

Dr. Brad Walker

While I was growing up I had many chances to experience the kindness as well as the generosity of Dr. Brad Walker. He died in 1977, when I was over fifty, married, and the father of two children, but my memories go back a long time before that. Gerry's do, too, since she had more opportunity to know him as the kind, gentle doctor who treated Liz and John when we were living in Cornwall.

Brad and Katie were close friends with my parents, and Brad was my father's doctor during his last years, after his first heart attack around 1970. Brad knew how scared people can be when they are told they have heart trouble, and he did everything he could to allay Dad's fears. On several occasions he came to Dad and Mom's home and sat for hours in a chair next to Dad's bed because he knew he would want to see him if and when he woke up in the night.

Liz suffered a broken nose in a softball game on the Green and was carried to the Walkers' home, only a few yards away. Gerry and I were called and came immediately. Brad had already set the fracture. While I drove home to get insurance cards, Brad drove Liz and Gerry to the hospital for an x-ray. I met them there. Brad learned that the nose had been perfectly set, which pleased him greatly and us, too. The nose healed and shows no effects of the incident. When Brad returned to Cornwall that afternoon he flew down Bunker Hill at a hundred miles an hour, which was his custom. The cops all knew his car and never gave him a ticket.

Katie and my mother continued to be close friends after their husbands died. Katie was a potter, and we have examples of her ceramics in our house and we put her two beautiful angels on the mantel every Christmas.

I was a friend of two of Brad and Katie's sons, Ted and Tom. In the 1940s, after I was discharged from the service, they asked me to join them and Tommy Hubbard in a "barbershop quartet." I was skinny (and still am) but my voice was lower than any of theirs, so I was appointed the bass and taught to say dum-dee-dum-dee-dum at the appropriate times. We had a lot of fun and even gave a few informal concerts; our piece de resistance was a rendition of "Deep Purple," which is a favorite of amateur quartets. I not

only miss Brad and Katie but the boys, too. I think of all of them every time
I pass their house on the way to the library.

Charles Van Doren