

C1.2 Introduction

1.0 Preface

I was born on a farm near Tecumseh in southeastern Michigan in 1905 in the Horse and Buggy Age and I expect that it will end in the Nuclear Age in central Florida. My story covers many subjects, seemingly at random and some subjects cover very short periods of my life. It has been impossible to write a connected story. Part I of my story deals with the History of the Families involved in my Ancestry, Part II deals with my professional experiences, and Part III deals with the life on farms in Southern Michigan in the early part of the Twentieth Century.

My parents, Henry McLain and Mary Helena Elliot, and had four sons, of which I was the youngest. My parents told me that I was sick most of the first summer of my life and for months, they did not expect me to live. In any event, I was named Henry Stuart McLain but I was always called Stuart due to confusion with my Father's name. My High School Diploma reads, "Henry Stuart McLain." So when I entered the University of Michigan, I stated that I "never" had a middle name. Since then, I have never used any name except Stuart McLain. I never had the name changed legally - and I never have been challenged about the name.

Even before I entered the University, I became interested in Chemical Engineering. I had planned to work in the Petroleum Industry, but due to the "Great Depression" that began in 1929, I had to change. So I worked in the Rubber Industry, taught Chemical Engineering, was an officer in the Army during World War II, and after the War, worked in the Nuclear Engineering area and taught the subject.

I married Winifred Roberta Denman whose father, Robert Denman, was a country doctor in Helmer, Indiana. Winifred had been my High School Teacher in Latin or "Virgil's Aeneid" in Tecumseh. So when we met later at the University of Michigan, over three years later, we were well acquainted. Winnie had returned to Ann Arbor where she was a Sophomore in the School of Nursing while I was a Senior in Chemical Engineering. Since I had been out of School for over a year and I had started School a year later than most children, there was about half the difference in Winifred's and my ages than the estimate of some of the ladies that knew both of us had calculated.

I cannot conceive of a more wonderful wife than Winifred. She died of cancer the morning after our Fiftieth Anniversary. Burial was in the "McLain Cemetery", near Tecumseh. We had two children, Neal and Douglas, both of whom are married with two children each.

My experiences can be summarized as follows:

Education: Ph.D., University of Michigan, Chemical Engineer, 1933

Construction: Concrete - construction of concrete storage bins for gravel washing plant. Operated concrete mixer during part of construction period and I was night foremen during part of construction period (I was still in high school but was older than the others in my class).

Carpenter: Acted as carpenter on construction of heavy timber construction for a gravel-washing plant superstructure.

Rubber: Tire Test Division for a few months; then for two years wrote all the Tire Development Test Reports for U.S. Rubber Products Inc at Detroit (1933-1936).

Teaching: Taught Chemical Engineering with positions of Assistant to Full Professor at the Universities of Detroit, Arkansas, and Wayne State. (1936-1941 and 1945-1948)

Presented Special Lectures to Argonne National Laboratory employees (copies of these Lectures were distributed all over the World as the basic information on Nuclear Power Plant Design.)

Purdue University: I was listed as a Professor of Nuclear Engineering from about 1960 until retirement in 1968.

Northwestern University: I taught Saturday Classes in Nuclear Energy at Northwestern for three years.

Committees: ASME Special Committee on Nuclear Power; several AEC Committees.

Professional (in Nuclear Energy) Associate Director of Reactor Development Division at Oak Ridge; Associate Director of Argonne National laboratory; Assistant Director of Reactor Development Division of the Atomic Energy Commission with a dual appointment in the Division of Production - as such I was responsible for increased production at Hanford and Savannah River. The production at Hanford was never the same again.

I was Chairman of the Steering Committee for the Materials Testing Reactor.

I was in charge of the only bad Nuclear Accident that has occurred to date in the United States - at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in 1948. We developed the cleanup procedures on an "ad hoc" basis.

I organized along with others California Nuclear Inc and we opened the Low

Level Waste Disposal Sites in Illinois and Hanford. Later I was on the Board of Nuclear Engineering Company and visited the Beatty Nevada and the Morehead Kentucky Sites.

Army: I was in Command of the Main Front at Aberdeen Proving Ground during World War II and later I was Director of the Arms and Ammunition Division.

Consulting: I have done Consulting for over 40 American Companies and in five foreign Countries, one was non-Nuclear.

Lectures: I have lectured on Nuclear Power for periods up to months in Argentina, India, and Spain.

I have had several honors in my life but the most important was that I was asked by the Director of the Argonne National Laboratory, Dr. Walter Zinn, to announce publically that Breeding of Nuclear Fuels had been demonstrated.