

The following is Clark's autobiography written when he was 14 as part of 9th grade English. (I had a lot of help from my mother.)

11/2/58 Mr. Davis English Orientation.

THE BEGINNING OF CLARK

At Murphy Hospital in Whittier about 10:00 o'clock at night August 29, 1944 my mother was bearing a child. She had always wanted a girl. A girl, to her, would be a dream come true, but as always a big, fat, indefatigable, boy of 10 pounds 2 ounces arrived. It was I! The fourth in a line of boys. If I had been a girl, La Jolla Belle would have been my name, or as my older brother puts it "la jolly belly." Oh well, I am a lucky boy with three brothers.

I guess I grew like a normal kid slobbered, cried, got spanked, like any other growing mass of cells.

My first trip was to see my new cousin who had just been born. My mother dressed me up in a little wool suit, and gave me a generous feeding of orange juice. When we left the Hospital, I was all broken out. That's when they found out that I had allergy. So since then I have had to watch my diet, clothing, bedding, stay out of dust and swimming pools, and not touch pets, such as cats or dogs.

My oldest brother passed away from rheumatic heart disease when I was 17 months old. I have always looked very much like him, and my parents felt I was a replacement. He must have felt that way too for he would never help care for me. My first word was "Raywood," which was his name. I went to his funeral where "Little Mary" took care of me. "Little Mary" is a girl who lived with us for several years and was like a sister.

My mother has told me all the things up to here. Now the light is dawning. One time I remember that I was supposed to be taking a nap but I wanted to play. So I proceeded to take some lipstick and rub it all over the crib and I got almost all the handkerchiefs out and threw them all-over the room. Then I heard my mother coming up the stairs; so I ducked under the covers and pretended I was asleep, but it didn't work. My mother gave me an impression I never forgot.

I remember one of my baby friends, Jill Hoyle, a girl who lived in our trailer park. She is three days older than I am and it seems that I always played with her. My mother tells me that we always had birthday parties together. At my

fifth birthday party, I was given a Hopalong Cassidy outfit complete with guns and tooled leather holsters. I was the scourge of the west. I didn't want to start to school for I wanted to play Hopalong Cassidy. But my mother convinced me that school would be fun and I still think she was right. At school I was fascinated by a pretty blond girl named Joyce and always made a play for her. Jill became jealous, but she moved to another school and we have remained platonic friends.

Some people in the Trailer Park were very good friends of mine. The Dillers were my favorite. They would give me candy, let me look at colored slides of their trips through their viewer. But what I liked best was that Mr. Diller fixed my toys. Once a man teased me by threatening to cut off my ear. I said, "Go ahead and cut it off, Diller will fix it." Other good friends were Mr. and Mrs. Ash and their dog "Teddy." I would walk Teddy around the block every day, and feed him dog candy. He would always bark when I came to see them. He was "My Dog." Long after they had moved they told me, that they would say "Clark's coming," and Teddy would run to the door and start barking.

The summer before my sixth birthday was a memorable one, for I had my first airplane trip. My brother Kern was attending college at Southwest Missouri State College in Springfield and living with our grandparents. So my mother and I flew by American airlines to Springfield and returned by car with Kern. I was scared at first, but after the plane leveled off at 20,000 feet I enjoyed it very much. While at grandma's I had the measles but when I recovered we drove around Missouri visiting relatives I had never seen before.

On one trip we saw several terrapins crossing the warm pavement. Finally my grandpa stopped and let me pick up a small one. I was delighted with this new pet and persuaded my brother to let me bring it with me to California. I named it Myrtle the Turtle and have enjoyed this pet of my very own. Myrtle is still alive and healthy and seems to thrive in our southern climate.

On our return trip to California by car we were accompanied by a college exchange student from Germany, who was a friend of my brother. He kept taking pictures along the way and exclaiming, "So this is the wide open spaces." We stopped at the Grand Canyon in Arizona but I will confess I was more interested in the chipmunks than the grandeur of the view. The colors were very beautiful though.

The measles, which I had in Missouri, were the preliminary to many of the

common children's diseases, which were to befall me during the next year. I was a pale, frail looking boy and my dad began teaching me to turn cartwheels and hand springs to develop my body.

11/9/58 SCHOOL DAYS Chapter II

On my seventh birthday I had a gay party, with twelve people attending. My mother arranged with a pony concession for me and my guests to ride the ponies all afternoon. For once we all got enough horseback riding. Then we went to Montebello Park where we had the usual refreshments of cake and ice cream.

I don't remember much about the first grade at school, but I do remember having an old black rag, which had been a lining from an old window drape. This rag was a cape, a parachute, Superman's wings, a Lone Ranger mask, a play tent, a blanket and, most of all, a cozy wrap while watching television. My, but, that was a good old rag!

I enjoyed the second grade at school and received my first perfect attendance certificate for that year. I began to really like school and still do.

During the next year I joined the cub scouts at the invitation of Mrs. Mudry, den mother, and now librarian at Pico Library. I especially wanted the uniform and liked that den because the boys were not boisterous. I worked hard in cub scouting and earned many badges, which were sewn on a felt wall hanging for me when I became a webelo. I enjoyed the trips to the snow and to the big scout circus at the Coliseum.

The following summer mother, dad, and I took a trailer trip through California. First we drove to Santa Barbara and then up the coast highway to Pismo Beach, where we turned inland towards Sacramento. From there we went with some relatives on a few days, camping trip to Calaveras Big Trees State Park. Then we went on up through Redding and by Mt. Shasta to Doris, California, where we visited my mothers aunt and her husband, my dads first cousin. (Figure that one out, if you can!) After leaving there we came south across the Golden Gate Bridge to San Francisco. This is a city with many steep hills, and we had a frightening experience of our car stalling and rolling backwards, but no damage done. On our return we went through the Capitol at Sacramento. I was afraid to ride in the automatic elevator with just my mother. So I ran down seven flights of stairs. This caused the annoying boil, which I had on my knee, to become

much worse, and we came straight home to see our doctor. This trip made my fourth grade study of California much more interesting, and I liked my teacher, Mrs. Pomeroy, very much. She was the only teacher that I have had who let me do arithmetic as fast as I could. When the end of that year came I hated to leave her class.

On December 6, 1953, there was a wedding in our family. My brother, Kern, married June Ann Lusby, and I was the ring bearer. Although nervous, I felt quite exhilarated. It was a big church wedding, and over 200 attended the reception at our house. I missed my first piano recital because of this wedding. My mother had purchased a beautiful grand piano the year before, and I had been elected to learn to play it. For the most part I was a willing victim, but she made me practice very hard. I won several prizes at recitals during the next three years.

When I was in the fifth grade I was excused from school for about six weeks to go on a trip with my parents in our new air-conditioned Cadillac. We went to San Antonio, Texas, to visit Kern who was serving in the army there. He and June Ann went with us to Laredo and across the Rio Grande into old Mexico. While visiting a cousin near Houston, I shot a gun for the first time. We went to New Orleans where I embarrassed my relatives by insisting on having a hamburger at a very famous restaurant in the French Quarters. From there we drove to Springfield, Missouri, and helped my grandparents celebrate their golden wedding anniversary, and to Davenport, Iowa where I met some more relatives for the first time, but was more interested in the snow falling. I was so glad to get home and to start to school again. I won first place in the Americanism essay contest of the local American Legion Auxiliary that spring. Easter of that year I made a decision to live for Christ, and Mother, Dad and I joined the First Baptist Church of Pico and were baptized.

I believe I enjoyed school in the sixth grade most of any so far, and I liked Mrs. Eshelman the best of all the teachers I have had. She was nice, considerate, pretty, young, and popular with everyone. She gave a special class in French for some of us, and taught us all to dance the bop step. I'll never forget the luau we had that year. We had a school newspaper, the "Ranchito Gazette" and I was editor-in-chief.

I spent only three days in the seventh grade at Mary E. Meller School. I was fortunate to get to take a seven-month trailer trip around the United States. I attended school in Missouri and in Florida which enabled me to complete the

seventh grade. I had a Negro mathematics teacher in Missouri, which was quite an experience. My school in Fort Myers, Florida, consisted of nineteen seventh grade classes.

When we returned home, we began planning another wedding, for brother, Ben, was getting married. Judy Nicolson became my new sister-in-law on August 24, 1957. In this wedding I was a Junior Usher. I felt real good about, this marriage because it made me the only boy living at home. That summer I started to play the baritone horn upon the advice and help of my two brothers, both of whom had played the sousaphone. Mr. Turvosky, who directs the Ranchito band, was very helpful, and by taking summer band I have been able to make the El Rancho Band. I studied hard in the eighth grade and was classroom president for one month. When graduation time came and I lined up with the other band members to receive my diploma, I felt very thrilled and anxiously looked forward to attending El Rancho High School.

11/26/58 THE TRIP

On September 20, 1956, Mother, Dad and I started on a long anticipated trailer trip through the United States. I believe this trip made the greatest change in my life's outlook than any other single thing.

We pulled our sixteen-foot Ideal Trailer with our air-conditioned Cadillac and were quite comfortable at all times. During the first ten days we toured California, Nevada, Arizona, Utah, and Montana. We visited Hoover Dam, Bryce and Zion national Parks and Salt Lake City. Then we went on to the Tetons and to Yellowstone National Park. I was disappointed with the fishing there for the weather was freezing cold. All the Lodges, except old Faithful, were closed and boarded up for the winter. The bears missed being fed by the summer tourists and were hungry. Two chased us for a mile or two after I threw them an apple.

We spent eight days in Billings, Montana, with my cousins, and I had a wonderful time. For the first time in my life I was free of my allergy, could breathe through my nose easily, eat chocolate and nuts, and play with my Cousins dog. From Montana we went to Black Hills National Park, which we enjoyed even more than Yellowstone. I especially remember the big gold mine there and the Bad Lands in South Dakota. Then we went to Denver, Colorado, for a weekend I'll never forget our drive to the top of Pike's Peak.

The next stop was Springfield, Missouri, at my grandparents home. We stayed

here for five weeks while my mother recovered from sciatica, and I attended Jarret Junior High School. We visited many relatives and enjoyed a big Thanksgiving at grandmas.

The next day we left for Florida. We went through Arkansas, Tennessee, and Alabama and Tallahassee, Florida. Since the weather was still cold, we kept traveling until we reached Tropical Trailer Park at Ft. Myers on the western coast of Florida. This was our home until March 7, 1957. I enrolled in school, and life settled into a routine of leisure. Dad drove me to school in the car, after school we played shuffleboard, and in the evening we played Canasta. On weekends and holidays, we went sight seeing or fishing. When the Christmas holidays came, we pulled up stakes and drove the Tamiami Trail to Miami. We toured the eastern coast of Florida up to Rivera and Palm Beach and drove to the tip of Key West. We visited a Parrot Jungle, which had many varieties of colorful parrots and talking birds as well as the famous pink-flamingoes. The millions of birds wintering at Everglades National Park, especially the cranes and herons, were quite a sight also. We returned to Ft. Myers after the holidays, and I continued in school until March.

When the weather became warmer, we continued our trip northward. We visited many interesting places such as Cypress Gardens, Silver Springs, the Mothball fleet in St. Petersburg, Charleston, South Carolina, Raleigh, North Carolina, and Richmond, Virginia. We spent ten days in Virginia and visited Monticello, which was Jefferson's home, Mount Vernon, which was Washington's home, and Williamsburg, which is the restored colonial capitol.

We spent two weeks in Washington D.C. during cherry blossom time. I even went fishing in the Potomac. We went on many sightseeing trips and were amazed at the immense size and the large number of huge buildings and monuments there. There were five flights of stairs to the foot of both Jefferson and Lincoln Statues. We were dinner guests at the home of our Congressman, Chet Hollifield, and luncheon guests of Congressman Ed Rees at the House restaurant.

We arrived in New York City the day before Easter and attended church at the famous Riverside Church. Afterwards, we took a boat out to the Statue of Liberty and climbed to the top of it and looked out through the crown to see the New York skyline. I enjoyed the United Nations Building and listened to a conference over earphones, which could be dialed to bring in Russian, French, Chinese or English languages. My mother and I took a subway ride and visited

the Stock Exchange and Rockefeller Center. We went to Long Island where we were guests of Dr: Thomas, another cousin.

By this time, we were all longing for home; so we headed our trailer over the Pennsylvania Turnpike through West Virginia, Ohio, and Illinois and back to grandmas. After resting a few days there, we returned to California over Highway 66. We arrived May 7, 1957, and California never looked better.

11/17/58 WHAT KEEPS ME GOING Chapter III

I live in a big white house of Mediterranean style architecture that has eighteen rooms. Part of these rooms are made into apartment rentals. The house is located in the center of an island of trailers, which is formed by three streets: Rosemead Boulevard, Whittier Boulevard, and San Gabriel Place. My own room is small and furnished with a bed, desk, and wardrobe or closet. Although it is small I have a rumpus room in the basement and another workshop room adjoining, where I keep my radio and electronic equipment. Since my brothers are married, the family living here consists of mother, dad and me.

All the members of my family help me in some way, even my brother who died. I inherited his stamp collection and have added to it to make it more valuable. My mother is also interested and we specialize in United States commemoratives and plate number blocks. At present neither of us have much time to work on our collection, but we keep saving the stamps anyway.

Kern, age 29, has always been a big, big brother to me and I admire him for his ability to make things. He has remodeled several rooms of our house, including mine. He has also painted our big house three times and sandblasted it once. He can build almost anything, and builds radio controlled model airplanes as a hobby. I like his wife, June Ann, because she likes to do things with boys such as flying model airplanes, painting, etc. Kern and June Ann have a sweet, five month old baby boy, named Sherwood James. We call him, Jimmy, but I don't have much to do with him.

My other brother, Ben, is 22 years old and the handsome one of the family, I have learned from him how to select the right kind of clothes to wear. We have had many squabbles and it seems as though he has always picked on me. The usual excuse was that I was hurting his pet cat, Fluffy. For a while I seemed to have four bosses, Ben, Kern, dad and mother. I like Ben's wife, Judy, because she dances with me and helps with my etiquette problems. She is only 5 years

older than I, and not as big as I am. A few nights ago Ben and Judy came to see us and after talking a while and watching TV, Ben said quite calmly, "We're going to have an addition to the family about next June." I guess that proves that $1+1=3$.

My dad is very active in community affairs. He is a member of Rotary, a director of the Bank of PicoRivera, a trustee of the First Baptist Church of Pico, a commissioner on Parks and Recreation for our city, and a member of El Rancho Masonic Lodge. My dad and I have very good relations with each other, and he gives me a generous allowance for helping with the work around the trailer park. We have enjoyed many fishing trips together. Both he and my mother have been teachers in high schools and can help me with homework, but I usually ask Mom for help.

Mom is the busiest one of the family. She is not only an active church worker and a member of the Pio Pico Woman's Club, but also is president of Thirty-Third District, California Congress of Parents and Teachers. She has an office and a secretary and is away from home a lot, but she enjoys doing things in P.T.A. She looks after my clothes and has taught me to cook, to take care of my room, and to be responsible for myself.

Here's a funny coincidence: The names of all the women in our family start with "J", my mother, Jewell, and sisters-in-law, June Ann and Judy. So everyone tells me I have to find a girl whose name starts with "J" for my life's mate. My girl friends have been Jill, Joyce, and Jane. So that should be very simple for Clark Jay.

11/26/58 THE RESULT Chapter IV

I am an average sized boy, five feet five inches tall and weigh 186 pounds. I am a blond and have light blue-green eyes. I am not good looking or handsome, but I'm not a muscle-bound gawk either. (You should see me turn cartwheels.)

My favorite occupation has changed from time to time. It used to be stamp collecting and then making things with my erector set. Now my favorite pastime is electronics. I like to fiddle with transistors, old radios and put together electronic kits. I have made a mechanical man, a walkie-talkie and a miniature two transistor radio. I also like all sports, especially football and basketball. I would like to go out for sports this year, but since I am in band and hope to

make good grades, I just couldn't do it.

I like El Rancho High School very much and have looked forward to coming here. I felt rather confused at first, but after a week, I began to know my way around and to see many familiar faces. After all, it is not much different from Mary E. Meller School except the size, the changing of classes at each period, and more competition for an "A" grade. Two month's participation in the activities at El Rancho has made me feel very much at home and my association with new friends has been enjoyable.

Band helped me to catch the school spirit quickly. The Band works furiously on the half-time show for each week's game. I practiced on my horn, marched, and marched, and yelled until I was ready to drop. I became so hoarse I could whisper. The following Monday there was a new show to work on with never a dull moment, which is why I like Band.

I am also a member of the Radio Club. This group is planning a stereo show for the public next spring. At club meetings the members present programs, and there are various groups who study amateur radio operating, code practice, and stereo phonics. This club fits in very well with my hobby.

My favorite subject is Algebra, not because of the mere fact that it is the study of figures, but because it is an exact science. In Algebra, a problem has to have a certain answer, whereas in English, one word can be several different parts of speech. I have always made my best grades in mathematics. Band is also a favorite subject, for I enjoy all kinds of music. Band is a class where I can play my horn for semi-enjoyment.

I like to be around people who behave themselves and are not too "goody-goody". I don't like smart alecks or snobs. I enjoy being with boys and girls who have good clean fun and play tricks on each other now and then. I don't like a poor sport or one who pulls dirty tricks on people.

During last summer I read about twenty books, all of which were science fiction. I enjoy this type of book very much, but when I started high school, I learned that these were not good books for outside reading reports. Since then, I have been reading biographies, fiction, and historical novels and have found them engrossing.

My plans for the future are quite indefinite, except that I know I will attend

college when I graduate from high school. I don't know whether I want to be a mathematician, a doctor or to take up some other profession. I may want to go into business for myself as my dad has. After all, I am only fourteen years old and have a long life yet to live. What the future holds I do not know. "Que Sera, Sera!"