
VIEWS LETTER

Volume 20, Issue 1

AWD's Views, News & Other Things of Interest

September & October 2001

Tractor Driving

One thing all “farm boys” learn, at a proper time in life, is how to drive a tractor.

I remember when I was very small, one of my greatest pleasures when I came home from school was to find out that Dad was out on the tractor! I would change into my “work clothes” (you know, the jeans with the “too short” legs and the holey knees) and walk, or ride my bike out to the field. And, if everything worked out right, I got to sit between Pop’s legs and drive the tractor! He always enjoyed my being there! Well, at least it SEEMED so from the perspective of a boy...

Usually dad plowed with a plow called a “One-Way.” As the parallel discs continuously rolled the dirt all to the outside, a track was formed by the inside disc which became the track for the next plow swath. The track would lead the tractor round and round in ever-smaller

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Is The U.S. Betraying Our Bataan POWs?

Tears suddenly fill Lester Tenney’s eyes. “I’m sorry,” he says. “It’s been a long time, but it’s still very hard sometimes to talk about.” All I can do is nod dumbly. Words fail me as I listen to the horror he is describing.

On April 9, 1942, Tenney, a 21-year-old Illinois National Guardsman, was one of 12,000 American soldiers who surrendered to the Japanese at the tip of Bataan Peninsula, which juts into Manila Bay in the Philippines. Ill-equipped, ill-trained, disease-ridden, they had fought ferociously for nearly five months against overwhelming odds, with no possibility of help until they ran out of food, medical supplies and ammunition.

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Poor Camry

By Shelby Doudney Schnauzer Dog

Well, this has been one tough week on the boss and Linda. Linda took Camry to the veterinarian, and the prognosis wasn’t good. She is in no immediate danger, but is suffering some sort of stress syndrome.

We all knew that she was a little crazy for spending the entire duration of two major thunderstorms outside in the yard. She finally came in after each storm soaked through and through and shivering like she was about to freeze to death. I can’t believe her out there with all the lightning, thunder, wind and rain.

The boss spent two days with a chain saw just cleaning up the broken limbs from the trees and the yard. A storm did that much damage, and Camry was out there the whole time. Go figure!

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PHILOSOPHY

Recently I have been taking notice of various different philosophies. Although some have very strong arguments and seem to be very correct in many ways, there is only one truth. So, I am in a search of it.

Below is a copy of Chapter 5 in C. S. Lewis' book, Mere Christianity. I think Mr. Lewis is on the right track. Read what he has to say very slowly and carefully, and I think you might agree.

In the previous chapters of this book, Mr. Lewis defined "Moral Law." In order to bring you to a place that you can better understand what he is talking about, I have paraphrased a definition of "Moral Law," which is sometimes called "Natural Law."

This law indicates that we human beings have within our mind the knowledge of what is right and wrong. This knowledge is unlearned. We just know about fair play, unselfishness, courage, good faith, honesty, truthfulness and all the opposites to these abstract qualities. We don't have to be told that when someone is unfaithful that he is wrong. Or, when one robs another that he is wrong. We just know. This *knowing* that just *happens* is an indication to us that there is a Supreme Being that created all order in the universe. This *knowledge* arrives in our mind about the age when we become accountable for our actions. The age of accountability might be earlier than we think. We almost always see the wrongs in others before we realize them in ourselves, but we know them by nature. This *fact* is part of the truths that point to a higher authority—proof of a created order—created by design and not by accident or evolution.

~ AWD ~

WE HAVE CAUSE TO BE UNEASY

Chapter #5 of "MERE CHRISTIANITY"

By C. S. Lewis

I ENDED MY LAST CHAPTER with the idea that in the Moral Law somebody or something from beyond the material universe ↗

was actually getting at us. And I expect when I reached that point some of you felt a certain annoyance. You may even have thought that I had played a trick on you—that I had been carefully wrapping up to look like philosophy what turns out to be one more "religious jaw." You may have felt you were ready to listen to me as long as you thought I had anything new to say; but if it turns out to be only religion; well, the world has tried that and you cannot put the clock back. If anyone is feeling that way I should like to say three things to him.

First, as to putting the clock back. Would you think I was joking if I said that you can put a clock back, and that if the clock is wrong it is often a very sensible thing to do? But I would rather get away from the whole idea of clocks. We all want progress. But progress means getting nearer to the place where you want to be. And if you have taken a wrong turning, then to go forward does not get you any nearer. If you are on the wrong road, progress means doing an about-turn and walking back to the right road; and in that case the man who turns back soonest is the most progressive man. We have all seen this when doing arithmetic. When I have started a sum the wrong way, the sooner I admit this and go back and start over again, the faster I shall get on. There is nothing progressive about being pigheaded and refusing to admit a mistake. And I think if you look at the present state of the world, it is pretty plain that humanity has been making some big mistakes. We are on the wrong road. And if that is so, we must go back. Going back is the quickest way on.

Then, secondly, this has not yet turned exactly into a "religious jaw." We have not yet got as far as the God of any actual religion, still less the God of that particular religion called Christianity. We have only got as far as a **Somebody** or **Something** behind the Moral Law. We are not taking anything from the Bible or the Churches, we are trying to see what we can find out about this **Somebody** on our own steam. And I want to make it quite clear that what we find out on our own steam is something that

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TRACTOR DRIVING *Continued from page 1.*

circles until the entire field became fresh rolled dirt.

This track was easy for a young driver to follow. In fact, if the track was deep enough, the tractor would follow the track all by itself! But I didn't know that until I was older and driving by myself! I would sit between Daddy's legs and hold onto that steering wheel and keep my eyes focused on the track. My job, as a farmer, was to keep the tractor IN the track.

I can remember a time or two driving the old "Poppin' Johnny" getting out of the track to the right (into the plowed ground), and in the process of steering it back, I would correct too much! When the tire would get back to the sharp cut edge of the mark, the tire would cut into the harder dirt causing the wheels to turn "full left." When this happened, the tractor had a mind of its own! There was nothing a little guy could do to stop the spinning steering wheel. He just had to "let 'er go!" When the steering wheel would stop spinning, then he had to pull with all his might to get the tires turned back in the right direction! And, if all else failed, he had to STOP the tractor!

Well, I can remember thinking as I was steering down the track; "I can do this job all by myself... just as good as Dad!" Then it would happen! And I would be "too little in the britches"... and helpless! (That was because neither was I "big enough," nor had I been taught yet how to "stop" the tractor!) Dad had to take over and get me out of the jam. He would get the tractor back under control, then with a little hesitation let me take back over the steering. After that happened, I'm sure I would sit with my shoulders stooped for a little while because I was made aware, "I couldn't do it as good as Dad." In fact, I was, indeed, "too little in the britches!"

Well, this realization could only keep me down for a little while. "Maybe NEXT summer I would be strong enough to control the big machine! Maybe by next summer, I might even know how to start and stop that tractor all by myself! ↗

Driving a tractor, and even "just being in the field" with Dad was just a fun place to be! I remember times when I would haul some of my toy trucks and tractors out to the field so I could play with them in the soft dirt. I had a "Red Flyer" that worked very well for that task! I would tow that wagonload of toys out to the field, and right up to the last round Dad had plowed. That's where the dirt was the most moist, the softest, and smelled the best! (There's not another smell in the world like that of "fresh turned" soil!) Then I would unload my equipment and begin creating the most elaborate farm I could imagine in that soft dirt. I would make roads, scoop out areas that became giant lakes with imaginary water, and I would plow rows in my fields so I could plant the same wheat crop Daddy did in his big field! It was GRAND! I was sure that my farm (though on a much smaller scale) was one of the best farms in the whole state of Texas!

In the midst of it all, time in a dream passed slowly. Almost the entire world was somewhere else. The only world for me was the world of my little dream farm. Except... there was one part of the real world that I would NEVER let pass! That was the time Dad would make his round and come again by the corner where I was playing!

As the tractor approached, I would stand up nice and tall with my eyes glued to Dad's face. I watched for the time when he would get close enough for me to see his eyes if they met mine when glancing from the track to me.

"There! He looked up! Did he see me?"

I thought I should now raise my hand to make sure he noticed me. I waved. He looked up. "Yep! I know he saw me that time! He didn't wave back, but I know he saw me. Was that a grin on his face?"

As he neared the corner where I knew he would turn to follow that "never ending" track, my greatest hope was that he would stop the tractor and wave me to him. I never took my eyes off him! I waited for any sign that might

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POWs, Continued from page 1.

As prisoners of war, Tenney among them, they were taken to a prison camp by the Japanese army on what became infamous as the nine-day, 55-mile-long Bataan Death March, during which 1000 of them perished. The atrocities they suffered have to some extent been revealed. But what happened afterward—when they were forced into inhuman slave labor for some of Japan’s biggest corporations—remains largely unknown. These corporations, many of which have become global giants, include such familiar names as Mitsubishi, Mitsui, Kawasaki and Nippon Steel.

Through interviews with former POWs and examinations of government records and court documents, I learned that in 1999 Tenney had filed a lawsuit for reparations in a California state court. His suit was followed by a number of others by veterans who had suffered a similar fate. The Japanese corporations, instead of confronting their dark past, went into deep denial. Represented by American law firms, they maintained that, by treaty, they didn’t owe anybody anything—not even an apology.

Surprisingly, the U.S. Government stepped in on behalf of the Japanese and not only had these lawsuits moved to federal jurisdiction but also succeeded in getting them dismissed by Vaughn R. Walker, a federal judge in the Northern District of California. In his ruling, Judge Walker declared in essence that the fact that we had won the war was enough of a payoff. His exact words were: “The immeasurable bounty of life for themselves [the POWs] and their posterity in a free society services the debt.” In applauding the judge’s decision, an attorney for Nippon Steel was quoted as saying, “It’s definitely a correct ruling.” She did not dwell on what these men had gone through.

What befell Lester Tenney as a POW was by no means unique. He got an inkling of what was to come on that April day in 1942 when he surrendered and one of his captors smashed in his nose with the butt end of a rifle. Forced to stumble along a road of crushed rock and loose sand, the men—wracked with malaria, ↗

jaundice and dysentery—were given no water. Occasionally, they would pass a well. Anyone who paused to scoop up a handful of water was more likely than not bayoneted or shot to death. The same fate awaited most POWs who could no longer walk. “If you stopped,” Tenney recalls, “they killed you.”

As Tenney staggered forward, he saw a Japanese officer astride a horse, wielding a samurai sword and chortling as he tried, often successfully, to decapitate POWs. During a rare respite, one prisoner was so disoriented that he could not get up. A rifle butt knocked him senseless. Two of his fellow POWs were ordered to dig a shallow trench, put him in it and bury him while he was still alive. They refused. One of them immediately had his head blown off with a pistol shot. Two more POWs were then ordered to dig two trenches—one for the dead POW, the other for the original prisoner, who had begun to moan. Tenney heard him continue to moan as he was being covered with dirt.

Tenney was one of 500 POWs packed into a 50-by-50-foot hold of a Japan-bound freighter. The overhead hatches were kept closed except when buckets of rice and water were lowered twice daily. Each morning, four POWs were allowed topside to hoist up buckets of bodily wastes and the corpses of anyone who had died during the night, which were tossed overboard.

In Japan, the prisoners were sent to a coal mine about 35 miles from a city they had never heard of, called Nagasaki. The mine was owned by the Mitsui conglomerate, which is today one of the world’s biggest corporations. You see the truck containers it builds on every highway in America. The mine was so dangerous that Japanese miners refused to work in it.

The Geneva Convention of 1929 specified that the POWs of any nation “shall at all times be humanely treated and protected” and explicitly forbade forced labor. Japan, however, never ratified the treaty. That was how it justified putting POWs to work during World War II, freeing up able-bodied Japanese men for military service.

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TRACTOR DRIVING *Continued from page 3.*

look like a call! If he called me, I knew I could drive for awhile.

There was not another sight or sound in the world better than seeing his hand reach for the throttle...seeing the black smoke from the stack cease its billowing...hearing the engine idle to its slow “pop... pop... pop” and the discs drag to a halt...then seeing Pop look at me and wave me to him with a giant sweep of his hand and arm. It was like a signal to start a race, and I raced with all my strength to climb up on that tractor with him. All this said “Dad wants me with him.” And there is no greater place for a son!

When that happened, it would truly be the BEST part of my day! But when it did not... when the tractor never stopped...when Daddy only smiled as he passed...I knew he'd rather be alone on the machine. But that was OK! I was still with him! I could still see him. And I could still wave at him on the next round so he would know I was still there and ready to help if he needed me.

As I stood watching the equipment plow away to the next distant corner, and listening the roar of the engine and the scraping of the plow grow fainter, I would drop to my knees and return to my “little” farm. “What could I create now... until Dad came back around? Ah yes! A stock pen! With a dirt fence!”

As I reflect on what I've written so far, I realize I have wandered away a bit from the theme, “Tractor Driving.” I hope that's OK! I think if someday someone reads this, I suppose my hope would be that they see more from my words the importance of the Father-Son relationships than the need for sons to learn to drive tractors. I think it's a wonderful thing when fathers raise their sons in a way that they WANT to be with their dads, and even a MORE wonderful thing when dads allow them to be! My dad was like that. And I'm glad he's my dad!

~ By Gaylon Stamps, Panhandle Texas ~



Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow mindedness. –Mark Twain

POWs *Continued from page 4.*

Lester Tenney and his fellow POW slave laborers worked 12-hour shifts. Their diet, primarily rice, amounted to less than 600 calories a day. This was subsequently reduced to about 400 calories. When he was taken prisoner Tenney weighed 185 pounds. When he was liberated in 1945, he weighed 97 pounds.

Vicious beatings by Mitsui overseers at the mine were constant. Tenney's worst moment came when two overseers decided he wasn't working fast enough and went at him with a pickax and a shovel. His nose was broken again. So was his left shoulder. The business end of the ax pierced his side, just missing his hip bone but causing enough internal damage to leave him with a permanent limp.

Frank Bigelow was a Navy Seaman on the island fortress of Corregidor in Manila Bay. It was lost about a month after Bataan fell, so Bigelow escaped the Death March. But he ended up in the same Mitsui coal mine as Tenney. He was in the deepest hard-rock part of the mine when a boulder toppled onto his leg, snapping both the tibia and fibula bones 6 inches below the knee. A POW Army doctor, Thomas Hewlett, was refused plaster of Paris for a cast. Hewlett tried to construct a makeshift splint, but it didn't work. Bigelow's leg began to swell and become putrid. Tissue-destroying gangrene had set in.

With four men holding Bigelow down, Hewlett performed an amputation without anesthesia, using a razor and a hack saw blade. Bigelow recalls: “I said, ‘Doc, do you have any whiskey you could give me?’ And he said, ‘If I had any, I'd be drinking it myself.’ ” To keep the gangrenous toxin from spreading, Hewlett packed the amputation with one item readily available in

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No man, for any considerable period, can wear one face to himself, and another to the multitude, without finally getting bewildered as to which may be true. -Nathaniel Hawthorne, American writer (1804-1864)

CAUSE TO BE UNEASY continued from page 2.

gives us a shock. We have two bits of evidence about the **Somebody**. One is the Universe He has made. If we used that as our only clue, then I think we should have to conclude that He was a great artist (for the universe is a very beautiful place), but also that He is quite merciless and no friend to man (for the universe is a very dangerous and terrifying place). The other bit of evidence is that Moral Law which He has put into our minds. And this is a better bit of evidence than the other because it is inside information. You find out more about God from the Moral Law than from the universe in general just as you find out more about a man by listening to his conversation than by looking at a house he has built. Now, from this second bit of evidence we conclude that the **Being** behind the universe is intensely interested in right conduct—in fair play, unselfishness, courage, good faith, honesty and truthfulness. In that sense we should agree to the account given by Christianity and some other religions that God is “good.” But do not let us go too fast here. The Moral Law does not give us any grounds for thinking that God is “good” in the sense of being indulgent or soft or sympathetic. There is nothing indulgent about the Moral Law. It is as hard as nails. It tells you to do the straight thing and it does not seem to care how painful, or dangerous, or difficult it is to do. If God is like the Moral Law, then He is not soft. It is no use, at this stage, saying that what you mean by a “good” God is a God who can forgive. You are going too quickly. **Only a person can forgive.** And we have not yet got as far as a personal God—only as far as a power, behind the Moral Law, and more like a mind than it is like anything else. But it may still be very unlike a Person. If it is pure impersonal mind, there may be no sense in asking it to make allowances for you or let you off, just as there is no sense in asking the multiplication table to let off when you do your sums wrong. You are bound to get the wrong answer. And it is no use either saying that if there is a God of that sort—an impersonal absolute goodness—then you do not like Him and are not going to bother ↗

about Him. For the trouble is that one part of you is on His side and really agrees with His disapproval of human greed and trickery and exploitation. You may want Him to make an exception in your own case, to let you off this one time; but you know at bottom that unless the power behind the world really and unalterably detests that sort of behavior, then He cannot be good. On the other hand, we know that if there does exist an absolute goodness it must hate most of what we do. That is the terrible fix we are in. If the universe is not governed by an absolute goodness, then all our efforts are in the long run hopeless. But if it is, then we are making ourselves enemies to that goodness everyday, and are not in the least likely to do any better tomorrow, and so our case is hopeless again. We cannot do without it, and we cannot do with it. God is the only comfort, He is also the supreme terror: the thing we most need and the thing we most want to hide from. He is our only possible ally, and we have made ourselves His enemies. Some people talk as if meeting the gaze of absolute goodness would be fun. They need to think again. They are still only playing with religion. Goodness is either the great safety or the great danger—according to the way you react to it. And we have reacted the wrong way.

Now my third point. When I chose to get to my real subject in the roundabout way, I was not trying to play any kind of trick on you. I had a different reason. My reason was that Christianity simply does not make sense until you have faced the sort of facts I have been describing. Christianity tells people to repent and promises them forgiveness. It therefore has nothing (as far as I know) to say to people who do not know they have done anything to repent of and who do not feel that they need any forgiveness. It is after you have realized that there is a real Moral Law, and a Power behind the law, and that you have broken that law and put yourself wrong with that Power—it is after all this, and not a moment sooner, that Christianity begins to talk. When you know you are sick, you will listen to the doctor. When you have realized that our position is nearly desperate you will begin

Continued on page 7 column 1. See: CAUSE TO BE UNEASY

CAUSE TO BE UNEASY Continued from page 6.

to understand what the Christians are talking about. They offer an explanation of how we got into our present state of both hating goodness and loving it. They offer an explanation of how God can be this impersonal mind at the back of the Moral Law and yet also a Person. They tell you how the demands of this law, which you and I cannot meet, have been met on our behalf, how God Himself becomes a man to save man from the disapproval of God. It is an old story and if you want to go into it you will no doubt consult people who have more authority to talk about it than I have. All I am doing is asking people to face the facts—to understand the questions which Christianity claims to answer. And they are very terrifying facts. I wish it was possible to say something more agreeable. But I must say what I think true. Of course I quite agree that the Christian religion is, in the long run, a thing of unspeakable comfort. But it does not begin in comfort; it begins in the dismay I have been describing, and it is no use at all trying to go on to that comfort without first going through that dismay. In religion, as in war and everything else, comfort is the one thing you cannot get by looking for it. If you look for truth, you may find comfort in the end: If you look for comfort you will not get either comfort or truth—only soft soap and wishful thinking to begin with and, in the end, despair. Most of us have got over the prewar wishful thinking about international politics. It is time we did the same about religion.

~ C. S. Lewis ~



POWs Continued from page 5.

the prison camp—maggots. Bigelow still can't comprehend how he withstood the excruciating pain. "You don't know what you can do 'til you do it," he says.

Another seaman, George Cobb was aboard the submarine *Sealion* in Manila Bay when it was sunk in an air attack three days after Pearl Harbor. Cobb was shipped to a copper mine in northern Japan owned by the Mitsubishi corporate empire. Clad only in gunnysacklike

garments, the POWs had to trudge to the mine through 10-foot-high snowdrifts in bitter winter cold. Of 10 captured *Sealion* crewmen, Cobb is the sole survivor. "I try not to remember anything," he says. "I want it to be a four-year blank."

One day in August 1945, Lester Tenney and his fellow POWs saw a huge, mushroom-shaped cloud billowing from Nagasaki. None of them, of course, knew it was the atom bomb that would end the war. They found out on Aug. 15 that Japan had surrendered when they were given Red Cross food packages for the first time during their long captivity. They then found a nearby warehouse crammed with similar packages and medical supplies that had never been distributed. They also would learn that the Japanese high command had a master plan to exterminate all the POW slave laborers, presumably to cover up their horrific ordeal.

After the POWs returned home, they were given U.S. government forms to sign that bound them not to speak publicly about what had been done to them. America was in a geopolitical battle with the Soviet Union and, later, Red China for the hearts and minds of the postwar Japanese and did not want to do anything that might prove offensive to our recent enemy. The State Department's chief policy adviser to Gen. Douglas MacArthur, who headed up the occupation of Japan, rhetorically asked: "Is it believed that a Communist Japan is in the best interest of the United States?"

But Tenney, possibly because of his extended hospitalization, never got one of those forms. In 1946 he wrote a letter to the State Department citing his experience and requested guidance on how to mount claims against those who had beaten, tortured and enslaved him. The State Department replied that it was looking into the matter and advised him not to retain an attorney.

Hearing nothing further, Tenney, a high school dropout, decided to get on with his life. He eventually earned a Ph.D. in finance and taught at both San Diego State University and

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POWs Continued from page 7.

Arizona State University. Meanwhile, the U.S. and Japan finalized a peace treaty in 1951.

Two years ago, Tenney read that the U.S. government not only had successfully worked on behalf of Holocaust victims in Europe but also was brokering an agreement with Germany to compensate those forced into slave labor during the Nazi regime. It was then that he filed his own lawsuit against Mitsui.

The U.S. State Department and Justice Department intervened for the Japanese corporate defendants on the basis of the 1951 treaty, a clause of which purports to waive all future restitution claims. But the treaty contains another clause, which the U.S. government to date has chosen to ignore, stating that all bets would be off if other nations got the Japanese to agree to more favorable terms than our treaty. Eleven nations—including the then Soviet Union, Vietnam and the Philippines—got such terms.

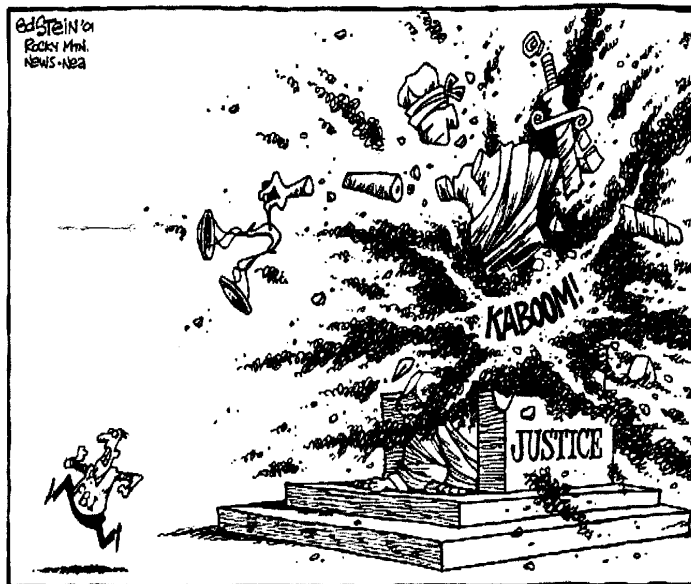
There is still hope for the surviving POWs, their widows and heirs. Last March, two California Congressmen, Republican Dana Rohrabacher and Democrat Mike Honda, co-sponsored a bill (H.R. 1198) calling for justice for the POWs.

Notably, Honda is a Japanese-American who, as an infant, was interned by the U.S. with his mother and father during World War II. The U.S. has since paid each surviving internee \$20,000 in restitution and, perhaps more important, acknowledged that the internment was wrong. “I believe,” Honda told me, “that these POWs not only fought for their country but survived, and now they are trying to survive our judicial system. They should have their day in court.” ~ **By PETER MAAS** ~

★★★

Peter Maas is a contributing editor to PARADE magazine. This article was copied from PARADE Sunday June 17, 2001. His latest best-seller is; “THE TERRIBLE HOURS.” If I come across a copy of it I just might have to read it, and if I do I’ll give you a full report. ~ AWD ~

Keep the cards, letters, stories and donations coming. I appreciate hearing from you. AWD
Viewsletter@mmcable.com or via snail mail
1015 W. Dorchester Way, Mustang, OK 73064



POOR CAMRY Continued from page 1.

Well, she is doing much better now, but the boss was out a couple hundred bucks on medication for Camry and annual shots for all of us. Camry is taking a drug called 911 for dogs, and it makes her less nervous. We all wonder what could have happened to her. It could have been several things—the little boy from next door might have hurt her or it could have been the groomer—she can be very rough at times. It might have been a stroke or just bad genes. We may never know, but we all hope she gets well soon.

Ashley has us all on the edge of our seats as she is taking her first solo trip to the Big Apple this week. (She and a girlfriend, that is.) I hope that they have the where-with-all to keep themselves safe and out of harm’s way.

Well, I’m out of room and must close. The rest of us Schnauzer Dogs are fine. Jazz still has an issue with the boss about sleeping in the burgundy chair. She is so hard headed!

LATER! ~ *Shelby Doudney Schnauzer Dog* ~

If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being. And who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart?
-Alexander Solzhenitsyn.