

Forward to Digitalized *Just About Me/Just About Us*

Bertrand Kingsbury Wilbur (BKW) lived a long and fascinating life. Born into wealth and imbued with faith and the idea of service, his autobiography *Just About Me/Just About Us* provides a valuable window into the changing times of his life span, 1870-1945.

In 1898, BKW married Anna Dean (ADW), who lived from 1874 to 1952. He took his new bride to Sitka, Alaska, where he was serving as doctor to a mission school. This autobiography provides a priceless record of rapidly changing Alaska, 1894-1901.

BKW and ADW had ten children: Bertrand (Bert), Harry, Donald (Don), Elizabeth (Buddy), Nelson (Nick), Esther (Toni), Ross, Anna (Deanie), Ruth (Helena), and Virginia (Ginno). Toward the end of his life, BK's children urged him to write his memoirs, which he did in Haverford, PA, and La Jolla, CA, from 1933-1939, totaling nearly 900 typed pages. Copies were laboriously typed on onion skin paper and distributed to his children. BK made an abbreviated Table of Contents covering the first 572 pages.

In the late 1970s, my father Ross Wilbur circulated excerpts from *Just About Me*, copied from his xerox of onion skin pages. Early in the 1980s, Ross had his copy of *JAM/JAU* professionally bound. For easier readability, he separated the autobiography into three volumes and prepared a more detailed index for each volume. The index of the first volume overlaps with BK's own index. Volume I covers BK's boyhood and education as a physician; Volume II covers his time in Sitka; Volume III covers his life at the Wilbur Chocolate Factory, Lavalette, family servants, and scouting.

In May 2016, with my husband Roy Treadway, I visited Sitka to donate to the Sheldon Jackson Museum a cabinet door carved by Rudolph Walton, BK's best Tlingit friend. This door was a gift from Rudolph to newlyweds BKW and ADW for their new home, Raven's Nest, which was up the hill directly above the Museum. This door, which had been in my family since my childhood, was thus safely returned to its Tlingit home for perpetuity. While in Sitka, we were honored to meet some of Rudolph's descendants. Talking with them and with Museum curators made me realize how much others wanted to read BKW's autobiography also. Thus began my intense quest to make this valuable historical document available "to the world."

It has been quite a journey, through thick and thin, to complete this digitalized *JAM/JAU*. The end result is three volumes, indexed, with OCR (Optical Character Recognition) added. Standard computer tools such as Adobe Acrobat and Preview can be used for basic searches; more advanced tools can be used for additional searches. This autobiography has been preserved in its original form as much as possible.

I am grateful to my grandfather BKW who deeply shared his life with his children through the written word, and to ADW and their children for encouraging him to keep on writing about his life. I am also very grateful to my father Ross Wilbur who preserved this precious family history so carefully and passed on to me not only the cherished volumes of BKW's life story, but the love of learning family history and preserving it for future generations as well.

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