

## George Wood

Daddy, Daddy, Please hold on,  
Just a little longer  
Till Mom and Don get here  
I'm sure you're looking stronger

Your eyes are closed  
Your skin's as white as winter's snow  
There can't be much strength left  
beneath the sheets, I know

Can you hear me?  
Can you hear a daughter's whispered cry  
Of how I love and care for you  
Me, the apple of your eye

Milburn, Ivy, Arnold  
You were the baby, named after Dad  
Do you remember your sisters who died?  
I'm sure that made you sad

Pneumonia took your pop  
When you were only ten  
There was nothing they could do  
They had no miracle medicine then

Clebit, Oklahoma  
A lumber town up in the hills  
Dirt roads and rough cabins  
Little church and moonshine stills

A boy of ten plus eight, working in the woods  
Driving a team of mules,  
Big responsibility for a kid  
Not much time for schools

Dragging loblolly pine to the mill  
Dangerous work in the muck  
But it was work during hard times  
Having a job at all was good luck

Your country called to fight a war  
They taught you to fire a big gun  
Afraid, like everyone, you did your job  
And were glad when it was done.

Coming home, you found my Mom  
Or probably she found you  
So shy, you hardly spoke  
But you made it last, you two

California, Oregon  
You traded mules for tons of clanking steel  
The D8 made the mountains shake  
Those trees were the family meal

You built the roads, pulled the logs  
for nearly forty years come rain or shine,  
From snow melt till autumn's frost  
I thought all dads were unemployed in wintertime

First me then Don, you cared for us  
until we were all but grown  
Half of us is you,  
And that part's as solid as a stone

Daddy, You didn't speak so very much  
A deep south twang as thick as honey on corn bread  
Not prone to praise or criticize  
But we felt the love that was un-said.

A major conversation went like this  
"George, how's your dinner?"  
"OK, I guess " is all you'd say,  
Like an English language beginner

but we all knew what you meant  
"Juanita, it's wonderful, the very best,  
And thanks for all you've done for me  
It's great this meal, and all the rest"

The years went by  
Your hair and teeth were put aside  
"Daddy" was replaced by "Gramps"  
New babes to swell your pride

So Daddy, that's how it was  
But now they've come, we're here  
All together now  
The four of us, so near

It's OK now to go  
Can you hear me?  
Remember you'll always have our love  
Wherever you may be

Your breath is short  
We hear you labor on  
But a stillness rests on you  
I think my Daddy's gone

What will say your epitaph  
You did the best you can  
and earned the highest praise of all  
"George was a good man"