



An extraordinary year was Eighty and Four!
Really impossible to have done much more.
One son was leaving, another coming home
And now they're both back out west on the roam.

The other three kids, though the distance not great,
Have been churning 'round here at an equivalent rate.
With sports and school and scouting and such,
Throw in the Church, it really is much.

Actually, the year started really quite slow.
At least when compared to those we'd come to know.
As we reported in this letter last year,
Greg was the one who put it in gear.

When he was here last Christmas vacation,
He caused us a certain amount of sensation.
He brought home a girl and gave her a ring,
Right here in our home, an innocent thing.

But, the ball was now rolling. Where would it lead?
Engagements should be short, on that all agreed.
So, we had us a bride and a now eager groom.
They were anxious for a new family to bloom.

But, the rest of the party, let's see, where were they?
One cannot have a wedding without "players" to play.
"We're ready, let's go!" Came back the reply.
Except for just one who said, "Please wait til July."

Bradford was in Oakland and still on his mission.
There was nothing he could do despite Greg's commission.
If Brad was to be there and be the best man,
Around his fixed schedule we needed to plan.

So, way back last Christmas the date it was chosen,
Around which all other schedules were frozen.
Brad's mission release was in Oakland, C.A.
July was the month. The sixth was the day.

Greg's intended wife was named Cheryl Ferjo.
You pronounce the last name the same way as sparrow.
While they met in Provo, she came from "L A".
So, the thought of geography came into play.

California, Utah, and of course Ole Missouri.
So, now the location became cause for worry.
Missouri was out. That decision was simple.
While it is nice, it "don't" have a temple.

In Utah, Greg's relatives would be found in a bevy.
But, Cheryl's "South Cal" concentration was heavy.
With Mom's two brothers and Brad on the "Coast",
When the votes were counted, "Southern Cal" had the most.

The date and the place were now "cast into stone".
To get there and meet, each was left on his own.
Our family flew out there, several days early.
To drive would have left us a "little bit squirrely".

A day at Disneyland, several more at the beach,
Helped us get ready to fill in the breach
During those hectic two days it took for the wedding.
A whirlwind event we won't soon be forgetting.

With Greg and Cheryl launched off on there own.
We could visit with Brad to see how he'd grown.
We drove up to Oakland to gather Brad's stuff.
His move from the mission had been rather "rough".

His final months were as assistant to president.
So, he had the privilege of being a resident
Of the Oakland Mission home complex and estate.
By any standard, his accommodations were great.

Our family was given the same privilege to stay
In the mission home office up on Lincoln Way.
Brad took us to meet many folks he had met.
Especially one family we'll never forget.

They came from Cambodia, but were now living here.
They fixed us dinner both exotic and queer.
We visited Brad's other districts and places,
And learned to attach peoples names to their faces.

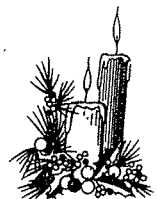
After several great days out there by the bay,
By then two whole weeks we'd now been away,
We flew back on home to "Good Ole Missouri".
We had sixteen bags so there was no way to hurry.

So, Brad's homecoming here was really unique.
His travel entourage was like that of a sheik.
There was no one to greet him at the airport that day
Cause all of his "greeters" had joined on his way.

He'd gained thirty pounds from his mission's "soft life".
Too heavy for football, or finding a wife.
So, he started in digging and chopping around.
Cleared all the dead trees and dug holes in the ground.

He had but one month to get back into shape.
To tighten his muscles so they would not drape.
On August 15, he was on his way west.
Back to Ricks College and scholastic quest.

Before we left home to take Brad to the hills,
Greg and Cheryl flew home for additional frills.
A wedding reception was held in our house,
So, everyone here could greet Greg and his spouse.



Once again as Brad would set out on his own,
He really could do it, for now he was grown.
All of the family, except Scott and Daddy,
Were travelling along with "Little Old Braddie".



Dad was too "pooped" to travel way out there again.
He was anxious to get back to "his comfort domain".
Scott couldn't go because football was started.
In missing Salt Lake, he was really down hearted.

Scott lettered in football, now two years in a row.
He has one more year to give it a go.
He has two tennis letters attached to his sweater.
With two seasons left, he'll get even better.

In vocal music Scott has surpassed all the others,
As he follows along behind his big brothers.
He made "All-State Choir", the best in the state.
He still has one more year to become really great.

Each year the high school has an extravaganza
To even be in it would be a bonanza.
"THE KING AND I" was a wonderful thing.
We all really liked it cause Scott was the KING.

The play is over, but Scott's still riding high.
It's hard to come down, be a regular guy.
After being the KING, a quite comfortable role.
How can a normal life ever seem full?

Scott continues to puzzle, confuse, and astound
All of the pundits from here miles around.
Electronics, computers, telephones, and such.
If he can't explain it, it isn't worth much.

He does so well in what he's about
That it takes him no time to figure it out.
Then he is bored and his interest is down,
So, he figures it's time to act like a clown.

Pushing on Scott, not too far behind,
Comes Matthew, our fourth, once gentle and kind.
But his sweet little sister, so small and petite,
Has toughened him up so that he will not be beat.

He has now reached eighth grade, an eventful year.
The last year of grade school for the students out here.
The first year for sports and their keen competition.
Matt started out great but was put out of commission.

First string running back became his main call.
He had a great record while "packing the ball".
Still one of the smallest of all on the team,
His "guts" made him BIG or so it would seem.

The final game that he played was really a bash.
Both teams had stomped the other to "hash".
Matt took the ball several times on the day.
He came within inches of breaking away.

After two first down carries right there in a row.
The same play was called, "Let's stay with what'll go."
When the pile was cleared, way down in the stack
Lay Matt, and the ball, and his hip with a crack.

He couldn't stand up, nor could he sit down.
He walked with a limp and a step like a clown.
He stayed close to the team, where he wanted to be.
As unofficial spokesman, he even talked on TV.

Matt follows the path prepared by his brothers.
His view of the scenery is different from others.
Not as serious as Greg yet more so than Brad,
He's probably the one who'll be most like his dad.

He's active in music, instrumental and vocal.
Plays the trumpet, and sings in the top choir local.
In scouts, he is ready to finish the quest.
He's nearly an EAGLE like all of the rest.

Matt knows what's required and what must be done.
He's willing to do it though it may not be fun.
He will get it done and he'll finally win it,
But he always will wait til the very last minute.

In making a man out of Matt, Jenni's quite coy.
She sure wouldn't torment just any old boy.
She's Matt's little "conscience", informer and such,
But her main job is "tormenter", which she likes very much.

Jenni has now reached second grade in her school.
Does very well in scholastics, that's usually the rule.
If she sees something that "needs" to be done,
She'll stay right there with it until she has won.

The teachers now recognize her drive and ambition.
And find it to be a refreshing condition.
She's willing to help, with the talent required.
So, they're using her now, and they're not quite so tired.

Jenni's into Barbie, and Cabbage Patch dolls.
Despite her four brothers, she has no time for balls.
A right proper lady, she has learned it somewhere.
Some could take advantage, but they wouldn't dare.

This month on the 14th she'll finally be eight.
A milestone for which she has needed to wait.
She will be baptized as she has wanted to do.
An experience required to see us all through.





Jenni can be the greatest resource and help.
She'll take on work without as much as a "yelp".
But, if she's not ready to tackle the job,
You'd better forget her, she can be a slob.

Perhaps we should end this right back where we started.
Right back there with Gregory, our "newly departed".
We just got the word, it came just today.
Greg and Cheryl will be coming back out here our way.

Greg is studying to become a dentist you know.
After this year, he'll have four more to go.
They'll be moving out here to St. Louis, Missouri.
Cause Washington U. Greg's favor did curry.

They are willing to pay his way if he'll come
They are willing to offer a quite "tidy sum".
For the next several years we'll be close together,
Just three hours away in good driving weather.

Jackie and John don't change quite so much.
The children still come first of all in their "clutch".
While some may think that the kids take a lot,
They also provide most of the joy that we've got.

We continue to find our greatest source of "return",
No matter what else we've attempted to earn,
Are those things that cost little but effort and time.
The things we can do without spending a dime.

To see that our children are happily started,
Especialy those who are already departed,
Is a reward that ranks up there with the best
And really for us, it out shines all the rest.

We've rambled along, much more than we should.
We'd like to be with you, if only we could.
But, that isn't possible, even today,
So, this letter is our one chosen way.

To you and to yours, both at home and away,
We send you our greetings and reverence the day
When Christmas first came and established on earth.
The reason for life and our personal worth.

May this season be joyous and merry for you.
Enough to continue to carry you through.
All of the next new, the on coming year.
And fill it with love and lots of good cheer.