



The Things He Gave Me
and The Things I Took

Ann Fessler



The Things He Gave Me and The Things I Took is Ann Fessler's artist's book/memoir about her adoptive father, Cliff. It is a story about loss and things left behind, from Cliff's unfulfilled dreams to the humble possessions he treasured and passed on to Ann for safekeeping. It is a book about generational legacy, keepsakes as a reflection of our values and identity, photographs that serve to both remember and reconstruct our past, and vernacular books as containers of family and cultural history.

The book uses the story of Cliff's life to address broader questions including:

- By what yardstick do we measure the life of an ordinary man?
- What is the impact of a parent's unfulfilled dreams on the lives of their children?
- What role do photographs play in the stories we tell ourselves about who we are, or were?
- Whose stories are worthy of being recorded and preserved in archives/museums?
- What might amateur photographs contribute to the historic record?
- What is the difference between an object and a photograph in relation to memory and history?
- What is our responsibility for a parent's treasured possessions after they pass away?



The book weaves together Ann's writing about growing up with Cliff, photographs she made of his possessions, photographs Cliff made throughout his life, pages from books passed down within the family, and pages from Cliff's hand-written financial logbooks, where he obsessively recorded every penny he made, spent, invested, and saved.

Like many working-class men before him, Cliff was intent on giving his children what he did not have himself, a college education. But ultimately, it was not his savings but a tragic accident, that paid for Ann's education in the visual arts.

Each book is housed in a unique clamshell box, designed to hold Cliff's treasured objects.

For a farm family, land and family are indivisible. Cliff was an all-state track-and-field star in high school and was offered a full athletic scholarship to attend college, but his parents wouldn't let him go. They needed him on the farm.

With his education cut short, he cultivated an interest in photography and began making pictures of his father, mother, brother Vernon, and their life on the farm.

He documented the draft horses and the sequence of tractors that ultimately replaced them. Photography suited him. He was not a man of generalities. He liked documentation and facts. He wanted to keep track of things and he needed to see them on paper.

...

Cliff stayed on the farm for a year or two after high school and then he left Iowa, his parents, and his brother, and headed west, taking jobs along the way to pay for his travels. He wanted to see the country.

He would return to Iowa regularly to help with seasonal work, but he never moved back to the farm.



VERNON

ALONG MAUMEE
RIVER ON OUR
3RD DATE.



When Cliff settled down in Ohio, he began a life of responsibility like his parents before him. He started keeping detailed logbooks where he would record his earnings, expenses, savings, and investments. He would sit with paper and pencil and calculate his interest way into the future.

When he bought a car he paid cash. Then he bought a logbook to keep track of the car.

When he married Hazel on January 1, 1944, he started a new, bigger logbook.

OCTOBER - 42		NOVEMBER	
Room	3.80	Room	8.00
GARAGE	3.00	GARAGE	5.00
BOARD	22.73	BOARD	22.00
LAUNDRY	15	LAUNDRY	1.70
GAS ¹⁰	6.87	GAS ¹⁰	6.05
TOOLS	2.9	TOOLS	5.25
CLOTHES	6.49	CLOTHES	6.57
GAS SPEND	58.84	GAS SPEND	22.27
	105.95		76.60
INCOME	287.51	INCOME	230.76
1942-TOTAL SPEND	105.95	EXP	76.60
CLOTHES	14.76	SAVED	154.16
GARAGE	3.80		
GAS GOSAL	19.19		
LAUNDRY	16.82		
BOARD	25.04		
OO SPENDING	36.66		
O/B	12.79		
ROOM	106.00		
TOOLS	34.65		
1942-TOTAL EXP	97.91		

FLYING EXPENSE		75	
APRIL 28	1/2 PAYMENT ON INITIAL	30.00	
" 30	1/2 BALANCE FOR 1/2	30.00	
" " LOG BOOK	1.00		
JAN 6	PHYSICAL EXAM	6.00	
" 11	1/2 FREE PLATE FOR FEDERAL	1.00	
APR 6	SPECIAL KIDNEY TEST	5.00	
APR 11	PICTURES FOR STUDENTS PREMIUM	1.55	
APR 16	TRIP TO CLEVELAND, OHIO	2.00	
APR 8	1/2 HR DRAKE FLYING	5.00	
APR 10	1/2 HR DRAKE FLYING	5.00	
APR 11	35 MIN. SOLO TIME	3.60	
APR 9	95 MIN. "	5.15	
APR 14	65 "	6.50	

10 OCTOBER - 42		11 NOVEMBER	
ROOM	3.80	ROOM	8.00
GARAGE	3.00	GARAGE	5.00
BOARD	22.73	BOARD	22.00
LAUNDRY	15	LAUNDRY	1.70
GAS ¹⁰	6.87	GAS ¹⁰	6.05
TOOLS	2.9	TOOLS	5.25
CLOTHES	6.49	CLOTHES	6.57
GAS SPEND	58.84	GAS SPEND	22.27
	105.95		76.60
INCOME	287.51	INCOME	230.76
1942-TOTAL SPEND	105.95	EXP	76.60
CLOTHES	14.76	SAVED	154.16
GARAGE	3.80		
GAS GOSAL	19.19		
LAUNDRY	16.82		
BOARD	25.04		
OO SPENDING	36.66		
O/B	12.79		
ROOM	106.00		
TOOLS	34.65		
1942-TOTAL EXP	97.91		

12 DECEMBER		13 JANUARY	
ROOM	10.00	3.00	2.00
GARAGE	3.00	1.00	0.80
BOARD	26.00	21.00	18.00
LAUNDRY	2.11	2.40	2.20
GAS	31	10	46.88
TOOLS	2.37	1.77	2.74
CLOTHES	11.59		51
MISCELLANEOUS	21.98		13.61
			52.35
VICTORY TAX	8.32		
		60.67	212.86
EARNINGS	274.38		
EXP	11.32		
SAVED	197.06		
		165.51	
VICTORY TAX	8.32		
SAVED	157.19		
WALBONDS	20.70		
NET WORTH DEC 31, 1943	3519.00		
YEAR SAVING	1887.00		

76 BOND'S BOUGHT		77 BONDS BOUGHT		
FROM	77	FROM	77	
MAY 7	7/200 100% CHECK	2.00	18 CHECK	6.91
" 14	" 200 100% "	2.00	25 OUTSTANDING	6.87
" 21	" 200 100% "	2.00	100 CHECK	6.87
" 28	" 200 100% "	2.00	6.08	6.19
JUN 4	" 200 100% "	5.92	18 "	6.33
" 11	" 200 100% "	5.31	5.31	6.88
" 18	" 200 100% "	6.63	44 OUTSTANDING	6.08
JULY 25	" 200 100% "	5.38	8 CHECK	5.88
" 2	" 200 100% "	5.18	15 "	6.75
" 9	" 200 100% CHECK	5.08	22 PAYABLE	7.23
" 16	" 200 100% "	6.09	27 BONDS	6.32
" 23	" 200 100% "	5.49	5.49 MAY CHECK	5.29
" 30	" 200 100% "	6.33	13 "	6.29
" 6	" 200 100% "	4.75	10 "	8.35
" 13	" 200 100% CHECK	5.71	7 BONDS	6.92
" 20	" 200 100% BOND	3	CHECK	7.15
" 27	" 200 100% CHECK	3.74	10 "	8.87
" 3	" 200 100% CHECK	5.66	17 "	6.69
" 10	" 200 100% CHECK	5.70	24 "	7.10
" 17	" 200 100% CHECK	5.60	JULY BOND	6.82
" 24	" 200 100% BOND	0.85	4 "	6.82
	" 11 CHECK	6.79	10 "	8.10

- 1944 -

1

1944

Cliff Pay A. Londo C. Victory by Hazel Pay H. Bonds

1942-109.71

1943-338.97

JAN 1-8 Income & Expense for week.

8-15

15-22

22-29

FACTORY BONUS

4127	413	660	3498	—
7152	715	1260	4682	—
7152	715	1260	4550	—
7152	715	1260	4550	—
1070	—	214	753	—
26653	2558	4654	17333	—

460	825	2750	—	—
660	860	—	—	—
660	573	—	—	—
660	686	—	—	—
2611	2	565	—	—
3360	3	PRUD. 2.08	HOSP. 175	70

FEB 10-6

6-13

13-20

20-27

7152	715	1260	4550	—
7322	732	1260	4550	—
6743	674	820	4550	—
7504	750	1020	4650	—
28721	2871	4360	18200	—

660	—	—	—	—
900	—	—	—	—
900	—	—	—	—
900	—	—	—	—
3360	3	—	—	—



MAR 10-5

5-14

14-21

21-27

27 MAR 3.

FACTORY BONUS

6523	652	820	4725	—
6840	684	820	5084	—
7258	726	1020	4883	—
7432	745	1020	4550	—
7350	735	1020	4550	—
1001	—	200	651	—
36424	3542	4900	24443	—

900	—	—	—	—
1100	—	—	—	—
900	—	—	—	—
900	—	—	—	—
900	—	—	—	—
130	—	—	—	—
4830	2	—	—	—

APR 14-3-10

3-10

10-17

17-24

24 MAY 1944

7001	700	1020	4550	—
6533	654	820	4550	—
6728	673	820	4550	—
7290	729	1020	4682	—
27552	2756	3680	18332	—

900	—	—	—	—
900	—	—	—	—
900	—	—	—	—
900	—	—	—	—
610	—	—	—	—
3600	3933	2750	409	—
409	—	—	—	—
131	303	303	270	70

MAY 15-7

7-14

14-21

21-28

Bonus

6553	655	820	4620	—
6783	678	820	4620	—
6772	677	820	4550	—
7436	744	1020	4550	—
997	199	664	—	—
29441	2754	3679	19004	—

900	701	2750	—	—
900	852	—	—	—
900	879	—	—	—
900	708	—	—	—
123	—	—	—	—
3733	3140	2750	257	175
316	868	1312	—	—

HOUSEHOLD

34750 63.98

E.M.B.R. 95

316 PRUD. 208

EMBA. 95

DAR. 479

MUTA 4660 HOSPIT. 175

JUNE 1-4

5-11

12-18

19-25

26 July 2

2430	31	486	—	—
7319	32	731	1020	—
2430	—	386	4550	—
5836	584	620	4640	—
2498	—	500	5346	—
7284	728	1020	5346	—
2498	—	500	6964	—
7052	705	1020	6964	—
2840	553	504	3090	—
5526	553	820	—	—
45393	3241	6776	24590	—

900	590	2750	—	—
900	1072	—	—	—
1100	1034	—	—	—
1300	809	—	—	—
760X	VACATION	—	—	—
4960	3505	2750	25	127
316	303	270	—	—

July 1st 6mo TOTALS

\$194184 16722 28049 121902

23094 19056 16500 2247 1045 1844 3043 3142

12-43 WAFFLE IRON.

10-1-43 ENGAGEMENT RING 129.75
 8-12-43 WAFFLE IRON. 650
 10-18-43 FLOOR-LAMP (GROSS ELER) 31.00
 11-6-43 (HORTON) WASHING MACHINE. 60.00
 11-11-43 WASHING BENCH 1.00



12-43 WAFFLE IRON. 129.75
 10-1-43 ENGAGEMENT RING 129.75
 8-12-43 WAFFLE IRON. 650
 10-18-43 FLOOR-LAMP (GROSS ELER) 31.00
 11-6-43 (HORTON) WASHING MACHINE. 60.00
 11-11-43 WASHING BENCH 1.00
 11-6-43 WASH TUB
 12-4-43 1ST DESK & CH. 1.00
 12-8-43 DRUM TOP T. 1.00
 12-31-43 WEDDING S. 1.00
 12-31-43 WEDDING - R. 1.00
 12-31-43 WEDDING D. 1.00
 2-17-44 KIDNEY BES. 1.00
 2-11-44 DAVENPORT 1.00
 1-14-44 WEDDING PIC. 1.00
 2-27-44 END BED SIDE (LAWLES) 1.00
 4-29-44 ELECTRICER 1.00
 3-4-44 MADE STEP L. 1.00
 3-1-44 MADE TELEPI. 1.00
 4-18-44 GOT SEWING 1.00
 4-15-44 GOT OVEN TH. 1.00
 8-2-44 SLIP COVER SPITZER, A.R. 1.00
 8-26-44 HAZELS BROK. 1.00
 5-8-45 3 H.P. MOTOR & 1.00
 9-24-46 PRESSURE SAG. 1.00
 1-19-47 MOMIES FE. 1.00
 3-22-47 TAPPEN. GAS STOVE. 144.72
 6-21-47 ELECTRIC CLEANER 69.75
 6-22-47 BOUGHT ADDING MACHINE 10.00
 12-20-47 MOMIES HAMILTON WATCH 62.95
 10-15-47 CLIFF'S SEASON SKIPPER COAT 65.00
 3-30-48 MOMIES " " 65.00
 4-10-48 SILVERTONE CONSOLE RADIO 489.25
 8-23-48 LAUNDROMAT WASHER 288.95
 10-14-48 REFRIGERATOR WESTING 331.35
 12-12-48 SUN BEAM MIXMASTER HOUSE #4119 1.00
 6-3-49 " SHAVERMASTER 15.40
 12-24-49 SMITH CORONA TYPEWRITER 63.00
 6-31-50 CARPETING MILWAUKEE HOUSE. 788.90
 7-27-50 TWO HANDBAWS 8' FOOT. 10.90
 8-12-50 BREAKFAST NOOK SET 77.77
 7-11-50 LAWN MOWER. 16" SEARS 25.90
 7-23-50 DAVENPORT. (SCHMID) 225.17

7-23-50 EASY BOY CHAIR 102.31
 7-9-50 NEW WESTINGHOUSE STOVE. 200.00
 7-15-50 SOLD TAPPEN GAS STOVE. 135.00
 8-2-50 DRAPES-RAINES-8PR. 103.00
 8-2-50 TRAVELERS RODS -
 7-24-50 A HERRY BEDROOM SUITE. 2430.00
 STAIRS (Lansard) 220.00
 SET 274+TAX 296.79

silver 69.95
 Uppress 80.00
 metal Gate 150.00
 Closet parts 279.00
 suit 185.00
 67.00
 31.00
 15.00
 (Karmatex 20) 50.00
 69.00
 21.00
 ice work Bank. 18.37
 Drill Press 7.50
 10" Dovier 121.75
 12" Gameel 84" 41.25
 JAMESON Co. 58.06
 Dryer 190.55
 9.00
 69.00
 30.00
 74.00
 96.00
 199.00
 21.00
 75.00
 35.00
 60.00
 123.00
 69.00
 566.00
 67.00
 100.00
 92.80
 239.00

NOV-1-85

28,397.25

DEC-1-85

12/28605.50 DEC
 31/28815.21 - 86
 JAN-1-8615/28815.27 JAN
 31/29026.58 FEB-86

FEB-1-86

12/29026.25

31/29239.44 FEB-86

38 MAR-1-86

12/29239.25

31/29453.25-MAR

APRIL-86

15/29453.86

31/29668.25-APRIL

MAY-86

29,885.25

30,184.25-MAY

JUNE-1-86

15/30104.25

31/30325.01-JUNE

JULY-1-86

15/30325.01

31/30347.39-JULY

AUG-1-86

15/30347.39

31/30771.40-AUG

31/30771.40-SEPT

OCT-1-87

15/30771.40-NOV

31/30997.40-NOV

31/30997.40-NOV

DEC-1-87

15/34336.01

NOV-1-86

12/224.71

31/34537.81-DEC

453.69-NOV

DEC 1-86

1-31, 453.69

31-31,684.35-DEC

JAN-1-87

1-31684.35

31-31916.70 JAN-87

FEB-1-87

1-31916.70

31-32150.75-FEB-87

MAR-1-88

1-33096.95

31-33354.32-MAR-88

JAN-1-88

1-34,587.81

31-34,841.45-JAN-88

FEB-1-88

1-34841.45

31-35096.95-FEB-88

MAR-1-88

1-33096.95

31-33354.32-MAR-88

2-1-88

4.33

60-APRIL

1-1-88

3.60

4.77 MAY

-1-88

.77

95-MAY

1-88

.85

86-JUN

-1-88

.86

81-JUN

SEPT-1-88

1-36669.81

31-36937.72-SEPT

OCT-1-88

1-36937.72

31-37215.60-OCT

NOV-1-88-36 MONTHS

37215.60

8,818.25 INT.

28,397.25 FOR 36 MONTHS @ 8.5

Compounded

THIS IS 15.0% BECAUSE OF MONTHS HAS DIFFERENT DAYS PER MONTH.

1-7	Fire brick & insulation for furnace	732
10-6-50	Cement sewer tile & Lintel	4.75
10-18-50	Screen	4.00
11-2-50	Window glass & frame in place	1.60
10-8-50	Chicken yard fence & supplies	8.10
8-12-50	42' of 1 1/2" pipe & 40' of 3/4" duck hawk rod. (WELL is 73' deep 43' down to Kar 53' deep)	14.10
1-22-51	LAUNDRY STOVE (SPEIGEL)	10.50
1-22-51	50' OF 10 YR. GARDEN. HOSE.	5.79
1-22-51	ANNS WAGON (SPEIGEL)	8.27
1-22-51	GARDEN & TREE SPRAYER. (SPEIGEL)	7.50
9-15-50	30' EXTENSION LADDER	26.50
9-24-50	6' STEP LADDER	5.95
2-24-51	1948 CHEV. MOTOR COMPLETE	271.16
3-2-51	TWO PEACH & ONE CHERRY TREES	4.05
3-5-51	STAINLESS STEEL SILVERWARE	15.40
4-2-51	2 ROSE Bushes & CROCANEUMS	5.00
4-4-51	100 DUN LAP STRAW BERRY PLANTS	2.60
4-5-51	72" X 42" MIRROR K-53.94 47.50 HANG	65.00
4-12-51	65 lbs Roofing / GAL Ciment: WORKSHOP	10.47
4-12-51	TWO RUBBER DOOR MATES. 10 STAR TREADS	3.70
3-30-51	HOVER VACUM CLEANER	89.95
8-7-51	4" P. TRAP EYE SPOUT DRAIN	1.98
7-18-51	5 gal. VORTEL TILE RED NY 1853	19.90
6-29-51	10 lb. WHITE TEXTURE PAINT	2.37
8-20-51	(gal white paint & fears)	4.10
8-12-51	2 1/4" to 2 1/4" 1" Galv. pipe	11.90
1-15-52	20 conduct wire; Fitting & outlet	21.47
1-15-52	15 WATT light in guest closet.	3.00
10-51	Living room & Dining room painted	130.00

(3-18-49) NEW 7F8 RADIO
TUBE

LINE
 1/3 4 P. MOTOR - BEARING N. S. K. F. 1202 J/63
 BLACK WHITE RED BLUE
 TWO 40 WATT 40V BULBS
 1620-49 HOT WATER HEATER UNIT
 MUSTEE HEATER CO.
 CLEVELAND OHIO
 SEARIS - 31-AC 5
 DER-MO-TINE. INC

Carpeting Sept. 1950 \$1
 Dogwood Desertune 54 121.75
 Kitchen floor 6-62 121.10
 Tiled Bath Room - 11-63 290.00
 Septic Tank Leach Bed - 7-64 382.20
 Cement front of garage - 5-58 350.00
 Over head Garage doors 4-57 250.00
 Cement pad & sidewalk 58- 200.00
 City water footage - 61- 682.93
 Water tap - 61 - 90.00
 Ditch & City water - 61 - 125.00
 Aluminum Siding - 69. - 1170.00
 Kitchen Cabinets - 53 - 200.00
 Black Top Driveway 66 - 340.00
 Carpeting Nov. 1966 - 741.00
 Taly - 67 Roof on HOUSE - 338.00
 62 Roof on GARAGE - 203.00



One evening my brother and I were at a movie theater and an usher found us with his flashlight and called us by name. He said there was an emergency. When we got to the lobby my mother was waiting for us. By the look on her face, I thought my father was dead.

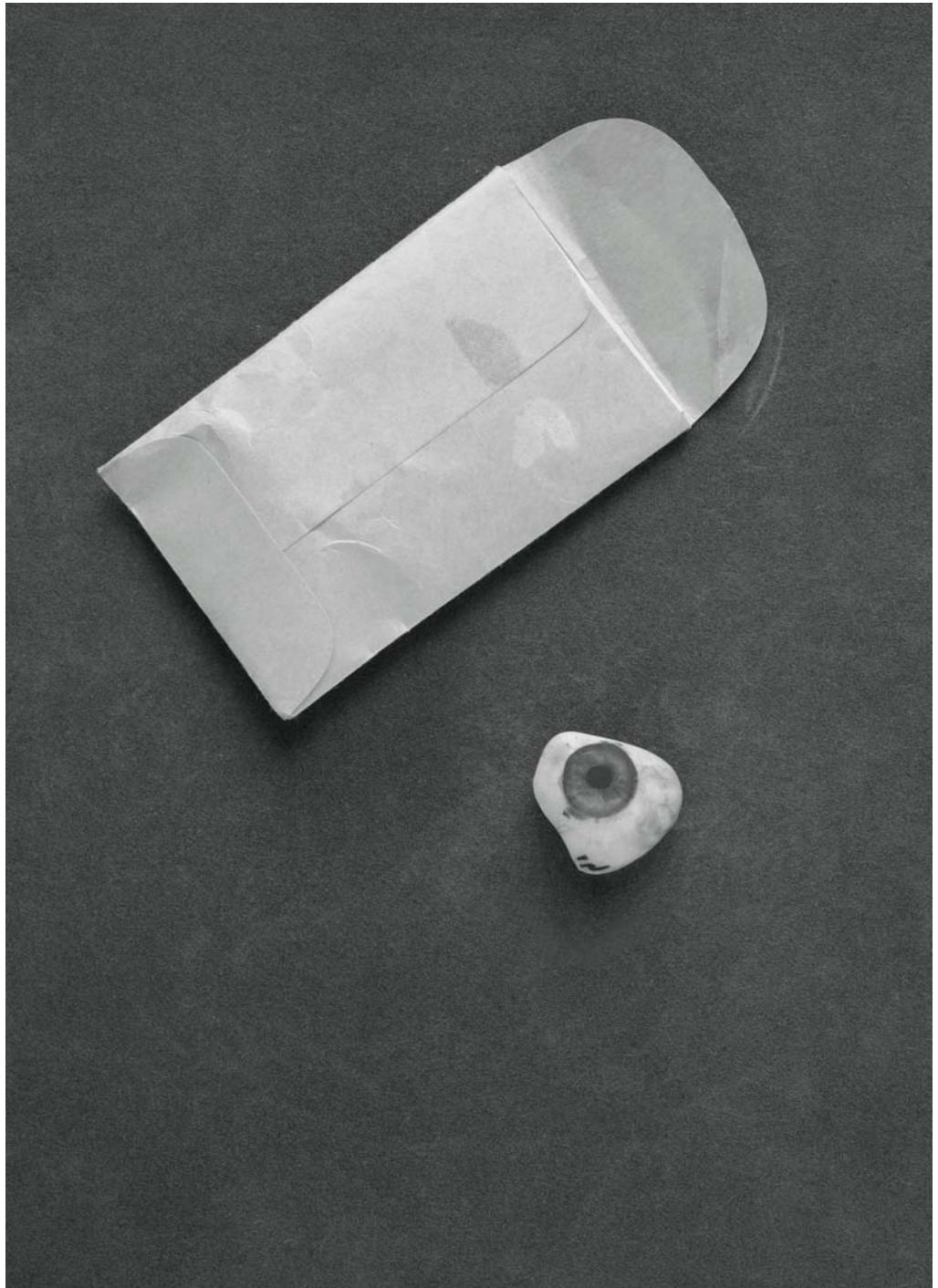
As it turned out, through someone's negligence at work, a tiny piece of metal flew across the factory floor and lodged in my father's right eye. When he went to the hospital, they tried to pull it out with a magnet but it drove the metal deeper into his eye so they replaced it with one made of glass. The insurance company paid him a little money for "loss of a body part" and he put it in a special savings account for my college education.

Years later, I was able to do what he was unable to do — go to college. And though it must have seemed like a frivolous decision to him, he continued to support me when I decided to major in art.



Long after I had moved away, on one of my infrequent trips home, my father called me into their bedroom where he had an array of books and boxes spread out on the bed. I recognized the items on display. They were the things that meant the most to him, objects he had saved and treasured for forty years. He gestured towards the bed and with very few words he gave me my inheritance:

- Two rattlesnake skins from snakes he shot in 1935 while herding sheep on horseback in the west
- A box with 9 rattlesnake rattles
- A shoe box containing petrified wood from his travels in Arizona
- An arrowhead he found along the way
- Four oversize leather-bound volumes of *Shakspere's Works: Comedies, Tragedies, and Histories*, and a volume illustrating the plays
- His mother's German hymnal
- His mother's Bible with funeral cards, obituaries of dead relatives, pressed flowers, and newspaper clippings of Cliff's athletic triumphs, tucked between the pages
- His track and field medals
- A flag with 48 stars
- His father's gold pocket watch



Cliff had always planned to travel when he retired, but his knees began to give out. He was afraid that he wouldn't be able to properly maintain the house and land, so they moved to a condo, and that did him in.

He never had the opportunity to be alone. There was no field to plow, no bikes to fix, nothing to be responsible for. He spent his days watching the news and cursing at the TV. Near the end, he was moved to a nursing home where he did more of the same.

As he grew old, the disappointments of his life increasingly filled the spaces in him that had formerly been occupied by the traveler, the pilot, the inventor, the photographer, the gardener, and the farmer. I think that's why he saved the things he gave me. They were proof of the man he once was. Maybe he favored me because he knew I could still see that man in him.

...

I don't know whether it ever occurred to Cliff that the loss of his eye made it possible for me to learn to see. I know that's not what he meant when he said, "One day you'll see. When you're my age you'll see."

But here I am at his age, and it turns out he was right. The education that he enabled taught me to see, and my belated gift to him is to use what I learned to document and preserve my inheritance from him.

The Things He Gave Me and The Things I Took

Copyright © Ann Fessler, 2025

Photographs by Clifford Fessler and Ann Fessler

Designed and printed by Ann Fessler

Bookbinding and custom boxes by Amy Borezo

Book

Book dimensions: 9 1/4" x 7 5/8" x 1 1/8"

Pages: 112 full size pages, 24 smaller interior pages

Paper: Hahnemühle Photo Rag Book and Album

Ink: Canon Lucia Pro pigment-based ink

Type: Iowan Old Style

Cover leather: Chieftain Goat, J. Hewit & Son Ltd.

Cover paper: Saint-Armand handmade 100% rag

Cover label: Sakamoto Japanese paper

Handsewn silk endbands

Clamshell Box

Box dimensions: 10 1/8" x 8 1/2" x 2 1/2–3"

Exterior: Iris Bookcloth

Chieftain Goat label with gold foil stamping

Interior: Sakamoto Japanese paper

and Ecological Fibers Rainbow acid free paper

Optium Tru Vue Museum Acrylic

Edition of 9, plus 1 artist's proof

Available to institutional collections

Books will be signed and numbered in the order sold.

ISBN: 979-8-218-54988-6

Price: \$4,600

For questions and information about availability:

afessler@risd.edu

cell 401-440-1962

www.annfessler.com



Flag with 48 stars



Cliff's track-and-field medals



Nine rattlesnake rattles



Rattlesnake skin #1



Petrified wood #1



Cliff's father's pocketwatch



Arrowhead



Cliff's glass eye



Rattlesnake skin #2

Ann Fessler Biography

Ann Fessler is a non-fiction author, artist, and educator, with a wide-ranging practice that includes photography, film, audio and video installations, and artist's books. Her work brings the untold stories of ordinary people into the public sphere where they can contribute to a more expansive and inclusive understanding of history. The majority of her work over the last 30 years has addressed feminist issues and themes of family and adoption.

Fessler is Professor Emerita at Rhode Island School of Design, where she taught for 24 years and served as both the Head of the Photography Department and the Director of the Graduate Program in Photography. She is the recipient of numerous grants and fellowships including an Artist's Fellowship from National Endowment for the Arts, and a Radcliffe Fellowship from the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard.

Her non-fiction book, *The Girls Who Went Away* (2006, Penguin Press), was chosen as one of the top five non-fiction books of the year by the National Book Critics Circle, and was the recipient of the Ballard Book Prize. She has produced numerous audio and video installations, and three independent documentary films including *A Girl Like Her* (2011, Women Make Movies, NY), which has been screened widely at colleges and film festivals and was subtitled in five languages.

Fessler has produced seven previous artist's books, including two unique bookworks, *Michele's Prayer* (1981), and *Alphabetical Index: Descriptions of Rape Paintings from the History of Art* (1994), a 12-volume set. Her offset multiples include *Guide to Coloring Hair* (1982, Tyler Offset Press); *First Aid for the Wounded* (1987); *Water Safety* (1989, Visual Studies Workshop Press); *Genetics Lesson* (1992, Nexus Press); and *A. H. Fessler's Art History Lesson* (1991), first published as an insert in *American Art* (Fall 1991), a journal published by the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. All of Fessler's artist's books make reference to existing book forms that are intended to educate, such as manuals, textbooks, and reference books.

Fessler's books are in more than one hundred university and museum artist's book collections in the United States and abroad, including the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum, and the Whitney Museum in New York; the Tate Britain and Victoria and Albert Museum in London.