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Perhaps like many of the members of our class, my “world line” through the past twenty-five years could hardly have been anticipated. The briefest summary: drafted (number three in the first draft lottery) in late 1969; Army duty for twenty months in New Jersey, Texas, and Kansas (including a ten-month stretch learning Vietnamese), during which service I began to explore the Rocky Mountain West; an enjoyable, but brief, return to Yale to work for Professor Bill Kessen; graduate school in Colorado, and more explorations; a return to my home in Baltimore, in part for family reasons, but mostly to take stock (aided immeasurably by a 600 mile hike on the Appalachian Trail from Massachusetts to Maine); a one-year period working for the federal government in flood hazards, interrupted (with incredible brass!) for a trek down the Pacific Crest Trail through Washington and an extended visit to Yosemite; working in the Washington, D.C., area for an international environmental consulting firm on everything from nuclear power plant siting studies to municipal landfills; a month-long trek on the Oregon portion of the Pacific Crest Trail with my wife- to-be in 1978; a wonderful adventure north of the Arctic Circle in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge in 1979, involving a 400-mile traverse of the Brooks Range in a two-person exploration of my own design; moving to Seattle in 1979, driven in no small part by a keen desire to be closer to mountain wilderness areas; and finally taking root in Seattle, establishing a family, a career (independent environmental consultant since 1987), and a personal backyard that extends throughout the Cascade Range.

I suspect that few of my classmates shared my Army experiences, and even fewer ended up being drafted. Being drafted in the first place is an example of one of those bifurcations (chaos theory indeed!) that sets life off in another direction entirely; being spared the Vietnamese tour of duty by Nixon’s Viet- namization policy, and by literally pulling a name out of a hat in a lottery to get an assignment in Kansas, is but another example. Detailed “war stories” will have to await a more leisurely forum. My usual summary comment on being in the Army is that, in retrospect, it exposed me to a part of American life that would have been invisible otherwise, and taught me a great deal. At the same time, I freely admit that the fatalism and passivity of that period continue to affect me.

When I was growing up in Baltimore, on the flat and congested coastal plain, I had an unexplained fascination with the American West. Reading books on the life of Kit Carson, other early explorers, and travelers on the Santa Fe and Oregon Trails is among my fondest early memories. At Yale, I found my way into Howard Lamar’s class on the American West (“Reds and Feds” as it was sometimes known) as a guilty pleasure set quite apart, I thought, from my more formal academic program. It turned out to be more central to my subsequent work than I could ever have imagined. I first saw a piece of the West working in the summer of 1968 near Mount Rainier in Washington State, thanks to the kindness of an older Yale graduate named Hugh Brady who helped arrange a job with the U.S. Forest Service. I have ever since been drawn to mountains and blank spaces on maps. My explorations have taken me from the benevolent Sleeping Giant in Connecticut to unvisited corners of the Brooks Range in Alaska, but have barely scratched the surface of what I hope to see. My adventures of late have unfortunately been of the armchair variety. I am summoning courage for knee surgery this year in the hopes of an early return to the mountains. This growing-old stuff takes some getting used to. Many of my happiest times have been spent wandering in the high country like some kind of a latter day Muir.

I met my wife Robin in 1974. We have two beautiful children, Rachel (six) and Lauren (one), who are allowing us to relive the pleasures of youth while still holding down day jobs. Actually, I think we are part of a grand experiment (one shared by a sizable portion of our generation who stayed busy with other activities) in raising children when we are between the ages of forty and sixty-five rather than, say, twenty-five to fifty. Surely there will be a host of studies of this phenomenon and its effects on the next generation. From time to time I do find myself thinking of my old roommate, Jan Louis R., whose oldest son has by now probably finished a Ph.D.! No doubt our views of the past twenty- five years (or, especially, the next twenty-five) would differ in substantial ways. I remember with great affection the many kindnesses of Jan and his wife Barb from our time at Yale.

Robin is an occupational therapist with a specialty in the feeding and swallowing disorders of infants. She has recently coauthored the definitive clinical practice book in that area and is in much demand as a speaker, traveling nationally to give seminars. She also is active in lecturing at the University of Washington, serving on thesis committees, and providing clinical training. Since moving to Seattle, I have focused my environmental consulting work in studies of chemically contaminated sites, especially in the areas of risk assessment and developing site cleanup criteria. The scientific basis for many of the decisions being made is less than formidable; a real challenge facing the field is development of better scientific methods. As is true of so many other fields where much is at stake, the investigation and cleanup of contaminated sites has become very litigious. To my knowledge, I have not yet been deposed by a fellow member of the Class of 1969, although the opportunities are growing!

A few random observations in closing. This seems in many ways a particularly unsettled time to attempt a summing up. Much of the past twenty-five years appears to have been about collecting things; there is still much sorting out to be done. If we are privileged to have emerged “victorious” from the (First?) Cold War, we nonetheless seem as a society to be exhausted by the victory and to have developed a hard and fractious edge. Rereading my father’s journals from his days in the Army Air Corps during the Second World War, only a few years before I was to appear on the scene, gave me a new appreciation as a son of the undisclosed deeds of my parents. How will our children look back on our stewardship of the natural and political world they are to inherit? I wonder about our ability to keep up with the furious pace of change that I suspect is upon us, and to avoid a fragmentation into separate enclaves. When even the wilderness areas have a permit system for entry, there can be no escaping the need to turn, face each other, and make our peace.