

## Tom Marshall's Weekly News, March 13, 2006

**The Five "Jays":** Swarthmore Preparatory School was a Quaker-oriented co-ed boarding school adjacent to Swarthmore College but with no official connection to it. About 1902, Israel and Lizzie Marshall (of Auburn Heights) and James and Mary Shallcross of Belleview Farm, northwest of Odessa, decided to send their daughters to Swarthmore Prep. At the same time, Maude Kemmerer of the Philadelphia area, Elma Laura "Bok" (pronounced Boke) Haines of Swarthmore, and Helen Ridgway of nearby New Jersey were also enrolled. The five girls struck it off immediately, became lifelong friends, and named themselves the Five Jays. Their ages seemed to vary by as much as five years, from oldest to youngest, but that made no difference; the bond was a strong one.

Anna invited the Jays to visit Auburn Heights, which they did more than once. They met her two brothers, Warren and Clarence, whom they called "Tad." Esther found Tad disinterested in the girls, more satisfied to listen to his scratchy Victrola records, with songs like "Let Me Off at Buffalo," "Everybody Works but Father," and "The Wearin' of the Green." On the other hand, she found his cousin, Henry Marshall, a lot of fun, as he would apparently sneak away from his shift at the paper mill down the hill to visit with the girls on the kitchen steps of Auburn Heights. In 1910, Anna became engaged to Norman B. Mancill, and the Jays were on hand to celebrate her engagement and have their picture taken with Anna's mother, Lizzie, on the lawn of Auburn Heights. Since there was a special bond between Israel and his only daughter, and he soon became terminally ill, she postponed her wedding until after her father's death. She and Norman were married in the front hall at Auburn Heights on January 25, 1912, again with the Jays in attendance. Clarence (my father) finally must have shown some interest in Esther (my mother), as he invited her to go with him on at least three trips in his new Stanley in the summer of 1912, to Rehoboth, to Atlantic City, and to the White Mountains of New Hampshire, all chaperoned, of course.

Although the romance cooled for several years, it was revived when my mother was in nursing school in Baltimore during World War I. My father courted her in a Model 735 Stanley and in at least two Twin Six Packards before they were married on June 4, 1921.

Maude Kemmerer taught school for many years in Jersey City before retiring to Essex, Connecticut. The oldest of the five, she never married. Bok Haines had a top secretarial job in Philadelphia and lived in Jenkintown in her later years, also remaining single. Helen Ridgway, the youngest of the five, married Dwight Cooley of Swarthmore, and they had two sons. Anna and Norman Mancill had three sons: Norman Clarence, born in 1914 (the only birth at Auburn Heights), and twins Robert and Alan, born in 1924. As mentioned above, Esther Shallcross married Clarence Marshall; I am their sole descendant. In 1940, when I was 16, the Jays had another reunion at Auburn Heights. They partied and reminisced for two days, and I drove them around. Maude still called my father "Tad." Sometime in the 1950s, they had another. We seemed to see Bok Haines more than Maude Kemmerer and Helen Cooley—one had family responsibilities, and the other did not live close by. These were friendships of several lifetimes.