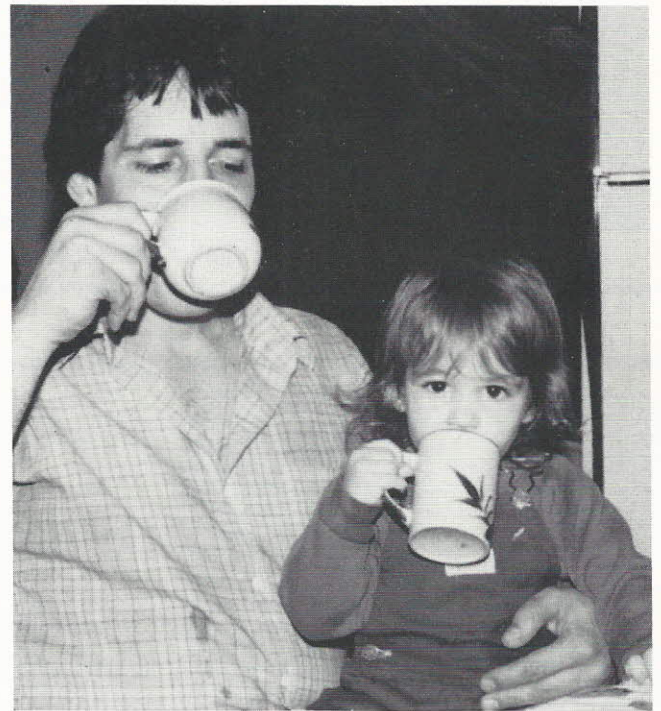


Richard Mark Holmes II

I saw you take your first breath; I helped you when you tried to stand.
I kept thinking, "There're no instructions; children don't come with a set of plans."
As time went on, I realized there is no set of rules
For raising children, just a few basic guidelines. It was up to me to choose.
Teach right from wrong and good from bad, teach dealing with your fellow man.
And always in the back of my mind I kept on thinking, "There's still no plan."
Time has passed; the years moved on. I've watched you work and play.
You overcame and corrected my mistakes, and I made quite a few along the way.
As I look at you now and remember back, to when you were just a boy
There's a feeling of love, a feeling of pride, a feeling of absolute joy.
That little bundle I held so long ago, the one that came with no plans,
Has turned out quite well in spite of my faults. My son is now a man.



~78~

*So oft have I invoc'd thee for my Muse
And found such fair assistance in my verse
As every alien pen hath got my use
And under thee their poesy disperse.
Thine eyes, that taught the dumb on high to sing
And heavy ignorance aloft to fly,
Have added feathers to the learned's wing
And given grace a double majesty.
Yet be most proud of that which I compile,
Whose influence is thine, and born of thee:
In others' works thou dost but mend the style,
And arts with thy sweet Graces gravest be;
But thou art all my art, and dost advance
As high as learning my rude ignorance.*

