



"I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem..." Isaiah 62:6

The

WATCHMAN

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WATCHMAN

1224 NE Walnut, Suite 146

Roseburg, OR 97470

STEWARDSHIP

by Anne Byrd



"Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching ... Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not."

Luke 12:37,40

On November 8 at about 8:30 P.M., the Byrd family caravan, consisting of our bus pulling a U-Haul trailer driven by Barry, our van pulling a horse trailer loaded with our two horses driven by me, and Dannie driving her little Plymouth Horizon, wound its way expectantly in our 1/2 mile long driveway after an absence of over two years. Coming home -- what a special feeling after so long a time away! Our beautiful log home and the farm we had dearly loved and worked, nestled in a peaceful valley embraced and protected by the mountains, had for many years been so much a part of our lives and our identity that at one time it would have seemed impossible that we could be away for so long. The fond memories flooded through all of us as we made our way in the driveway. How strange it seemed to be driving up to a dark and isolated place where there had been so much life and

light in times past...

I was hopeful that this homecoming would be heartwarming. We had rented out our home over two years ago to some acquaintances of good friends. Though we had charged them very little rent, we had been pleased to have people whom we considered to be responsible in our home, as leaving it untended for such long periods in the past had really been hard on it. A home without a family in it is like a person without a soul. It seems to lose its will to stand against the harshness of the elements, and it declines rapidly. The renters had moved out a couple of months earlier, and we were counting on their integrity in having left the place clean and in good shape, as they had assured us that they would.

With eyes straining to catch sight of familiar landmarks, we all eagerly bailed out of the vehicles as soon as we could stop. The pestilent knapweed defiantly assaulted our vision as if to remind us that we had abandoned our diligent efforts to "subdue the earth" in our little domain, and the weeds were doing what weeds always do when left alone -- they had spread, attempting to choke out all productive life. The fences sagged

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