

## Thoughts at the 1989 Memorial Day Parade

I have just been to a Memorial Day parade in Wayne. Alone, there was time to think back over past Memorial Day parades. When a lone WWI veteran passed in a car, I said to a man sitting next to me on the Presbyterian church wall, "I've been watching these parades since there were Civil War veterans in the line." That brought my thoughts up to the Welcome Home parade for WWI soldiers, my brother among them; and then on to the pictures of Edward in his Navy uniform and the girls in their Brownie and Intermediate Girl Scout uniforms when Daddy came marching home after WWII .

Along came Connie Soto with the Brownie Troop, that was another phase in my life, walking with Troop 108 in Mount Joy. And the Girl Scouts, yes, I walked out of the job of Girl Scout Neighborhood Chairman when we moved to Wayne in 1954. I had barely time to think of that when along came the Cub Scouts. Oh, that was a very different kettle of fish, and we will pass over that quickly. I fear I was not at my best as a den mother. Wayne Scout Troop 312 moved along boys and leaders, OK, nothing outstanding. Then along came the elite Paoli 1. Everything spit and polish, perfect formation, excellent equipment, and a drum and bugle corps setting it off in style. My throat always tightens up at that marshal music.

Now team after team of Little Leaguers. I never got so involved with that. However, it was very much a part of Tom's growing up, here Dad took more interest and responsibility. Now the Radnor High School Band. For the three girls the school band shared a big part of their high school years. Our earliest 35 mm transparencies were of Tom in a stroller watching the "biggels" in their red M.J.H.S. uniforms. Then recalling Dilla's disgust when Radnor High School girls wore skirts for band uniforms; and when she first arrived in '54, girls did not march, they performed only in concert band. Could that be?

Veterans of Vietnam recalled another confused time in Tom's college years. A thoughtful, prayerful wrestling with patriotism and inner convictions. Now all the neighborhood organizations. Edward and I never did get too involved, perhaps because there was not the pressure as in a smaller community. Neighborhood League, AARP, Radnor Memorial Library - oh yes, for a while I was on the Board of the Friends of the Library. We both did take books to shut-ins and to Wayne Rehab in the summertime.

Last the Valley Forge Military Band, and no matter how pacifist may be one's inner feelings, there is always a certain thrill when the boys in uniform, colorful, neat, and precise in drill formation march to the roll of the drums. If only they did not have to shoulder a gun. The guns mounted on caissons, rolling along leave me cold. But again, I thrill and choke up at the band music. The VFMA has a fine band. Only a few mounted on horseback this year. I wish there had been more horses and less guns. But that is war and I feel sorry for these beautiful young boys being instilled with the technique of battle rather than peaceful diplomacy.