



JIMMY CARTER

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To Paige Arrington

I'm afraid I don't have a very good story.

I learned to read before I entered school, taught by both my parents. My father had finished the 10<sup>th</sup> grade at Riverside Academy near Augusta (the highest educational level of any of our Carter family at that time), and my mother was a registered nurse. This was during the Great Depression, and they were determined that someday I would go to college. We had very little money, and the only two free universities about which we were familiar were West Point and Annapolis. Even in those early days, my announced ambition was to go to Annapolis.

We had a lot of books in the house, and my parents ordained that anyone could read at the table during mealtimes, a practice we still follow. I remember that my father would peel an orange, and reward me or my older sister with a slice when we could read an entire page in one of the children's books. I can't say that I could write legibly before beginning my elementary work at Plains High School, which offered eleven years of schooling, from 1<sup>st</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> grades. We never heard of kindergarten in those days. In school, each student was required to master cursive writing, mostly by full classes of constant practice and help by our early teachers. I can still write and even sign my name legibly.

Later, in high school, I took both typing and shorthand, and throughout my attendance at four different universities I took all my classroom notes in Gregg shorthand. I have written 29 books, all but one on a word processor or computer.

Best wishes with the archive,