

Timothy Eugene John Sullivan Part I: Autobiography

(Note: Part I was written by Tim on February 20, 1973. Footnotes have been added from information obtained from various letters and other documents.)

My father, Timothy Eugene Sullivan was born of Irish Catholic immigrant parents in San Jose, California in 1866¹. His brothers were Frank (“The Professor”) Daniel, John, and Patrick. He had one sister, Aunt Mary, who never married.²

My mother was Anna Sophia, born Olson³ in Sweden⁴. Her mother’s name was Johanna⁵ and her sisters were Emma (Dahllöf), Maria, Gerda (Elberg), Ester, and Helena. She had one brother, Nils Olson who begat three sons by the names of Ake, Allan, and Olof. My mother immigrated to the United States in the 19th century with another sister, Ada. My mother’s mother was widowed at early age and thus her family was very poor, living in the small railroad town of Herrljunga in the province of Västergutland, about an hour’s train ride from the seaport city of Göteborg (Gothenburg). My mother lived with relatives in Chicago named Swanson who were related to her on her father’s side of the family. They had two American-born children, Oscar A. Swanson and Alice Swanson (who married very late in life.) Oscar Swanson became an insurance agent and had one daughter, Carolyn, an unmarried (to date) school teacher. My mother’s sister Ada returned to Sweden where she spent the remainder of her life in a mental hospital—no doubt the result of the tension of living in a strange, foreign country (USA).

My mother became a nurse in Chicago⁶ and later in life migrated to the far west, following her profession briefly in Goldfield, Nevada and San Francisco. It was in the last named city that she met my father who was a patient at the French Hospital where she was a nurse.

My mother became the private nurse of my father and finally he asked her to marry him. There was, apparently, a dispute over religion, my mother being of Swedish Lutheran background and my father of Irish Catholic background.

My parents were married in the rectory by a Catholic priest on February 29, 1916 in Bakersfield, California.⁷ I was born on March 31, 1917⁸—my mother being 44 years old at the time. One of my father’s friends sent him a telegram saying “Congratulations Tim, I would have bet 100 to 1 against you having a child so late in life.” It was my father’s desire that I should be named after him, but my mother insisted on the name John, so I was

¹ Born July 5, 1866.

² Timothy Eugene Sullivan was described in a newspaper article as “a pioneer capitalist and oil man; a director and heavy owner of the Section Twenty-Five Oil Company.”

³ The Swedish spelling was “Olsson.”

⁴ Anna Sophia Olsson was born in 1871.

⁵ Johanna Fogelquist was born in 1841, died in 1931. Joanna’s father was Nils Fogelquist, born 1813, died 1895. Johanna’s mother was Sara Nil, dotterFogelquist, born 1818, died 1887. Anna’s father was Lars Olsson, born 1835, died 1888.

⁶ Anna received her R.N. degree in 1905.

⁷ The house at 2703 19th Avenue was built in 1916-17. The family moved in on July 23, 1917.

⁸ Tim was born at 11:35 a.m.

baptized in St. Francis Catholic Church, Bakersfield as Timothy Eugene John Sullivan—my cousin Esther Sullivan (Buty) and her fiancé William (Bill) Cannon being the God-parents.⁹

Then the Priest shall take the Child into his hands, and shall say to the Godfathers and Godmothers, *Name this Child*. And then naming it after them he shall dip it in the water discreetly and warily saying, Timothy Eugene John Sullivan, I baptize thee In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Publick Baptism of Infants
Book of Common Prayer, 1549*

As an only child of middle-aged parents I was spoiled quite badly. There was a pretty little girl who lived across the street from us. Her name was Jessie Lee Hubbard and my mother would arrange for her to come over and visit at my slightest desire to have her do so.

My mother had the habit of going around to many different churches and religious meetings and she took me with her. One evening there was an elderly man who got up and testified: "I love everybody." I thought he must be a very wonderful person to love everyone.

As I grew up, I made many friends of the boys in the neighborhood. There was John Swett who went to the Episcopal Church and who had a younger sister, Ruth. John played first base on the Franklin School baseball team on which I was only a substitute. Then there were the Stroud brothers, Allan and Bill (who died at 19). Other friends were John (Slink) Muir who had a younger sister Barbara (Snook) and Sargent Eissler and Carl Kamline, another only child whose Lutheran father operated a curtain store. Then there was George Nicholas Rudolph Voll who was a superb athlete and whose widowed mother ran the downtown Euclid Hotel. Other youthful friends were Harvey Nesbit, Terry Fugard (The Master), Tony, and Larry, Jack and Patrick O'Brien, all Irish-American Catholics.

My mother never disciplined me, so far as I can remember, but my father (whom I always called "Daddy") raised the hairbrush as if to paddle me once and thereafter I always feared and respected him more.

Our kindergarten teacher at Franklin School was Miss Annette Pritzka and our first grade teacher was Mrs. Laota Snow. I found it very difficult to learn to read and was kept after school with two other slow learners. My daddy helped me with my reading and I gained in confidence by having him teach me.

My friend Carl (Lefty) Kamline and I used to make model toy aeroplanes out of the shavings of his father's curtain store. One day Carl and I made two small fires in our garage with some of the shavings left over from making model aeroplanes. About that time my mother came out to the garage and we, feeling guilty at having our fire-making discovered, turned our backs to the fire. However, I got too close and my shirt caught fire. My mother snatched the burning shirt from my back and put out the fire, but I was rather badly burned and our family physician, Dr. N.N. Brown, tended my burns and it was very painful when he took the bandages off my back. As a result of this accident I have been rather afraid of matches and fires.

⁹ Tim was baptized on July 3, 1917.

(Note: At the age of eight, Tim went on a trip to Sweden with his mother. Following are messages on postcards written to his father in Bakersfield:)

Dear Daddy,

I received the \$five dollars you sent me. Thank you for the \$five dollars. I have some wooden shoes. I just got them this morning. I hope you are well.

Love from Tim, July 4th 1925.

Dear Daddy,

We are in Grenna now. But we are going back to Jönköping today. We rode to an island in a motorboat.

Love from Tim, July 17th, 1925

Dear Daddy,

I and Mama have been in 16 Swedish cities. The picture is of falls that supply waterpower for Sweden.

Love from Tim, August 5th.

(Note: Although Tim did not mention it in his autobiography, photographs taken at about the age of 5 or 6 indicate that he must have contracted polio at some point. One leg was shorter than the other and a special lift was attached to his shoe.)

When I was 10 years old both of my parents died within three weeks of each other. My father (Daddy) was stricken with a heart attack while visiting his friend Tom O'Brien in Lebec. They brought him in an ambulance to the San Joaquin Hospital. My mother and I were at his bedside. Daddy called mother's name—"Anna", and she replied "Tim" (I think). That was the last word that Daddy spoke. He died December 23rd¹⁰, just two days before Christmas. His funeral was held in St. Francis Catholic Church.¹¹ I have no recollection of the funeral, but I believe a large crowd attended it. Mother was soon taken to the ward at Kern General Hospital which is associated with mental illness. My Uncle Dan took me to visit Mother in the hospital. She was so happy, good and kind and seemed so glad to see me. She called me "My dear little boy." It made me feel good as I thought Mother was getting better. But the next time I visited Mother she was very upset and angry. She said "You will never be anything but a drunken Catholic like the rest of the Sullivans." At least that is what I seem to remember. I was crestfallen and very sad. I never saw my mother alive again. She was taken to Glendale Sanitarium where she died January 8, 1928.

Mother's funeral was held in the First Baptist Church where the pastor, The Reverend Frank O. Belden, gave a splendid eulogy. He said if there were more people like Anna Sullivan the world would be a better place.¹²

For a short time after Mother's death I was taken care of by Anna and Fred Karpe, a devout couple from the Baptist Church. Like my own parents, they had an only son, Milford Karpe, and I can recall Anna Karpe saying "Milford always stays for church."

Soon after my parents' death I was placed under the care of my first cousin, Uncle Pat's daughter, Esther Sullivan Buty, of Seattle, Washington. Esther had two small children, Louis Francis Buty, Jr. ("Little Louis") and Virginia Buty who was an exceedingly pretty little girl. Louis, Jr. had the Italian nickname of "Pasqual." It was, I believe, in May 1928

¹⁰ 1927.

¹¹ Buried in Union Cemetery, Bakersfield, California

¹² Buried in Union Cemetery, at the side of her husband.

that cousin Esther gave birth to her third child, Francis Xavier Buty who was born in “The old home town” of Bakersfield.

It was fun living with the Butys—the happy time of having two small “brothers” (cousins) and a tiny “sister” (Virginia) to play with. We spent the summer of 1928 and the fall, too, I believe, in Seattle. We had a lovely summer cottage at a place called “Three Tree Point” near Seattle. It was there that I first learned to play tennis. I seem to remember Joe Weber, and McCaffrey and Mahlom Hultgrern (Swedish name) as people I played with. Oddly enough, although naturally left handed, I decided to play tennis right handed which “stance” remained with me as long as I played tennis.

It was fun living in Seattle in the winter. “Big Louis” (cousin Esther’s husband) took me to some of the University of Washington football games where “Big Pat” Jessup, 6 foot 6 inch center, and halfback Merle Hufford were the stars. Also saw some of the Seattle Indians (?) baseball games, starring Pitcher Rudy Kallio and outfielder Dave Barbee.

Now, for the first time I began to take an interest in girls. There was a pretty little Irish American girl who lived across the alley from us. Her name was Maxine Murphy and I learned how to tie a neck tie so as to appear more presentable to her. She had a brother, Bob Murphy and an older sister, Ursula. The Murphys were Catholic as were my cousin Esther and her family. Sometimes the Butys would have big parties on Saturday night, until 1:00 or 2:00 a.m. but they would always make it to the late morning Mass. But the time with the Butys was almost too happy to last and the bank (who controlled my estate) decreed that we should live at “2703”, my parents’ home in Bakersfield. For awhile a friend named Aggie Dempsey stayed with us in Bakersfield, but before long the “religious struggle” between Catholic and Protestants came into play with the result that somehow Mrs. W.J. Schultz and the Baptists succeeded in having my cousin Esther’s guardianship terminated. I was sorry to see Esther and the children leave. The first night they were gone I almost tried to sleep in a garden at Klipstein’s house, but finally I got up my nerve enough to ask the kindly Mrs. Swett if I could spend the night with them. Her son Johnny Swett was my best friend and he had a younger sister, Ruth.

Then I went to stay with another friend from the neighborhood, Billy Holmquist. After a few weeks there, Judge Erwin Owen, a kindly old Texas gentleman ruled that Mr. Holmquist should be my guardian, thus starting a new chapter in my youthful struggle to grow up.

Here ends Tim’s autobiography as written in 1973.

Part II: Biography

(Note: The following biography was compiled from letters, interviews with family members, newspaper articles, and notations on photographs.)

Legal Problems Concerning Sullivan Estate and Guardianship

Following the death of Tim’s father in 1927, and just prior to the death of his mother about three weeks later, a legal battle began over the estate. A front page article from the *Bakersfield Morning Echo* of December 29, 1927 reads as follows:

**START SULLIVAN ESTATE
BATTLE
Widow Taken from Home on Warrant
Forcibly Remove Woman on Insanity
Charge Following Funeral Declares
Attorney**

A bitter legal struggle between Mrs. Timothy E. Sullivan, widow of the late pioneer millionaire and a relative of the deceased was indicated last night by Edward A. Brittan of the firm of Brittan and Brittan, attorneys for the widow, in connection with the application of Mary E. Sullivan, a sister of the late millionaire and aunt of Timothy E. Sullivan, 10-year old son of the decedent, for appointment as guardian of the son and heir, following the removal of his mother from her home on a charge of insanity, preferred by Thomas O'Brien.

"The widow, Anna S. Sullivan, was forcibly taken from her home and is being held under an insanity charge preferred by Thomas O'Brien of Lebec," said

Attorney Brittan, "while the Sullivans, who came here from the north to attend the funeral have taken possession of her home. Mary E. Sullivan, an aunt of the boy, has applied for appointment as guardian of Timothy E. Sullivan, Jr."

"We have asked the Security Trust Company, named executor of the will, to immediately repossess the house," said the attorney, "as it is the personal property of Mrs. Sullivan, to which they have no right of occupancy."

"The Security Trust Company has also been requested to apply for special letters of administration to protect the estate," said the attorney.

The action for appointment of a guardian for the boy and the granting of special letters of administration is being heard before Judge H. A. Peairs of the Superior court, proceedings being started yesterday.

"The arrest of Mrs. Sullivan upon an insanity charge took place at her home on Tuesday

afternoon, following the funeral of her husband in the morning," said Mrs. Richard Apsley, a neighbor and friend of the family. "This action," she said, "aroused much criticism in the neighborhood owing to the fact that it appears to be part of a plan to part the mother and her son."

"It seems as if a woman of such prominence, and known kindness of character, would have been given more considerate treatment," said Mrs. Apsley, "for she has been noted in this city for years for her charities, and sincere desire to serve the unfortunate."

"She has been a devoted wife and mother, and if through illness and strain she has broken it seems as if she should be given the same gentle consideration and kindly treatment that she has shown others," said the friend.

"Inside of half an hour after Mrs. Sullivan had been taken from her home by force relatives of Mr. Sullivan appeared and took possession. They discharged the household employees and Charles Hicks, who had been caretaker of the property and chauffeur, was required to give up keys to the garage and car," said Mrs. Apsley, "and it is to be noted that the car and property are now being used by the Sullivans," she said.

"Timothy Sullivan, Jr., center of a legal battle for his guardianship, and heir to the bulk of the great estate, is stopping at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Swett, neighbors. Mrs. Sullivan is at Kern General Hospital where she was taken on Tuesday.

"Mrs. Clara Peterson of San Francisco, an old-time friend of Mrs. Sullivan, who was herself formerly a nurse, was among the callers upon Mrs. Sullivan yesterday. She reported that the woman should be in her own home, with a private nurse," stated Mrs. Apsley. Miss Peterson is one of the head nurses at the Southern Pacific hospital at San Francisco.

Besides the sister, Mary E. Sullivan of San Jose, there are three brothers, John Sullivan of San Jose, Thomas Sullivan of Seattle, and Patrick Sullivan of Bakersfield.

On the following day, December 30, 1927, the following article appeared on the front page of the *Bakersfield Morning Echo*:

**Security Bank to Administer
Sullivan Estate
Special Writ Handed Down in Will
Case
Administrator Ordered to Take
Immediate Possession of Estate; Other
Hearings Set**

Special letters of administration of the estate of the late Timothy E. Sullivan, valued at more than \$200,000 in a will made in 1918, were granted the Security Bank and Trust Company yesterday by Judge E.W. Owen of Kern County superior court upon petition of Attorneys Harvey and Heard representing the bank. Under the terms of the will the bank was named as guardian of the estate and the person of the son.

The hearing as to the guardianship of the bank was set by Judge H.A. Peairs for January 9 at 2 o'clock and the hearing on the application of Mary E. Sullivan, an aunt, for guardianship of the son Timothy E. J. Sullivan, Jr., was set for January 3.

Hearing of insanity charges against Anna S. Sullivan, widow of the decedent, was set for Saturday before Judge Owens....

Under the terms of a codicil of the will, dated June 6, 1922, it was declared that substantial gifts had been made to the wife and the clause in the will leaving her the residue of the estate was revoked, and instead the son was made heir to the residue of the estate....

To the widow, Anna Sophia Sullivan the east half block of 430, together with the improvements, was bequeathed according to the terms of the will.

The will also provided \$35,000 in Liberty bonds and two 40-acre tracts and an 80-acre tract in Kern County as special bequests to the son T.E.J. Sullivan. Later in the codicil the residue of the estate was bequeathed to the son.

In the will the estate was valued at more than \$200,000 and in the codicil it was valued at more than \$10,000 according to the documents filed with F.E. Smith, county clerk, in the probate proceedings.

Anna Sullivan went to Los Angeles on December 30, 1927 and was admitted to a hospital under the care of Dr. Ross Moore. He stated in a letter dated January 28, 1928 to Oscar A. Swanson, relative of Anna, living in Chicago, that

"Mrs. Anna Sophia Sullivan came under my professional care December 30th 1927. At that time she was very much exhausted from the long ambulance journey from Bakersfield to Los Angeles. This exhaustion was both physical and nervous. It manifested itself in great mental confusion and excitement. During the first few days her condition was quite precarious on account of this acute exhaustion. Then for two or three days her condition seemed to take a turn for the better. The nervous excitement subsided and she became mentally clear enough to talk with the nurses for a few minutes at a time about her son. This improvement was brought about by first class psychiatric nursing and the use of neutral baths to control nervousness and excitement.

Mrs. Sullivan's general physical condition was poor and had been so for some months previous to her death. The improvement which we succeeded in bringing about was therefore only temporary. She began to fail and died within a few days. Looking back over the case I am inclined to feel that nothing was left undone which might have brought about a different result."

Prior to receiving the above letter, Oscar A. Swanson had traveled to Bakersfield on January 7, 1927 to try and determine the circumstances regarding the estate and the insanity hearing for Anna. Arriving back in Los Angeles on the evening of the 7th it was too late to see Anna. She died early in the morning of the 8th before Oscar was able to see her.

While in Bakersfield Oscar tried to find out as much as he could about the case. He was told that two hours after Mr. Sullivan's funeral Anna was locked up on an insanity charge, and that immediately thereafter "Mary Sullivan and her gang took possession of the house

and they immediately got good and drunk on T.E.S.'s private stock which all went." Oscar talked to young Tim who asked him, "Who will get me if Mama dies?"

Following his return to Chicago, Oscar Swanson received several letters from friends in Bakersfield keeping him posted on Tim's situation. From a reading of several letters it appears that Mr. & Mrs. Karpe took care of Tim for a short time prior to the arrival of Tim's cousin, Esther Sullivan Buty. Eva L. Schultz¹³, one of the correspondents, reported that when Mrs. Buty "...and two little heathens arrived, the eldest greeted Mrs. Karpe with "This is our home. What are you doing here?" In that same letter, Mrs. Schultz indicated that Timothy had united with the Baptist Church on January 22nd and that he would be baptized the following Sunday. She said that Tim came forward of his own accord and presented himself. She hoped that Tim would become a minister.

Writing to Oscar a few months later, Mrs. Schultz had a more favorable report, stating that Mrs. Buty seems to be very fond of Tim and that she wants to do the right thing by him. She felt that "Mrs. Buty had won over the folks around here." She said that Tim had gained in weight and that he had more "child life than ever before." Mrs. Schultz also indicated that Tim had been received into the Baptist Church and had been baptized and attended Sunday School and church.

Timothy Eugene John Sullivan, I baptize thee in the Name of
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Dr. Frank O. Belden

Defend, O Lord, this Thy Child with Thy heavenly grace, that
he may continue Thine for ever: and daily increase in Thy
Holy Spirit more and more, until he come into Thy
everlasting kingdon. Amen

*The Order of Confirmation
Book of Common Prayer, 1549*

In August of 1929, after Mrs. Buty had gone to Seattle with Tim and her own children, a friend of Oscar Swanson visited the Buty family and Tim. A good report was given, including the fact that Tim was attending a Baptist church in the Seattle area.

The next we hear is a letter of May 13, 1930 from Matilda Smeitzer¹⁴ to Oscar Swanson. She reported that Esther Buty had been removed from the guardianship of Tim because of charges of gross immorality brought by Dan Sullivan, Esther's uncle. She was asked to resign, which she eventually did and she left Bakersfield.

Eva Schultz, writing a few days later, informed Oscar that the judge planned to appoint a new guardian within a few days. It was at this point that George and Agnes Holmquist became responsible for Tim.

The High School Years

While attending Kern County Union High School Tim began what plainly turned out to be a lifelong love of writing about any and all topics. Sending and receiving correspondence of the social kind was his passion, and he did not hesitate to read others' personal mail if he could lay his hands on it. This "fault" of his became the cause of much distress on the part of his new "siblings" after his marriage to Reinette. This ardor for writing expressed itself in high school where he served as Editor of the school newspaper, the *Blue & White*, in

¹³ Eva L. Schultz lived at 2223 19th St.

¹⁴ Matilda Smeitzer lived at 529 Kentucky St.

1934 and 1935. During this period the newspaper was acclaimed the best high school newspaper in the San Joaquin Valley. Tim was a member of the Press Club and played on the football team, the “Drillers”, who were county champs in 1934; his number was “48.” He graduated from high school on June 7, 1935.

The following year Tim attended the 1936 Olympics in Germany where he had the opportunity of seeing Jesse Owens’ outstanding performance, an accomplishment that confounded Adolph Hitler. Perhaps this experience of being a spectator at an international event explains why throughout his adult life Tim took a special interest in the Olympics and attended a number of these games.

Stanford University (1935-1938)

Entering Stanford University in the fall of 1935, he became a member of Delta Tau Delta. In the summer of 1936 Tim and a friend from Stanford made a bicycle tour of Europe, followed by a visit to relatives in Sweden. Gustof Dahllöf went to pick him up at Herrljunga Station but didn’t recognize him. “No one could travel all the way from the U.S. and not wear a hat!” Gustof said.

In the fall of 1936 Tim began a second year at Stanford, enrolling for independent study, but the strenuous bike travel of the summer before had taken its toll on Tim’s energy and his health broke down causing him to spend about two years recovering at the Livermore Sanitarium. During the time he was a resident at Livermore Mr. Holmquist faithfully visited him every few weeks.

Out of the depths have I called to you, O LORD;
 LORD, hear my voice; let your ears consider well the voice
 of my supplication.
 If you, LORD were to note what is done amiss, O LORD
 who could stand?
 For there is forgiveness with you; therefore you shall be
 feared.
 I wait for the LORD; my soul waits for him; in his word is
 my hope.
 My soul waits for the LORD, more than watchmen for the
 morning, more than watchmen for the morning.
 O Israel, wait for the LORD, for with the LORD there is
 mercy;
 With him there is plenteous redemption, and he shall redeem
 Israel from all their sins.

The Psalter, 130

Marriage and the War Years (1939-1943)

In 1939 Tim returned to Bakersfield where he attended the First Baptist Church and began a courtship with Reinette Poteete. They became engaged in February of 1941 and were married on June 1, 1941. The wedding was held on Sunday at the First Baptist Church, the Rev. Burton C. Barrett officiating. Monteen was the matron-of-honor and Lt. George W. Holmquist was the best man. The reception was held at the Poteete home from where they left for a honeymoon in Hawaii for a month. They sailed on the Mattsonia.

Wilt thou take this woman to thy wedded wife, to live
 together after God’s ordinance in the holy estate of
 matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honour, and

keep her in sickness and in health; and forsaking all others,
keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?

*Solemnization of Matrimony
Book of Common Prayer, 1549*

For this honeymoon trip they bought a movie camera with which they took much footage of hula dancing. So much so, that even the novelty of seeing “movies” of hula dancing in exotic Hawaii began to wear thin for the provincial Poteete family there in Riverview. The newlywed’s arrival home brought with it souvenirs unlimited consisting of hula skirts, leis, shell trinkets, and memorabilia of all kinds. Tim not only loved to travel, but he loved to buy souvenirs for friends and family back home.

Because of his mental history Tim was rejected by the draft so during 1941-44 he worked at The El Tejon garage. He had an aversion to things mechanical but there he had to learn to pump gas and hassle with gas rationing coupons. This building housing the garage was built by Tim’s father in 1926, as a Mormon car agency (Mormon meaning the name of a car), later becoming a parking garage for the Haberfelde Building and the El Tejon Hotel across the street. Tim also contributed to the war effort in his own way by bringing home for Sunday dinner after church men in attendance who were stationed at nearby Minter Field air base. From being an only child and an orphan as well, Tim had the heady experience of having married into a ready-made large family with lots of girls of marriageable age. This Poteete family consisted of uncomplex, straight forward and in many ways naïve people who were not schooled in the social graces nor did they have the tools for resolving social conflicts skillfully. Such a family had its code words and body language automatically in place and an outsider, as well as an only child who was as unrestrained as Tim, was ably personified in the saying of being a “loose cannon” in its midst.

Tim entered the family enthusiastically with his Irish charm and command of language and the family was like putty in his hands. It was as if another childhood began for Tim with teasing, control of comings and goings, lavishing clothes, cars and everything and dominating any family get-together with his choice of conversation and behavior.

Looking back at these times one can see that Tim had to be in control or things would go sour. The only person who on occasion would not be left sputtering with indignation was Mother Poteete who with lowered voice and carefully chosen words would make clear to Tim when he had overstepped his bounds.

To allay any wrong perceptions by the reader that Tim was only an irritant to the family, it needs to be emphatically stated that he was an enrichment to the family well beyond the material ways. Each person was impacted favorably and profoundly with lifetime benefits which mainly seem to be intangible.

Throughout his life Tim gave every person who got his attention a nickname with himself being the only person who did not have one, probably because he moved among friends who were not imaginative enough to give him one. Frequently the name he gave was a corruption of pronunciation of the name or usually something completely original but pertaining to a physical or character trait. Often the names were clever but many times they were painfully and accurately funny. “Squire” Poteete and O.P.L.A. were the names that stuck with Mother and Daddy throughout their lives. (Opla was Mother’s given name.)

In 1943 Tim and Reinette visited Mexico, one more of the many trips they would take together. This trip gave Tim an opportunity to indulge in his favorite pastime of writing cards and letters and buying foreign stamps. (During his younger adult years Tim collected volumes of stamps, amassing an impressive stamp collection.) Addressing and stamping the

blank face of an envelope became an art form for Tim where he could get almost as much information on the front and back of the envelope as was in the contents of the letter. Again, armloads of souvenirs came back to Bakersfield in the form of jewelry, clothing, bric bracs, and trinkets.

University of Southern California (1944-1946)

Tim enrolled at USC in 1944 where he majored in journalism. As a sideline he recruited lots of young men as escorts for Ruth (unsolicited by Ruth!). From the USC yearbook this note is found: "Tim Sullivan, famed matchmaker." This penchant for matchmaking quickly became one of the sources of friction between Tim and his new sisters, not to mention Mother Poteete. Pleas, tears, threats, and remonstrances of every kind fell on deaf ears with Tim as young men of all kinds were brought on to the scene. Mother Poteete was the only person before whom Tim's willfulness would stop short, with this maternal interference sometimes resulting in a sullen retreat on Tim's part for a while.

He was a member of the Roger Williams Club and Sigma Delta Chi (Professional Journalistic Fraternity). In 1945 Tim served in various positions on the *Daily Trojan* (the university paper) including Reporter, Desk Editor, Sports Page Editor, and Feature Editor. He wrote excellent editorials ranging from an historical analysis of the Republic of France as compared to contemporary issues in the U.S. to an inspirational Christmas message. He even sent features to the paper while traveling overseas in Sweden.

In the spring of 1946 Tim and Reinette made a trip to Sweden, on the way taking Lucille to meet Glenn Heitz's folks in Madison, Indiana where Lucille became engaged to Glenn. They also arranged to meet Jeanne in Atlanta (she was stationed with the Waves in Washington, D.C. at the time.) where they visited relatives in Georgia and a Bert Linker in Chapel Hill, North Carolina (Bert was a very nice handsome young naval man whom Tim and Reinette had previously met at USC and Tim had introduced him to Ruth).

After leaving Jeanne in Washington, they went on to New York where they sailed to Sweden on the Gripsholm, the first ship sailing to Sweden after the war, filled with lots of returning Swedes planning on visiting relatives. They spent several months abroad.

Tim received the degree of Bachelor of Arts from the School of Journalism at USC, graduating *cum laude* on February 24, 1946

Business Endeavors (1946-1950)

For a period of time following his graduation from USC, Tim returned to Bakersfield and worked as a reporter for the *Bakersfield Californian* as well as for the *Bakersfield Press* for a little time.

In 1947 Tim served as campaign manager for the sale of Easter Seals, a position which mainly attracted him so that he could help Ruth Poteete get a job as an occupational therapist in Bakersfield. This same year Tim and Reinette bought a DeSoto sedan for \$1,965.04, a car which they later drove across the U.S. and part of Canada.

In 1948 Tim and Reinette, accompanied by Carol and cousin Bertil Dahllöf, went to the Olympics in London. After that Tim, Reinette, and Carol traveled around Europe for six months, with a long visit to Sweden. Peggy and Clyde married in February of that same year and moved into Tim and Reinette's house during their absence.

October of 1949 found Tim and Reinette in the Newton Highlands area of Boston, living in a rented apartment where they would reside for approximately three years. Several trips were taken abroad and a boat trip to South America during this three-year period. At

Christmas time in 1950 they traveled to Sweden and made a surprise visit to Tim's relatives. They went back to Sweden again in early 1951 to attend Möster (Aunt) Maria's funeral.

At the time of this particular trip to Sweden Tim saw an ad in a Stockholm paper stating that adoptive parents were wanted for a baby coming in March. Tim investigated and a visit was made to the parents-to-be, Ulla Ahl and Svante Mattson in Salefteo. Svante was doing his army service. Anna Maria Teresa Sullivan was born March 24, 1951 and in May Reinette went back to Sweden to get Anna at the tender age of two months. Reinette lived with Bertil and Greta in Mariestad until August, then flew home to Bakersfield with their new daughter.

Graduate Education (1950-1955)

While living in Boston, Tim attended the Babson Institute of Business Administration, completing the requirements for a certificate on June 16, 1951. Tim also took classes at the Episcopal Seminary in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the beginning of his interest in the Episcopal Church, an interest that would eventually lead him into the ministry.

During the period Tim, Reinette, and Anna were away from Bakersfield, various family members lived in the house at 2703 19th street. Lowell and Carol and their children, along with Lowell's father, lived there from 1953 to 1957 and Brian and Joel were born during this time. Jeanne and Arnold, Peggy and Clyde (as noted above), and Alan and Beverly also lived in the house at various times. Mark was born to Alan and Bev during the time they occupied the Sullivan home.

Prior to going to England in 1953 for an extended period of time, Tim bought four lots in the Westchester area of Bakersfield and had Max build a building. This building was eventually leased to Lowell Ball who had a medical supply company among other businesses. Mr. Ball remained as the same tenant for over forty years. A plaque was placed on the front of the building designating it the "Anna Sullivan Building, 1953." The garage building on 17th and K had "T.E. Sullivan 1926" engraved at the top.

Traveling to England, the family rented an apartment near Hyde Park in London for part of the time they were there. They lived most of the time in an apartment in Oxford, about a mile from the Hall. Tim began in earnest to build his library, a library that would eventually fill the "Book House" at the Poteete residence in Grass Valley, with volumes and volumes left over to fill bookshelves and the basement of the house in Bakersfield. Tim enrolled at Wycliffe Hall, an evangelical seminary located in Oxford, England, and earned a Certificate in Theology in June of 1955. He was a conscientious attender of lectures and a scrupulous note taker, with handwritten notes from each class filling numerous notebooks.

Following the receipt of his certificate from Wycliffe Hall at Oxford, Tim and family returned to the Bakersfield area. During the summer of 1956 Tim served for a brief time as a "Lay Curate" at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Taft while the Rev. John Atkinson, rector, was traveling in Great Britain, Sweden, and Russia.

We praise Thee, O God; we acknowledge Thee to be the
LORD.

All the earth doth worship Thee; The Father everlasting.
To Thee all Angels cry aloud; the Heavens, and all the
Powers therein.

To Thee Cherubin and Seraphin continually do cry,
Holy, Holy, Holy: LORD God of Sabaoth;
Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of Thy glory.

Morning Prayer
Book of Common Prayer

Ministry in Canada (1956-1958)

Tim pursued several options for possible ordination and assignment as a priest in a local parish in both England and the U.S. In May 1956 he met with the “Council of Advice” in Fresno and became a “Candidate for Holy Orders” in the Missionary District of San Joaquin. Tim started training at the Episcopal Seminary in Berkeley at the request of Bishop Sumner Walters of the San Joaquin Diocese.

In the late summer of 1956, Tim was invited by The Right Reverend Kenneth C. Evans, Bishop of the Diocese of Ontario, Canada, to come to Plevna for a period of service and Tim accepted, with the blessing of the Bishop of the San Joaquin Diocese. The Bishop described Plevna as “...a place of forest and lake, with a small frame rectory with all modern conveniences—oil furnace, electric stove, electric refrigerator.” In a subsequent letter he provided more information about the area:

Plevna is beyond Oso, the northern point in the Parish of Sharbot Lake. The road is not paved—it is a rough road and has many bends and turns in it. The countryside is forest and lake with little farming and some lumbering going on. Plevna is a tiny village on a stream, of about 200 souls, about half of whom are Anglican. Our church there was made up originally of equal parts of Anglican settlers and German Lutherans. They were, of course, assimilated a long time ago.

In Plevna we have a small modern Mission House with just two bedrooms upstairs, oil burning furnace, good water supply brought in by electric pump, and a kitchen furnished with electric stove and refrigerator. The view from the house in almost every direction is one of sheer forest. For the hunter and the fisherman it is quite an attraction during the right seasons.

The roads are kept open during the winter by snow plough for the sake of the high school students who go down every day to Sharbot Lake.

Plevna is a mission parish, which means that the cheque for stipend and travel is sent out at the end of each month from the Synod Office, and that part of it that the congregation supplies is sent in to us. The stipend is definitely not one to attract a person from the United States. The stipend is \$200.00 a month and the travel allowance \$50.00 a month (\$3,000.00 a year, with the use of the house).

Besides Plevna there are two other spots in the Mission—one on a bay on the very beautiful Palmerston Lake, called Ompah—and the other at a little settlement that is largely Roman Catholic, called Ardoch.

What really constitutes a challenge to us in this area, is that there is no priest resident in an area of 300 to 400 square miles other than ours. An R.C. priest comes in to say Mass from a distance of about twenty miles or more, and the United Church is under the care to two deaconesses.

On November 14, 1956 Tim was appointed to be a Lay Reader and Catechist in the Mission of North Frontenac, with permission to perform baptisms and burials. He was admitted into the Holy Order of Deacons by the Bishop of Ontario on December 21, 1956 and admitted into Holy Order of Priesthood by the Bishop on Ascension Day, May 30, 1957. Tim’s ordination as a priest was held in a small brick Anglican church in Athens, a church known as Christ’s church, nestled on a hill, surrounded by shade trees.

Therefore, Father, through Jesus Christ your Son, give your Holy Spirit to Timothy Eugene John Sullivan; fill him with grace and power, and make him a priest in your Church.

Book of Common Prayer

In serving the Anglican Mission of North Frontenac, Tim was responsible for All Saints Church in Ompah, Holy Trinity Church in Plevna, and St. John's Church in Ardoch.

It should be noted that during their first winter in Plevna, Tim, Reinette, and Anna experienced temperatures as low as 50° below.

Tim began to endear himself to the people by his eager willingness to be of help to them both spiritually and materially. (At one point his Bishop extracted a promise from Tim to the effect that he would not go head over heels in his generosity to his parishioners!) His human touch came through in the following poem he wrote to the ladies of the W.A.

“Ode to the ‘W.A.’ on the Festival of St. George.”

*God be with you as you go
Through the mountain's lingering snow
To the Belleville land below
Cheerfully along your way
As you chatter and as you pray,
Dear ladies of our own village “W.A.”*

*Remember though the battle long
And weary sometime the road,
St. George the Dragon slew of wrong
As he bore the cross's load.*

*Sharing in the world's strife and sin and pain
That he, with Christ, might put it right
again;
Directed toward paths of joy and peace
Where faith in hope of love may still
increase
Until you sing, each one, the victor's song
“For God and country” as you march along!*

The Bishop began to gain an understanding of Tim's penchant for writing long and meandering cards and letters as evidenced from this quote from the Bishop's letter:

I must certainly open up a file in my office marked “Letters from Ompah.” I thought I had a fairly juicy bit of correspondence when I read only the outside pages of your card. I noticed that page two didn't run freely onto the last page, but I did not notice that the last page was number “7.” It was my wife who pointed out to me that we had the whole inside of the card covered with news.

And again the Bishop wrote:

You are excelling yourself in your epistles. I think you must be conscious of the fact that you are, because I notice that you jump from page ‘5’ to page ‘8’, and your eighth page is numbered ‘10.’ But I can assure you that even if you had written ten pages instead of a measly eight, I should have enjoyed every one of them.

And once again he wrote:

I read your last letter of a mere 12 page length at one sitting with the aid of my new reading glasses and a magnifying glass. It is not that I need the magnifying glass to discover the interest and excitement of your work; that stands out in big letters on every page. I had to have the magnifying glass for all your second thoughts that are sprinkled like salt and pepper over the whole page.

Letters from the Bishop to Tim contain many words of appreciation and commendation for Tim's hard work in ministering to the people. It is evident that gains were made in attendance and in confirmations and baptisms.

Tim resigned as Incumbent of North Frontenac as of October 15, 1958. He was granted a six month leave of absence, after which he was to be considered for service in another parish within the Diocese.

Tim and Reinette spent time in Grass Valley. During that time Tim celebrated Holy Communion in several Episcopal churches in the area.

We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

Book of Common Prayer

Ministry in Wyoming (1959-60)

Late in 1958 Tim began to correspond with The Right Reverend J. Wilson Hunter, Bishop of The Missionary District of Wyoming about the possibility of returning to the United States and serving in the Wyoming area. Bishop Hunter described an opportunity in Ethete (pronounced etheetee) as follows:

St. Michael's Mission, Ethete, is a work among the Arapahoe Indians. Up until last June we had a day school (grades 1-8), but the government has built a new school three miles from Ethete and our school has closed. We are now in the process of determining what program we should carry on at Ethete: (a) a small home for Arapahoe children from broken homes?, (b) a kindergarten for the Arapahoe children?, (c) an enlarged recreational program? Our equipment consists of a beautiful log chapel and nine buildings (rectory, gym, teachers' homes, guest house, farmers' houses, etc.).

We have a fine farmer and his family who run the farm, a fine couple who oversee the buildings and now have a young lay couple who are interested in coming to do social service work under guidance of the Vicar of St. Michael's. I would see your job as one to hold services, head up a church school which needs much strong teaching, and to be a great Pastor. Indians need unceasing pastoral calling. We claim about 350 communicants, although many have been inactive too long.

Salary is \$4,800 plus pension and 7¢ a mile for travel plus rectory and utilities. Ethete is 14 miles from Lander (population 3,500) on a good road. Lander has good schools, doctors, hospital, stores, etc.

Bishop Hunter formally offered the position to Tim in mid-January, 1959 and Tim gladly accepted. Tim, Reinette, and Anna arrived in Ethete in early February where Tim plunged into the work with a ready willingness to be a priest and pastor to the Indians. In addition to the usual pastoral ministry, responsibilities included the overseeing of the property (everything from water lines and septic tanks to building maintenance) and providing direction to staff members, working with committees, and dealing with personal problems among the Indians, including the excessive use of alcohol by some of them.

Tim, who long had a reputation for fast driving, continued this pattern in Wyoming. A letter from the Archdeacon stated it in this way:

I learned something the other day in Lander which I felt I should pass on to you. Roger Budrow, Ernie Newton and I were having coffee the other day when I was in Lander, and the State Highway Patrolman joined us in the booth.

He mentioned to me that “one of my colleagues” was having an eye kept on him not only by the State Patrol, but also by the Lander City Police. The conversation left little to the imagination—it was you that he was talking about with regard to speeding both on the highway and in town.

As long as they seem to be aware of this situation, I thought that I would mention it to you and leave it up to your good judgment as to what to do about that, and also to suggest that you check to see what the status of your California license plates happens to be according to the reciprocal agreements between the two states concerned.

I am sure that a fine would not affect you financially, but the adverse publicity which might result could do you and the Church a good deal of harm, so I am relaying to you what I heard...period.

During the period Tim and Reinette lived in Wyoming, they made a trip to California. On the return trip they were involved in a serious auto accident that resulted in hospitalization for Reinette and Anna for a few days. The other driver was cited for the sad accident in which his small daughter was killed.

Apparently, early in 1960 some conflicts began to develop between Tim and members of the staff, resulting in an expression of concern by the Bishop. Tim met with the Bishop in February, and in a subsequent letter to another party Tim indicated that “...what he [the Bishop] had to say was as surprising as it was unexpected.” The situation seemed to improve somewhat, but on May 1 Tim submitted his written resignation. The Bishop accepted the resignation effective June 30, 1960. In his letter the Bishop stated ‘This has been a difficult decision to make, as I am appreciative of many fine things you have done since coming to Wyoming...but in view of you yourself having written out your resignation, I am sure you must have concluded that you could have a more effective ministry elsewhere.’”

Writing again in July, the Bishop expressed his feelings thusly: “Frankly, you are a person who is very difficult to understand. One moment I think I understand you and then in the very next time I hear from you or talk with you, I realize that I don’t understand you at all. I’ve tried to support you—if you only knew how much criticism I’ve come into from time to time when I’ve taken or given certain advice!...I am very fond of you and your family and obviously would never hurt you or anyone, but it just came to the place where I felt that it was necessary that you leave Ethete because certainly in the time that you’ve been there, in spite of the many good things that you’ve done, there have been far too many disturbances.”

Tim’s unusual style of writing letters, as mentioned previously, was a sore point with the Bishop in Wyoming:

When I say that I do not understand you, I’ll give you a couple of illustrations. Tim, from time to time you write me and send my letters in care of Mrs. Nancy Hunter. I never heard of anyone writing to a Bishop, or anyone as a matter of fact, and putting it in care of his wife. After all, I think as the Bishop, I’m well enough known just to have letters addressed direct to me. And then from time to time, you are so overly explicit in your letters. For example, in this letter that I’m answering right at the present time, you say, ‘The first of this week a telephone call from Laramie, your Episcopal Cathedral City...’, now why did you have to go to the length of telling me where my Episcopal Cathedral City is—I know where it is!

From time to time you'll write about Henry Hutto, and you'll say he's the vicar of St. Thomas', Dubois. If I don't know where my men are, then no one knows. If you could only just learn Tim, to speak with more restraint, and also write with more restraint, then perhaps I wouldn't be as puzzled as I am whenever I talk with you and whenever I hear from you.

With his ministry coming to an end in Wyoming, Tim planned a trip to the Olympic games in Rome. This was no ordinary family excursion. An article in the Lander paper described the proposed trip as follows:

**Rev. Timothy Sullivan Taking
14 to Europe and to Olympics in
Rome**

Fourteen Fremont County residents, including four Arapahoe and one Shoshone Indian, will sail from New York in August to attend the Olympic games in Rome.

They are being taken by the Rev. Timothy Sullivan, who is leaving as rector at St. Michael's Mission. He has bought the Dubois home of Dr. and Mrs. E.S.

Bovenmyer and will live there until he goes to another church.

The travelers will sail in two parties, the first on August 13 and the second August 16. They will return to the United States late in September.

The trip has required considerable organization and planning.

The article continued at length to explain the itinerary, with details about side trips to Paris, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, and Sweden by some of the members of the party, and plans to return with three of Tim's cousins from Sweden.

Ministry in British Honduras (1961)

In the spring of 1961 Tim became aware of an opportunity to serve in British Honduras. The Bishop of Wyoming evidently wrote a supportive letter to the Bishop of British Honduras and as a result Tim was licensed and granted authority to serve as Priest in charge of St. Peter's, Orange Walk and St. Paul's, Corozal in the Diocese of British Honduras on July 21, 1961.

Tim, Reinette, and Anna arrived in British Honduras in July along with Hurricane Anna (and left in November with Hurricane Hannah!) The rectory, church, and the school were located in Orange Walk and Tim bought a British-built Land Rover, complete with instructions and tools. (Upon leaving the country Tim gave the vehicle to the Bishop of Honduras which the Bishop used in Belize.) There was a slight problem with the Land Rover—every time there was a parade, which was often, the villagers wanted to borrow it.

There were two main schools in the country established by the Anglican Church which was black and the Roman Catholics who were Hispanics. Regular Sunday services were held in Orange Walk, and Corozal, but getting to Gallon Jug and Lemonal was more involved. Anna and Reinette went with Tim one time. They left by a river boat in late afternoon, traveled all night on board the boat, and arrived the next morning at a place where a small train met the boat and then they rode through a forest most of the day to Gallon Jug which was a mahogany lumber settlement run by the British. Church services were held in a big hall. The following day they left by train for the boat landing, and from there took a small boat (like a dory) through river and forest. Finally, they were met by a man with some mules which they rode the rest of the way to Lemonal.

Lemona seemed like a small island with lots of trees—no cars— and plenty of chickens! Services were held in the school house which was built high off the ground. At one end was a small room with a single bed for the priest and by pushing some desks together Anna and Reinette made a bed for themselves. The school teacher provided the meals.

Anna was always a curiosity because of her blondness and braids, with rubber bands on the end to hold the braid together. The black children's curly hair held in place with nothing to keep their braids from unraveling. On the way out of the village one of the women made them wait while she caught a white chicken and gave it to Anna. Living in British Honduras was very different and very interesting!

The Later Years (1962-1996)

Upon returning to California, Tim, Reinette and Anna went to Grass Valley and stayed until June 1962. In 1962 they returned to Bakersfield, and lived there ever since.

Retirement in Bakersfield at first involved some psychiatric treatment for Tim resulting in following a drug treatment program using Lithium, a commonly used anti-depressant. The roller coaster existence of a manic-depressive diagnosis was the condition under which Tim had lived for many years, resulting in a high-stress married life, strained and fractured friend and family relationships, and the confusion, worry or anxiety that were attendant at personal encounters with Tim. These conditions finally leveled out when he started a consistent drug treatment, and social interaction became more acceptable to everyone whose lives bore on his.

By his mid-seventies when travel was not available to him, Tim turned to food as a way to occupy his attention; in particular going to Dewars ice cream shop for a malted milk, his favorite food of all. At first he could walk there, but gradually obesity and a lame knee put a stop to that and he used cajolery of family and friends to bring him a malt occasionally.

Along with overeating, he took up writing in notebooks almost nonstop, and because by this time his reasoning capacity had failed considerably his writing was mostly unintelligible. In the psychiatric literature this was a disorder for which the name "epigraphy" had been attached.

Attendance at church services was another passion of Tim's at this time. Tim's father was a Catholic, and in the late 1960s Tim decided to also become Roman Catholic where he had been baptized as a baby. Tim attended St. Francis Catholic Church faithfully until his physical condition no longer permitted him to get in and out of the car.

Timothy Eugene John Sullivan, I lay my hands upon you in
the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, beseeching
him to uphold you and fill you with his grace, that you may
know the healing power of his love. Amen

*Ministration to the Sick
Book of Common Prayer*

Epilogue

Tim was always a very generous person. He contributed significantly to the educational expenses of several different relatives and friends. He also invited guests to several trips to the Olympics, and tours of foreign countries, and brought Swedish relatives to visit the U.S.

Mention should be made here about the Belden-Barrett Scholarship which Tim initiated and supported at the University of Redlands, beginning in 1957. The initial scholarship was awarded to Joseph Abu-Samra, a nineteen-year-old student from Nazareth, Israel, whom Tim had met on one of his trips. The scholarship was later awarded to Sarojini Benjamin, an older foreign student from India.

In the last year of Tim’s life, Alan, Reinette’s younger brother, was able to spend several months, all totaled, in giving Tim the personal care which was increasingly needed and for which Reinette was physically unable to do alone.

At the very end of his life, while still in his home, Tim removed from his wheelchair to a bed where he gradually ceased to be responsive to those about him. One of the last meaningful things Tim said to Reinette was about two weeks before he died when he said “I’m not as intelligent as I used to be, am I?”

In the early morning hours of March 29, 1996, with Reinette and Anna beside him, Tim peacefully breathed his last and while “absent in the body, present with the Lord.” A beautiful and dignified funeral mass was conducted at Saint Francis Catholic Church, the church where he was baptized almost 79 years earlier. The casket was covered with a richly broidered pall adorned with a cross, with the foot of the bier toward the altar befitting the office of a priest. Interment at Union Cemetery was in the family plot next to his parents beneath a tall monument of a Celtic cross. Following interment, family and friends gathered at “2703” and once again the old house was filled with memories of previous events: engagements, marriages, births, deaths, joyous Christmas Days and happy Thanksgivings.

Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God of His great mercy to take unto Himself the soul of our dear brother here departed, we therefore commit his body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope of the Resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ; Who shall change our vile body, according to the mighty working, whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself.

*At the Burial of the Dead
Book of Common Prayer, 1549*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore.
Amen.

The Benediction

Compiled, edited and written by
Wayne and Jessie Poteete Lance (June 1996)