been “a job well done” and I hope that my own will measure up.



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