

David's Journey

We learned something important the day he took his first proud walk alone

BY BETTY MILES

Author of "What Is The World?"

I CAN go to the store by myself," David announced with certainty. David is three and a half. The store was across a road and down a path and around a turn, in a small town to which we had just moved after years in the city. "I can go to the store by myself, and if you needed something I could buy it," David said.

We thought David was right, that he said this because he felt his own sureness and a readiness for new independence. Perhaps it followed logically to him that since we'd allowed him to cross the road by himself (cross and re-cross, proudly) the day before, the crossing should be a means to going somewhere.

So we let him go, with money in his pocket to buy cookies for the family.

David said "Goodbye," but he didn't waste time waving. He walked straight across the road and down the path, and the last we saw of him (standing, ourselves, proud and uncertain against the window) was his small blond head disappearing among the tall grasses that line the path.

Then the turning—and he was beyond our eyes, beyond our knowledge, beyond our help.

Our own sureness faltered as we thought of the dangers in his journey. First, the real physical hazards: a car might speed along the road without seeing his small body; a boy on a bicycle, rushing down the path, might collide with him.

Then, the dangers of fear. Now David's moves were his own. He had to rely on his own strength, his own sureness—and if that should falter? Would David feel lost, would he be lonely? If a kind stranger should think he was lost, would offers of help confuse him? What if he took the wrong turn for home? Could he straighten himself out without feeling panic?

And the hurts to his pride. If David did get to the store, could he reach the kind of cookies he wanted? Would he hold onto his money without losing it? Would the store man treat him with

respect? If he fell and broke the bag of cookies, would he feel he had failed?

Ten minutes had passed, so our worries took a new turn. If David *had* become lost or confused, would it hurt his pride to be looked for? If it was necessary to look for him, which of us should go?

Perhaps his father should set out as casually as possible to help him? What kind of setback would it be for David to fail on this first important journey? Surely, no matter what the setback, it was necessary to follow him, to check, to help?

No! For we saw a blond head, and then the whole of David, coming sturdily and matter-of-factly along the path, clutching a bag. Full of relief and pride, we moved away from the window, not to shame him with our concern.

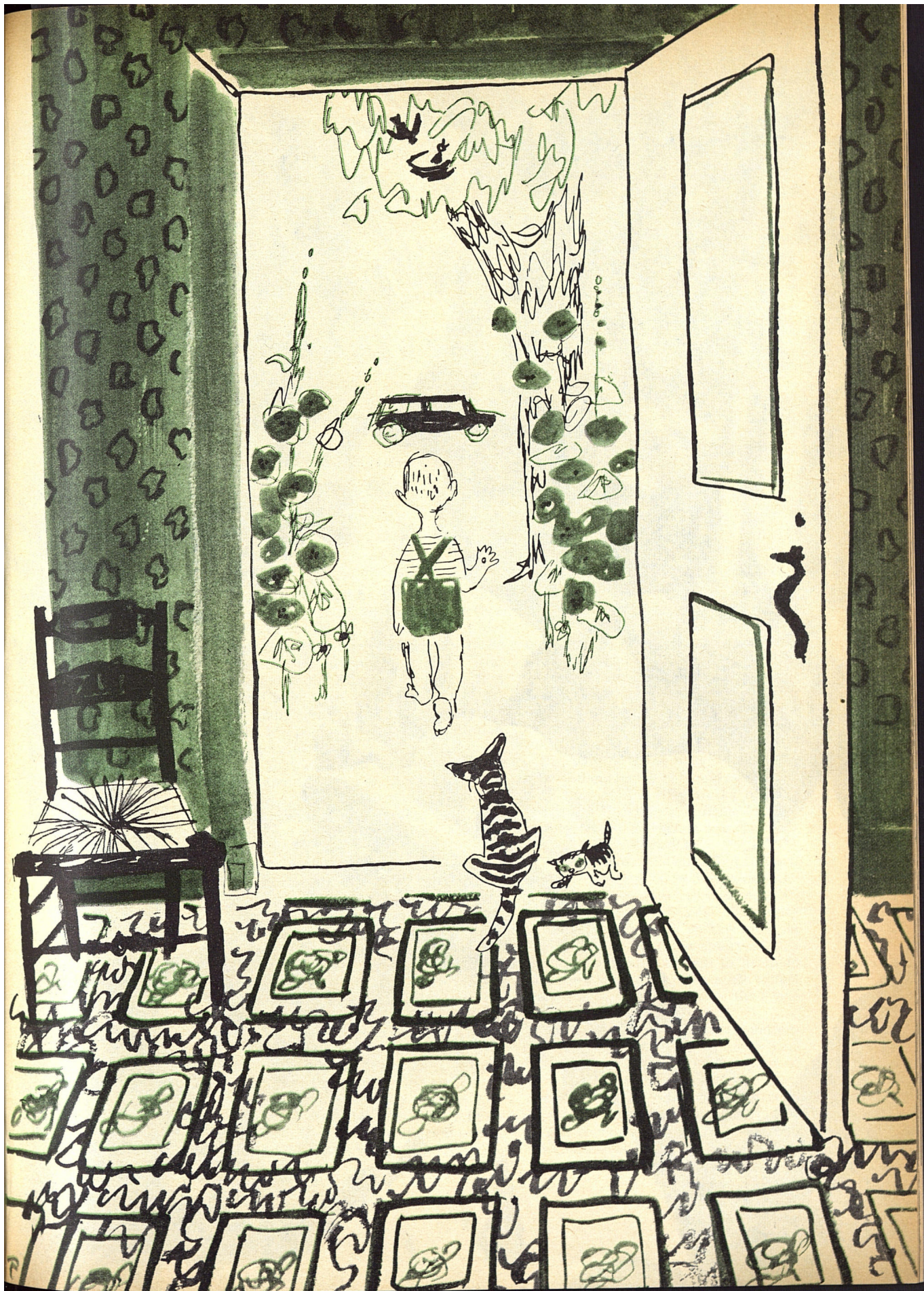
David walked in. "Here," he said, holding out the bag. "The change is in the bottom," he explained. "It's chocolate chip, because we like them."

He gave me the bag and smiled proudly. His father responded as the situation deserved, not with over-praise, not in terms of the larger significance we saw in David's trip. "Thank you, David," said his father. "You did a good job. And I'm glad you got chocolate chip, they're my favorite kind."

I gave David a hug—two hugs. We were very proud of our son and David knew it. He settled down to eat a cookie that was different from all other cookies because he had got it himself.

The cookies tasted special to us, too. They were a small part of the prize we gambled for when we let our son venture out against hazards. Eating the cookies and watching him, we realized how necessary it is to gamble in this way if a child is to become increasingly independent. When the child himself is ready for the gamble, we saw, his parents must be willing to gamble this readiness against all dangers. This is the way to growth, and though it holds dangers, it carries great joy.

That is the story of how David went to the store by himself. It is how (Continued on page 101)



SOUTHERN SCHOOLS—BOYS

Augusta Military Academy

"The Friendly School." Distinguished ROTC school in Shannadah Valley, Jr. & Sr. Divisions. Boys 8-20. Accredited; graduates in leading colleges. All sports—pool, gym, 1400 acres. Family owned since 1742. Rate \$1250. Catalog. Col. Charles S. Roller, Box P, Ft. Defiance, Va.

Fork Union Military Academy

Our ONE SUBJECT PLAN in Upper School (grades 9-12) has increased honor roll 50%. Develops concentration. Accredited. ROTC highest rating. Modern bldgs., 2 gyms, 2 indoor pools. Separate Jr. School, grades 4-8. 61st year. Catalog. Dr. J. C. Wicker, Box 607, Fork Union, Va.

Georgia Military Academy

Quality education for boys of ability, character and good conduct planning for college. Ideally located suburban Atlanta. Military. Highest rating. Social, athletic, religious activities. Grades 5 thru 11. Registrar, Box 119P, College Park, Ga.

Farragut

Study and play in Florida sun! Fully accredited. Prepares for all colleges, government academies. Separate Junior Department. Naval-military training. Boarding. Guidance for college and career. Near Gulf beaches. All sports. Catalog. Assistant Registrar, Admiral Farragut Academy, St. Petersburg, Florida

Miami Military Academy

Accredited. 35 Acres on beautiful Biscayne Bay. Honor Military School. College Prep H. S., Jr. School, Band, Sports, Develops leadership & character. Boys learn to study, advance rapidly; by interested instruction, small classes. 34th yr. Moderate fee. Address Col. F. R. Williams, Box 26, 10601 Biscayne Blvd., Miami 38-P, Fla.

Junior Military Academy

Boys 4-14 Semi-military. Kindergarten—8th grade. Family life and affectionate care. Food from our own farm. 12 months' enrollment includes 8 weeks at Camp Whoopsee. Enter any time. Moderate rate. 40th year. Write for catalog. Maj. Roy DeBerry, Box P, Bloomington Springs, Tenn.

SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Perkins School

A year 'round special school for the Scientific Study and Education of children of retarded development. Constant supervision. Individual training. Five attractive buildings. 130 acres of campus and gardens. Summer session in Maine. Franklin H. Perkins, M.D., Dir., Box 12, Lancaster, Mass.

Rhinebeck Country School

For the child with learning and adjustment problems. Individual academic attention, vocational program, psychiatric services. Year round, warm home atmosphere, 110 acres, shop, animals, happy social life. Therapy. Leonard D. Zneimer, Dir., Rhinebeck, N.Y. TR 8-3434.

Bailey Hall

For mildly retarded teen-age boys unable to meet regular academic requirements. Instruction and therapy for each boy based on tests and personality evaluation. Stresses practical industrial training. Special teaching procedures. Friendly, relaxed atmosphere. 30-acre estate. Chartered by N. Y. Board of Regents. Box P, Katonah, N. Y. Central 2-3070

Bancroft School and Camp

Year 'round training for the mentally retarded or emotionally unstable child. 9 mos. Haddonfield, N. J.; 3 mos. on Maine Coast. Individual educational programs. Psychiatric and medical supervision. Modern Speech Dept. 76th year. Jenzia C. Cooley, Prin., Box 355, Haddonfield, N. J.

Stewart Home School

For Retarded Children, 66th year. Private home and school on beautiful 500-acre estate in Blue Grass section. Cottage plan. Individual mental and manual training. For illustrated folder, address: John D. Stewart, Director, Box B, Frankfort, Ky.

Mary Pogue School, Inc.

Founded 1903. For retarded girls and boys of all ages who need special care and teaching. Year round. 61 Geneva Road, Wheaton, Illinois (near Chicago)

If Your Child Needs a Special School

by Edith M. Stern
Author of "Mental Illness—A Guide for the Family"
This article in reprint form is available upon request. Mentally retarded children, especially those who have reached school age, may profit greatly by enrollment in a suitable school. Should you be interested in special schools those listed here are recommended to you. Further help and information are available. Write us in detail about your child's needs. School and Camp Department, Parents' Magazine, 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York 17, New York

MIDWESTERN SCHOOLS—BOYS

Northwestern Military and Naval Academy

College prep. Est. 1888. Accredited. 75 mi. north of Chicago. Average class 10. Fireproof buildings. New 3-court gym. 85 acres on lake. Sr. ROTC Basic. All sports; sailing. Summer Camp. Write for catalogs. 97 So. Lake Shore Rd., Lake Geneva, Wis.

Oklahoma Military Academy

"The West Point of the Southwest." Fully accredited H.S. and Jr. Col. Small classes. Individual instruction. Math. science. Strong personal supervision. Highest Army rating, full ROTC. All sports. Fall term begins Aug. 29, '59. Catalog. Col. Homer M. Ledbetter, Pres., Box P, Claremore, Oklahoma

Howe Military School

Thorough academic training in spiritual environment. Accredited college preparatory, business courses. Potential Achievement Rating gives each boy a goal. Small classes. Junior school. Sports. Activities. Senior ROTC. New dormitories, pool. Episcopal. Established 1884. Catalog. Burrett B. Bouton, M.A., 779 Academy Pl., Howe, Ind.

Missouri Military Academy

And Separate Junior School 71st yr. Grades 5-12. Fully accredited. Sr. ROTC. Friendly, inspiring teachers. Essentially college prep. Small classes. Strong guidance program. All sports. 30-acre lake. 5 athletic fields. 226-acre campus. Catalog. Col. C. R. Stribling, 679 Main St., Mexico, Missouri

Roosevelt Military Academy

"Builders of Men." More fundamentals. Teaches how-to-study. Accredited all colleges. Career Guidance. Small classes; personal supervision; free tutoring; all sports; band; riding. Moderate rate. Grades 5-12. Catalog: Colonel Glen P. Millikan, Box P, Aledo, Ill.

Williams Military Academy

Boys 6-15. Accredited. Full curriculum. Inspiring military life. All sports. 18-acre campus. New fireproof bldgs.: classrooms, gym. 25 miles from Chicago's advantages. Moderate rate. Also summer camp. Write for catalog or call: Col. P. E. Williams, Dept. P, Wheaton, Ill. Tel: 8-1048.

WESTERN SCHOOLS—BOYS

VILLANOVA PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Boys' Residential Catholic High School • Est. 1924 • College, University Preparatory • Fully Accredited • 9th to 12th Grades • 131 Acre Campus • Healthful Climate • No Fog, No Smog • Near Santa Barbara • All Sports, Varsity, Jr. Varsity Teams, C.I.F. Tri-Valley League • Gymnasium • Olympic Size Pool • Modern Buildings • All Semi-private Deluxe Rooms • Brochure • Fall Term Registration Now • Augustinian Fathers, Route 2, Box 10, Ojai, California

Mount Lowe Military Academy

Beautifully situated at base of Sierras close to metropolitan area of Los Angeles. Outstanding academic guidance. Athletic and Military training. Character building and Leadership for the "Men of Tomorrow." Boys 7-14. \$95.00 per month. Maj. J.H. Dargin, Pres., Dept. M, 603W Palm St., Altadena, Cal.

Recommended Schools

Students and parents are anxious about their preparation for schools beyond their present grade levels. Entrance requirements to secondary schools are as competitive as they are for colleges. Therefore, from the earliest grades parents must be certain that their sons and daughters are getting the best preparation possible. The schools listed here are recommended for your consideration. Their limited enrollment prevents overcrowded classes and assures individual consideration.



CASH'S NAMES WOVEN OR PRINTED
CASH'S NAME TAPES protect personal belongings, apparel, linens, from loss or mix-ups. Your name actually woven into fine white cambric ribbon—12 Doz. \$3.75. Or printed on fine cloth tape—12 Doz. \$1.50. Other quantities on request. At notion counters everywhere. Write for samples.
Cash's NAMES
South Norwalk 2, Conn.

DAVID'S JOURNEY

(Continued from page 36)

he literally walked away from us and toward a larger world. It is the story of our pride in our growing son. But like all stories of growing, it doesn't end roundly, perfectly. Shortly after his cookie was eaten, David was in tears.

"There was a box of cheese crackers in the store," he said. "Can I go to the store again and get some?"

"No," I said. "Not now. You did a fine job of getting the cookies. But we don't really need any cheese crackers. Besides," I added pointlessly, "it's time for your nap now, and you must be tired after your trip."

"I am not tired," David said. "I am not!" He began to yell. "I want to get some crackers right now! I don't want a nap! I won't take a nap if you won't let me go to the store!"

He cried while I took off his shirt, while I carried him into bed, while I tucked him in. He settled down, though, as I rubbed his back and talked of his trip and of the many other times we would go to the store—he alone, and the two of us together. In five minutes he was asleep.

WHAT had become of the sturdy David who plodded down the road without turning to wave? For one thing, he had come home a new David, a boy who could take a job upon himself and accomplish it without his mother and father. For another, he had entered a whole new world—where money can be exchanged for many exciting things, and where even a small boy has the power to get what he chooses. What a feeling for David! The solitary trip, the reception at home as a person who has done a useful job. The world had opened up very wide for David, and my refusal to let him go right out into it again must have seemed a sudden closing-in, a sign that he was not really as powerful and as independent as grownups.

I think David needed to know this. For there are many times when he can't be powerful, when he can't quite manage to be strong, when—as at this time—he breaks into tears and behaves like a very small boy. He is a very small boy. Someone must teach him what we have all learned—that we can't have everything. And if he cries at this, someone must comfort him and hug him and help him to settle into rest. But David deserves more than this. The difference in him demands a difference in us. We can no longer treat David as a little boy who must hold a grownup's hand whenever he leaves home. We must treat him as a little boy who can go away all by himself sometimes, and with grownups sometimes, and maybe choose sometimes not to go at all. If we can let him go when he seeks to move out, and support and respect him when he stays where he is, David will be strong for the many more journeys he's yet to make into the world.