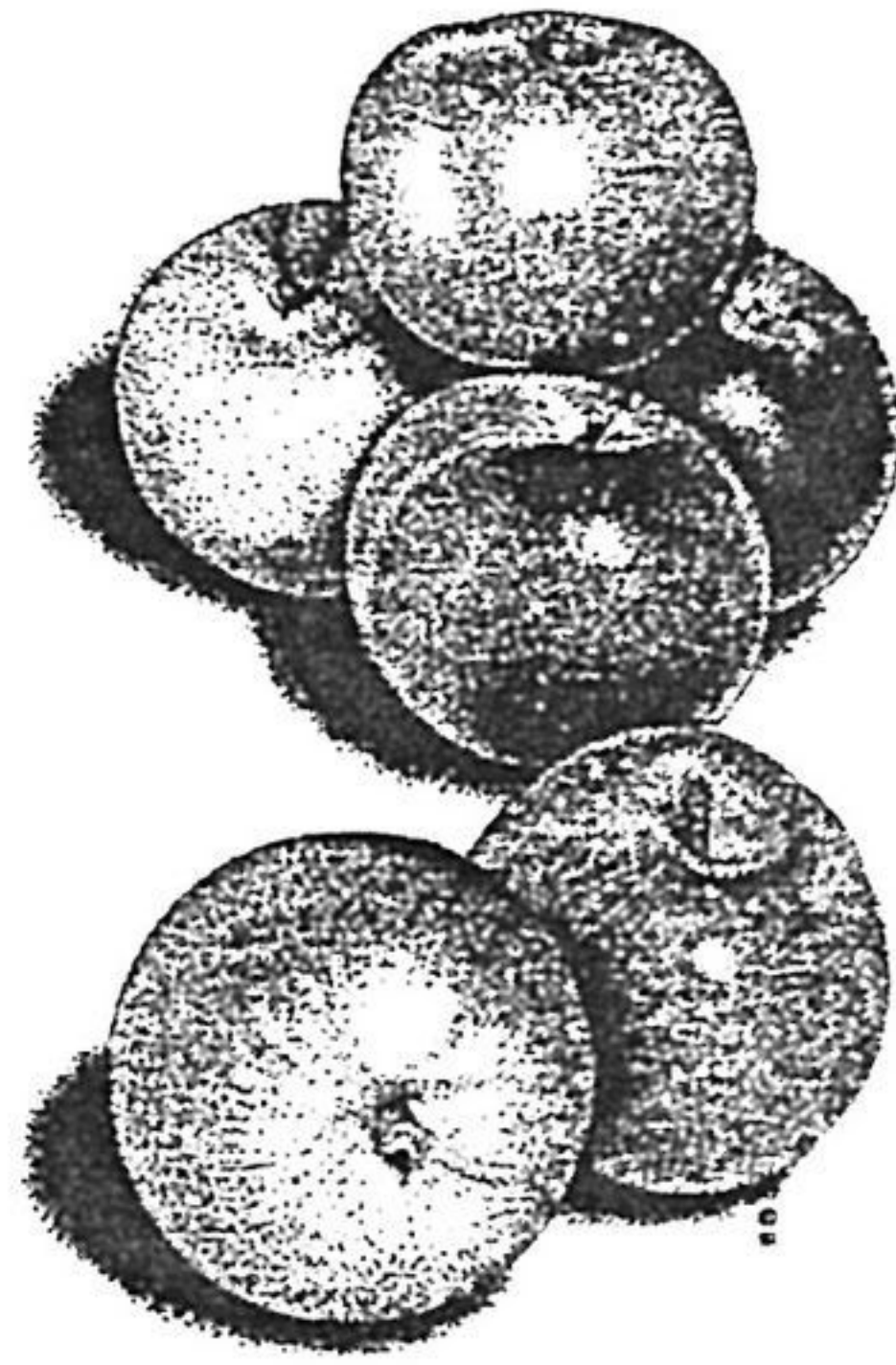


APPLE DREAMS

by Bill Brearley
Chapter One



The meeting of the local ship modellers was always held on the last Friday of the month, in the heart of Canada's apple country. After the usual discussion on one of the topics connected with model ship construction, several of the members discussed the possibility of a trip to the west country of England to see an especially large boat show that was being held in a few months with an emphasis on the Royal Navy in the second world war. Two of the members, Chad and Chris, were very interested because of their fondness for the small coastal motor gun and torpedo boats. Several of the members had read up on the American Elto P.T. boats, the German E boats, and of course the British Vosper M.T.B. and M.G.B. boats. Comparisons had yielded up the facts that while the German boats had superior sea capabilities safer fuel, and a slight edge in speed, the Americans had shown great innovation with guns added on, by the men

on board after scrounging ashore.

After the meeting Chad and Chris decided to leave a week or so before the show in order to see a bit of the west country while their wives visited with relatives in London and Yorkshire.

The flight was uneventful. On arrival at Heathrow the two ladies departed for their relatives, leaving the two middle aged modelmakers to catch a west-bound train for Dorset. Arriving at Plymouth, they sought out the member of the local model boat club, a certain Joe Raleigh, who would show them to their accommodations. It turned out that they were to stay with an apple farmer a few miles out of town. They were the first Canadian guests that he had since the last great unpleasantness. When he heard that Chadwick and Christopher, as their host liked to call them, were from apple country, he insisted that they should join him in the apple storage shed to sample his version of apple cider. Both of the chaps agreed that the cider was indeed as strong as the apple wine produced back of St. John's church in their county. As one glass led to another, they remarked that this cider had a somewhat unusual flavour, almost like almonds. Their host left them alone, while he returned to the town to get his wife, who was still shopping. With the cider passing their lips at a rate that would have pleased the old Celts that had lived in the west country after the Germanic invasions, they fell into

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That Thing Called Middle Age

I often marvel at discussions
That groups of people wage,
About a definition
For that thing called "middle age".

Some say it's just a state of mind,
Others say it's physical.
As the argument grows hotter
My mind becomes more quizzical.

Is a woman showing middle age
When things go against her grain?
Is father showing certain signs
When he plays with Junior's trains?

Perhaps a man is middle-aged
When he's cranky, gives no leeways;
But has a woman reached that point
When her 2-way stretch goes 3-ways?

Is a woman middle-aged who frets
'Bout wrinkles in her face?
Or a husband when he warms his seat
Before a fireplace?

I've listened to the pros and cons
But nothing seems to fit;
For when you ask who's middle-aged
No one will admit it.

So I've decided that there's just
One answer to this row;
Middle age is that time of life
Ten years older than you are now.

- Submitted by
Alice Miller.

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