

For 30 years, while I was a school head, , I belonged to a prestigious organization called the Country Day School Headmasters Association , which had recently begun to elect women as members, in spite of the title, and for two years even served as its President, attending its annual meetings as the guests of different colleges every summer. I hadn't participated for the last ten years , however, except just once , three years ago, at Bowdoin College in Brunswick , Maine, when I thought I might find this talk tonight there, and did.

Several years earlier, while visiting Boston, a couple of elderly relatives had approached me at a family dinner, and said " that it's time to come home, Peter, and write something about our family's history, and you must have those people out there straightened out there by now. " Some of them seemed to think that I must have been in the Peace Corps in Borneo or something.

And I had found myself thinking about several wonderful experiences I had growing up in Maine , and what they have meant to the person I have become.

When I was 11,, in 1943, and my older sister was a social worker in Washington, and my two older brothers had been drafted for military service at ages 19 and 17-- Loring was the most versatile and gifted of us all, but had skipped two grades in elementary school, over the pleas of my mother, so this was an unintended consequence.

Whatever their reasons, my parents had decided to send my seven year old kid sister Ellie for a month, to an odd place in Waldeboro , Maine , called Kindercamp Farm, where I would be an unpaid junior counsellor, and was surprised to find myself loving working with little kids.

And, on a couple of those unbelievably clear nights, Miss Bartlett, who ran the camp, awakened us at midnight, and we dragged our sleeping bags outside and looked up at the starry sky while she explained what we were really seeing for the first time, and Ellie would creep over and find me and smile and feel safe even though we didn't say much.

When Ellie and I got back from Maine, I was invited to join a smallish sports club called the Wellesley Tigers, and we competed all year in football, hockey, baseball and tennis , coached by a legendary volunteer named Larry Rice., who never seemed to have a real job, to the best of our knowledge, but must have had a lot of money. We had all gone to the same public neighborhood elementary, and the team broke up when we all enrolled in private high schools in grade 9. and were eligible for sports there. Larry talked every day about the importance of hard work, punctuality , sportsmanship and teamwork, and five Tigers quietly dropped out along the way. When he died , at 90, the Boston Globe ran a major obituary on its front page, perhaps in part because a senior editor had been a Tiger, and noted that every one of us lettered in at least one sport in an Ivy League college. Former Tigers were senior executives at Gillette, John Hancock and Raytheon, and three of were heads of major independent schools, and there were Professors at B. C., Harvard and Tufts, and the list went on. Every one of us had older brothers or fathers who were neighbors had served in World War 2, several of whom had been killed or wounded, and we have never forgotten that, although we didn't talk much about it, either.

To this day, we are all convinced that one of the reasons we have such growing inequality and social immobility and political tensions in our society is that the terms required personal sacrifice and community service are only rarely heard among our leaders. There are dozens of inexpensive ways besides a narrowly military draft that a couple of years of required national service among all our young people and illegals could be enormously meaningful shared experiences. But there aren't many votes there, especially among the biggest hitters.

The highlights of our three summers together as Tigers were when we all gathered at the North Station and took the train together to Belgrade, Maine, and met in a bus by Larry Rice and driven to his cabin on Blueberry Island on Great Pond, where we set up our tents for two weeks, and concentrated exclusively on our tennis, spinning around the lake on his stunning state-of-the-art chris craft, spending a couple of nights at the roller skating rink in Waterville, building campfires and grilling burgers and roasting marshmallows, and licking the big blades from making our own home made ice cream, and never tiring of hearing him tell us over and over and over about the August he beat Johnston and Tilden on the grass at Newport, and lifted his national rank to #6. I learned several years from a Tiger that a young Boston hedge fund guy had just bought the ancient chris-craft for \$500,000 and spent another \$5-,000 fixing it up.

And I remember, after getting home from Maine before enrolling at Nobles, getting together with my close Warren School friends Gigi Harunk, whose father cleaned our lawn mowers, and Bunny Impallario, whose father was a cobbler, and Jimmy Gately, whose father worked for the town's trees and moths department, and our promising that we would remain close friends after I left.

And Jimmy, after a pause, quietly responding; "That isn't going to happen, Peter." And he was right.

It never ceases to amaze me how vast Maine is, but it is important to understand that. When one crosses the border from New Brunswick into Fort Kent, for instance, on his way to Manhattan, he has driven half the distance when he gets to Bangor. And Maine is bigger than the five other New England states combined. When I was growing up, it wasn't uncommon to hear about small planes going down and never being found.

The third summer of my early adolescence, following my first year at Nobles, just turned 14, my mother told my father that the two of us needed to go off together for a while and explore his beloved Northern Maine wilderness. Years later, she told me that he had needed that more than I had.

My beloved brother, Stewie, had been killed in Holland on the previous Thanksgiving day, age 20, and my other brother, Loring, aged 19, had been wounded twice in Austria, and was awaiting orders to board a ship bound for Japan. And my father, who had been a dashing young Cavalry officer in WW 1, was beginning privately to berate himself for having insisted that they follow his example, and join the Army when most of our friends' and neighbors' sons seemed much safer serving as officers in the Navy.

He arranged with the enormous Great Northern Paper Company that extends all the way into Canada to let us camp for two weeks on its property, as long as we signed a document promising that the company

had no responsibility for us if we got lost or injured, and off we went, an unforgettable experience, with lots of quiet thinking and wondering.

And he had some memorable stories.

We passed over part of the downtrodden trail, for instance, where, where his Harvard classmate, Joe Kennedy bootlegged a fortune's worth of booze into the country during prohibition, and he how he barely knew Joe because Roman Catholic day students who commuted every day were strangers.

He told about how Joe was a back-up infielder on the baseball team, and made the last out at first base of an Ivy League baseball championship game when the coach inserted him at first base in the 9th inning. When the coach asked him for the ball for the team trophy case the next day. Joe said he must have lost it. It was years before friends observed that ball in a glass case in a prominent place on his desk years later.

And, when Joe wanted to build the famous family compound on the ocean in Hyannisport, but couldn't get the land, he secretly hired a few aristocratic Protestants to make the purchases for him. It was a generation or two before some of those families could get back into the Cape's most fashionable clubs.

He talked about losing his father when he was 12, and being the oldest of seven siblings, and voting at the Vestry meeting at Trinity Church in Copley Square when the Parish stopped selling seats in the most desirable pews to the highest bidders. Hilariously, he told about selling Boston Herald's outside Trinity church on Sunday mornings, but dividing the paper into three separate sections in order to supplement his income. It was the sports section that done me in", he remembered. "All the men insisted on the sports page."

And I marvelled at his skill in calmly navigating the Great Northern property with extraordinary skill, and privately understood for the first time that he and our mother were older parents for Ellie and me than they must have been for Barbara and Stewie and Loring.

So little spoken those two weeks together in the wilderness, so much deeply felt.

My last unforgettable experience in Maine occurred when I was invited by the Ford Foundation, in the midst of the Vietnam war in 1965, to spend a year launching something called the Leadership Development Program, a project aimed at developing largely home-grown administrative talent for public schools in Northern New England, especially remote villages along the Canadian border in Maine such as Fort Kent, Eastport, Lubec, Machias, Eagle Lake, Jackman, Presque Isle., Caribou, Jackman, Patten and Sherman Mills, towns financially and culturally far removed from places such as Kennebunkport, Portland, Camden and Bar Harbor.

Some such programs already existed, but largely involved excellent young men and women from Wellesley who had degrees from Yale and might well be Teach for America veterans today and aspired to wind up in Darien, New Trier Indian Hill and other communities that could afford them. It is an

understatement to say that the eight prospective administrators I chose for our new programs lacked similar educational credentials. But they were bright, and energetic, and charismatic, and deeply rooted in the region, and loved kids.

And the Ford Foundation paid them for a year simply to do internships beside eight of the best high school Principals in the country, and course work only if they could manage both responsibilities. We got very lucky matching our mentors and their hardscrabble mentees.

Simply stated, these 5 young men and 3 young women turned out to be terrific, indeed so terrific that two years after I left my one year gig to head a boarding school near Cleveland, , the Ford Foundation began making them promise that they would return home to work for at least two years before moving anyplace else.

Every Monday morning, I flew from Boston to Presque Isle on Northeast's only daily nonstop, flew home on Friday nights, and stayed in some of the worst motels in the country, made even worse by the fact that it was out-of-season.

Their missions were simple: just study excellent high schools in action, and see what you can take home.

1965 was a fascinating time to be in the most down-east place in the country.

I recall, for instance, that numerous parochial schools were still conducted entirely in French, led by French nuns, most of whose relatives had not made it to Louisiana after the English cruelly threw them out of Nova Scotia.

Their rural poverty was as bad as our cities' poverty, as many farmers kept trying to farm lands that still can barely be farmed., except for the scraggly potatoes and wonderful blueberries that grew in profusion. Costcos sell Wyman's marvelous Maine blueberries here in Cincinnati's, and those of you who know Lobsta Bakes in Newtown know what I mean when it comes to blueberry pies. Every fall, at least still during the year I was there, the schools closed for two weeks in the fall to harvest the crops, in part because very few immigrants wanted to travel that far.

There's a small interesting tid-bit from that Vietnam era when our country still had drafts and our leaders kept feeling we ought to keep showing the world how tough we were, although growing numbers of them have not fought in wars themselves, which means that only 1 % of our citizens feel they have an obligation to serve and sacrifice, militarily or in other patriotic ways, is that Maine, for generations, ranked behind only Mississippi and Georgia and Alabama in its high percentages of young men being judged physically unfit for our forces.

One last note about that year before I move on, which was inspired by a personal experience in 1965 that is becoming what is perhaps the most fascinating significant potential economic development that has happened in Maine in generations, and an extraordinary development that I have been privileged on several occasions to see up-close-and personal.

Last year, in a featured first page article in the Globe, was the headline: "The nation's first commercial tidal energy project in this northeasternmost city of the country in Eastport can sometime generate a significant portion of the nation's energy...20 tidal generators that are being lowered to the seafloor here will produce enough electricity to power some 1,300 homes.. Maine is second only to Alaska in the number of places with strong enough tides and waves to support ocean power installations This beginning is jointly supported by a private ocean renewable power company in California and the Energy Department...Eastport's dramatic and powerful tides rise on average some 20 feet over a 12 hour cycle, and they have been known in storms to rise as much as 50 feet, when storms are at their strongest... This water can move as fast as 6 knots, or as much as 7 miles an hour, resulting in a surge of 70 billion cubic feet of seawater every tide. And the times of the tides can be counted on to be as predictable as clockwork.

Franklin D. Roosevelt and Dwight D. Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy have recommended pursuing this idea, and every scholar who has pursued it in theory agrees that it can generate enough energy to serve our entire east coast, from Eastport to Key West, from the large Bay of Fundy that washes down an ever narrowing passageway to the headwaters of Eastport.

The probable reason Chamberlain didn't accept the offer from Harvard was that he had fallen in love, and that's an interesting story all by itself.

Having complied with his mother's request that he regularly attend Brunswick's local protestant church, presided over by a Pastor named Adams, he looked across the sanctuary and saw worshipping there for the first time a girl who turned out to be 22, or three years older than he was, and was smitten. So, apparently, was she.

Fanny was a Boston Adams herself, and, therefore, it turned out, not too distantly related to two Presidents of the United States, but, for reasons I simply haven't been able to figure out, she somehow had been adopted into four different Adams family homes in four different locations in her lifetimes, this one being the last. And she didn't like this Pastor Adams at all, as he kept reminding her that he still had a legal right, indeed obligation, to order her around, which he was comfortable exercising. And he never had any enthusiasm for the financially strapped farmboy at the college who wanted to court her who was three years younger than she was. And most important, as a widower, the Rev. Adams had himself recently married a young woman who was the same age as Fanny, indeed a young wife whom he showered with public affection and expensive gifts.

The fact of the improbable matter was that it took eight years before Fanny Adams and Lawrence could marry, although, happily, in my opinion, they found enough privacy from time to time to be especially romantic, which twice strongly worried them when she told him she feared she might be pregnant. Interestingly, one of the rare times Pastor Adams felt comfortable having them seen together was when they could spend some Sunday evenings in the home of a Professor whose wife would read passages

from a book she was writing about slavery. Her name was Harriett Becher Stowe, and the book was called Uncle Tom's Cabin.

As the relationship between Pastor Adams and his adopted step-daughter continued to deteriorate, he somehow persuaded himself that he had one card left to play, which was to send Fanny to a place called Milledgeville, Georgia, to teach in a school for two years, in the obvious hope that she would either forget about Lawrence, or fall in love with someone else. Or he might get lucky and Lawrence would have a similar experience. It didn't happen, for

even though Lawrence left Bowdoin for the year after his graduation, enrolling in the same Bangor Theological Seminary that his mother had hoped he would enter after high school to prepare for the ministry.

The department he liked best at the Seminary was music, and he spent a lot of time there singing and learning to play the organ. And, when he returned to Bowdoin to teach, and Fanny and he were finally granted permission by the Pastor to marry, he was able to supplement his income by becoming the College's successful organist and choirmaster for four years.

Fanny, now 30, had her first of five children just six months after they married, although #s 2, 3 and 5 heartbreakingly died in infancy.

Their marriage was from all reports a very long and happy and mutually supportive one, although Fanny really lost her temper when he returned from Maine to join his troops at the height of the Civil War after being told by the War Department he had more than fulfilled his commitments.

Just a word about my comparing some ancient Briggs women photographs from the 1850s with a few of Fanny, and, alas, we had no one who compared favorably with her. This was one strikingly handsome woman.

If you want to know exactly what Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain did in the Civil War, go back and read The Killer Angels and see Gettysburg, and understand, with the exception of New England, that very few Americans knew who he was until the mid-1970s. Now, as we commemorate the 150th anniversary of the end of that war and President Lincoln's assassination, one can't walk five feet at Gettysburg without someone's trying to sell a trinket with Chamberlain's face on it. Suffice it to say that he fought in 24 battles, was wounded 6 times, once mortally, and had 6 horses shot out from under him.

His decision to leave Bowdoin and fight was interesting

Having completed 8 years on the Bowdoin faculty, he felt entitled to a sabbatical, for instance, and told the President he was leaving for a year, since, like the heroic visionaries who have given us Iraq in this century, he knew the Civil War would be over in a year. The President said "no", saying he was

indispensable, and reminding him that going to war was by no means a slam dunk in pacifist parts of Brunswick. After all, Jefferson Davis had been awarded an honorary degree just 5 years earlier.

So, Chamberlain came back a week later to tell the President that he wanted a year off to study Aramaic, Jesus' native language, after all, and would be back in a year, and got on a train to Boston and enlisted there.

He was surprised to be offered the command of a very important unit there, but indeed was surprised, and declined, saying he had no military background, and would need to work for another senior officer until he did.

So, in no particular order of chronology or importance, a few biographical events I found revealing:

While preparing for a major battle one day, an officer and three armed soldiers showed up in his tent with 200 shackled prisoners from Maine who turned out to have deserted from their units, and carrying out orders to pass them along to a bewildered Chamberlain for safe-keeping and appropriate discipline. In fact, Chamberlain knew several of them quite well. These proud soldiers from Maine had been so disillusioned with their treatment that they had simply started hiking home before being arrested.

They had had almost no food or rest for two days and were bitterly resentful.

After some hesitation and discussions with his own colleagues, Chamberlain ordered their shackles removed, and had generous rations brought from his troops' food tent, and left them alone for an hour or so.

And he then returned alone into their midst, and began to talk patiently with them as an effective chaplain might have done. After an hour or so, he called to his own men to bring back their firearms, and excused two of them to keep going on their way back to Maine because their friends said they were so badly needed there.

198 of those prisoners were quietly restored to active duty, and soon joined Chamberlain's unit in the historic Battle of Little Round Top that eventually earned him the title of "Lion of the Union." Fifteen of those prisoners went back to Maine after the war with medals, and 70 of them never got home at all.

About a year after Little Round Top, as Chamberlain stood before his men in Petersburg, Va., and lifted his sword for a leftward oblique, a bullet smashed into his side. It travelled through his right hip to the left one, crushing his bones and cutting into his bladder and urethra on the way. Blood pooled around his feet. Chamberlain knew the wound was likely to be mortal, but feared that falling in front of his men might derail their momentum, so he held himself up on his sabre until he weakened and fell. He lay bleeding into the Virginia soil for almost an hour, thinking of Fanny and his mother as his life drained out of him. When he finally arrived at the field hospital, he asked the surgeons to leave him and see to the soldiers first. Then he laid back to wait for the end. But the end never came. The surgeons, led by a Harvard Medical School professor named Abner Shaw, who became such a close friend that

Chamberlain and he are now buried beside each other in Brunswick, ignored his requests, and instead worked on his extensive wounds until they could give the then Colonel even the slightest chance of recovery. For weeks it appeared he couldn't possibly survive, but, miraculously, he was back at the front of his brigade within a few months, driving Fanny so crazy that she began making plans to leave him.

And, especially interestingly, most of America thought he had died the first night because that was what the newspapers in Boston and Portland and New York had already printed. The very next day, Gen. Grant had him posthumously promoted to Brigadier General, and, the day after that, President Lincoln had upped it to it Major General.

What was also interesting about the rest of Chamberlain's life-- he didn't die until 1914, and he only lost his beloved Fanny in 1905--was that he always bravely saw his wound more like an old enemy than a badge of courage, and dared to say so. As a journalist wrote last week in Gettysburg: "This man on all the tourists' keychains lived the majority of his life with pain, incontinence and infection."

I'm obviously over my depth here, but this wound quietly tortured Chamberlain for 50 years. Because of the damage to his urethra, he often required the use of a catheter, which created a fistula at the base of his penis. The hole never healed. It leaked constantly and left him susceptible to chronic bladder and testicular infections that left him unspeakable agony. A surgery in 1883 attempted to close the fistula, but he barely survived, so it wasn't attempted again. It was the old wound that killed him in 1914.

And I think what follows needs to be said as millions of Americans think they have done their patriotic duty when they applaud a veteran for throwing out the first ball at a Bengals game, or insist that the Congress get tougher employing other people's kids to serve their country at home and abroad.

Chamberlain's case is only one example of the struggles of hundreds of thousands of disabled Civil War veterans. The pain and difficulty of wartime wounds and illnesses did not simply resolve with the surrender at Appomattox. Some prosthetics were made, but the vast majority of veterans, like Chamberlain, had wounds that no artificial limb could repair. These old soldiers struggled to support their families in Gilded Age society, and, although many received pensions, they were usually insufficient for those who could not work to supplement the payments. Hundreds of thousands of veterans filled soldiers' homes, poorhouses, prisons and and asylums.

Twenty years after the war, the brilliantly oratorical Chamberlain, who was now making hundreds of speeches that Lincoln might have been making if he hadn't been killed, closed a speech at the very spot where he had been mortally wounded: "What was it all for, and what will come of it?"

As the war progressed, Chamberlain naturally kept writing letters to friends and family at home, and some of them were published. This one seemed especially interesting, and, strangely, a little unusual: "I must stop to mention one rather striking incident in the rush to the front. For the first time, my eye caught the glimmer of black soldiers trotting along our left, eager for the front, faces all lighted up. The sight thrilled me. Is it patriotic justice, or is it the irony of history, or fate, those black men pressing

their way to the front, eager to get into the fray which is to make a white man's republic a free country?
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It is apparently truer than fiction, my having checked several independent sources, after Chamberlain somehow returned to lead his troops after his much publicized mortal wound, almost losing his furious wife in so doing, that a confederate's bullet went through his horse's neck, and hit a metal frame carrying Jenny's picture inside a bible inside a leather pouch in very close proximity to his heart.

April 9, 1865 marked the conclusion of the war, and it was understandably expected that Lee would surrender directly to Grant. For some reason that isn't entirely clear to me, however, Lee chose a confederate Gen. John B. Gordon to handle the poignant ceremony for the south, while Grant chose Chamberlain.

And Chamberlain, entirely of his own volition and without consulting anyone, ordered his men to come to attention as the southern troops approached, and to carry their arms in a show of respect. So, Gen. Gordon, surprised and deeply moved, equalled Chamberlain's courtesy by dipping his confederate ensign and instructing his decimated troops to respond to the so-called northern "carry".

As word of this extraordinary exchange spread throughout the country, there was widespread applause on both sides. but there were equally large-scale and spontaneous attacks of Chamberlain in the North for his cowardly, traitorous and unilateral forgiveness of a sworn enemy that was deserving only of humiliation. . . Those attacks never fazed him a bit, and he was never disciplined for his actions.

Years later, Gen. Gordon, like Lee a West Point graduate, wrote a book in which he called Chamberlain "the knightliest soldier I have ever known.."

When the war ended, Chamberlain returned to Bowdoin and Fanny and their two living kids, but that kind of domesticity would be allowed to last for only two years. Happily, the two years gave him some time, with Fanny's help, to begin to recover psychologically from what the doctors and scholars in the Civil War were calling "soldiers' heart.", while his excruciating physical agonies continued unabated for his entire lifetime. Interestingly, while I was doing my research, I was reminded that the currently fashionable term PTSD, or post-traumatic stress disorder, isn't describing anything new. In addition to "soldiers' heart", it was called "shell shock" in World War 1, "combat fatigue" and "combat exhaustion" in WW 2 and Korea, and "stress response syndrome" in Vietnam. There are apparently very few winners in wars.

In 1867, after several times saying "no", Chamberlain was finally persuaded by both major political parties to run for Governor, and leaving up to him which party he preferred.

He served four terms as Governor, and never got less than 75% of the vote. He repeated one previous miscalculation, however, showing some rare insensitivity, perhaps generated, in part, by financial considerations, at a time when no home was provided for the Governor by the state, when he left

Fanny in Brunswick most of the time he was in Augusta. For the time was understandably at hand when Fanny's fear of abandonment was growing, remembering that she was a woman whose parents both died when she was an infant, and who, for reasons I could never quite figure out, had been parcelled out among four different sets of adoptive parents by the time she was 18. She would not be a happy camper until her husband was finally invited back to Brunswick to become the President of Bowdoin.

The highlights of his years as Governor were interesting, and featured a state war claims commission that subsidized Maine troops for their military service, going all the way back to 1812. His insistence on the generous treatment of veterans and their widows and children became legendary. Heartbreakingly, however, there was so much cheating and fraud and misuse at the national level when these designated funds for veterans and their families were distributed that the federal government reduced such appropriations.

Troubled by the ignorant and wretched conditions at Maine's Hospital for the Insane, serving a population that he described as "minds broken under the weight of real or fancied wrongs," he initiated improvements.

He founded the University of Maine in Orono, close to his home in Brewer, with 12 students and 2 teachers the first year.

Determining that Maine's numerous and powerful rivers could generate lots of energy for industrial growth in southern growth, he subsidized some new factories, and, having been very favorably impressed during the war with the troops in a regiment from Minnesota fighting next to his own 20th Maine, he provided financial incentives for Scandinavians to move to Maine and work in the new factories.

And he fought prohibition, convinced that it was an excessive assertion of states' rights.

And he held out for capital punishment at a time when it was very unpopular, although no one was ever executed on his watch.

If there has ever been a married couple that richly deserved some fulfilling and happy time together, it was Joshua and Fanny Chamberlain, so it was wonderful when the Bowdoin Trustees asked him to come back to Brunswick in 1873 to become the college's President, a position he held for 12 years. Simply stated, these would be the closest and most idyllic years of their marriage and lives. And no one had thought twice when he told the Trustees during the interviews that he had been thinking hard for years about his beloved college's future, and would need to be granted "flexibility and freedom to make changes."

So, he said, first, the college would have much too important a calling in the future to insist that its primary mission was predominantly to prepare young men for the Congregational ministry, delivering an eloquent message to the college community about the importance of providing a liberal arts curriculum. And, in support of this position, he said it was crazy to insist that all entering freshmen

show some mastery of Ancient Greek and Latin. Modern languages would be the future, especially French and German.

And, surely knowing that this preposterous idea had no future, but willing to do a little horse-trading, and speaking as the brother of two talented sisters, and the father of two talented daughters, and the son and spouse of two formidable women, he wrote this: "Women too should have a part in this high calling. Because in this sphere of things her rights, her capacities, her offices, her destiny, are equal to those of men."

Observing how many young men had demonstrated enormous courage and maturity in the recently completed Civil war, he suggested a loosening of rigid discipline and treating the students more as young adults. And he eliminated obligatory worship services before classes every early morning.

Interestingly, he proposed that all the undergraduates should undertake some mandatory military training on a regular basis, and asked Washington to send some soldiers to be in charge program. The soldiers who were sent had no respect for the undergraduates, however, and there were frequent protests that sometimes turned into public demonstrations. The army had insisted that the students buy their own uniforms and other equipment, and devote so much time to their training that it cut seriously into their class and study time. A frustrated Chamberlain summarily sent the soldiers back to Washington, and protested to congressional leaders that his new Reserve Officer Training Corps, or ROTC, depended on the leadership of soldiers who could communicate with young college men.

He abolished Saturday classes, made advanced mathematics and science and modern language courses mandatory, and abolished an incredible eight week mid-year vacation that had been for years responsive to hard Maine winters.

And I'm leaving out some other changes.

Perhaps the happiest of Franny's and his years at Bowdoin was when they were granted a sabbatical at the request of the State Department to spend six months in Paris representing the U. S. at an international Paris Exposition that must have been a kind of World Fair.

Simply stated, they electrified the French. For the first time, Fanny could afford to dress and behave the way a Boston Adams is supposed to dress and behave, and her striking elegance made her enormously popular.

Her husband's eloquence, impeccable French and statesmanlike behavior made them an unexpected hit of the French social season, and his ability to converse in other languages with the representatives of other countries was enormously impressive.

Fanny and Joshua were celebrated in both France and at home when they returned to Brunswick, and, although the exposition was obviously over, they were invited back the following year to be presented an award that is to this day the highest honor that France can bestow on a non-citizen.

Years later, she told me that he needed the trip much more than I did. My beloved brother, Stewie, had been killed in Holland on the previous Thanksgiving Day at age 20, and my other brother, Loring, age 19, had been wounded twice in Austria, both of them enlisted men, and, we at home were being told, might be awaiting orders to board a ship bound for the Pacific.

One of the things that my mother also told me, which I never discussed with my father, was that, near the end of his life, he was feeling terrible guilt about that he had urged Stewie and Loring, and then me, 15 years later during Korea, of course, to join the Army, when a big majority of the guys who were our classmates were choosing to be officers in the Air Force or Navy. My mother was as unselfish a person as I have ever known, felt guilty praying every day I was in college that I wouldn't be sent to Korea in 1954, as an Artillery forward observer, and, somehow, I wasn't.

If there is any local group that can understand what a complex challenge it is for a man to age gracefully, it is probably this one, and I truly don't want to dwell on the sad fact that Josua Chamberlain had both mental and physical problems in his old age.

It all started in his twelfth year as President of Bowdoin when he visited a famous Dr. Richard Warren in Boston, and was told that he was shortening his life if he didn't slow down. He still had a couple of life-threatening surgeries ahead of him to reduce fevers and infections, needed to keep replacing his catheters, and was never free of excruciating pain.

.In addition, Fanny was going blind, while he had growing financial problems. And his name and reputation still created tempting opportunities that never quite worked out, for one reason or another. Florida real estate was one example, as were several expanding robber baron railways and hotels, and a year as President of a college of art, for some reason, in NYC. At age 70, he wrote the War Department to inquire if he could assume a command in the Spanish-American War, and was outraged when his request was denied. On another occasion, strangely, he wrote a senior Russian military officer he had met in Paris to see if he might find some employment there. And the federal government was still the victim of so much fraud when passed legislation to help veterans that it became increasingly reluctant to enact bills.

It was only when several senators from all over the country kept pestering President McKinley to create a job for him, that turned out to be called "Surveyor of the Port of Portland", that he finally had some stability.

When he finally died in Portland, at age 85, and was transported back to Brunswick by a special train, it was overwhelmingly only the residents of greater Boston and Maine who clearly remembered the giant the country had lost, until The Killer Angels and Gettysburg came along 60 years later.

He insisted on his own gravestone in Bowdoin's cemetery, which reads in its entirety: "Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, 1829-1914."

Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain was born in the small town of Brewer, Maine, across the Penobscot river from Bangor, Maine, not far from Orono, where the University of Maine, of which he was the founder, is located.

He was the oldest of five children, including three sisters, of a father he never liked very much, and a mother he adored.

His father persisted in farming 100 acres of unproductive land, and was proud of an extensive military heritage, and always wanted his son to go to West Point. A great grandfather had fought in the revolution, a grandfather in the war of 1812, and his father had served in a little known Aroostook/Quebec conflict over land that happily stopped short of bloodshed.

Maine had just separated from Massachusetts to become a state at the same time Missouri became one, too. This had been a horse trade -- slave and free -- to keep trying to avoid a civil war.

Joshua's father was a stern man who simply didn't understand why his son was so interested in excelling at his studies and reading books and day-dreaming when he should have been doing chores. A sister remembered all the times when the father would ask 12-year-old Joshua to do something, and he persisted in seeking instructions, and the response was always curt: "Just do it, damn it, that's how."

Mrs. Chamberlain was another story, a gentle thoughtful, religious woman who wanted him to attend the Protestant seminary in Bangor and become a Protestant minister, and applauded his accomplishments and aspirations. Joshua adored her and his kid sisters and younger brother, and was always comfortable showing it.

By the age of 15, he had exhausted the intellectual resources of his local school, and decided he wanted to go to college, and, specifically, because his favorite teacher was a recent graduate, Bowdoin College, the best college in the state, even though it was 100 miles away.

and his mother agreed, since its main purpose was to prepare Protestant clergy, and the students enjoyed a reputation for piety at the same time they were manly and fun-loving.

sadly, however, there would be a normally insurmountable problem in gaining admission because he would have to get to Brunswick first and meet with a faculty jury and demonstrate a mastery of both Latin and ancient Greek. And, while his favorite teacher could help him with the Latin, he had forgotten all the ancient Greek. So Joshua's mother had some ancient Greek texts mailed up from Boston, which Jonathan mastered by himself. Six months later, barely turned 16, Joshua travelled alone to Brunswick and demonstrated for three senior faculty his mastery of Cicero, Homer and Virgil.

Four years later, just turned 20, he graduated summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa, and was invited to join the faculty. And eight years after that, he was a full professor and chair of the department of modern languages and had literally taught every discipline in the curriculum except mathematics. And he had been offered a full scholarship to go to Harvard to pursue a Ph.D. in modern languages, which he asked to be postponed until he got home from what he was convinced would be a short civil war.

(some of the things i am describing here about chamberlain will seem preposterous, and i can only plead that i have checked them all in 4 or 5 different places.)

In what he always considered his single proudest undergraduate achievement at bowdoin , chamberlain, who had grown up with a stammering and stuttering problem as a boy, won what is still to this day one of the college'ss major honors, its oratorical speaking contest.

And, incredibly, by the time he turned 30, he was considered to be fluent in nine languages, greek, latin, spanish, german, french, italian,arabic, hebrew and something called syriac, which i had to look up.

Yet, chamberlain's biggest event as an upperclassman at bowdoin was his instantly falling falling in love, at 19, with a woman who was older than he was by three years who also fell instantly in love with him , and the road to their marriage eight years later was a bizarre one.

I have seen pictures of some of my female ancestors from the mid nineteenth century , and concluded, after seeing pictures of her, too, that i would have waited eight years to have married chamberlain's fanny Adams long before the briggses.

Sadly, fanny Adams of Boston , a direct descendant of two presidents of the united states , lost both her parents only weeks after her birth , and , for reasons i have not been able to fathom, been passed along among relatives in four separate adoptions, the last one to an Adams who was the pastor of the protestant church in Brunswick that chamberlain had promised his mother he would attend every Sunday. And that recently widowed pastor had just married a parishioner who was exactly the same age--22- as fanny. And the three of them had intensely disliked each other from day 1, and the pastor was damned sure that and wasn't going to embarrass the extended Adams family by letting fanny marry a poor farm boy.