

# FOREWORD

*Memory is a crazy woman that hoards colored rags and throws away food.*  
— Austin O'Malley

**H**ow accurate can the memoirs of a 94-year-old man be? Those of us who knew this man knew the pride he took in his mental acuity and his memory for detail. Indeed, these memoirs tend to overwhelm the reader with details. However, memory can be selective and inventive.

Mr. Allan Duane, my writing instructor, once wrote to me, "...after all, how much of any personal history is truly fact? People remember and recall things from memory, but we all know this to be as much fiction as it is fact." I thought at the time, "Ah, but *he* didn't know *Grandpa!*"

However, as the publishing of this book has occupied my life during the past few years, I have discovered what Allan meant. Looking at old photos and discussing events with others, I experienced some confusion. I was more or less forced to acknowledge that my own recollections are blurred and all I have left in my memory are the *impressions* made on me by experiences, places, people, and things. I have come to accept the fact that memories are not photographically precise.

According to Uncle Chet, Grandpa's memories are not all accurate either. (See footnotes in Part I.) Based on this experience of mine, I confess that I must agree. Nevertheless, these memoirs are a window into a world we will never know. Let's read them with open eyes, doubting where we feel we should, but trusting that we are seeing his world the way he saw it as he wrote it – looking back.

S.N.  
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