

Part 2
A-bomb led me as an independent technician
(8)
Correspondence with an American polio lady
heart warming story in my life

Along in the process of my association with the American fellow band saw filers and companies in the lumber industry, I had a chance to correspond with an American polio stricken woman. The story begins when I happened to read in a local newspaper in Hiroshima, in which I found an article with photo. It wrote "Polio woman in a locking bed using an electric typewriter with a bar in her mouth" Her name was Ann Adams. The main theme or the hero of the article was the newly came to the market of "electric typewriter", I thought. The point was that it could be operated by light touch instead of typing the key boards deep by fingers. My interest was not the electric typewriter, however, but the lady in locking bed with a little bar in her mouth touching the key boards without using her hands at all. She could not move with the exception of her head.

I felt we were in a same boat as polio stricken fellows, though mine is far much lighter than her condition. This drove me to try to find a way to get in touch with her through the newspaper company. I got the address and our correspondence began.

She was married and had a son, Kenny was the name. She was stricken by polio at the age of 27. The locking bed was helping her breathing. I intended to encourage her but the fact was the opposite. I learned a lot from her.

She used to travel with her husband on his business trip throughout America. After suffered from the disease, she was divorced. She wrote me, "I am thankful that I could do what I was unable to do before I got the disease. Someday you would be able to come to this country".

She sent me for my 20th birthday a set of necktie and a metal walking cane. I have a good memory of the cane. Up until that time, I usually did not use a cane when I walk, even though my walking style was so awful pushing my right knee with my right hand so that the right knee could stand to support my body somehow.

The cane presented me by her was a turning point of my shifting mind of using it for better walking. I brought the cane to a blacksmith to cut the right length to my height and to have the letter carved, "Presented by Ann Adams on Oct. 28 1953".

The cane had ever since been with me as a never-to-be-off my hand, although years later as I grew taller,

I was obliged to change to others. The craved letters turned blurred for years.

A fairly long article was published in a newspaper in Greensboro, North Carolina where she lived. The local newspaper in Hiroshima, which was the go-between for us, published an article telling about the story with photo. She played a big role in my young hood. However, as time goes on, our correspondence ceased with no reason.

Although in 1993 some forty years after that, I began to be able to walk with walking cane. Ever since then, the cane continued to be in sleep at home as one of my dear memories of the past.

In the same year of 1993, I traveled in the States for a month for business (trucking industry) investigation. I tried to find whereabouts of her by the help of my American friends to find she had been dead to my regret. The story about this appears in the coming next chapter.