It was a real pleasure and a rare privilege to have the honor of being invited back to one's home town on an occasion such as this, especially after an absence of over thirty-five years, as in my case. The environment and influence of Fort Collins and its people throughout the years of my boyhood and early manhood made a lasting impression on my life and I have always thought of Fort Collins as my home town even though I have spent more years of my life away from here than I did here. Hence, I was delighted to accept the invitation though I did so with considerable trepidation for I wondered what I might say that would be appropriate for an occasion of this kind.

Over the weeks since I received the invitation, I have asked myself repeatedly, "What makes Fort Collins the attractive city that it is? What makes it grow? What is its appeal that draws me back on every possible occasion?"

Perhaps it is its location in the midst of a beautiful and productive agricultural valley whose products have provided the base for its economic activity throughout its history. Or perhaps it is its easy access to the majesty and awe of the nearby Rockies with their seemingly endless variety of hills and valleys, deep canyons and towering peaks, trickling streams and rushing rivers, to say nothing of the new man-made lake that has turned the dry hillsides of Horsetooth and its foothills, which I used to climb as a boy, into a mighty reservoir that provides not only a source
of new productivity for your farms but also a site for water sports and recreation heretofore unknown in this area. Yet these do not seem to provide the answer for there are other agricultural areas equally or even more productive and other equally scenic mountain areas with less rigorous winters.

It might be your industries, yet Fort Collins has never been a major industrial city nor an important transportation center with mass payrolls to attract a big labor force. True, there has developed here over the years a number of relatively small but thriving industries, each of which contributes significantly to the economy of the community but none of which stands out as a dominant factor on its growth and development nor as a significant determinant in the character of the city itself.

What, then, makes Fort Collins the city it is, a city of attractive homes, good schools, and thriving churches, with wide, clean streets and a prosperous, steadily growing civic-minded business community, and a city government not unduly burdened by debt, yet alert and responsive to the needs of its citizens.

The more I have thought about it, the more I have become convinced that it is the people themselves with their hopes and aspirations for themselves and their families, their adaptability and receptivity to the changing world in which we live; but also their belief in and adherence to the fundamental and enduring verities of life. Let us look briefly, then, at our history in terms of people.

When Fort Collins was established one hundred years ago today the country was engaged in one of the greatest fratricidal struggles of all time. But even in the midst of this turmoil, many men were looking to new challenges and new opportunities in the beckoning frontiers of the
West. Trails were being blazed and forts established for the protection of that flood of people that was to surge across this vast and untamed land frontier in search of their future. First, were the hunters, driven by their aversion to the restraints of civilization and their craving for the freedom of the wild. Next came the gold seekers lured by the prospect of quick and easy wealth. Both made their contribution to the opening and the development of the West in general, and even of this community, but both were of a transitory nature. Thus our State became dotted with thriving mining camps that flourished for a day or two and then slid back and became mere memories of glories achieved or frustrations suffered as old mines played out and new discoveries beckoned. Even this area had its touch of gold fever as some of you will recall from the stories of the old Manhattan gold camp.

Less spectacular but yet of importance in their day were the old stone quarries at Stout and Masonville, once thriving communities in this area but now buried under the waters of Horsetooth Reservoir. And as recently as the mid-twenties it experienced again the excitement of the Manhattan gold days when black gold was first discovered in the Wellington oil field.

Activities such as these have all played their part in the development of this community, our State, and, in fact, the entire West and will doubtless continue to do so as new discoveries and scientific advances unlock the door to wealth still hidden or unutilized, not the least of which may be the oil shale fields almost at our door to the West.

However, a larger, stronger and more enduring factor in our Western development was the surge of settlers seeking a piece of land to call their
own, a place to put down their roots and raise their families. These were men whose ancestors had known the oppression of the feudal land barons and merchant princes of Europe, where a man's future had been limited to that of the station or economic strata to which he was born. In our own country they had seen the rise of the plantation system of agriculture in the South based on the slave labor of fellow human beings. And in the North they had seen the beginning of our own industrial barons rising to power through the oppressive exploitation of labor in their sweat shops.

They were earnest, courageous, hard-working and God-fearing men and women seeking a place where they might enjoy a fair share of the fruits of their own labor; a place where a man's stature in his community was based on his own efforts and his own contribution to its welfare, uninfluenced by race, religion, reputation, or economic status of his ancestors. Even as their independence and self-reliance gave them the courage to face the hazards of a new country, their God-fearing nature, fortified by the necessities of their new environment and their zeal for the rights of their fellowman as the best protection of their own rights, made them good neighbors and community builders. From their first start west, they had been bound together by their common needs and for their common protection. Thus developed the friendliness, neighborliness, and open-handed hospitality that became the tradition of the West.

It was people such as these who settled in Fort Collins and its surrounding area. It was people such as these who built our churches and our schools; people with a realization that they were living in a changing country and that to keep up those changes they must be prepared to accept and adapt to changes. It was this realization that led them to see the
possibilities in a new type of education envisioned by the Morrill Act of 1864, authorizing the establishment of the land-grant colleges. Up to that time college training had been limited largely to sons of the well-to-do and to the fields of the Arts and so-called learned profession, namely, law, medicine, and the ministry. Here was a proposal that would provide college training not only in the traditional fields but in the applied fields of agriculture and mechanic arts in publicly supported institutions that would be available to all. Incidentally, it was our land-grant colleges that have been largely responsible for the technological evolution in our agriculture that has made it the wonder and envy of the world. No place else in the world and at no other time in recorded history has man had such an abundant supply of such high quality food at so low a cost in terms of manhours of labor required to produce it as we enjoy in this country at the present time.

It was no accident nor idle dream that led some of our early pioneers to visualize the value of such a college, and it was this kind of vision that led such men as Patterson, Mason, Peterson, Mathews and Dalzell to provide the land as a site for such a college here in Fort Collins in 1879. From that day to the present time, the college has been a part of the town and, in fact, its major industry. Not only has it been a leader in the development of western agriculture but from its earliest days the importance of irrigation to our dry but potentially productive land was recognized and the college became a leader in the training of irrigation engineers and the development of irrigation projects. The early days were hard and growth was slow. Agriculture was as old as man but agricultural science was new and unrecognized as academically respectable
among the older colleges and universities of the day. Even at the turn of
the century the agricultural curriculum was a curious mixture of arts and
science in the classroom and practical work on the farm. But already its
impact was being felt in many fields and Fort Collins was developing from
a frontier fort to a prosperous and thriving commercial and educational
center for a rapidly developing agricultural community.

It was to such a town that the widow of a young Jefferson County
rancher brought her five-year old son and two younger daughters in the
summer of 1901. She sought three things: first, a source of livelihood
for herself and her children; second, a clean, wholesome environment in
which to raise them; and, third, far-sighted as she was, the opportunity
for a college education for them when they reached that age. Without busi-
ness or professional training but with the capacity for work developed
as the daughter of an Illinois farmer with an unusual talent for cooking,
she saw the opportunity for a livelihood in running a faculty boarding
table which would at the same time enable her to maintain a home for her
children and put them at the very door of the college when they were ready
for it.

And so, ladies and gentlemen, your speaker became a kindergarten
Pupil in the basement of the old Remington school sixty-three years ago
this fall. Perhaps you didn't know it, and I didn't until recently, but
that kindergarten was the first public school kindergarten west of the
Mississippi River and was indicative of the interest in the education of
its children that has made Fort Collins a city of outstanding schools
throughout its history. Then we had two buildings -- Remington with its
kindergarten and Franklin with the high school on the second floor, a small
Plant indeed compared with the numerous new grade schools, the junior high schools, and the magnificent high school plant that you have today. But more important even than the new buildings has been the corps of dedicated teachers who have contributed so much not only in the academic training of our children but also in the inspiration and ideals that they have helped instill in them.

As I think back over my own school days here, I can't help but give thanks to my teachers for the solid educational foundation they helped me to acquire. But, even more, as I think of the turmoil and strife that exists in so many of our cities today, I give thanks for the spirit of self-reliance and responsibility, of ambition and initiative, of tolerance and fair play that they taught us not only in the classroom but on the playgrounds, the athletic fields, and in all of our daily contacts. In this connection, I would like to pay tribute to a man whose former students are gathering to honor him later this week. This man came to Fort Collins High School in 1912 and it was my privilege to be a student in his class and a member of his first football team. The records of his athletic teams are known to all of you but his impact on the lives of the hundreds of Fort Collins boys who came under his influence in the last fifty years cannot be measured. As you know, I refer to George Washington Scott, teacher, coach and Christian gentleman.

And will you pardon me if I pay tribute to another Fort Collins teacher who retired just last year. As a former teacher myself, nothing has given me more pride and satisfaction than the words of praise that I have heard from some of the men and women who were in her classes during the past forty years, and who have told me what an inspiration she was to them. I refer to my sister, Miss Margaret Shepardson.
What I have said of the city schools is equally true of the College. It, too, has gone through an amazing evolution. In 1901 Colorado Agricultural College, frequently referred to as the "Cow College," had about 200 students known as the "Farmers." Its campus was limited to the old red brick buildings still standing on the East side of the campus. But it was already making its mark not only as a school for practical training in agriculture but also in the fields of science and technology, while the old Columbian and Aethenium Literary Societies, the student glee clubs and band added to the cultural development of the campus and the community.

By the time I entered as a freshman in 1913, enrollment had grown to over 500, with our class of 221 making up nearly half of the total. The chapel and gym had been added to "Old Main" and the white brick campus west of the track had been started. And in 1915 and '16 our football teams, of which it was my privilege to be a member and still known as the "Farmers," surprised ourselves, the community and, in fact, the entire Old Rocky Mountain Conference by winning the first football championships "Aggies" ever had. And here I would like to pay tribute to Harry Hughes, "Grand Old Man" of Aggie athletics and a man who had a powerful influence on the lives of all of us who came under his supervision.

But more important than its athletic record was the continuing advancement of the College in the fields of science and technology with a growing reputation that was drawing students in agriculture, engineering and veterinary medicine not only from across the country but also from many foreign lands. As further evidence of the achievement of academic respectability, its graduates were being readily accepted in the better graduate schools of the country.
And with this growth Fort Collins kept pace. The growing staff and student enrollment stimulated the growth of the business community to meet their needs, and the open hospitality to all, regardless of race, creed, national origin or economic status, continued to attract families seeking the type of home environment and educational and economic opportunity that had attracted my mother some years earlier.

In this connection, I am reminded of an illustration of Fort Collins' friendliness and hospitality to those seeking a home and an opportunity. Many of you will remember when the sugar factory was built and freight train loads of European peasants were brought in to work the beets. Few of them spoke any English and their customs were strange to us but they were honest, hard-working, God-fearing people looking for an opportunity for their children and a home they could call their own. Starting as contract workers, with the size of a man's contract depending upon the size of his family and the number of workers he could put in the field, they gradually became renters and then owners. Today many of the best farms in the county are owned by them or their children. Others have moved to town and have become some of the city's most substantial citizens.

If you will pardon another personal reference, I would like to tell you of my first job as an illustration of the interest of Fort Collins' business men in the youth of the city. As a small boy, I had been doing such odd jobs as I could find. One day Carl Anderson, then editor of the old Fort Collins Courier, called my mother to say that he had seen me working around the neighborhood and he wondered if I would be interested in a regular job delivering papers. That job was the beginning of a paper business that paid for most of my clothes, shoes and books for as I went on
through school I picked up routes for the other papers until at one time I was delivering the Fort Collins Express before breakfast, a combined Rocky Mountain News and Denver Republican route at noon, the Courier after school, and the Denver Post after supper. In fact, I learned the streets and house numbers of Fort Collins so well in those years that I can remember most of them to this day. But more important than that, I had a chance to learn about people and their attitudes toward life as reflected by their interest in the news boys on the streets. As I think of the many kindnesses I received and of the opportunities that have come to me and to many of my schoolmates who are now leading citizens of the community, I always remember my mother's answer when I asked her how Mr. Anderson knew about me. She replied with a quotation, most of which I have forgotten but one line of which stuck - "Many eyes are watching, taking note of you." I would like to think we have all earned whatever success we have attained but I know that much of it was made possible by the friendly interest of the many whose eyes were watching our efforts and who stood ready to extend a helping hand.

But I have talked overly long of the past. What of today and tomorrow? I need not tell you that we are living in a day of change. This has always been a land of change but the pace has been accelerated almost beyond belief. It takes less time for me to fly from Washington to Denver than it used to take to come from Denver to Fort Collins by train when I was a boy, and we can send an astronaut around the earth in a matter of a few hours. We can sit by our televisions and watch a news conference between world statesmen with each sitting in his own living room while their words and pictures bounce around the world by means of a man-made satellite in the sky.
The seemingly unlimited land frontier of yesteryear is gone but the developments of science have opened new frontiers whose limits no one can visualize today. The outlook for the future is for further technological advance in the development of new products, new tools and new methods of production, and these in turn call for increased and improved training of people for the new jobs that are being created. The unskilled jobs of the past are fast disappearing, just as did our land frontier, and the growth of any community in the future will depend primarily on its ability to provide the education and training for its youth to meet the employment needs of the future. In fact, the solution of the Number One economic problem of our country today, namely unemployment, is basically one of education and training.

In this connection, I would like to refer to a recent statement by another Fort Collins boy and former classmate of mine. Keith McHugh, who is now serving as Commissioner of the New York State Department of Commerce, in a recent speech before a national industrial conference, said this and I quote: "The return on our investment in education now accounts for more than one-fifth of the U. S. total economic growth. The key to the economic growth of the future is not in our factories but rather the nation's research corporations, industrial laboratories, experiment stations and universities." Later he went on to say that, "The best way for a region to attract the industry of tomorrow is to combine the finest possible college and university facilities, including advanced degree centers, with a solid growing base of research and development laboratories. This combination of assets has enormous attraction for research oriented industry, which in turn is generally the fastest growing in our industrialized society."
As I first read Keith's paper, I couldn't help but think of the many cities that are seeking to develop this kind of stimulus to their future economic growth and of how fortunate Fort Collins is to have such an institution already in operation. The "Cow College" of yesteryear has become a great university with an anticipated enrollment of 10,000 students this fall. From a position of striving for recognition and acceptance of its students by the graduate schools of other universities, it has risen to the point where the enrollment in its own graduate school outnumbers the total enrollment of my day. The beautiful new campus that you have seen developing over recent years is but an outward symbol of the expansion of its program that today draws top graduate students from all over this and many foreign countries. Its new research laboratories are exploring fields unheard of a few short years ago. And as Keith has said, these all act as powerful magnets for the new industries dependent on such research facilities and trained personnel.

I am sure you all recognize its value as a community asset but I wonder if you realize your responsibility for its continued growth and development. Sure, it is a State institution and it depends on the State for its financial support. But let me remind you that even in this day of automation it is its staff that makes it a living, effective institution. And, regardless of its financial resources, its ability to attract and hold the kind of staff that can develop new research and attract and inspire the students who fill its halls, depends in no small measure on the kind of environment the community affords them in which to live and raise their families.
If the University is to continue to grow and if Fort Collins is to reach a population of 80,000 in the not-too-distant future, as projected in the local paper recently, it will involve many changes. The shortening of time and distance brings us closer and closer not only to our neighbor next door but also to our neighbors around the world. As population becomes more congested, human relations become more complicated. More and more we find the exercise of our own rights and freedoms impinging on and restricted by the rights and freedoms of others. As we see the effects of these changes in the increasing wave of social unrest that is manifesting itself in many areas of our country, the importance of our human relations becomes increasingly apparent.

And so, as Fort Collins looks ahead to the next hundred years, I would hope that in our zeal for economic, industrial and population growth we would never lose sight of the attributes that make a city a desirable place to live. I would hope we would continue to exercise and to develop in our children a sense of responsibility and self-discipline, a pride of achievement, and a wholesome regard for the rights of others. I would hope we would continue to hold open the door of opportunity for each man to prove his worth by his own efforts while standing ready to extend a helping hand to all who need it. I would hope we would continue to maintain the civic pride and cultural atmosphere that will attract the kind of staff and student body that are the life of the University, which in turn will become more and more the base of our whole economic growth and development. Thus will the aspirations and ideals of our founders live on and thus will Fort Collins continue to be the kind of a city that we are proud to call our home town.