

Mein Kampf (My Struggle)

Autobiography by Randall Bruce Murrow, 26 Feb 1964
(*Spring semester of junior year in Dacoma High School*)

Earlier Years

On the day of May 13, 1947, in a maternity ward, in a hospital, in the medium-sized town of Alva, Oklahoma, a child was born. This child was not much different from many others that were born. He weighed nine pounds ten and one-half ounces and was, fortunately, a boy. After a few days he was transferred to the home of his parents sixteen miles south in the small town of Dacoma where his momentous journey of life began. I know, because I was that child.

Probably my first major accomplishment was talking, which I learned between the ages of one and two years. I loved to talk on the telephone and would simply tell the operator that I wanted my "momma" or "my grand-ma." Needless to say, I was always connected with whomever I wanted.

Another art which I acquired soon after learning to walk was the art of "roaming." I was always a sort of "outdoors-man" and many were the times that I'd toddle up to "Grand-ma's" house in my small T-shirt and diapers.

As a "toddler" I did some out-of-state traveling too. I went several times with my grandparents to Missouri, and would describe "Me-mels" (windmills), "Ewy-ewy-ells" (oil wells), and other interesting things as the car rolled along. In Missouri we'd visit my Great Aunt and my Great Grandparents. I was the only one of her fifteen great grandchildren that my Great Grandmother ever saw while she was alive. I can still remember how she liked to cook on a wood stove and how I loved to eat "Bumatas" (tomatoes) in her garden.

Of course, like any small tad, I occasionally had "accidents" and I'll never forget the day that the whole town searched frantically for me after one of those "accidents" while I hid in an old car, near Ray Morse's garage.

My favorite haunt was my Grand-pa's grocery store where I and my ever-present companion, Friskey, spent many happy hours together. I ate candy and drank pop and she ate meat scraps and chewed on bones for, you see, Friskey was my dog.

I can also remember the old Church of God which stood on the corner west of the store. We had Sunday School in the basement and my first Sunday School teacher was Gladys Smith.

I first attended public school in the old red-brick building in the room which is now the typing room [the southeastern room on the first floor of the old school building]. I can still recall how we used to line up to march into our classes and how at noon and recess

we'd "turn, rise, and pass." It was during the first few weeks of school, that I encountered one of my life's most memorable experiences. One day during the morning recess, a group of us were playing on the merry-go-round just south of the building. I, along with several other boys, was in the middle doing the pushing when my pantleg became entangled on a bolt and I was literally "wrapped" around the center pole of the merry-go-round.

I can remember how the kids all crowded around as Leonard [Leonard Murrow, the school custodian] pulled me out from under the iron monster that had broken my leg. I spent nearly a month in the hospital and another two and a half months at home in a cast which made me immovable from the waist down. However, I was kept well-informed during my absence from school. Almost every evening Mrs. McCray would come by the house and help me with my lessons and tell me how my friends were getting along at school. I received hundreds of cards which I still have and also many flowers, toys, and other gifts. On Halloween, my classmates in the first and second grades put on their costumes and paid me a surprise visit at my home. Eventually, though, I went back to school in a wheel chair and then, later, on crutches. Needless to say, it was an experience I shall never forget.

But not all of school was hardships, there have been many pleasant experiences, too.

In the first and second grades I can recall parties, Easter-egg hunts and train trips to Avard. I can still remember the games we used to play on the playground. Terry Budy was always the "captain of the Texas Rangers" and Marilyn Mae Bland was the "leader of the Indians." In the winter there were snowball fights and snow-forts. In the spring and fall there were games like Red Rover, Blackman, and Cowboys and Indians. One outstanding memory is the many Christmas operettas that we put on. Once, as Santa Claus, I started to come through the chimney and ripped off my beard with my knee.

I can also recall my teachers in the earlier grades. First there was Mrs. [Avis] McCray, then Mrs. [Katherine] Leslie, and Miss [Evelyn] Nusser. I will always remember these teachers and the help they gave me.

The "In-Between" Years

The "in-between" years began the year that I entered the sixth grade. Our teacher was Ray Haltom, a newcomer to the school staff.

I can recall many activities in these particular years. I went to stock shows and judging trips and went to serve as a page in the State Legislature after my grandfather's election to the House of Representatives. I went on many Boy Scout trips, but the one I especially remember was a hike down Lake Creek and Eagle Chief to the Carmen highway. Those along were Dale Ross, Frank and Bill Hickman, Newton Baker, Larry Long, Danny Rolfe, Skippy Polson, and our Scoutmaster, Rev. Marvin Polson. It was the longest hike I've ever taken and to top it off we ran out of water and I raked a wasp nest off on my back.

I can also recall the most enjoyable class party I ever went on. It was in the sixth grade and Haltom was our sponsor. We went to Cleo Springs in the back of a truck owned by Mr. Merlin Budy. On the way home it began to pour down rain, and after the truck got stuck cross-ways in the road, the soaked occupants took refuge at Glenn Baker's house until our parents arrived to rescue us.

Many other things took place during these years, but one thing stands out to me as the greatest. On August 12, 1961, I gave my heart to Jesus Christ and accepted him as my personal savior. I'll never forget that revival and the thrill of seeing many of my friends saved. Since that time I've had troubles and failures and have felt many times like giving up, but just lately I am beginning to realize that the things of the world aren't so great after all. [Mrs. Zelma Snyder, Randy's teacher for this assignment, added this comment - "You will realize this more and more as time goes on, Randy."]

Teen-ager

One of my first memories as a teenager is that of my eighth grade graduation. We were all pretty proud as we marched down the aisle that night. But that night was more than pride. It was the beginning of one of life's greatest journeys, highschool.

Some of the best memories of life are woven into these past three years; memories such as freshman initiation, ball games, stock shows, judging contests, working in the concession stand and selling magazine subscriptions; memories of writing themes, putting on plays and racing to lunch.

But the greatest memories of life are found in friends. I am thankful for many things but I am most thankful for my friends; old friends like Dale, Terry and Newton; new friends like Terry Doty; grown-up friends like teachers, relatives, and friends of my parents or grandparents; and, of course, the greatest friend of all, Jesus Christ, and it is with His help that life can be sweet and it is with His help that the future will be brighter.