

THE YEAR OF THE YELLOW OX

“THE OX IN THE BYRE”

CHINESE NEW YEAR 2009

26 Jan 2009

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Hour	Day	Month	Year
Stem: 3 Yang Fire	Stem: 8 yin metal	Stem: 3 Yang Fire	Stem: 6 yin earth
Branch: IX Metal Monkey <i>Mountain</i> <i>Monkey</i>	Branch: VIII Earth Sheep <i>Lucky Sheep</i>	Branch: III Wood Tiger <i>Tiger in the</i> <i>Forest</i>	Branch: II Earth Ox <i>Ox in the Byre</i>
Combined Fire <i>Foothill Fire</i>	Combined Earth <i>Ditch Earth</i>	Combined Fire <i>Fiery Furnace</i>	Combined Fire <i>Lightning Fire</i>

Kung Hei Fat Choi !

(Congratulations and be prosperous, Everyone!)

People seem to have favorites among animals, whether they keep those animals as pets, make them subjects of study (in a constructive sense) or just simply like to be around them and watch them. I could sit and watch animals all day, especially birds and small animals. We had chooks when I first came to Australia and I used to sit on the back stoop and watch them for the longest time. (I had never been around farm animals before.) If you just let animals be and watch them interact freely amongst one another one can see some of the most amazing or entertaining things – yes, even with chooks. One of my close relatives has such a fascination with cows. None of us in the family knows why. It has always been a puzzle to us. Perhaps she had a happy past-life around a farm or owned an ox as a beast of burden in that life. Maybe seeing cattle in a field invokes a memory of a peaceful pastoral setting and sends her into a sort of contemplative, serene state. Strains of *The Pastoral Symphony* waft through my mind with that image. Regardless, she has copped her share of ribbing about it over the years. Cows? Why? We couldn't figure it out. Kids can be bad that way. Maybe some day, if I remember, I will ask her what goes through her mind when she drives past a field with cattle in it.

We have just entered the Year of the Ox with the Chinese New Year just-commenced. For all those fans of cows out there, this is a year to watch for you, and in a lot of ways it will be another history-making year, and for some of the same reasons as the year just past. We will get to the reasons why in due course. With regard to cows, though – especially draft cattle (oxen) – what follows is a little story that will set the scene for the year. To my sister, this one's for you :-)

The Ox in the Byre*

Farmer Owens paced slowly back and forth in the cow shed. It was in the wee hours of the morning and the humidity of the previous day still lingered in the air, almost like a hovering presence on the farm. Arthur Owens looked down on the prone form in the stall before him. Breathing heavily and occasionally groaning in the throes of her task, the weary ox was in a sad state. His ox 'Patches' had been in labor for the better part of the night and was having a difficult time calving. His young daughter had named the cow when it was still a calf and it was made clear to him early on that Patches was not to go the way of the other cattle of the farm. Patches was there to stay and was clearly his daughter's favorite pet. So, Farmer Owens had made Patches a draft ox and breeder for his stock. His daughter, worn out from the drama unfolding before her, was asleep on a hay bale just across from the stall. They were waiting for the vet to arrive to assist Patches with her bundle. Patches was past the point of caring what happened. She wanted to either deliver or die. The pain of labor had worn her out and she knew something was very wrong. Better to leave this world than to put up with this any longer, she thought. She knew her unborn calf was struggling with it all, too, and it would move inside her occasionally, only adding to her discomfort.

The veterinarian finally arrived about a half-hour later, not very pleased at having to call in at 3:30 AM, and took a look at the sorry sight before him.

"How long has she been like this, Arthur?" the vet queried.

"About two hours now." Farmer Owens replied.

The vet surveyed the situation carefully. His gut sense was that he might have to end the suffering of the animal and try to save the calf if it was still viable.

"Well, Arthur, I don't like the look of this. As worn out as she is she has really suffered. I'd better get in there and have a look at things. If it is what I think it is we might have to put her down and try to save the calf. There isn't much fight left in her."

"No!!" The men turned in the direction of the shriek they had heard behind them just in time to see Arthur Owen's daughter leaping from the hay bale that had been her loft.

"You're not going to kill Patches!! Please daddy! Please don't let him kill her!"

The vet suddenly softened his attitude and bent down to the child standing defiantly before them.

"Sweetheart, I am going to do all I can for Patches, but she is really suffering and we cannot let her go on like this. It would be cruel."

The little girl knew the vet was right. As the reality of the situation set in her lips began to quiver and she buried her face in her father's side, clinging to his leg.

"It'll be OK, honey." Farmer Owens said. "I'll look after Patches. You'd better go in the house now." He called for his wife to take the young girl inside – just in case.

The vet pulled on his long glove and went around to the rear of Patches to begin his work.

"You had better hold her head, Arthur." The vet said. "This could get a bit dicey."

Patches cast a big brown eye in the direction of the vet, not liking at all what she sensed coming. As the vet began his inspection Patches decided that she *definitely* did not like what was happening and began to struggle to get up and somehow escape the intrusion that was being foisted upon her so ignobly. The vet stopped his inspection abruptly and said,

“Right! Arthur, we are going to have to get her up and tie her to keep her from struggling. She has more fight than I thought. This is a good sign!”

And so, they got Patches on her feet and positioned her so the vet could inspect her from behind a wooden barrier, lest he should get kicked in the execution of his work. After a time and having a good feel of the calf, the vet announced that it was not as bad as he had thought. All he had to do was turn the calf and pull it out. As he began to turn the calf, Patches was not the least impressed and began to bellow her disapproval at this effrontery. Eventually, though, the vet prevailed and Patches gave birth to a healthy male calf, much to Patches’ relief. Farmer Owens’ wife and daughter arrived just in time to see the worn-out calf struggling to its feet.

“Aww, Daddy! Isn’t he beautiful? Can we keep him?” said Farmer Owens’ daughter.

“We’ll see, honey. Let’s let them rest for a few days first.” said Farmer Owens.

Arthur Owens knew he had to be careful with this one. The last time Patches gave birth he eventually had to send the calf from that birth to the feed lots and his daughter wouldn’t speak to him for a week afterward. He had to *be careful that there is no conflict between family and business*, though. One pet cow was all the family could afford. He would have to deal with his daughter later on that score.

“You can untie her, now, Arthur. Patches should be fine. *All is in its proper place.*” the vet said.

Patches was trying to lick her new-born calf in order to get it to its feet so it could feed, but she couldn’t because she was tied. She was none-too-happy with Arthur Owens, either – or the vet for that matter. She did not want to lose another calf like she did the last one and she did not like the way the vet had just treated her. So, she waited while Farmer Owens untied her from the post. The very second she was freed Patches lunged at Arthur Owens, sending him flying for cover over some bags of feed, bellowing her sternest disapproval. Unable to reach Owens, she turned her attention on the hapless vet, chasing him out the door of the shed. No sooner had she got outside, however, that she remembered the beautiful little calf calling for her to come back. Maternal instincts aroused, she forgot the two men and returned to her charge.

Arthur Owens’ wife and daughter were hiding behind the hay bales, amazed at the *complete and sudden change of direction* in their beloved Patches. Motherhood prevailed, though, and soon all had returned to normal. Everyone came out of hiding. Arthur Owens sat on the feed sacks for a while and watched, wary of the usually placid ox. The vet surveyed the situation and realized that *plans would be successful* with mother and calf.

“No harm done, Arthur”, the vet called out to Farmer Owens. “I guess she just needed to show us who was really the boss here. You look after her and I will check back by in a few days. It’s been a long night. I need to get to bed – if I can sleep after all this excitement.”

Patches gave a few stern swishes of her tail as she licked the last bit of fluid from her calf and glared at the vet as he left, but she was very pleased to have her beautiful new calf now happily feeding at her udder.

As we enter today into the Year of the Yellow Ox we say farewell to the *annus horribilis* that was the financial side of the Year of the Yellow Rat (2008). I remember saying in that letter last year that 2008 would be a year to go down as a major one in the history books, and it turned out to be a bumper year in that regard. We saw the US elect its first afro-American president, the worst

financial downturn in decades, skyrocketing petroleum prices, still-greater extremes of weather, the apology to the Stolen Generations, crises in Gaza, Georgia and Tibet, Cyclone Nargis, the Chengdu Quake, the Large Hadron Collider, Haumea (a plutoid) was added to our solar system as a dwarf planet, large and fatal temple stampedes in India, the Mumbai attacks, the riots in Greece and the 2008 Olympics. Yes, it certainly was a memorable year. However, for those who think the Year of the Ox will be a more stable year and that “Anything has to be better than the year that was!”, you may want to be careful about what you say. Ox years are notorious in recent history for being bad years financially – and it certainly does not look to be an exception this Year of the Ox. The market will be anything but ‘bullish’ this year.

Doom and gloom aside, there are some very positive things to commend the Year just started and we may very well see some things turn around in a positive way. As we will see very shortly, Earth Ox Years have generally been ones of consolidations, new starts and the institution of social programs. That does not mean that financial issues will necessarily be better, though. Social programs and new initiatives cost money, and it will take a few years before things begin to stabilize on that front, I think. So, before we get into the year before us, let’s have a look back and see if we can get a sense of what this year will bring, because history and life evolves in cycles and the cycle of sixty years seems to be very significant in that regard.

In researching this letter I looked back over Earth Ox years starting in 1709 for key points in history that were common to the sexagenary anniversaries after that, so we are looking at the years 1709, 1769, 1829, 1889 and 1949 for clues as to this year. Some very interesting patterns emerged. To begin with, there has historically been a focus of consolidation between nations and of groups within nations in Earth Ox years. We have the following as examples: Greek autonomy from the Ottomans (1829), the birth of the Republic of Brazil (1889), the first convening of the International Conference of American States (1889), the Land Run of 1889 and the consolidation of many US states, the consolidation and recognition of The People’s Republic of China (ending centuries of feudal rule), the first move toward a united Europe in The Council of Europe (1949), NATO, the birth of India (free of British rule), Germany (as its current structure), Indonesia and Ireland as free and sovereign nations, and the birth of the British Commonwealth (1949). In all, there is a theme of independence within and greater cooperation between nations in such years. We’ll see what Hillary Clinton and other foreign ministers can pull out of their hats this year.

In addition, the same then seems to follow in the financial sectors of countries, too. We have the inauguration of the Industrial Revolution (1769), the precursor of the Nintendo Corp. (1889), the birth of the Wall Street Journal, the Coca Cola company and the founding of the Tokyo Stock Exchange (1949) as major points of interest. The companies just mentioned went on to become huge multinational companies – a tribute to the tenacity and care of finances the Ox can often exhibit. There have also been some major advances in commercial media in recent Ox years. We have the birth of the Columbia Phonograph company (later to become Columbia Records, and the oldest surviving brand name in pre-recorded sound) in 1889, the Wall Street Journal (again, and the most widely circulated paper in the US until 2003) the Emmy Awards, the first commercial television broadcast (1949), the invention of the precursor to the typewriter (1829) and the invention of the accordion (Come on – you know you love it!) in 1829.

There have been major advances in transport in Earth Ox years. We have seen the demonstration of the first documented hot-air balloon flight in Europe (1709), the first commercially viable steam engine (1769) and the first commercial jet airline flight (1949). The latter two examples were, again, tied in with commercial viability and they certainly changed the face of public transport in the years that followed.

1949 saw the putting forward of legislation by the Truman administration known as the Fair Deal. Social conscience is one aspect of the Earth Ox that is quite intriguing, given the current state of

affairs world-wide, and also given the fact that Oxen are not known for bold action. It is a conservative sign. However, the Ox represents building and is the Establishment Phase of the cycle of Chinese Animal Signs. The Fair Deal was a major push to transform the US economy into a peacetime one after years of war and the past emphasis on the huge military-industrial complex that still drives a major part of the US economy. Of the Fair Deal, Harry Truman said:

“Every segment of our population, and every individual, has a right to expect from his government a fair deal.”

It was a bold initiative aimed at universal health care (which eventually led to the establishment of Medicare in the ‘60s), certain socioeconomic plans with economic interventionism as a major feature and the Housing Act of 1949, giving rise to urban renewal, housing projects and public housing. Only portions of the Fair Deal were passed due to conservative backlash. In a precursor to that, though, Truman made an address to the NAACP in 1947 (he was the first sitting US president to ever address the group), in which he stated:

“Every man should have the right to a decent home, the right to an education, the right to adequate medical care, the right to a worthwhile job, the right to an equal share in the making of public decisions through the ballot, and the right to a fair trial in a fair court.”

Do we see any shades of this sort of thinking in the present administration? We’ll see what the next few years have in store. History is based in cycles.

Finally, there was a fascinating example of life imitating art that came out of my investigations. There have been unprecedented natural and accidental disasters in Earth Ox years, especially with regard to cities. For example, there was a two-month freezing spell in 1709 in France. Crops failed and at least 24,000 Parisians perished. The Great Seattle Fire of 1889, which was started from a glue pot (and we know that cattle were used for glue in those days) destroyed the entire business district of Seattle. It also cured the city’s vermin problem. There was only one life lost in the fire, but it was certainly a complete and sudden change of direction for the city. In 1769 there was the worst famine in history in Bengal – although not a city – in which ten million people died. The one that struck me the most, though, with regard to this letter was the destruction of a major part of the city of Brescia, Italia in 1769.

Lightning will tend to strike the highest structure in any location. In mid-Eighteenth Century Europe, churches were commonly the tallest structures in any town and lightning strikes were a common and destructive occurrence on churches, causing a great many fires and deaths over the years. Lightning rods in Europe were invented in Bohemia between 1750-1754 by Diviš, but the Church, in its wisdom, elected not to install them on their buildings due to religious objections. As it turns out, there were some 200,000 lbs (90,000kg) of gunpowder stored in the basement of the Church of San Nazaro in Brescia in 1769 (exact date unknown) when a lightning strike to the building one day caused a fire in the church. Why they would store gunpowder in a church is beyond me, but life was different in those days. Once the fire reached the gunpowder, the resulting explosion flattened 1/6th of the city, killing 3,000 people in an instant. After that, by decree of the Church, lightning rods were all the rage on church buildings throughout Europe. It might interest you to know that the Combined Element for the Earth Ox Pillar in Chinese astrology is called ‘Lightning Fire’, indicating sudden and complete changes of direction.

In summary, then, we have the following synopsis for the dynamics of the Year of the Earth Ox:

- consolidation of national and state groups
- financial legislation and consolidation of financial sectors in society
- advances in commercial media and transport

- major governmental initiatives in social welfare and economic reforms
- huge natural or accidental disasters, especially with regard to regions or cities (financial losses and loss of life)

In all of the above, we see the underlying action of Saturn, the 'Earth' Planet (Element).

When we combine the above points with the italicized main points in the story of 'Patches', we see that 2009 will be another year of big change, *especially* with regard to finances and governmental intervention in financial affairs. In the latter part of 2009, I would expect to see some natural or accidental disasters, especially from late September onward. That is when the Sept. 2006 eclipse is activated by Saturn and Pluto. This is not going to be an easy year, but many initiatives should be put into play this year that will greatly benefit the world in the years to follow. It is said that the Ox is conservative and good with money, but as I was saying to a good friend last night, Oxen tend to be cautious with money because of a sense of lack and because of necessity. Care with money is learned under the influence of the Ox. It is a nascent ability of the sign, not a developed one. With the following points, then, we will flesh out the complete dynamics for this Ox year.

To begin with, this Year of the Yellow Ox started on a North Node solar eclipse – normally thought by the ancient Chinese to be an ominous start to a year – but this eclipse had Jupiter as its lord. In addition, Jupiter will transit the eclipse point in less than a week (2nd) and, being a North Node eclipse, it will mark the year as one of beginnings and eventual expansion, however large or small. So, if you have planets or angles within three degrees of the sixth degree of Aquarius or Leo, you should have something quite good come into your life, all other factors being favorable. In addition, this year is what is termed a 'double-bright' year, meaning the year starts before and after the *Li Chun* (commencement of spring on Feb 4th). This is considered to be a most auspicious sign and it favors the success of all sorts of projects.

Fire and Earth predominate this year, and excessively so, to the point where the water element is non-existent in many charts for the Chinese New Year throughout the globe. In a word, the Earth will be hotter and the earth-changes we have seen will be even more pronounced this year, especially toward the end of the year. Certain areas of the planet, like Australia, will be very dry and others will have extremes of precipitation. What the Elemental setup means is that the Earth Element will completely dominate the Water Element. Water types will feel the pinch this year, whether the Water Element is found in the Year or the Day Pillars. That being the case, Fire will not be controlled and I think we will see some runaway situations involving every thing concerning heat (Fire): spirituality, aggression, overstimulation, massive fires and heat waves (we already have the worst one in 100 years here in the south of Australia with several days over 42° [108°F]). The Earth Element, being fed by such Fire, though, will be emboldened, and that may be just what is needed in the world if positively applied in order to get the financial sector back on track. It is not a year to shrink from what must be done. It *is* a time for bold and decisive action in many areas of life, even though such action goes against the grain of the normally placid Ox temperament.

We need to stop and take a look at the darker side of the scenario before us now, for there is a hidden foil to the plans of the US's and many other administrations world-wide. I said in last year's letter that the Neocon (conservative) agenda would be defeated in the election, and it was, but I also saw that it would just go underground and possibly try to regroup for future action. The lack of the Water Element in the chart for this year indicates a secretive agenda working behind the scenes. Indeed, there is a crying need for transparency in government, given the past eight years, but there are other forces in Washington and elsewhere who are still working to further their own conservative agendas. The conservatives still wield a large amount of political clout in the US. It is those forces that will throw a wrench in the works of the Obama administration. There are some stubborn issues still about that will be difficult to displace this year. We can expect to see a great deal of stubbornness in certain quarters as a counterpoint to the progressive plans of the Obama

administration. It is the conservative forces that exemplify the Ox in this year – resistant to change, distrustful of anything new, etc. You get the picture. It may seem for the moment that everything is in its proper place now in the political arena, but the capacity for sudden reversals and necessary changes of plans is there very strongly and will be evidenced largely as a result of the conservatives. Obama and Co. will have some fights on their hands, just as Truman did with the Fair Deal.

Another side of the Earth Element is that it is very resistant to any sort of change. Saturn is like that. As with the year just past, also ruled by Saturn, karmic accounts will come due all year. However, as we have seen from history, this year will be more about consolidation and movement forward based upon that rather than some sort of revolutionary or evolutionary change, which Rat Years can bring. The pairing of the Rat and the Ox (and they are a natural pair in Chinese astrology) is said to be one of ‘construction’. In other words, this is a pairing of years that will alter the course of history somehow and put new structures into play. We saw the changes that needed to be made during last year. This year it is time to roll up the sleeves and get to work. Like the Ox, it is a time of taking on the collective and individual burdens and bearing them through to completion. We had the same sort of scenario in the years 1948/49 with the reconstruction of the world after WWII. It was a lot of work, but the social structure of the world at large was brought into the modern age, feudalism and empire was ended in the world to a large degree, there was much more and better cooperation between nations and a greater sense of human dignity and rights because of all the chaos that preceded those years. We can see much the same sorts of outcomes over the next decades as a result of the changes and resulting new initiatives put in place in this Ox year. We need to remember that these two years (2008/9) will set the tone in a big way for the fifty-eight years to follow. Saturn is a pivotal planet and it both brings things to completion and sets new things in place as a result. Saturn teaches us about cause and effect.

There is a lot more that could be said, but you will hopefully get the gist of what the year is about. There is a file I am happy to send you if you want to see what the year holds for you personally on a monthly basis. In general and if you know your animal sign for the year, Snakes, Rats and Rabbits will fare pretty well this year, all else being well. You are compatible with the Ox. Roosters will have a bumper year. Ox years are one of the best ones for Roosters. On the other hand, Tigers, Sheep, Dragons and Dogs will have a tougher time of things this year. The Ox is in conflict or tension with those signs. This will be a particularly rocky year for Horses. It is said that the Horse fears the Ox, and this year is likely to bring up a lot of fears for Horse types. How that plays out is an individual matter, but generally speaking, the Horse is too pushy for the Ox and the Ox will not be bound to the Horse’s demands or schedules. Horses would do best to seek out other Horses, Tigers or Sheep this year for solace and companionship.

As far as the Elements go, you can figure out your Year Element by the following: Wood years end in the numbers 4 & 5, so 1965 was a Wood Year, for example. Fire: 6 & 7 Earth: 8 & 9
Metal: 0 & 1 Water: 2 & 3 So, from this, Fire and Earth types will do very well this year, and probably did so last year. Metal types will find a great many benefits coming to them and should feel supported. It would be a good year to start an entrepreneurial venture, for instance, if the capital can be worked out. Water types will suffer this year and will feel the weight of discipline or circumstance upon them. It will seem a hard slog, but a lot of self-knowledge can be gained from whatever happens this year for you. Wood types, if they apply their considerable creative energies, can make some money this year or have some good successes. Earth is the ‘Money Element’ for Wood, which implies that Earth is the Element through which they are able to make best application of their energies. It is the Element and medium through which they are best enabled to grow and bear fruit.

In summary, then, this Year of the Yellow Ox will be one of rebuilding and establishing new foundations – ones which will carry us securely into the future. In this year we all need to be

mindful of conflicts between business and family. Oxen build steadily and for the future. Some very good outcomes can be produced this year, although there will still be changes and reversals of direction. Those changes will be planned this time, however and as the dust settles we may well see the financial sector rebuilt upon much more solid foundations. The general outlook, then, is that things are in their proper place now and that outcomes will be positive and assured, at least eventually. Any plans put in place last year will slowly and steadily build if they were based upon sound ideas, for the Ox will not tolerate shaky foundations or slipshod thinking. We have all seen what that has brought us, especially in finances. This will be the year of the financial sector, and the Ox has a lot to commend in terms of getting it back on track and firmly so. See the end of this letter for additional information about the Year.

There are two dates that stand out as being significant for me in terms of opportunity and growth that both took place in Earth Ox Years. The first one took place on 11 Mar 1889 when the North Carolina legislature issued the charter for the foundation of Elon College (now Elon University). The town that was established around that school was where I grew up and I went on to graduate from the school. That was one Ox Year consolidation that has stood the test of time and has benefited thousands of people – students and public alike. The other one took place on 26 Jan 1949 – actually three days before the start of that Earth Ox Year – which was when the first Australian citizenship ceremony took place. It was appropriate that it took place in the Rat Year, marking the beginning of a new cycle, but we might say that it was in the transition between the years. I became a citizen of this wide, brown land in 2005, and thus a citizen of two great countries. That is another move toward consolidation of a people that has held great benefits for all who have partaken of it. We should look for more such things in this year as well.

I mention the latter date because Australia Day (26 Jan) was also the start of the Chinese New Year this year. A sixty-year cycle has been completed. I went to a citizenship ceremony the other day with a group of friends. The head Geshe of one of the Buddhist centers here was taking an oath of a different sort that day and a bunch of us went to witness it. In all, twelve people became Australian citizens in that ceremony, virtually all of different nationalities. It is not every day one sees a Tibetan Buddhist monk taking citizenship vows, though – and on Chinese New Year either. After all the awards and ceremony they also had a group of Chinese come in and do the Dragon Dance, set off fireworks to cleanse the place of malevolent spirits, present a traditional Chinese dance for the New Year and then we all tucked into a Chinese banquet – all provided by the Unley Council. It was a fine moment of multicultural exchange and the Geshe seemed quite pleased with all the celebrations after the ceremony – especially the fireworks.

It is my sincere wish that all of you have a happy, productive and much better year than the past few have been. May this Year of the Yellow Ox see many of the sorts of things in past such years come to pass. Though the labor might be difficult at the moment, much of great beauty can be born in this year if we can come together in a true spirit of cooperation, compassion and generosity.

Happy New Year to you all,
Malvin.
28 Jan 2009

Addenda

CHART

Name: Lunar New Year: 26 Jan 2009 7:55 am UT (CCT -8:00)
(Chart cast for Adelaide, SA)

THE CHINESE CALENDAR

Solar Period (Fortnightly Festival Period): 24 Great Cold (N); Great Heat (S)

Element Counts:

Wood: 1 - Neat, particular
Fire: 5 - Out-of-Control, extravagant
Earth: 4 - Expansive, bold
Metal: 2 - Sportive, astute
Water: 0 - Secretive, cautious, tentative

CONSTELLATION OF DAY

Animal: Deer This is a good day for everything. Day Indicator: G - Ruin
This is a day for leisure. All else seems to go wrong.

9 STAR QI:

Trigram-Li

Year Number-1 Yin Water / Month Number-6 Yin Metal / House Number-9 Yang Fire

Tetragram 8:

Opposition: Yang chi, driving all things forward, penetrates and supports them on their way. Yin chi opposes their progress.

26 Jan (Daytime):

Fiery tongues set neighbors apart. Cool heads silence the fiery tongue.

* The story at the beginning of this letter is based loosely on and adapted from the true story of Grady the Cow (which happened in 1949). See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grady_the_Cow and <http://www.amazon.com/Gradys-Silo-Una-Belle-Townsend/dp/1589800982> For those readers who check out the second link, I did not know about Bob Artley until writing this letter and he is not a known relation, although he has done wonderful illustrations and books. Life really is stranger than fiction. Consider my little story as a tribute to Grady and fans of cows everywhere.

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