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Written and read by Amanda
Bates at the Golden Wedding of
George and Emily Bates.

We have met today to celebrate
the Golden Wedding of our
Father and Mother Bates, to
offer to them our congratulations
and to hope for many happy
returns of the day.

We are glad that so many
are permitted to be with us.
Among the faces before me,
are some that have been
familiar to me since my
early childhood - pioneers,
who came to build for them-
selves homes in a new country,
who toiled and suffered pri-
vations that can scarcely be
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for much that we now
enjoy. Here too
are the friends of later
years, who join with us
in our gladness.

But we think of those who
have gone ^{on} before, some in
the bloom of youth with
prospects bright and hopes
gay, others with hoary heads
whose weary hearts were
waiting for the Master's call,
our meeting is also made
sadder because some of the
brave ones from among us
answered their country's call
to wipe from our land the
dreadful curse of slavery.

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I'm looking at the history of the past fifty years, what marvelous changes have taken place, what wonders have developed. When Miss Emily Robinson made her wedding trousseau, it was all done with a needle and her two hands, for sewing machines were not invented until that year. When the young groom cast his first vote for president, the political issue was not "gold or silver" for gold was not discovered in America at that time. When he began the harness business, he didn't order

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When he began the harness business, he didn't order ...

his leather by telephone,
talking to a man hundreds
of miles away as though he
were in the same room.

If the phonograph had
been in the room at the
time of the wedding cere-
mony fifty years ago today
we could reproduce here at
the Golden Wedding not
only the Minister's words,
but the tones of his voice.
And the world is still
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We often say when something occurs but rarely; "It happens but once in a life time". This is true of Golden Weddings, where ~~husband and wife~~ instances are rare, indeed, where husband and wife are both living to celebrate their fiftieth wedding day.

The father and mother whose half-century of wedded life we celebrate today, are fortunate, not alone in being spared to each other, but are especially favored in having around them an unbroken family circle,

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Your life has not been all sunshine, it has been tempered by shadow, but we all wish for you in the years we hope to still have you with us, that you may have more joy than sorrow, and hope, also, that should any of us, your children, live to enjoy an occasion like this, that we may merit from our children the honor that we today so gladly give to you.

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Forty-fourth birthday, and
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Mandie H. Bates