



REFLECTIONS

May 29, 2022

**Train a child in the way he should go,
and when he is old he will not turn from it.**

Proverbs 22:6

An Inspiring Influence

They lived a simple life. Millie worked as an assistant to our hometown doctor who personally trained her for the job. Jack and his brother owned the grocery store their father started years before. Jack and Millie both put in long hours in their chosen vocations; but neither hard work nor meager income erased smiles from their faces or the joys of life from their hearts. Difficult times didn't break their spirit either.

They both grew up in the depression, lived through the Dust Bowl, and supported their country through World War II. Millie went on with life as best she could, loyal to her job, maintaining their home, but always with a smile and an energetic heart for people while Jack served in the War's Pacific theater. His letters to Millie noted that he "flew the hump" more than a few times. "The Hump" was the name given an airborne route where unpressurized, two-propeller transport planes, heavily loaded with essential supplies, flew through unfathomable weather conditions at elevations above 20,000-foot over the Himalayas from India to China. Even as a 5-year-old boy I could sense "the hump" placed Jack in harm's way.

At war's end, Jack and Millie's small home renewed its place for their friends to gather to play cards on the living room floor, board games around the dining room table, ping pong and croquet in the backyard, or simply enjoy lively conversation. Still, Jack and Millie placed priority on serving their church, and doing their part to make our little town friendly and warm.

"*Train a child in the way he should go...*," the Proverb reads. With no children of their own, perhaps it inspired Jack and Millie's dedication to children and youth. Millie kept a toy box in the front bedroom closet to entertain toddlers when their parents stopped by, and entertained older ones with indoor games or occasionally chasing about in their large backyard. And Jack...

Over the years, Jack provided summer jobs to no small number of teenagers. And who can count the miles driven to deliver football players to their rural homes after late afternoon practices, or the years Jack and Millie hosted high school graduation parties in their backyard.

It's extraordinary to think of the influence on those young lives who connected with and through this devoted couple. God didn't bring Jack and Millie into the world to live big or have a family. They served God with their lives rich in character and the warmth of a servant's heart.

What an inspiring influence to leave in the lives of the young.

"You are the light of the world,"

Richard +

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