

My Life Story

EDITH METZGER



*Katie, Elizabeth,
David and Andrew –
here is my life,
As I Remember*

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Forward

For Christmas 1996, my granddaughter Katherine Anne Metzger, gave me a book entitled, "To Our Children's Children" that suggested "Preserving Family Histories for Generations to Come." Almost a year passed while I did nothing about the idea. In September, 1997, the Senior Center at Solana Beach Presbyterian Church listed one of their activities as "Life Story Writing", conducted by Betty Springer. I went to the class and began writing about my experiences through the years. The group was a real pleasure and the idea of reading something every week was a real incentive to get some writing done.

While I have lived a most ordinary life, the times in which I lived were momentous. The Depression Years of the 1930s and the War years of the 1940s were the "Worst of Times" and the years from 1946 on, when Harold and I were making our life together, were the "Best of Times".



THE DARLINGTONS



NEIGHBORHOOD FRIENDS



EDITH AND HAROLD



ADMIRING EDDIE!



DIANE AND PAUL



50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY



THE GRANDSONS



THE METZGERS



EDITH AND STEVE



EDITH, LIZ,
GWYNETH, LAURA
AND JOHN



EDITH, ANDREW AND
DAVID



TRICIA, KATIE AND
STEVE



DAVID, ANDREW AND
ELIZABETH

The Players

As I write this in 1999, I realize that the story of Harold and Edith Metzger is encompassed in this century that is receiving so much notice in the news as it comes to an end.

I am Edith Darlington Metzger, born March 13, 1917 in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada to George and Ellen Sager Darlington, who had emigrated to Canada from England in 1915. I had an older brother, William, born in England in 1911. My parents also had two children, Joseph and Greta, who died in infancy.

After attending an academic high school for five years and one year at special secretarial school, I worked happily for ten years as a representative for Bell Telephone of Canada.

In 1942 I married Harold Metzger of Youngstown, Ohio. He was born July 16, 1907 in Milford, Indiana to John and Emma Bakody Metzger, of German descent. John emigrated from Alsace/Lorraine at the age of 18. After three years at High School, Harold worked in the shipping office at Youngstown Sheet and Tube Co. When his younger brother, David, started a landscape business in 1930, Harold left his office work to join him. They established Terrace Gardens Co., a landscape and nursery company that succeeded for fifty years in the Youngstown, Ohio area.

We had two children, John Paul born April 25, 1950 and Stephen William born November 28, 1956, both in Youngstown, Ohio. John married Laura White December 28, 1974. They have three children, Elizabeth, David and Andrew. Stephen married Patricia Fogerty September 6, 1980. They have one child, Katherine.

We lived in the suburbs of Youngstown, Boardman and Canfield. After Harold's business was sold in 1981, we spent three and a half winter months each year in San Diego, California, where our children lived. In 1995 we moved to San Diego. Harold died there September 4, 1998 at the age of 91.

You, our grandchildren are descendants of immigrants, as are so many now living in the United States and Canada. Our parents struggled with the problems of uprooting their lives and making a life very different from that of their parents. After seeing the dire results of the "depression", our generation's goal became the "work ethic". After World War II there were years of great progress and we benefited from them.

Our children (your parents) had still another background. They had the opportunity to go to college and establish careers very different from ours. In the late 1960's perhaps fueled by the unpopular Viet Nam war, there was a general pervasive change in respect for authority and the "drug culture" developed. They became the "consumer generation" and have to cope with the escalating economy and its problems.

Your lives will be lived in still another background and development, not really known at this time. We can hope you will meet with success and happiness as we have.

The Darlington Family

My Father

My father, George Darlington, was born July 26, 1884, in Crewe, Cheshire, England to Joseph and Emily Darlington. He was one of seven children, four boys and three girls. Crewe was a main railway center and the father worked on the railroad. I don't know in what capacity. All the boys were apprenticed to a trade; my father to cabinet making, his brother Tom to bricklaying, his brother Fred to stone masonry. The youngest boy, Joseph, went into shipbuilding at Birkenhead. The girls, Elizabeth, Hannah and Edith, went into "service". My Aunt Hannah was a cook. Later, when my mother's sister Florence came to Canada, she came with her and got work as a cook in a wealthy home in Hamilton.

Dad and Aunt Hannah came to Canada. All the rest went to Australia. Tom stayed there, and was in the building business. Fred's wife was unhappy in Australia and they eventually came back to Crewe and he was in the stone mason business. Edith married an Australian sheep farmer. Joe never married and later came back to England. I remember that Grandma Darlington sent all her children a Christmas cake and Christmas pudding – quite an enterprise – all that baking and mailing them to Canada and Australia.



THE DARLINGTON FAMILY



AUNT HANNAH



OUR FIRST HOUSE DAD BUILT

My dad apprenticed seven years as a carpenter and cabinet maker. When the apprenticeship was completed, he found work with a building firm in Littleborough, Lancashire. There he met and married my mother. They had a son, William, born April 4, 1911. In 1913, a second son, Joseph, was born. He was a sickly baby that could not retain food. In our time, this health problem can be helped, but then no remedy was known and he died at eleven weeks. This was a stressful time for the family. Canada was recruiting tradesmen to come as emigrants. Dad decided to make the move. They came to Hamilton, Ontario to make a “new start”.

They had a struggle to get established, but there was work in construction. Dad worked on various buildings. One of his co-workers was Fred Atkinson, whose family became life-long friends of ours. As soon as possible, Dad built their first house, where I was born in 1917. He didn’t believe in debt and built the house as he had money for wood, etc. Mother said that at one time they used a ladder to get to the second floor until they could afford to buy wood for stairs!

He was a good builder. In my lifetime we lived in eight houses he had built, in all stages of construction. By the time they were finished, they would be sold and we would move on. The only house we were in that he didn’t build was an old farmhouse that he remodeled while we were living in it, coping with plaster and dust.

Much about my father will develop as I tell about the future years. He was an honest, hard-working and upright person. Perhaps he may have been considered “reserved” and yet all my parent’s friends through the years were people he had dealings with – either built a house for them or sold them one of his houses. I always thank him for giving us music in our home and sending us to an academic high school instead of a trade school, as many working people did at that time. Unfortunately he was one of millions caught and made destitute with the depression. But he came through and built several houses after the war years.

My Mother

An avid reader of fiction all of my life, I have enjoyed the novels of English writer, Catherine Cookson. Her stories are usually located in Yorkshire, England, about the lot of poor working people in the 1800’s. Many tales like that I’ve heard from my Mother, whenever she would talk about her childhood.

My mother, Ellen Sager, was born February 6, 1883 in the small town of Littleborough in Lancashire, the dour midlands of England. This time was the heyday of the British Empire – raw materials were brought from the far-flung empire and manufactured in English factories. Littleborough was a town dominated by textile mills.

My mother's father, William Sager, worked at the railway station – steady work, but low pay. Most of the time he earned a pound a week – at that time that would be about \$5.00. My mother was the second of four children, two boys and two girls. Her mother worked in the mill as much as possible, having her children, but they had a meager living. Mother said at meals, the meat was served to her father first, and what was left was shared with the family! When her father had a week's vacation, he went off to Blackpool by himself to enjoy the change, leaving the family behind!! Seems very selfish compared to our family attitudes now!



ELLEN SAGER
DARLINGTON

When my mother was eleven, she started to work in the mill half days, and go to school half days. At 13 she had completed the 8th grade. A good student, her teachers urged her to go on to High School. This was in the nearby town of Rochdale and entailed train travel each day. The family finances could not permit any further education, and my mother started to work full time as a weaver in a woolen mill.

The family was poor, but, as in most cases, they didn't know it! Their friends and family all lived the same – they accepted their lot. When mother was 15, her mother died of kidney failure. I don't know how much later her father married again, a spinster, Mary Ann Halliwell, whom I was to know as my grandmother.

I should briefly mention my mother's siblings, and the little I know about them. The wife of the older brother, Frank, died young, leaving him with a daughter, Evelyn. He later married Nora, who had three children, Frank, Tom and Jesse. Since all these cousins will appear later in my story, I merely put them in the family chronicles. Frank and Tom returned to England after the war and became school teachers. Both married school teachers, Frank married Marie and Tom married Bernice. Jessie stayed with my grandmother, Mary Ann, now a widow, who owned a stationer's store. Jessie worked in the store and inherited it when Mary Ann died. She never married.

The brother, Harry, was married and had one daughter, Florence. At one point in his life, his wife left him for another man. Years later she wanted to come back to him, and he took her back! I'm sure there are many interesting stories in those lives, but I don't know about them. Mother's sister, Florence, came out to Canada in 1917, and figures very much in my life and the life of my family, as our very loved "Aunt Florrie".

Mother told of first seeing my Dad in the town and thinking, "I'm going to marry him"! Dad had recently come to Littleborough to work as a carpenter, so he was new in town. (In that culture, a skilled tradesman was a step above a mill worker). We never heard anything further about how they met and courted – just that they got married January 14, 1910. Mother was 26 and Dad 25. I don't know why I never thought to ask her for details – it seems I never related my parents to that phase of life!

My brother William was born April 14, 1911 and 18 months later another son, Joseph, was born. Joseph was a sickly baby, had what is now known as "projectile vomiting", which is curable in our time, but he got no nourishment and died at 11 weeks old. It happened that Mother was at



UNCLE JOE AND AUNT EDITH



EDITH, HANNAH AND GRACE



GRANDMOTHER DARLINGTON



ELIZABETH, HANNAH, AND EDITH DARLINGTON

Mary Ann's when contractions started, so she had the baby there. Dad claimed it was a "put up job"!

At this time, I may interject, that Dad was an "English father" of the times, coming from a home dominated by a tyrannical father. The man's word was "The Word". He was probably obnoxious to Mother's family. He worked for a builder who went on periodic "drunks" and sometimes my Dad got into it with him. Mother said her family urged her to leave Dad – but she had two children – where could she go!? In today's culture, that would be the end of a marriage, but they lived together for almost 60 years and made a home for their children. Who is to say which is the better solution?

No doubt there was much unhappiness when the baby died. At that time, ads were being run in the media by Canada, recruiting immigrants, especially tradesmen. Dad decided that would be for them. They sold their furniture and sailed for Canada, with their boy William, and settled in Hamilton, Ontario.

In the USA, a country of immigrants, we tend to admire their courage, especially those who pioneered the West. My husband claimed it wasn't so much bravery, as a decision or need to leave an unhappy situation. Certainly that was the case in my small family. My Uncle Dave, who married Aunt Florrie, left Littleborough after his young wife died of tuberculosis. He had a sister and brothers in Hamilton, Ontario and joined them. Uncle Jim, who married Aunt Hannah, was a handsome womanizer (according to my mother's version). He left Littleborough, with his pregnant wife and two children, when he was involved in a scandal with a married woman. In Canada, his wife told mother she didn't want to live and died giving birth. (Can you will yourself to die?) Uncle Jim shipped his three children, one a new baby, to England to be raised by his unmarried sisters. He had two more marriages, the last one to my Aunt Hannah, to my Dad's disapproval!

So began the Canadian years, which comprise a large part of my life.

My Parents (Continued)

In the story of the Depression in the 1930s, I tell of my parents losing their home and ending up in an apartment owned by a friend who gave it to them rent free in return for janitor duties in a six apartment building. During the war, Dad got employment as a woodworking instructor at an Army training camp. They finally became solvent and Dad built a very nice house for them on Main St. in Hamilton, near the home they had had before. They were back in the East end of the city, where they had always been since coming from England.



Dad continued to build houses, some for customers, some on speculation. He built another house for himself and Mother on King Street in the same general area. This was a perfect home for them and Mother said she “wanted to leave there in a box”. She’d had more than enough of moving. After Dad was 70 he found he could no longer do the active work of building. They were able to live on their old age pensions.

King Street was becoming a thoroughfare and the road was widened and taxes took a big jump. Dad felt they may not be able to afford to live there and put the house up for sale at a price he thought no one would pay – but it sold readily and they were out of a house again. We were very upset that he would do that, we would have been glad to pay their taxes so they could live on in the perfect house for them in their old age – but Dad was independent, didn’t want us to help them – so my poor Mother had to move again. My cousin, Alan Lord, lived a block away from them and came to help them with them move. He said when the movers came, Mother had done nothing to prepare for the move – curtains were up and everything was in closets and cupboards. I suppose that was a mini-revolt – but she moved!

They found an apartment closer to town on King St. In an older building – very dingy compared to the bright new apartments being built near their house – but Dad said that was what they could afford!! It was on a bus line near stores, so it was convenient – just old! It had a porch and they enjoyed sitting out watching the passing scene. I went home every few months and was determined to get them into a new apartment and get someone in to help with the work. I would be back in Canfield having made no change – no matter how old you are, you can’t tell your parents what to do!



In September, 1968 Mother had a slight stroke and was in the hospital for a month – came home using a walker and having home help sent in every day as part of the Canadian Health Service. Very soon, they canceled that service because they said there wasn’t work for them – Dad got everything done before the help got there and didn’t want them to make meals for them! By this time, my mother was 85 and found keeping house and making meals were too much for her. Dad was 84, had chronic emphysema, but helped out and they continued on their own. I remember going up there and feeling I should stay and look after them, but I had my home and family and could stay only a week at a time.

For Christmas, 1968 Mother wanted to come down as they had for many years, even though she was still recovering from the effects of the stroke and was in a generally frail condition. We drove up and brought them down for the holidays. There was a usual winter epidemic of colds and flu and Steve picked up the bug at school and was miserable during Christmas vacation. Unfortunately, Dad caught the cold; added to his emphysema, pneumonia developed. We took him to our doctor. He was

very ill, but was home. The doctor said he could be looked after as well there as in the hospital. We were suppose to go with our group to the Chinoth's for the football games on New Years, but I didn't feel I could leave Dad. He was in bed most of the time, and died there January 4. I was shocked – it seemed I'd been in with him and went to get lunch and when I got back, he had died! Probably the Doctor knew there was no point in putting him in the hospital. Thank you, Doctor Heaven! Dad would have hated being in the hospital. Once a few years before the Doctor had him in the hospital for x-rays, thinking he may have lung cancer (but it was all the emphysema). After a day, Dad signed himself out, called a taxi and came home!

Sad to say, his death was opportune. He was anxious to get back to Hamilton and would not have stayed with us. Mother was relieved to be able to give up housekeeping and live at our home. After a couple of weeks, Mother and I went up to Hamilton and closed up the apartment. Members of the family and friends took any thing they wanted. A neighbor who had helped Mother and had a small family took anything left and agreed to clean up. So ended the Canadian connection of my life.

Mother continued to be with us for another 18 months and was in fair health, better for being relieved of her home responsibilities. She was very frail and I had a nurse come in twice a week to help her. I was getting anxious that I could continue to manage and hated to even think of putting her in a nursing home. Our son John said "when you get old, we'll look after you like you looked after Grandma." A lovely thought, sometimes easier said than done!

Aunt Florrie, her sister, came down for a visit in the summer of 1970. She was due to go home (the shuttle service we had set up with her son, whom we'd meet at Erie PA). She was sleeping in another bed in Mother's room and came out in the morning saying "I think your Mother is dead!" Mother had died in her seep – aged 87.

Both Mother and Dad were buried in Canfield cemetery – the end place of their years of wandering.

It is a milestone when you lose your parents – I could only feel grateful that they could go when the life they had lived together was no longer possible.

My Brother and Best Friend

My brother, William, was born in Littleborough, Lancashire, England April 14, 1911, and came to Canada with our parents in 1914. He was 6 years older than I and always part of my life.

An early memory of him was going to the Saturday movies every week. On Saturday evening our family went to cruise the stores on nearby Ottawa Street. Dad always bought the weekend paper and some solid milk chocolate slabs. On Sunday morning my brother and I read the comics in bed. I will refer to my brother as Bill, although he was always called William at home and with the family. It was when he was older and his friends called him Bill, that I began using the shortened name.

On Saturday mornings, Mother gave us a grocery list and Bill and I took his wagon to carry the packages. At that time, you told the storekeeper what you wanted to buy and he got it from the shelves behind the counter. Bill had a paper route through good weather and bad. Cold and snowy winters were a problem. He collected every Saturday and always bought himself a chocolate éclair from his profits. Often he had to go back and back to some customers before they paid him.

My Dad and he played the violin in a small church orchestra at Laidlaw Presbyterian church a couple blocks away on Ottawa Street. The six years difference in our age meant we had very diverse interests and friends and activities. I do remember many evenings after supper; we would be in the kitchen with our Mother. Perhaps we were doing homework and she the dishes. My Dad was never in on those times, but my Mother would entertain Bill and me with English music hall ditties like "Burlington Bertie", "Won't You Come Home, Bill Bailey?", and the "Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo." She'd give her interpretations of the cake walk dance – just last week I saw a revue on TV where they were doing the "cake walk" and I remembered Mother's version. I can still sing "The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo" 70 years later!



WILLIAM DARLINGTON

It was when I got into High School that Bill and I paid more attention to each other. He'd been to the same school and had the same teachers, so his advice was very useful. Also, I was now able to play the piano enough to play his violin music. Soon after he started work as a teller in the Royal Bank, he bought a Philco radio – the first in our house! This was a wonderful time for radio – suddenly great musical and comedy talent was available for everyone, the time of the big bands and the beginning of the half-hour programs of the singers like Bing Crosby and Rudy Vallee. We enjoyed listening to the greats like Fats Waller, Artie Shaw, Tommy Dorsey – Bill and I enjoyed their great musical treatments. Our parents weren't familiar with them, or interested, so it was all enhanced for me by sharing it with Bill.



BILL AND MARY

He had a group of boy friends who got together every week for cards at each others house. His friends included our life long family friends, Tom Smith and Bob Atkinson, a school friend, Harry Whitaker, and Ted Cross. Others joined in occasionally – these are the ones I knew well. He dated Ted Cross's sister, Mary, a very pretty girl whose looks and charm reflected her Irish background. I remember (still!) one time they were going dancing as a group and Bob Atkinson asked if I'd go with him. I foolishly said no – which shows what a dumb, shy person I was to refuse a nice boy I had known and liked all my life!

I have told of the effect of the depression in delaying the time when couples could afford to be married and start a home. After dating for several years, Mary became pregnant and they were married. Bill felt badly to take the money he paid at home away, when it was desperately needed. He offered to move in with us, but Dad wouldn't hear of it, saying "no

house is big enough for two women". They got a small house a few blocks from our home and their son, Edward, was born. Bill left the bank and worked in the office at Steel Company of Canada where Mary's brother Ted worked. We saw them frequently and they were a part of the family life. When Harold and I were married in 1942, Bill was "Best Man".

Canada had been at war since 1939. Most services were filled by volunteers. There was a draft, but it was limited to defense of Canada troops. No men were drafted for the Foreign Service. Perhaps it was Harold going into the Army and a large number of men his age already having joined the various services. I don't know why, but Bill decided he'd like to try for the Air Force. He was 31, certainly over age for a pilot. He talked to Dad about it to get his opinion. Dad said if he wanted to do that he should go ahead. This urge to join the Air Force was completely out of character of his life so far. He never discussed it with me or our parents until he made the decision. He enlisted in R.C.A.F. and was trained as a navigator. Mary was very upset at his leaving; she blamed Dad for not discouraging him in such a drastic move. Of course, that had to be decided between Mary and Bill. It happened that none of their long time friends in the group joined up and Mary was very bitter about his leaving.

After training in the Canada west, he went to England. His letters were always enthusiastic – he probably found it more absorbing and exciting than a clerk's desk in the Steel Co. He visited my parent's families when he had time off. He wrote that Dad had not made a mistake when he left England! He saw a lot of my bachelor Uncle Joe, Dad's youngest brother.



GEORGE, BILL, MARY, EDDIE AND ELLEN
DARLINGTON

By 1944 and 1945, England's RAF was decimated and many RCAF fliers were stationed at RAF centers. Every night in our newspapers in Hamilton, they would list the fatalities, but I never thought anything bad could happen to our family! By March of 1945, the German Air Force was almost unable to mount a defense, but Bill's crew went out on one of the last bombing missions of the Allies. His plane was hit and they limped back to England, but crash landed and went up on flames. Only two of the crew were saved, but badly burned. Bill was dead. My Uncle Joe took his body to be buried at Crewe, where my grandparents' grave was. When I was there many years later, I saw his name listed in the group from there who died in the war. My Uncle Joe later visited the pilot who had survived but was badly burned. He told my Uncle that "Bill had had the best of it."

Needless to say, we were devastated. For the first time, I realized that mourning is a physical as well as a mental state. I think my parents were never the same after losing still another of their children. Bill had always been close to my Mother – called her every morning from work. Mother found herself overwhelmed, sitting by the hour reading his letters. She realized that couldn't go on and,

at the age of 63, got a job in a knitting factory working on socks and healing her sadness in the company of other lady workers. Mary was bewildered as to how she could cope with being alone and raising a child. She had been a dental assistant, but didn't want that now – she took a commercial course and got work at the Steel Company, who had a policy of hiring former employee's family. In the summer holidays, when Eddie was out of school, we brought him down to stay with us in Youngstown, Ohio. He was with us for a few summers, until he was 16 and I thought he should get some summer job to keep at home.

Bill was very fair and slight build, like Fred Astaire and Stan Laurel. (He used to do imitations of Stan Laurel). He had inherited Mother's mild disposition and got along well with everyone. I saw him angry just once in my life, a bizarre episode involving my Dad. Dad was adamant against the flourishing custom of buying things on credit – his theory was "Save until you have the money to buy what you needed." Too bad he had not carried that philosophy into his business! Bill and I both resented his attitudes during the Depression of refusing to get any job at less than union wages. At that time, people worked at any job they could get for whatever pay was offered. Dad never felt money should be spent for comforts for the home. Mother longed for a chesterfield sofa that had become popular – everyone had one! We had an ugly brown leather sort of chaise lounge that had been bought, used, many years before. Dad would not agree to buy one "on time" so Mother agonized for years at this stalemate. Finally, as she was earning a little money from going to work in people's houses, she dared to buy a brown velvet sofa and chair by paying for it on regular payments. When it was delivered and in place, Dad was furious and put it out on the porch. When Bill came home from work and saw it he quietly put it back in place in the house. There was no ranting and raving – but the sofa stayed in the living room. Perhaps Dad realized he'd been ridiculous – he never said. Events like this reinforced my determination never to be afraid of my husband.

My brother Bill was an important, happy part of my life that ended all too soon. I will always cherish the memory of the times we were together. Our younger son is very like him in looks and temperament, so my brother continues for me.

Two Sisters

On February 6, 1883, Ellen Sager was born in Littleborough, Lancashire, England; a daughter of William and Sarah Crosley Sager. Four years later, her sister, Florence, was born.

These two sisters became a most vital part of my life. Ellen was my Mother and Florence was Aunt Florrie. They were different; my mother had auburn hair and the fair, English complexion, and always tended to be plump. Florrie was very thin, had dark hair and more sallow coloring. But they were somewhat alike in their temperament – calm and pleasant – not complainers or arguers. I think Mother was more outgoing than Aunt Florrie.

I have told previously about my parent's marriage and subsequent move to Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. About three years after they were established in Hamilton, Aunt Florrie decided to come out to Canada. Dad thought his sister, Hannah, could accompany her. Both were in their late 20s. They settled in Hamilton, Florrie getting a job at Westinghouse and Hannah getting a position as cook in a wealthy family.

The story of my Mother weaves in all parts of my memories, so this part is mainly about Aunt Florrie. A former neighbor of my parents in England, David Lord, said he'd take Florrie out when she came. He was a widower, had no children. He came to Hamilton after his wife died and worked as a loom-fixer in a cotton mill. They were married in 1919 and built a small house about a mile from my parents. They had two boys, Arthur in 1920 and Alan in 1922. Uncle David was concerned to have babies at this age (nearly 50) he felt he may not live to see them raised. (He did.) From then on, their outings to play card and dance were shelved – they stayed home to look after the boys – baby sitters were not in the picture and homes where you took two little boys visiting were limited – when they came to our house Mother felt a cyclone had hit.

From the time the boys were born, I spent many days at my Aunt's, particularly in the summer vacation. It seemed Aunt Florrie and I were kindred spirits – I always enjoyed being with her. She had a gramophone. We listened to music, sat in deck chairs in the yard reading books from the library. By this time I was a compulsive reader of fiction – probably as an escape. To this day a well written book takes me completely out of myself.

She went walking every day – both boys in a carriage. They lived a couple of blocks from a baseball park, and Aunt Florrie and I and the boys went to games. A farm team from one of the major leagues played there. Aunt Florrie knew all the players by name and cheered and yelled advice to them. My Mother had no interest in sports, and read magazines and newspapers rather than books. She never went walking except to the store or to visit a friend. In the winter, Aunt Florrie followed the wonderful Toronto Maple Leaf Hockey Team on the radio. On Saturday nights Mother and Dad would be at Aunt Florrie's and playing bridge and Florrie would be listening to hockey games as she played. Not a very alert partner for bridge!

We always went to Aunt Florrie's for Christmas and they came to our house for New Year's. We had such a small family that we were very close to our cousins.

In the depression, even though Uncle Dave worked short time, Aunt Florrie never went to work as my Mother did. She was very frugal all her life. After Uncle David died and both boys were married, Aunt Florrie surprisingly didn't want to live alone. She gave Alan money to build two extra rooms on their house, a living room and kitchen, and she continued to live there the rest of her life.



AUNT FLORRIE

When we were in Youngstown, Ohio, she often came down to stay a couple of weeks at a time with us. She was free to stay as long as she wanted, whereas my Mother always felt she had to get back to look after my Dad. I went to Hamilton often, at least four times a year – our boys loved going up. For years, we'd bring Mother or Aunt Florrie down when we returned. Sometimes, if Mother was down, we'd meet Alan at Erie PA (about halfway) he'd bring Aunt Florrie down and take Mother home.

Aunt Florrie happened to be down when we learned we were getting a baby boy to adopt. She stayed over and helped me. I think it bothered Mother that Aunt Florrie had seen the baby and she hadn't. Without telling us, she came down by herself on the train just to see the baby! Six years later when I was having Steve, Aunt Florrie came down to stay while I was in the hospital

(ten days at that time). John, whom we expected to be gone all day at school, came down with mumps and was home the whole time I was gone!

Aunt Florrie enjoyed all the activity of our busy lives – all our friends thought she was nice – called her Aunt Florrie – probably had no idea she was Mrs. Lord! About three years ago, as I was walking in our street, my neighbor said “you don’t have the bounce Aunt Florrie had!”

When she was 80, she had a gall bladder operation – got along okay – about three days later she had a blood clot to the brain, was in a coma. I went up to see her in the hospital—she didn’t know me – just kept saying “I’ve got to walk.” I thought it was terrible that they had brought her back at her age. I envisioned her spending months or years paralyzed. I was wrong! Perhaps because of her years walking, she worked hard at therapy and was able to come back to almost her usual self for another eight years!

In 1968, my Mother had a slight stroke and was in the hospital for a month. When I went up, I felt I needed to be there to look after them (they were 85 and 84), but I had Harold and the two boys at home and couldn’t stay very long. They had always come down for Christmas and Mother wanted to come, so we drove up and brought my parents down just before Christmas. Dad had emphysema but the two of them had managed to keep going. After Christmas, Dad was urging Mother to walk and get her strength up to go back to their own house. There was a lot of cold and flu around and Steve had a bad cold, which Dad apparently got. It turned into pneumonia and after a week’s illness he died January 4. There was no question of Mother going back to Hamilton. We closed up her apartment and she stayed on with us, quite contented to not be keeping house any longer. Dad would not have wanted to live with us; I don’t know how it would have worked out. So – you can say, he died at 84 at the right time. Their living on their own was no longer possible.

Aunt Florrie was visiting us in the summer of 1970; as usual we were going to meet Alan at Erie for the shuttle exchange. The morning we were to drive up she came out of her bedroom with a shocked look “I think your Mother has died!” Mother died in her sleep. Many nights when I was helping her to get ready for bed, she’d say “Wouldn’t it be nice if I didn’t wake up!” So, at 87, that’s the way it happened. Aunt Florrie was again with us at yet another momentous happening! I don’t think she ever came to stay with us again – perhaps she thought it could happen to her – away from home!

She lived until she was 89! Still walking every day. The last four months of her life she had falls and broken hip – in and out of hospital. Alan said she seemed to “give up”. A very blithe spirit who always there for me and my family.

Our Houses

House Number 2 - Robins Avenue

I have mentioned House number 1 that Dad built when they came to Hamilton, and where I was born. The second house my Father built for us to live in was on Robins Ave., still in the East End where most British people settled. Since I was just 2 and 3 when we lived there, all events are as my Mother told them. My sister, Greta, was born there in 1919; I was a year and a half older.



GRETA

My Mother's younger sister, Florence, had come out from England. Among Mother's English friends was David Lord, a former next door neighbor of my parents in Littleborough. He had come to Hamilton after his wife died. He took Aunt Florrie out and eventually they were married. On their wedding day, Dad left early for his duties as "best man". Aunt Florrie urged Mother to hurry to get to the wedding reception early so she could help out. I was 2 years old. She got me all set to go, then looked after the baby. By the time she was all ready, I had been out in the yard and was all dirty! Typical family problem!

My Dad was building a house further down on the same street. He came home for lunch. I was out playing and wandered down to the house he was working on. By the time Dad got back from lunch, I was painting the newly plastered walls with brown stain! A "terrible two" indeed! It's a wonder I survived!



EDITH

A traveling photographer stopped to see if Mother wanted my picture taken. She plopped me on the window sill, just as I was, and the result is the picture of me scowling at the man, with a toy gun in my hand.

Dad must have been doing well with his building, and decided Mother should go home to England when school was out for William and take all three children! We were to stay with his family in Crewe and Mother's family in Littleborough. He planned to come over for Christmas and all return together. (In thinking of it now, I wonder how they could accommodate four more people in their modest homes. But they always put up any family when they returned.)

When they arrived in England, my lovely, healthy sister – 11 months old – sickened with diphtheria, which she had likely picked up on the boat. At that time, there was little the doctors

could do and she died, a week after they had arrived! The first word my Dad got of their safe arrival was the telegram saying that Greta had died!

The Robins Ave. house was eventually sold to Harry and Lillian Smith, also from Lancashire. They were to become life-long friends of my parents and my brother and me. They had a son, Tom, about William's age and a daughter, Joan, about my age. We frequently went to each other's homes for dinners and card parties. The idea of "babysitters" was not in the picture for my parents and their friends. The children went with their parents. Joan and I had a good time playing together – would often sleep over. In all their get-togethers there would always be some one playing the piano and everyone singing. Mrs. Smith would chord and sing music hall ditties that I still remember. Mother sang them to us. This is one I still remember:

As I stroll along the Bois Boulogne with an independent air
 You can hear the girls declare "He must be a millionaire"
 You can hear them sign, and wish to die
 And see them wink the other eye
 At the "Man who broke the bank at Monte Carlo"

We children enjoyed these gatherings as much as our parents. These were happy memories. Years later I would get the old songs out and play for an hour or more, and I was right back with them all!

Dad was building a house around the corner for a young couple. As it still happens, the house was not ready when they had to move. The couple and their two little girls came in with us until they could get into their house! A full house!

House Number 3 - Park Row Avenue

(Timeframe: Early 1920s)

On our return from the visit to England, Dad built a house for us on Park Row, still in the east end of Hamilton. This is the scene of my first memories - I was probably about four when we moved there. There were many children in the neighborhood. After supper in the summer, we'd all be out playing Hide & Seek and Red Rover, and endless games of hopscotch.

We went to Laidlaw Presbyterian Church a few blocks away. I had been christened there as a baby. Dad and my brother played violin in the church orchestra. One of my earliest memories is of Sunday School where we learned to sing "Jesus Loves Me" and "Jesus Wants Me For a Sunbeam" which I can still sing word for word. The neighbor next door, Mrs. Aitchison, bred Airedale puppies and let me play with them. The lovely smell of cuddling a clean puppy lingered with me for many years. Dad bought a piano and started to take lessons himself. We always had music in the home – of our own making. We never had a Victrola and were grown up before we got a Philco radio.



Dad bought a Model-T Ford. The man who sold it to him was to come to show him how to drive it. When he didn't come, Dad thought he could figure it out himself. He drove the few house lengths to the end of the street and had to run into a pole in order to stop!

My brother had a paper route. Every Saturday morning he went to collect the pay for the week. Often he'd have to go back to some customers several times before he got his money. This was especially tough in the cold winter months - slogging through snow. Because of this, I was always sure to pay the paper boy right on time!

I started school from this house. I was five years old in March. You could go to school as soon as you were five, so I went into kindergarten for only three and a half months. In September, I went into First Grade I was still only five. This acceleration had good points and bad, as I found out by the High School years. Mother said I knew the first reader by heart before I went to school, from hearing the neighbor children read. I could say "The Little Red Hen" all through her problems with the lazy barnyard denizens.

At this time, childhood diseases such as measles and mumps, etc., were widespread. Serum for them had not yet been developed. If there was a disease in the household, the family was quarantined and a sign put on the door - MUMPS, CHICKEN POX, etc. until the quarantine time was over. I never got any of these diseases, not even diphtheria when my sister died from it. I apparently had a natural immunity that continued throughout my life. Although I never got any childhood diseases, I seemed to have many colds. The Doctor suggested it might help if I had my tonsils and adenoids out. The Doctor brought his nurse to the house and the kitchen table was the scene of the operation!

Almost every Saturday afternoon, my brother took me with him to the movies a few blocks away. They were actually a nightmare of kids yelling and stomping their feet at the cowboy chases. The weekly serial always left you dangling, anxious for next week's episode. But - we loved it - gladly paid our five cents admission. I usually had two cents to buy candy - there was an amazing variety of candy available at that price!

By this time, Aunt Florrie had a baby boy, Arthur, and was about to have Alan, July 6, 1922. Uncle Dave brought Arthur to our house for a few days - he was 18 months old. During that time, he ate some washing soda from under the sink and screamed with the terrible burning in his mouth. A friend and I took him to a park about a mile away. On our way home a storm came and heavy rain fell on us and baby Arthur in the open carriage. He screamed all the way home! I always remember when Alan was born!

I got into the habit of going to Aunt Florrie's at least one day a week when school was out. I enjoyed playing with the boys and listening to the gramophone (which we didn't have). I remember enjoying such records as 'Dardanella', 'Jada', and 'Poet & Peasant Overture'. Aunt Florrie and I developed a great rapport. She liked to read books, went out walking every day, for awhile, had both boys in the buggy. She lived a couple of blocks from a baseball stadium and we often went to the local games. She was an important part of my life and of my family, later on in U.S.A.

I remember going there for dinner. Sometimes we'd sit after the meal, and enjoy Uncle Dave and Mother talking about mutual friends in Littleborough. They'd often lapse into the Lancashire

dialect, talking about 'Tom Willie' and "Joe Bob". This is probably like English immigrants to Kentucky and Tennessee did, which we found entertaining.

My Father's sister, Hannah, had come to Hamilton with Aunt Florrie. She had married a Lancashire friend of my Mother, James Stanfield. He was a carpenter, like Dad. He had been married before – two wives had died in child birth, and Dad didn't approve of his sister marrying him. However, he was good looking and jolly – just what my spinster aunt needed. That same year, 1922, she had a baby girl, Grace. That was to be the extent of our family in Canada.

My Father had worked with another carpenter, Fred Atkinson, building a group of houses for a contractor. The Atkinson family became my parents' good friends, along with the Smiths (previously mentioned when they bought our Robins Ave. house). The Atkinsons had three boys; the youngest, Bobby, was my brother's age. He and Tom Smith and my brother were good friends for the rest of their lives.

We went with our parents to Smith's and Atkinson's and my two aunts. There was always music and cards. The Atkinson sons played piano and violin. I was an avid reader and enjoyed going to Atkinson's - Mrs. Atkinson always had movie magazines. While the parents played cards, Bobby and William played and I luxuriated in the stories about the movie stars.

Mother never followed the routine many housewives usually had in that era - wash Monday, iron Tuesday, etc. Instead, she met Mrs. Atkinson on Mondays down town to have lunch and see a show - taking me with her when I was out of school. I remember there was vaudeville at the downtown shows in addition to a movie, so I enjoyed the outing as much as my Mother.

While we had children we played with and knew at school, at this stage of our lives we were very much a part of our parents' activities and enjoyed their friends with them. We used the street car to go to downtown Hamilton. Otherwise we walked to all our relatives' and friends' homes; they were all in the East End, within a mile or two. Walking was our main 'transportation'.

Dad had built a very nice house on speculation on the next street, Edgemont Ave. It didn't sell readily and was broken into and all plumbing fixtures stolen. He felt we should move into it to protect the premises until it was sold. That became 'House No.4'. I left all my playmates and found just one little girl to play with on that street.

House Number 4 - Edgemont Avenue

We lived in House No. 4, the house built for sale and not sold, for only a year or two, can't be sure. I was able to continue in the same school. I don't remember much about school, except that I was promoted from third grade to fourth during the same year. This policy is seldom used now – I don't know why it was done then. Perhaps it was based on the fact that working class children often left school for work as soon as they were 16. School officials may have wanted pupils to get as much learning as possible before leaving. My brother left high school at 17 and got a job as a teller in a bank. Very few of our acquaintances went on to college. The oldest Atkinson boy, Lawrence, left school during high school and became a superintendent of a steel company in Hamilton. His brother, Fred, went to college, a proud event for his family, and

became a chemical technician in another steel company. In that era it was possible to advance without a college degree, particularly in Canada, more so than in the United States.

While we lived there, my Aunt Hannah's husband died of blood poisoning – (no penicillin at that time). He was a carpenter and got a sliver in his left hand that became infected. The infection spread up his arm to his heart. Aunt Hannah was left a widow with a three year old daughter, Grace. Because his death was basically work related, she received a Workmen's Compensation check for \$40.00 per month for the rest of her life. That seems a "nothing" amount in our times, but during the depths of the depression in the 30's it was a life saver.

My father was in partnership with a James Cartwright, building houses for sale. Business was good in the mid 20s. An opportunity arose for them to buy a whole block of lots just outside the city limits in a community called Normanhurst. At the last minute, Cartwright decided he didn't want to tie his money up, so Dad went ahead on his own – much to my Mother's dismay. He built many small houses on one section of the block and they sold readily. He decided to build a store on one corner, with living quarters behind and above. This became our House No. 5.

House Number 5 - Store at Normanhurst

The store was a convenience store with ice cream, tobacco, candy, papers, etc. A Dry Goods store was attached, which my Mother was supposed to manage! In the main store, there was a big assortment of 'cent' candy that drew the children. They would hover endlessly deciding how to spend their pennies. I don't remember that I sneaked much candy, but one in particular I do remember. There were small chocolate candies for a cent each if you got one with a white filling, that was your cent's worth - if it had a pink filling, you also got a candy bar! So, gambling was introduced at a very young age. When I took one of these and it turned out to have a pink center, I really felt guilty because I couldn't take a bar and I had cheated some poor kid out of his bonus.

There was no city water or sewers or gas available. We had an electric stove. There was city water piped into a tap about a block away everyone used this for drinking water. On wash days, many pails of this water was needed for boiling white clothes in a big copper boiler like those you find now in antique stores. Dad and my brother would get the water before they left in the morning. I think now that if I had been my Mother, I would have emptied a pail of water over Dad's head for moving us into such an inconvenient area! We had a big rain barrel at the back door; this water was used for cleaning and general use.



MOTHER AT STORE ON
NORMANHURST

When my Aunt Florrie came to visit with her two boys (about three and four at this time), Mother said it was like a cyclone hitting the place, they seemed to run wild! Mother had two quiet children and was stunned by the turmoil two little boys could generate. The younger, Alan, three, was just caught before fell head first into the huge rain barrel at the back door. He also made a history first in our family by biting our dog's ear.

For the first time in my life, I had a 'best friend' - Marjorie West, whose parents had a grocery store across from our store. We constantly played together during the two years we lived there. My brother went to high school in the city. But I went to a four-room school about a mile away. There were two grades in each room. We enjoyed the walk to school with our friends. There were sidewalks beside a busy road. Sometimes, in nice weather, we skated to school. In the winter, we had fun making angels in the snow as we came home. There was a large basement in the school where we could play if the weather was bad. A nearby creek sometimes was frozen and we skated there during our two-hour lunch time. School started at 9 a.m., with two hours for lunch. There was no cafeteria. Some children lived quite a distance from school so needed the time to go home for lunch. If weather was bad, they brought a lunch and we played in the basement.

In the summer, after supper, the children in the neighborhood gathered on an empty lot and chose sides for game of scrub baseball. Everyone played. There were no organized games -- no parents involved. In the winter, a corner lot was frozen and we all skated. As I recall, snow and ice stayed all winter.

These were the happiest two years of my life as a child. I was unaware that Dad was building a house for us on another part of the block. Apparently the store was not a winning proposition, My Dad had continued his work and the burden was on Mother, except at weekends. I realize how completely children live in their own world and unknowingly go along with the changes set up by the parents. At any rate, the store was sold before the house was ready - as usual!! We all four moved in with my Aunt Florrie! I don't remember how long we were there, but eventually moved into House No.6. This was still in the Normanhurst community and my euphoric life continued without interruption! I should note that at that time most parents were not involved in their children's activities. I know my parents never went to any school we attended. They checked our report cards, did not have interviews with teachers - spoke to US if they didn't think our grades were satisfactory.

Houses Number 6 - Main Street

To continue with the saga of the houses - we lived a short time in House No.6 - it probably was sold as soon as it was completed. As I have said, changes were brought about by our parents' decisions (always my Dad's) and I have no idea what set up the changes.

We moved into an old family house on Main Street, back in the city. We were in this House No.7 longer than any other. I never knew (or thought to ask) why Dad bought that place. It had a big frontage on Main Street; perhaps he thought he'd build on it later. Dad did some remodeling and the house was very nice for our family.

Once again I could go to a city school. At this time I was ten and had just passed out of sixth grade. Mother went with me to register. The school principal felt I was very young to be at that level in school and suggested they put me in Grade six. Mother persuaded them to try me in Grade seven, which they did. I had no problem with the school work, in fact my eighth grade teacher asked me to try for a city scholarship - which, incidentally, I didn't get.

There were three types of secondary schools - the academic collegiate, which taught college prep courses; the technical school, where mostly boys learned skills for future jobs; and a commercial school, where mostly girls went to learn office skills. My Father wanted both my brother and me to go to the collegiate - for which I thank him. I was thrilled to be learning French and Latin and geometry, etc. There was an option of German or Greek - which I unfortunately didn't take. My brother had 'been there and done that' and could help me if I had problems with any subject. It was at this time that he and I seemed to finally notice each other and became good friends. We had never seemed to bridge the six year age gap during the early years.

House Number 7 - The Teen Years

I was ten years old when we moved into house number 7, the old farm house on Main St. East in Hamilton city. Some musician had told Mother that he didn't take children as pupils before they were ten; this suggested to her that I should now start taking piano lessons. I liked being able to play - I had always enjoyed hearing others play at Mother's gatherings with her friends. My brother took violin lessons, and as I progressed I was able to accompany him, which pleased our parents. This was an incentive for me to practice.



By this age (and to this day) I was a compulsive reader - particularly enjoyed by brother's books about English school boys and their antics. I know I read my Dad's Zane Grey books over and over.

I have told about going to the nearby city school and then to Delta Collegiate. Unfortunately for me, most of my friends from public school went to either the technical or commercial schools. Only one girl, Olwen Dodgson, out of our eighth grade class, went to the collegiate. She hadn't been in my class and I had not previously known her. So - at 12 years of age, I went into a new school with children of 14, many of whom had gone through school together from kindergarten. I was very shy and immature at this age, and the situation didn't make it easy for me to adjust. I was always able to do the work and got good grades, but socially I wasn't ready to go to the after school monthly tea dances or yet into the dating game.

By my second year I would meet and walk with three girls from streets on the way. The first I would meet was Clara Smith, two streets further was Joan Cornford, and then Helen Cronsberry. School started at 9:00 a.m. until noon; two hours for lunch then back for classes 2 to 4. Everyone went home for lunch. These three friends became the nucleus of the rest of my life! Clara Smith visited me last year in San Diego; Helen Cronsberry was my bridesmaid, now lives in Ottawa, Canada. We keep in touch by telephone and visits. She and Ray came to Ohio for our 50th wedding dinner.

There were no graduation ceremonies for high school in Canada, as were so emphasized in the USA. Graduation from college was celebrated, but not from high school. College prep courses in high school were for five years, so I graduated at 17, ready for college! Unfortunately, this was 1934 and the "depression" had gotten a grip on industry. Hamilton was a "steel city" and

was badly hit. The building industry almost closed down, and there was a period of two years when my Dad did not work. Many tradesmen worked at any job available, for whatever it paid, but Dad was an English union man and thought it was wrong to work for less than union wages. My brother and I resented this attitude and the financial hardship that resulted. At any rate, there was no money to send me to college. It wasn't even possible to pay fees for a private business college. The commercial high school has a special one-year class for high school graduates, so I went to that. It was a very good complete training in typing and shorthand and bookkeeping. I enjoyed it and after the year was completed, I was first in the secretarial class – and ready for a non-existent job. All summer I applied to all businesses, mostly Westinghouse, which at least took my application – but no job. When school started again, I went back to the special course to keep my skills. In the fall, a friend told my Mother the telephone company was hiring girls as operators. This was certainly no job I wanted, but our situation at home was crucial and I couldn't refuse to try for any kind of a job. So – I applied – and was eventually hired as a switchboard operator December 1, 1935. This was when all calls were connected on huge switchboards. I found it very confusing and hated having to do it, when I had trained for secretarial work. In January, they had what they called "Commencement" for the commercial high school. My picture was in the paper as being top student in the special one-year class, along with other leaders of the four-year classes. Apparently the telephone company manager saw that and felt they were missing out by employing me as an operator. I was asked to transfer to the stenographic department immediately. I finally had an office job in a very good company!

As the economy improved, more people were able to go to college. McMaster University was becoming established in Hamilton. The telephone company then usually hired college graduates for Representative jobs. In working with them, I realized I was as smart as they and overcame my feeling of inferiority at not going to college.

Bell Telephone Company of Canada was an excellent company to work for – they did a lot of training their employees in how to deal with the public in a friendly, co-operative manner. This was just what I needed to build self confidence and conquer my shyness. I got so I could go into any group or situation with ease.

None of my family went to church, but I went to Sunday school at a neighboring Presbyterian church. Clara's family went regularly to a big downtown evangelistic gospel church. She frequently asked me to go with them, but I didn't feel that was for me. Finally she did persuade me to go to Sunday school with her. That turned out to be a vital part of my religious learning. The teacher was a lovely, intelligent person who opened up the Bible, particularly the New Testament, to become meaningful for day-to-day living. There was a delightful group of girls in the class, including Joan and Helen. It continued on for many years and we all became very good friends. I went to that church for the rest of my time in Hamilton, but I never joined. They preached it was a sin to go to shows, play cards, dance or drink. In my family, we had played cards as long as I remembered. My mother and I went to the local theater every week; it cost 25 cents with 5 cents or 10 cents extra for a dish. I could never feel there was anything sinful in these activities, so didn't feel I could conscientiously join the church.

A new, younger minister came and started a Christian fellowship group for young people. Clara talked me into going with her. There, too, I found a great group of young people. They sang sort of jazzy choruses, like Southern Baptists. Everyone took turns speaking on assigned subjects

and verses in the Bible – a good training for teenagers, especially shy ones, like me. There was a tennis court beside the church where we gathered for games. Once a month we had a party of some kind, a picnic or a wiener roast, at someone's home. They used to put on skits at some of these that I still believe were funnier than many of the inane half-hour shows on television now.

So – I was having a good time, even though I was missing out on dancing and show dates. After Young Peoples many of us went for hamburgers, a sort of casual dating. This was at the heart of the depression – very few had cars. We didn't feel deprived to ride street cars most of the time.

Soon Joan Cornford and Helen Crosberry were interested in two boys from the nearby town of Ancaster. They came to Young Peoples, but they didn't have access to a car. One of their school friends, Bob Wade, was able to use his Dad's car; so it evolved that I was Bob's date and the six of us went together to all the activities. Of course, Bob and I dated on our own, but I never felt he was important to me. When he decided to go to Bible School after high school graduation, I knew that wasn't for me and stopped seeing him. Both Helen and Joan later married their boy friends, Ray Horning and Roy Marshall. As an interesting side note – Bob Wade never became a missionary, but took over his Dad's farm. He later married someone we didn't know; they had four children and his wife committed suicide! It was apparent I was fortunate to avoid a weird life with Bob Wade!

I went to church every Sunday with Clara and her family. After church, they often invited me to have Sunday dinner with them and go back to Sunday school in the afternoon. There were three younger brothers; Mr. Smith had a radio and appliance store and was the genial salesman type, so dinner there was fun, compared to my quiet home. I became almost part of their family – went on vacation with them to their cottage in northern Ontario. Mrs. Smith was a lovely person, calmly coping with the confusion. When Clara started to go with Jim Tierney, he was added to the group around the table. He was very witty and with Mr. Smith and the young boys, there was always a happy time for me among the group.

At the Young Peoples group, there were two sisters, June and Helen Bakody. They ran a market gardening business in nearby Burlington, after their parents died. Helen was closer to my age and she and I became friends. When her American cousin, Eloise Metzger, came to stay with them for a whole summer, I spent many weekends in Burlington with them. They usually came to Young Peoples and church and Eloise and I found we enjoyed each other. I will write more about what evolved from that friendship – visiting the Metzger family in Youngstown, Ohio and marrying her brother, Harold. It would seem that my meeting Clara on the way to school and our developing friendship was a most important event in my life – so many happy happenings followed – to this day.

The Depression - The 1930s

There have been many books written about 'The Depression' in the 1930's. All our family was affected by the financial problems that beset working people.

When my Aunt Florrie and Uncle Dave were married, they built a small house. Uncle Dave had almost enough to cover the cost, but they took out a small mortgage of \$1000 to complete it. My uncle worked as a mechanic in a cotton factory. He never lost his job, but for months at a time he worked only three days a week. For years they had tried to save enough to pay off the mortgage when it came due (which was a goal in those days). They would have almost enough, but periods of shortened wages would come up and they had to use savings for living expenses. It was probably 20 years before they were at last able to clear the debt. In our days of huge mortgages that many people never plan to pay off, it is hard to relate to the value of a dollar in those times.

My Aunt Hannah's husband had died and left her with two houses people were buying beside her own. She was supposedly drawing income from them, but when times got hard many of the tenants could not pay. In order to protect her equity, she had to pay taxes on those houses out of her own small income, or they would have been seized for back taxes.

My brother worked in a bank. At that time they had a ruling that junior employees could not get married until they were earning what the bank considered a living wage for a couple. William and his girlfriend, Mary, dated for many years. My brother and I, when I finally was working, gave my Mother half of our wages as board. Finally, out of necessity, they got married. My brother felt badly to take his financial support from our home. He offered that they would move in with us. My Dad would not hear of it, saying 'No house is big enough for two women"! I was 18 at the time, my brother 24.

The most tragic effect of the depression was felt by my parents. Building had almost closed down and Dad had no work. He came up with the idea of building a group of apartments -- this would give him work and could be an investment for their old age. Mortgages were hard to get. In those days, most mortgages were provided by private individuals investing their money. He put in any equity he had in a few houses he had sold, and was able to raise only an additional \$10,000 mortgage. Against the advice of his attorney, he embarked on that enterprise. Often, when Mother needed money for housekeeping there was none available - the subcontractors had to be paid. Mother finally got a couple of jobs doing laundry for a doctor's wife and her sister. This money bought food for us. Mother was a good worker and highly respected by the people she worked for. She did not feel demeaned by the work - to go on relief, as so many workers had to, would have been demeaning to my parents.

This was at the time I was desperately trying to get a job. Our telephone, which cost only \$2.60 a month, had been canceled. I had to give our neighbor's telephone number for call backs on

job applications. Ironically, our neighbor, Fred Sinnett, couldn't afford it either. A couple of years later, when I was working in the telephone office, he came in several times to pay his bill, having had his phone disconnected for non-payment!

While we didn't go hungry because of my Mother's meager earnings (\$2.50 per day), there was no money to pay taxes either on our home or the apartment building. Both were eventually taken over by the mortgagee and we were homeless. I had, by this time, finally gotten a job at the telephone company earning \$15.00 a week. I really wasn't aware of the complete disaster that had finally happened. My Mother borrowed money to pay rent on a big old house in the west end of the city. (House No.8) We were there a few months when an opportunity came for us to move into an apartment owned by Clara Smith's uncle. My parents lived rent free in return for their duties as caretakers. (House No.9). The apartment was on Main Street. There was a veranda on the front and my parents enjoyed sitting out watching traffic and people going by. I remember that in 1939 Mother invited friends and family to join us on the front porch to watch the King and Queen of England pass by in a motorcade. As history evolved that fall, it was obvious that their trip to Canada at that time was hoped to strengthen the ties between the Commonwealth members for the coming struggle with Hitler's advances into Europe.

We lived there several years. These were the war years, during which I got married but continued to live at home. I don't know how it came about, but Dad got a wartime job teaching carpentry at an army base near Hamilton. At last there was an adequate income. While that job lasted, my parents were able to save money enough to build another house back in the east end of the city - their longtime stamping ground. (House No.10).

I was interested to read in this week's Time magazine this quote. "Every one has heard stories off the Depression-era parents who were still recycling string long after their portfolios had reached seven figures. There is something about even a glimpse of poverty, much less the experience of it, that leaves scars of humiliation and terror and resolve not ever to live there again". I could certainly identify with that!

Years later, when my parents were elderly and living comfortably on their Pension and savings, I urged my Dad to go on a trip to Australia to see his brother and family. He said "Edith, I've been without money twice in my life, and I don't want it to ever happen to me again". He wouldn't think of spending the money such a trip would involve.

My Mother, brother, and I blamed my Dad for risking all his resources on one enterprise. In retrospect, his idea was valid - no one expected the downswing of business to continue for year after year. It was as if a malevolent being had the workers in an iron grip and kept squeezing until all was gone. The man who loaned \$10,000 got a well-built 8-apartment building and reaped the benefit of my Dad's hard work. The adage 'money gets money' certainly applies in this case.

Our generation learned lessons from the hardships of the depression that influenced the rest of our life; namely, to value work opportunity and to shun debt. This colored my attitude toward money, the saving and spending of it, all my life. We were without necessary money while Dad was building the apartments, and we never got the use of it, some stranger benefited from our sacrifice.

Bell Telephone Company

I was just out of school and desperately interviewing for a job. It seemed the basic question was "what experience have you had?". My main job of the teen years, baby-sitting, was of no interest to them. You resentfully think "how can I get experience until I have a job!" I didn't work very long at the telephone company before I realized the interviewers knew what they were talking about. You learn more very quickly at a job than in all your years of schooling. My ten years at Bell Co. were a continual learning process.

In the confused two months when I started at the despised job of telephone operator, I learned the hard lesson that when you need a job, you have to take whatever is available. After working a couple of months, there was an article in the newspaper about Commencement at the public Commercial High School. My picture was included in those who had won awards. I had been top student in the special one-year secretarial course offered to high school graduates. When the telephone company management heard of this, I was offered a job in the stenographic office. Just what I had been trying to get for months!

The job involved typing letters for the office staff, teletyping equipment orders from the plant engineers to headquarters, and filing all correspondence. That was the worst part of the job! It seemed you spent ages looking for a file some one requested, only to find it was in someone's desk. I heard that the girl who had done the job before me had been let go because she couldn't keep up with the work. This struck terror to my heart! I was so anxious to be able to satisfy the requirements - this job was so essential to our family. This was the beginning of 1936 and there were gradual signs of recovery from the Depression. Business was slowly increasing and work loads were a little heavier.

It was about this time that I learned a lesson that was to stay with me for the rest of my life. One of the representatives, Isobel Downey, had given me a letter to type from her rough draft. About 4:30 she brought it back to me to retype - I had put the phrase "in the hospital" instead of "in hospital", which she said was the correct phrase! I couldn't see what difference it made and didn't see the need to type the whole letter for such a minor change. I tossed it into my basket angrily, which had the reaction from Isobel! She spoke to the Office Manager about it and he called me in to his desk. He showed his managerial ability by first assuring me they were pleased with my work. If I found I had more work than could get done, I was to tell him and he would see that I got help. I must not show my resentment to the staff members. A wonderful lesson for me that you can't show negative moods to co-workers. I was grateful I didn't get fired. And certainly saw to it that I didn't display any temper or resentment in all the years I worked. That episode is still very real to me, 60 years later!

My next job was handling customer accounts. We each were assigned a group of accounts and were responsible for handling all business concerning those customers - took orders for

telephone changes, moves, complaints, and had to handle collection of the monthly accounts. We sent out notices and called if payments were not made by the required time. I always disliked calling then and would delay it as long as possible, but the Manager always checked to be sure we contacted late payers.

To become a customer representative the company trained you extensively on dealing with all possible relations with the customers. There was an "observer", employed by Head Office in Toronto, who listened in to our calls randomly and reported on our accuracy and attitude. We never knew when we were being 'observed'. The monthly report was anxiously received by the manager, who wanted his staff to have the fewest demerits.

I was later moved into the front office to deal with customers who came in. I could often see the value of our training when a customer would come storming in about an error on his bill. Very soon our polite response and action turned him into a 'friend'. After a few years, the telephone company had turned a shy, self-conscious, person into a confident person who could freely speak to everyone and tackle any problem that arose.

I had been raised in an English home where the Father was never questioned - his ideas set the way we lived. I always adored my brother and looked up to him. Thus, it came as a surprise to me, in working with men, some as representatives, to realize that they weren't the paragons of wisdom I had anticipated! I found I could work as well or better than they did. This lesson I learned colored my regard for men from then on. When I was married, I felt my opinions were as valid as my husband's. Probably I was lucky to be married to Harold - I may have run into trouble with some men. I always felt Harold had the least ego of any man I knew - perhaps being in the middle of eight children didn't give it a chance to develop!

The stenographic department was where the daily orders from the representatives were transmitted to the installers on an order-writing machine. Perhaps about a year after I worked there, a new order writer came from Toronto office, Mabel Vandervoort. She revolutionized work for me! She had a great sense of humor, would joke with all who came into the department, even the dour plant engineer who brought the requisitions in to be teletyped to Toronto. It seemed that her coming had lightened the whole atmosphere! From that time on, work was enjoyment - looked forward to every day! How can one person make such a difference? Another lesson I learned!

I can't pass the mention of Mabel Vandervoort (who became a dear lifelong friend) without a couple of memories. She was always plump and when she came to our house my Mother would invariably comment "Are you losing weight, Mabel" (I suppose she thought she was being tactful). Mabel always kidded about it to us - how she would wait for Mother's remark, that never failed to come! Many years later, when I was in Hamilton, I went to visit Mabel. She said "You looked just like your Mother as you came in!" and I said, "I'm not as good looking as my Mother" and she said 'No, you're not!'

At one time, I was briefly in charge of the stenographic department, but found I didn't like 'managing'. I was happier when I was responsible for only my own work.

After I was married, I was always thinking I could go to stay with Harold, but it was never feasible. He was stationed at Needles, California and later at Fort Benning, Georgia; neither

place had any accommodation for G.I. wives. After D-Day, in June 1944, we were all hoping that war in Europe would soon end. But after the terrible setback in December at the Ardennes, it looked as if it would go on much longer.

The company asked me to move to head office in Toronto and work on a training manual for order writers, and also do some training of new representatives. I thought it would be an interesting change to help the time pass until the war's end, so I moved to Toronto March 1, 1945. On March 4 we received word that my brother had been shot down and killed. He was flying a bomber with the R.A.F., the plane was damaged and limped back to England but he went up in flames on landing. Of course, we were all devastated. My uncle in England took Bill's body to Crewe where he was buried in the grave with my Darlington grandparents and the two children of my parents who had died in England. In English cemeteries, several bodies were put in a common grave -probably due to lack of ground space on the little island).

This was the greatest sorrow of my life. It certainly spoiled any pleasure in my new work and I wished I had not made the change. I found I missed the daily contact with the 'public' - always interesting. I traveled some, conducting training classes in telephone company offices in Ontario. Being in hotels and eating in restaurants very soon got "old". I always pity men who frequently travel in their work.

When V.E. day came in May, I couldn't be happy - it had come too late for my brother. Finally, in November 1945, Harold came back from Europe and was discharged from the army. Our life together began, at last. I left the Telephone Company and good friends there with very happy memories of my years with them. I had learned many lessons that helped me all my life.

The Cottage

One of the service representatives in the public office of the telephone company was Florence Markle, whom I knew from church and Sunday school. She was engaged to Horace Dulmage, a divinity student at McMaster University in Hamilton Ontario. One summer when he was to be away as a student fill-in minister, she asked me to join her Mother and sister in renting a beach cottage on Lake Ontario for the whole summer. I think that was 1939. We were still at the cottage when war was declared over Labor Day weekend 1939.



FUN AT THE COTTAGE

Another friend of hers, Beryl Seivenight, also came in on the event. We went down on the bus every day after work. This was a great experience for me – a welcome change from home that seemed so dull since my brother had married. We had the cottage for several summers – adding friends as Florence’s Mother and sister bowed out after the first year. Florence and Beryl and I were constants, adding one or two friends each year. We all shared the rent. We took turns weekly two cooked and two cleaned. When you were a cook, you could invite anyone for meals at the weekend. One time when Florence was cook, she asked my parents down for Sunday dinner. My English father couldn’t believe we had hot dogs for a Sunday meal! Anything I knew about cooking I picked up there.

It was a marvelously happy arrangement – we all got along well together – had lots of laughs and fun on the beach and tennis court. It was there that I invited Eloise Metzger to share my vacation in 1941; when she came up with her brother, Harold, and her fiancée, Jack Bare, and we went up north to a Muskoka resort and Harold asked me to marry him! I’ve written about that in another context.

In these days many girls started collecting silver and linens and china for when they would marry. One of the representatives at the Public Office, Shirley Blamey, had been engaged for years to a young man. It was depression and weddings were often delayed. They had shared in buying a stove and some furniture and a refrigerator – big items for their future home. Suddenly, it seemed he was dating someone else and there was no wedding – the purchased items had to be prorated! This happening made me avoid all “Hope Chest” purchases – until I got the engagement ring from Harold! We felt sorry for Shirley and invited her to stay at the cottage for part of the summer. While with us, she met Ken Hawthorn who lived a few doors from the cottage. They were later married and Ken went into the Air Force. Shirley stayed occasionally with us after and was able to give us first hand experience of the wedding night, etc., which we had not discussed with our Mothers.

All the fine stores were centered in downtown Hamilton. At lunch hour we'd browse in Mills China Store. There were almost hundreds of fine English bone china sets – every few months I'd change my mind as to which I liked. At Birk's, right in the middle of town, were beautiful silver and china. That's why I have table service for 12 in sterling silver and the melon shaped silver service I admired. I finally settled on a bone china pattern and have a setting for 12. I have used them for many years and enjoy every time I set the table for a diner party.

That was the last summer we had the cottage – the next year I was unhappily working in the Toronto Head Office – Beryl and Florence got married! Our old gang was breaking up!

How Harold and I Met

When I consider my life, with the idea of writing about it, it seems to have been very calm and uneventful. However, countless people have asked me 'how my husband, an American, and I, a Canadian, met'. These are the events that led to it. In Hamilton, Ontario, where I was born and raised, I had an unusual friend, Helen Bakody, whom I met through a church Young People's group. She was the youngest of three sisters who ran a successful market gardening business in the nearby town of Burlington. Their parents had died, but they continued to raise choice crops of strawberries and celery. These they sold on Wednesdays and Saturdays in the famous Hamilton Market situated in the heart of Hamilton city.'

One year, probably 1939, their American cousin, Eloise Metzger, came to stay with them during the busy summer months. I saw a great deal of Helen and Eloise at Young People's and church and spent several weekends at their home in Burlington. Eloise was a very enjoyable girl, full of fun and enthusiasm, and a warm friendship developed between us. The next year, as one of the newer employees at the telephone company, I was given a week's vacation in April - not a choice time! Eloise invited me down to visit her in Youngstown, Ohio. She was the youngest in a family of eight. She kept house for her two older brothers, Harold and David, and her Mother, who was ill. I met all the Metzger family and was charmed by their easy friendliness. The two brothers still at home had a landscape business. I was impressed by their 'outdoor looks' - they wore tan outfits, jodhpur-type pants with high boots - quite glamorous compared with the 'clerks' at the telephone company! This was their busy season and I saw them only at dinner. I went home to Canada feeling that Eloise and I were 'best friends'.



THE BAKODY VEGETABLE
STAND

A few months later, I was to spend a holiday weekend in Youngstown. Eloise called to ask me to go directly to Cleveland where we would stay with her oldest sister, Alma. When I arrived, I found Eloise had brought her brother, Harold, to stay also. Alma's husband, Harry, was a jewelry salesman - had an endless store of jokes and stories. The weekend was delightful - lots of laughs and good feelings.

At this time, Canada was already in the war (from September 1939). I was invited to join three girls in renting a cottage at Burlington Beach for the summer. We went down by bus after work each day and enjoyed weekends. Two of the girls were engaged, but there were still unattached males at the beach and a nearby tennis court, so we all had a great summer time together. In July of 1941, I had a week's vacation and asked Eloise to come up to the cottage to spend the week with us. She called to say she and her boy friend, Jack Bare, and her brother, Harold, were coming up to stay at a lodge in Muskoka and would I join them? We all got along well and had a good time with swimming and boating and shopping. After dinner, Eloise and Jack seemed to "wander off" on their own, and Harold and I were perforce on our own! There was the usual

'necking', but I told myself this was not a real "date", but actually a cover for Jack and Eloise to get away together. I was really surprised when Harold asked me if I would consider marrying him! "But we don't know each other"! This was just the third time we had been in each others company! I thought we should be together more before thinking of such a decisive step. There was nothing settled just that we would try to see each other more.

I did a lot of thinking after that! I knew I liked him more than anyone I had dated - he was good looking - he had a great sense of humor - I enjoyed being with him - I knew and liked his family - he had an established business. I realized there would never be a chance to 'date' and have much time together. So - when he came up to visit in the fall, I told him I would marry him. After the holidays, he came up again, bringing a lovely diamond ring. It was "official" but no time for a wedding could be planned until after the 'season' at his landscape business.

Eloise and Jack were married July 1, 1942 and promptly Jack was called into the army! David was in the army by this time, so the home was broken up and sold and Harold stayed with his sister, Ruth, until we would be married. I went to Youngstown over the Labor Day weekend, thinking we would make arrangements for a wedding when it would fit into Harold's work schedule. To my dismay, nothing was mentioned about a date, or marriage! I went home wondering what was happening! I'm sure my letters were very cold. (I later learned that the family felt Jack had been drafted after he registered that his marital status was changed. They reasoned the sane thing could happen with Harold. They felt he shouldn't make any status change just then. Not a word of this from Harold!) In October, Harold called to say he had received his army call and had a month to close up his affairs before he had to report. Did I want to get married before he had to leave!!!! I thought it would be a good thing to be married so I could stay with him wherever he was posted - so - a date was set for two weeks later.

In Canadian wartime, marriages were set up quickly. I had a lovely blue suit I thought would be very suitable for a quiet family wedding. However, my Mother felt she'd like her only daughter to have a church wedding and a reception. So - in two weeks I got a wedding dress 'off the rack' for \$25.00, a neighbor loaned me her veil, I got the license, arranged for the church wedding at 6:00 P.M. November 10, 1942, made train and hotel reservations for a trip to New York city, looked at wedding rings! (Little did I realize that that would become a pattern in our marriage. I was always in charge of all arrangements!)

Harold came up the morning of the wedding, bringing a lovely diamond-studded wedding ring, (no doubt, from his brother-in-law). We were married - many of my friends and co-workers were at the church - we had a reception for family and close friends - all very proper! My brother, Bill, was best man and my school friend, Helen, Cronsberry, was bridesmaid. We had a great time in New York. I had never been there - we saw shows and famous restaurants. We returned to Youngstown where a farewell dinner had been arranged for all the Terrace Gardens employees. The company had to be "put on ice" for the duration. Some of the men were in the army and some had to go to work in the essential steel industry of Youngstown. Harold left for the army from Youngstown and I returned home and to work.

So-that is how we met and married! Now-55 years later, Jack and Eloise and Harold and I are the only Metzger family members left. I can say that Harold and I really do 'know each other'.



OUR ENGAGEMENT



OUR WEDDING

The Metzger Family

In writing about my life in Canada, I gave a short background of my parent's families in England. As I being "The American Years", I'll list what I know of Harold's more varied European background.

Not much is known of his grandparents, Michael and Mary Metzger of Alsace/Lorraine. His father, John Metzger, was born in Strasbourg in 1870. He came to Ohio when he was 18 to avoid conscription in the German Army. He was a tailor by trade, and worked in Youngstown with Phil Bakody in a men's furnishings business.

He was a member of the Apostolic Christian Church in Girard, founded by Phil's father, John Bakody. It was there he met and married Emma Bakody. I must tell of this church, in which Harold and his sisters and brothers were raised. It was essentially a German church. Harold said his Sunday school teacher taught in German and preachers spoke in German – most of which, no doubt, went over Harold's head! I went to the church a couple of times when I was visiting Eloise and found it most unusual. Women sat on one side, men on the other. There was no music, i.e., organ or piano. Their singing sounded like a dirge! There were very strict regulations about membership. You had to appear before elders and be approved. Actually, only Harold's brother Paul, ever became a member. The men who led the church sessions were "lay preachers" and for many years, Harold's father was the preacher. The whole family went to church in Girard by trolley, spent all day there – a light meal was served between morning and afternoon services. Eloise had many close friends among the young girls – I met some of them when I visited Eloise – who were lovely people and life long friends of Eloise.

Emma Metzger's father, John Bakody, was, indeed a Patriarch. A picture of him in the Youngstown paper shows him as we picture the prophets in the Bible! The following information about him was taken from his obituary and other newspaper articles: "John Bakody was born December 10, 1828, in Budapest, Hungary. He was left an orphan when quite young and was thrown on his own resources; worked in the tapestry trade at which he became quite successful. Known as a church revolutionizer in his native land. A survivor of the Hungarian war of independence under General Louis Kossuth; at one time he was imprisoned by Francis Joseph for his pronounced opinions on the subject of the revolution; after the revolution all his estates were confiscated. He then set out to work and made a small fortune in the tapestry industry; before leaving the country, he was given the title of alderman which corresponds to that of sir knight in England; was eventually forced to flee Hungary to avoid persecution. Came to America and settled in Akron in 1849; he could speak only Hungarian when he came here, but within a year he could converse in both English and German. Entered the jewelry business in Akron. Following a big fire at his place of business at which time he suffered heavy financial loss, he went to Youngstown where once again he entered the jewelry business. He had married Elizabeth Riesen, who had been born in Berne, Switzerland. He was married 47 years when

he died in 1910. He was one of the founders of the Apostolic Christian denomination. He is buried in Youngstown Oak Hill cemetery. His children were: Emlen of the Bakody-Berger art gallery in Cleveland; Charles of Wilmington, Pennsylvania; William, who lived near Idora Park, Youngstown; Emma (Mrs. John Metzger) of Lincoln Avenue, Youngstown; Miss Sarah Bakody, who lived at home with her parents; Samuel of Burlington Ontario; E.T. Bakody, a jeweler in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; T.W. Bakody, a merchant tailor in Youngstown; Miss Gertrude Bakody, who studied music in Florence, Italy."

We visited Gertrude, who lived with her sister Sadie, when we visited New York City. Also, one of the sons, Sam, went to Canada and developed a market gardening business in Burlington, Ontario. It was his daughter, Helen Bakody, who became my friend, through whom I met her American cousins, Eloise and Harold Metzger from Youngstown, Ohio. The sons were in sundry businesses. The only one I knew, Phil, had a fine tailoring business in Youngstown, until ready-made clothes made tailoring specialties unprofitable. All of the sons, except the youngest, Phil, had a history of blindness as they got older. Fortunately, this congenital defect didn't pass to the girls and on to their sons.

John and Emma Metzger had nine children: six boys and three girls. A boy, George, died in infancy, so they raised eight. I have told about meeting them all when I visited Eloise in Youngstown, Ohio and how much I admired and enjoyed them. They were all smart and articulate, hard working; they made me feel very welcome as a friend of Eloise, which "paved the way" for me when I married Harold and became one of the family. I had no sisters, and Alma and Ruth and Eloise became my well-loved sisters. For the interest of my grandchildren, I'll try to tell about the family as I knew them.

The oldest, Alma, born in 1900, should perhaps be described as "sunny". She had blond, curly hair, always somewhat casually worn. When I see old movies, I realize that was the way hair was worn in her early years. She looked like Mary Pickford. She always had a warm smile – very pretty. She worked as teller in a bank. As the oldest of eight, she was a "mother" to all the Metzgers, and they all loved and esteemed her. When I first stayed in her home in Cleveland, (mentioned in the story of "how I met my husband"), I was impressed by this lovely home, with coordinated decorating – very different from our depression-era homes. She had beautiful china and sterling silver. It was there, and in Ed Metzger's home, I first saw period furniture reproductions used. They appealed to me so much, that they became the basis of my home decorating after the war, and even now my children have carried that timeless theme in their homes. Ohio was in the Western Reserve and mostly the homes were traditional colonial and furnishings were of that era.

Alma married Harry Stauffer, a genial jewelry salesman. I was overwhelmed by their warm hospitality when I visited them – very "un-British". Harry had the usual salesman's fund of funny stories and could keep us entertained for a whole evening – he should have been a comic. They never had children but were very loving to the Metzger grandchildren.

Harry's main sales were in school rings—he went about high schools selling his line. As he got older, his sales tapered off. He and Alma turned to exhibiting jewelry at state fairs. They enjoyed the travel involved and meeting fellow exhibitors. At Christmas weekend, 1967, Harry was returning from visiting in Youngstown when Ruth's alcoholic husband, Erwin, when he was stricken while driving. He was weaving and the police stopped him and escorted him off the highway. They thought he was drunk, but he died as they took him in. A dreadful shock to Alma, and all of us, a real loss to the family. Whenever I see or read the play "Death of a Salesman", I think of Harry as Willy Loman. I always felt Harold would have liked to marry someone warm and loving like Alma, as I always thought I'd like to marry someone like my brother – but we didn't! But we've had 56 good years so it's all right!



ALMA AND HARRY



HAROLD

During the war, when Harold had leave, he would come to Alma's and I met him there. Of course he enjoyed being with his family, but I resented using my vacation time being with his family and helping Alma. I felt we should be off on our own, getting to know each other. In fact, I wrote a nasty letter to Harold after one visit saying I wasn't doing that again – if he wanted to see me he could come to Canada! In fact, as soon as he got back to base that time, he was slated for overseas and had a leave scheduled immediately – so he came to Canada!

Alma had breast cancer surgery and recovered well for about seven years, when cancer struck again and she died in 1969, at Eloise's home.

The oldest son, Edward John Metzger was born in Elgin, Illinois on March 7, 1902. He worked in Falcon Bronze Foundry in Youngstown. As all Metzgers, he was smart and hard working and became superintendent. He was married to Eunice when I met him. They had a lovely home in Indianola. There were three sons, Ted, Alan and Gary. As Youngstown geared for war production, the son of the owner was moved in to take charge (and avoid the draft)! Ed moved to a foundry in Cleveland. As the war escalated, he moved to Washington D.C. in the Office of Price Stability. He bought a small foundry in Wauseon, Ohio. It was very successful and soon included his engineer sons, Ted and Alan. Ed died January 15, 1989 and was buried in Forest Lawn cemetery in Youngstown, where his wife Eunice and several Metzgers are buried.



PAUL

The second son, Paul, followed his Bakody uncles into the jewelry repair business. When he was a small boy, he had a damaging head injury. For several years, he had seizures that kept him out of school. His uncle, Charles Bakody, had gone blind and Paul moved into his home to help care for him. When the uncle died, Paul continued to live in the house and conduct his repair business in a down-town office. He became a member of the Apostolic Church, a very strict German church where his Dad was lay-preacher. He never married but was part of all Metzger family get-togethers. He loved the nephews and nieces. He made the beautiful hobby horse for our son, John. I heard that the church elders would not agree to his marrying a church member because of his history of seizures. He lived alone in his home until he died at the age of 67.

Arthur Metzger went into the Army as a young man, but left when his required three years were up. He returned to Youngstown and joined his youngest brother, David, and Harold in a landscape business they were starting up. He later was in charge of the greenhouses and growing and selling of annuals. He married Eleanor and lived in a nice apartment over the offices. They had no family. Eleanor became a camera enthusiast and went to Santa Barbara, California, to a photography course. She fell in love with the town and persuaded Art to move out there. They moved in 1957. His third of the Terrace Gardens Company was sold to Eloise's husband, Jack Bare. Art worked for a landscape business in Santa Barbara. He died at the age of 91.

David was the youngest brother and had a great natural talent for landscape design and planting, which he added to by courses and Ohio State seminars every winter. When he left high school, he started in business. This was the depth of the depression – 1932. Harold was working in the office a Youngstown Sheet and Tube – just three days a week as all business struggled to keep going. When the spring season came, Harold asked for a leave of absence to work with David during the good weather. They wouldn't grant it, so he left and cast his lot with Dave. Their business grew and prospered for 50 years, before it was finally sold in 1981. David died suddenly of an aneurysm in March, 1977. Jack's son, Russell, came into the business to carry on Dave's part of the business, the sales and design and they were able to continue until age caught up with Harold (74) and Jack (66) and the 30-acre nursery and landscape business was sold.

Harold's sister Ruth was a more reserved person than Alma and Eloise. She worked in an Insurance office all her life. She married Erwin Frease, a car salesman. They had one daughter, Gail, born in 1942. Erwin had a drinking problem and was often between jobs, even though he was "the best car salesman in the city". Ruth had to continue working until she retired. She was so good to me when I moved to Youngstown and didn't know anyone – we had many common interests, reading, theater, music and bridge. The first time I heard Beethoven's "Emperor Concerto" was at Ruth's and my interest in classical music went on from there. We had countless family gatherings and Ruth was always a part of them. She was a wonderful friend who left a big gap when she died of cancer in 1994.



THE METZGER WOMEN

Eloise is mentioned so many times in this story, I probably don't need to list details of our friendship and how I enjoyed her warm personality and sense of humor. She and I were drawn to each other when she spent a summer at her cousin's in Canada. We have been wonderful friends, even as I write this, for more than 65 years. She is the last of the Metzger children living in 2001! We and our families spent many great vacations together, mostly in the Muskoka area in northern Ontario. One summer we rented adjacent cottages at Kennebunkport, Maine. She and Jack and their three children were a big part of our family activities. Our son, John, has spoken of

his regret that his children in California have not had the family around for them as he did.

For many years the Metzgers were in Youngstown/Cleveland area, so we had great years with each other and I enjoyed them all! I haven't said much about Harold's parents. Harold's father died of a stroke at age 60 in 1930. I never met him or saw pictures of him, but I learned that his children love and respected him very much. Harold said that his dying was the worst thing that happened in his life. No doubt the financial stress of the depression was a factor. Harold told the story of



EDITH, ELOISE, RUTH, ED, JACK AND HAROLD

the church people criticizing his Father because Ed, the oldest son, had bought a radio for the home. This was a worldly thing in the church's eyes. This again alienated the boys from the church, that they would blame their beloved Father for such a thing. Harold always said his Father didn't "talk his religion" – he lived it.

Harold's mother, Emma, daughter of the patriarch, was, of course, very involved in the apostolic church. Her husband, John, became the "lay preacher". Their life seemed to revolve around the church. She was of the evangelistic idea to speak to people she met about their need to be able to get to Heaven! This embarrassed some of her children. Eight children involved endless work. They moved to Glenwood Avenue in Youngstown.. When they moved there, it was "country". They had about 2 acres of land and grew vegetables for the family. Art has spoken of how endlessly there was "canning" all over the kitchen in the fall. He never wanted Eleanor to do that. When Eloise and Dave got married, the family home was sold. Mrs. Metzger lived with Alma or Eloise until she died of cancer in 1948. She often spoke of how well her family had provided for her after her husband died.



EMMA METZGER

Homecoming 1945

The first Christmas I Spent in Youngstown, Ohio was a chaotic blur, but I'll try to reconstruct it as I can.

In November, 1945, Harold was finally returned from Europe and discharged from the Army. I bade a farewell to the telephone company and my parents. My Mother thought Harold was 'Mr. Wonderful'; she sent me off to begin my life with him with the blunt admonition "If anything goes wrong, I'll know its you!" We met in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania for a few days on our own before we finally began our married life in Youngstown.

With the great influx of returned servicemen, housing was almost nonexistent. Harold's sister, Ruth, found out that we could live in her Aunt Una Bakody's house for a few months while she spent the winter in California. Her home was near where the Metzger family home had been. It was also near Terrace Gardens Co., the nursery/landscape business David, Harold and Arthur Metzger had built up before war service interrupted. It was a wonderful arrangement for us, and gave us time to locate an apartment.

The Bakody home was a big old farm house. Years before, her family had had a large farm there. Some acres had become part of Youngstown city and Mill Creek Park. I was charmed by the home. It showed the effects of many years of life-style changes. (A far cry from my Dad's symmetrical houses!) The kitchen was a big "keeping room" with an open fireplace, a large round table in the center. The working kitchen with stove, sink and cupboards, was in a small adjoining room. At some time, a bathroom had been added off the hall under the stairway. There were three steps down to it! There were five bedrooms upstairs, different sizes, according to the contour of the roof. Some of the floors sloped. The cellar had a dirt floor and walls of the huge stones of the original foundation. To reach it, you had to go outside the kitchen door and down steps. Luckily, it wasn't my job to look after the furnace during the winter we spent there! (When it was later sold, I would have bought it, but Harold wanted no part of the renovations that would be involved.) Even though I was 28 years old, I had never kept house or done much cooking. Some of my dinners were great disappointments to me, but, after army meals for 3 years, Harold was easily pleased.

The wartime separation of the five brothers and three sisters of the Metzger family was ending. With Christmas coming, a family gathering was planned - this to be held in Aunt Una's house where there was room and facilities for a large group. I was the inexperienced bystander to all this; Harold's sisters, Ruth and Alma, made all arrangements. To help in the preparations, Alma and Harry came down from Cleveland two days before Christmas, bringing Harold's Mother. His oldest brother, Ed, his wife Eunice, and three sons came the day before Christmas from Washington, D.C., where Ed worked for the wartime government Office of Price Stabilization. All five bedrooms were in use and Harold and I ended up sleeping in a single bed in a small bedroom. The logistics of food and drinks were handled by all the family, except me! It all came

together and there was a great dinner reunion on Christmas day. Aunt Una's elaborate French rococo wall table was moved into the hall beside the living room. Its marble top made it perfect for use as a lowly bar! I heard later that Ed's two older boys, probably 8 and 9 then, got into more than pop - no one noticed in the happy confusion!

Needless to say, I didn't know what was going on; to be in the midst of 18 Metzgers when I was used to my small family! But, I had met and admired all of Harold's family, so I enjoyed being with them and was happy to finally begin my life with Harold, three years after our marriage. That was the first of many wonderful Metzger Christmas gatherings at our home.

Terrace Gardens, Inc.

There could be no story of my life or of my children's lives without an outline of Harold's nursery and landscape business that dominated our lives.

In the year 1929, Harold's youngest brother David, just out of school, decided he wanted to go into the plant growing and landscape business. The family lived on the outskirts of Youngstown on about two acres of land on which they grew food for the family. This could be adapted for a basis of a nursery.



The four brothers and three sisters encouraged him, and a primitive journal shows the family contributions that started him on his way. Remembering that this was 1929 when there was no money, the list of start-up money is weird. The oldest sister, Alma, gave \$186; brother Ed gave \$80; the Father gave \$60; Harold gave \$18. Unbelievable that a 50-year enterprise could begin like that!

The home was higher than the street, so the lawn was 'terraced' down - which gave the company the name "Terrace Gardens". Plants were grown and sold from that location. Harold said they took materials to jobs on the running board of their car!

Harold was working in the shipping office of Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. just three days a week. As the spring planting time came on, he asked for leave-of-absence so he could work with David. They wouldn't grant it, so he resigned and became a full-fledged member of the firm. The family was alarmed that he gave up even a part-time paying job in the depths of the depression. Later, an older brother, Arthur, came back from a tour of duty in the army and joined the group. The three continued together until 1957.



David had a natural gift for landscape design, which he added to with study and winter courses at Ohio State University. He was the head of the company, was the salesman and designer of the landscape jobs. It happened there was a lovely development of fine homes being built in Boardman area called Forest Glen. An outstanding Cleveland architect was in charge. He liked David's designs, which enhanced the features of the houses and grounds. Terrace Gardens landscaped most of these homes. This gave them a big lift of jobs and prestige.

When I first met the Metzger boys, about 1937, they had progressed to the point of buying 32 acres of land on Tippecanoe Road a few miles from their home. This became the basis for their nursery and office and equipment storage. They built a very attractive stone and frame office building, with greenhouse attached, and an apartment upstairs. Arthur and his wife, Eleanor, lived in the apartment. He looked after the greenhouse and plant propagation and sales of plants. They gradually filled the acreage with rows of shrubs and trees. These they sold to customers and used in the landscaping jobs. David designed and sold the jobs and Harold worked at the nursery. He lined the material up for the jobs and trucks each day and oversaw the maintenance of the plant stock.



They developed a skilled staff and established an outstanding reputation in the Youngstown area. At this time, the steel mills were flourishing and there were many wealthy families who used their services. They built up a fleet of vehicles, a far cry from their beginning! Harold told of going in a truck with one of their men to Kansas to have it outfitted with a tree-mover. This gave them the ability to move large trees, especially in winter when ground was frozen.



FAREWELL DINNER

They were going ahead at a great rate when the specter of war arose in 1942! David and Harold were drafted into the army. Arthur was permitted to stay on the 'farm' to grow vegetables for food to sell. Their employees went to work in the steel mills for the duration. We were married in November 1942. After a few days in New York, we came to Youngstown for a farewell dinner for the Terrace Gardens Co. staff that were being

dispersed (much against their will). When they returned in 1945, they had to work very hard to get things back into shape and to get customers lined up.

I said at the beginning that the company "dominated" our lives. (We couldn't get married until the 'season' was over in November!) When I finally came down to Ohio in 1945, I knew no one but Harold and his sisters, Ruth and Eloise, and Dave's wife, Millie. Harold was working seven days a week and several evenings, so I was left on my own a lot. Millie introduced me to a group of school friends she met with. I went to Newcomers Club and met many wives of men who had moved into the area as the steel companies geared up for post-war business. Many of these were far from their home base and were ready to develop a social life among the newcomers. They became a group of lifelong friends who had many activities as couples and families.

Because of Ohio weather, particularly as far north as Youngstown, winter work was a problem. Foremen were carried over, but every spring new crews were hired. Many were college boys

who get out of school earlier than the local schools. When the spring broke, everything started up full tilt and nothing could interfere - family took a background!

In 1957, Arthur's wife went to Santa Barbara to take a photography course and fell in love with California and Santa Barbara. She persuaded Art to leave the nursery and move to California. Harold's sister's husband, Jack Bare, had worked at the nursery before the war. (It had been his father's acreage the Metzgers bought some years before for the nursery). It was agreed he would buy out Art's share of the company over a period of the next few years. He took over Art's job of the greenhouse and propagating and selling plants.

Jack had two sons, as we did. They enjoyed being at the nursery. As they grew older, they had summer jobs there. It was truly a big part of our life. Steve said many business practices he learned there were invaluable to him when he went into the work force after college. The Metzgers, particularly David, were active in County and State landscape organizations. We went on several very nice landscape conventions with the family.

A terrible calamity befell in March 1977. David died instantly in the doctor's office from an aneurysm - a dreadful shock to us all, and particularly to Millie and Diane. It seemed that the mainspring of the company was gone! David was "Mr. Terrace Gardens" to the public. In off seasons he spoke to many groups, using gorgeous color slides to illustrate his ideas. He had not gone to college, but his innate talent and experience made him well known state-wide. When his nephew went to Ohio State to study horticulture, he found Dave's drawing on the walls of the landscape division.

Jack's son, Russell, an Ohio State graduate in horticulture, stepped in to continue with sales and design. With every one cooperating, they were able to continue in business.

Unfortunately, age was coming into the picture. Harold was 74 - still digging trees! Jack was 65 and thinking of retirement. The time now was 1981 - most of the steel mills had closed - it had become a depressed area. No one wanted to buy a nursery and none of the sons in the family wanted to try to take over.

Finally, a couple came forward who were able to get a government-guaranteed loan to buy it. Youngstown was considered a distressed area and this would continue employment.



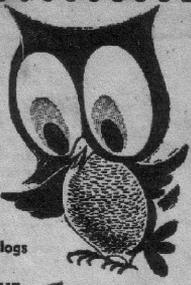
So - we were out of the nursery business after 50 years! Harold always loved the work and the business - it had been the achievement of a dream for the Metzgers.

Unfortunately, the new owners knew nothing about landscaping or growing or business or people, and in a few years they went into bankruptcy. A doctor bought it at the closing sale, ostensibly for a real estate development. But it was never developed and sadly became overgrown and dilapidated - a far cry from the lovely nursery people enjoyed visiting and dealing with.

When we were home in 1998, we learned that it has again been sold for a development. I hope that comes to pass - it hurts all of us to see our pride and joy in such a ruined condition.

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Between Highways 62 and 254

May 27 1956

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A COMPLETE STOCK OF HIGHLY RECOMMENDED SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT FOR THE LAWN AND GARDEN



CRIMSON KING MAPLE

SHADE TREES
SUGAR MAPLE
NORWAY MAPLE
SCARLET MAPLE
MORaine MONEY LOCUST
SUNBUST HONEY LOCUST
SWEET GUM
PIN OAK
LITTLE LEAF
LINDEN
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COME and SEE For Yourself

30 ACRES OF NURSERY STOCK

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WE DELIVER 3-27-55

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NURSERY STOCK
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... The best time of the year... they root in such better because of the cooler weather.

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CRIMSON KING MAPLE

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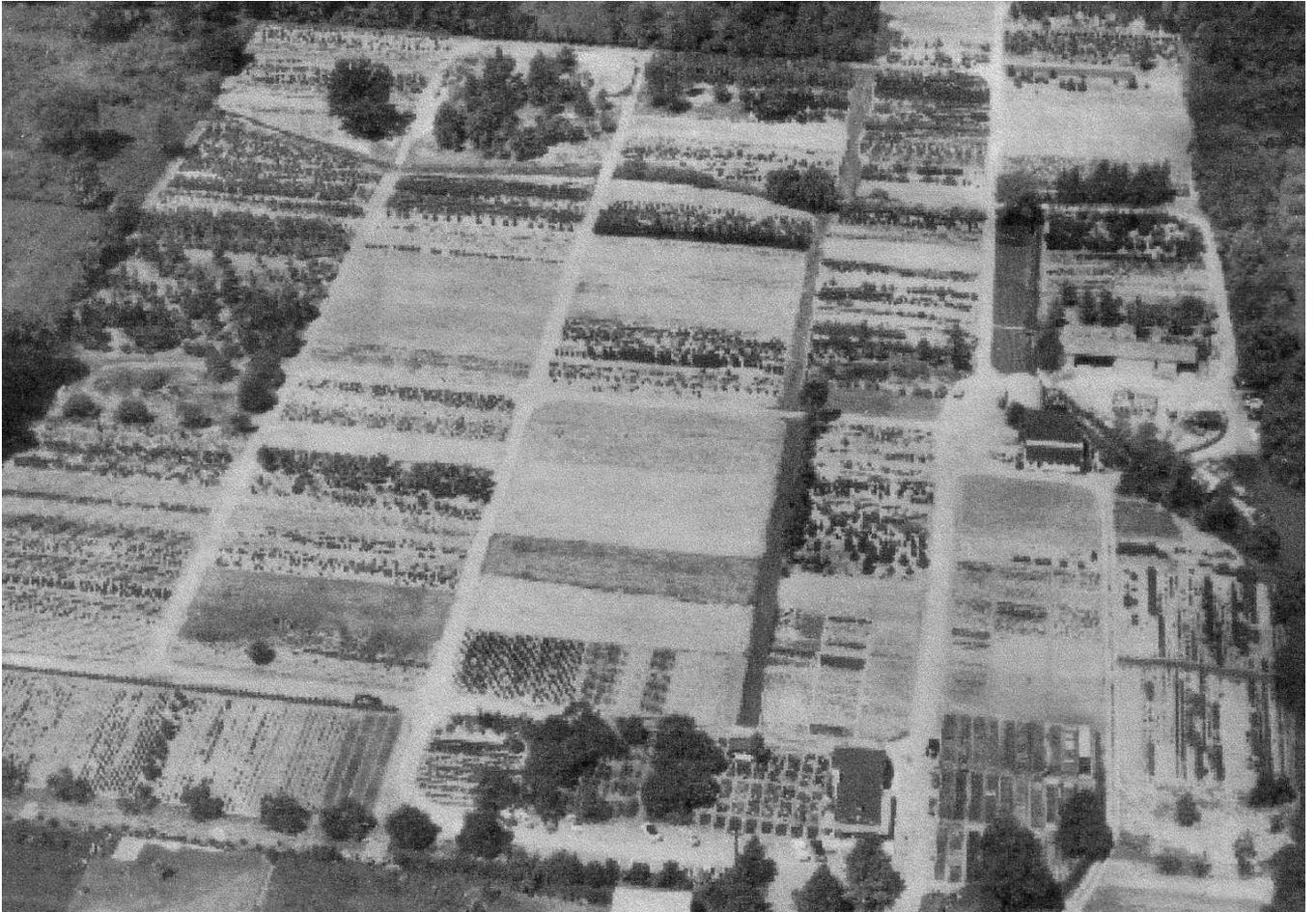
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TERRACE GARDEN 1950S ADS



TERRACE GARDENS

A Housewife of the 1950's

It was a big adjustment when I began to spend my days alone in a strange house and a strange town after years of working in the Public Office of the telephone company dealing with people continually. I had left friends and family that had been a part of all my life. After being away during the war service, the three Metzger brothers were working seven days a week to get their company functioning again. I was on my own a lot, knowing no one. Harold's sister Ruth was a lifesaver, I learned to enjoy her so much during these years.



COOKING IN EWING ROAD HOUSE

I could have gotten a job at the telephone company in Youngstown, but Harold was home for dinner every night by 5:30 – just when I'd be getting in from work. At that time, that would not be considered workable. Also, I hoped we'd be having a family. Through a casual friend I met at the Presbyterian Church, I was invited to go to a meeting of a new neighbors club in Youngstown. I felt reluctant to go into a group where I knew no one, but forced myself to go, in desperation. There were about 40 women there for lunch and playing cards. This was the beginning of the movement of families from their usual hometown after the war. Companies were getting into peacetime production after years of war work. Youngstown was a great steel town so many men were moved into that area; these were their wives. At that first luncheon, I remember particularly noticing a lady across the table – she had such a pretty smiling face, I thought I'd like to get to know her! She was Gertrude DeHetre who was in our first Boardman bridge group and became my life long friend – we still get together since.

I had played bridge for years, very casually – my family played with their friends. That first day at New Neighbors I must have had good cards! Immediately I was invited to join a bridge club some of the ladies had started in their houses. Later I was part of the group who lived in Boardman that started an evening bridge club of 8 meeting every 2 weeks. We were all in a similar situation getting our houses and families – so we had much in common. These women became my friends for the rest of my life. We were all away from family and friends, so we became "a family". We had many dinners and parties with husbands included. Fortunately, the men were compatible. We had 40 years of close friendship. We had great picnics on July 4 and Labor Day. There was a picnic area at Harold's nursery where we gathered. We cooked hamburgers and hot dogs – everyone brought food and their own drinks. Children were part of the gathering – in this way we saw them grow up. My son referred to these outings with

“my drinking friends” but no one ever over did, it was just a happy gathering to celebrate the holidays. On July 4 many of us took the children to fireworks at Poland High School. We had as many as 30 at the picnics and they became a family tradition. Last year we were in Huntington Beach to have an anniversary dinner with DeHetres. On the drive to the restaurant I hear Molly (DeHetre) telling her two children about the picnics we had at Mrs. Metzger’s nursery!

When our group first started some of them played golf. I had never been on a golf course, but was persuaded to go with them to a great public golf course in Mill Creek Park. As you can imagine, it was weird golf – but good fun. Sue Seidel was a good golfer, had played in tournaments. Later we asked her how she could stand to be with such a group of non-players. She said she didn’t have a car available and that was the only way she could get to golf!

Occasionally we golfed in the morning – went to Sue’s for lunch and played bridge in the afternoon – helping her with her laundry on the side! There was always golf, or bridge or a luncheon. I was amazed to be part of it and my time was very happily occupied compared to my first lonely weeks in America. For four years we had no children and I was free to do all this activity – but even after we had John, I continued – hiring baby sitters who were cheap (fifty cents an hour) and plentiful.

For several years we had no children. I wrote about that in “How you get a Baby.” When we adopted John our friends were all happy for us – Gertrude DeHetre, Alice Baumann came the evening we brought him home – which added to the confusion – but was warming to know they cared about us. I remember the time when, after 14 years of marriage, I was finally pregnant. It was so unexpected, I told no one, except we had a party for Lehnep’s who had been moved away. I thought I’d tell Lou privately since she was not going to be there any more and wouldn’t be there for the event. She went into the group and made an announcement. So, there was happy congratulations from all those who had been with us through the years of our dismay at not having a family. As the men retired, many of the friends moved to warm climates in Florida, the Carolinas and California. Our get-togethers dwindled, until when we finally left Ohio, there were 2 widowers left of all our wonderful group.

When it was our 50th wedding anniversary, our two sons planned to come from California, so we decided to have a dinner to celebrate. I sent invitations to all our away friends who had seen our boys grow up. Amazingly they all, except Alice Baumann, came and it became a wonderful reunion of “our group”. The last time most of us would see each other.

We had moved to Canfield in 1957. That was a small town, growing with many new people moving in, so once again there was a new neighbor’s group. The women got together for golf, bridge and bowling. I was happily busy with all that and teaching Sunday school and being Cub Scout mother. When my mother visited she said “I wouldn’t have your life for anything”. One of the Canfield husbands said “If he could choose to come back to life again, he’d be a Canfield housewife!” There were many bridge groups – there was always a calling around for a fill-in. Harold asked me if I ran an ad in the paper as “available fill-in”!

That was the life many of us led at the time. Now, in the 1990’s, I see my son’s wives working at important jobs all day, coping with homes and children. I have to echo my Mother’s words “I wouldn’t have your life for anything!” We had it very nice – sadly, those time are gone, probably forever.

How to Get a Baby

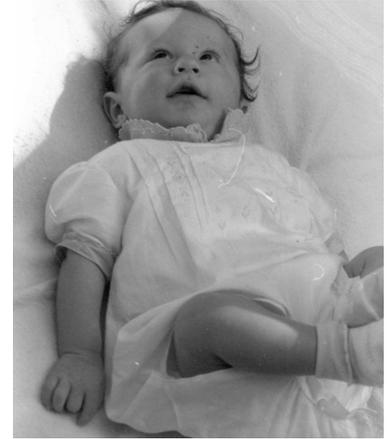
As a long time reader of fiction, I was under the impression that a baby resulted from the first sexual union of a man and woman. When our marriage plans were interrupted by Harold being called into the Army, I thought I didn't go for the idea of my having a baby in my Mother's home while Harold was away in the Army, So, in the hurried two week preparation for the wedding, I made time to go to a Doctor to be fitted for a diaphragm. Later events make this a master irony.

At war's end, when we finally started our life together, we expected to start a family. At this time, I was 28 and Harold was 38. However, in spite of my continual prayers, no baby came about. Letter after letter came from my Canadian friends announcing their pregnancies and I got more depressed with each one. In all I went to four doctors – we both had all tests – no physical reason was found that would account for no pregnancies. I wouldn't wish the ordeal of temperature taking, etc. on my worst enemies. With one Doctor I mentioned that we were considering adoption, and he advised us to go ahead with that. We applied to the County Children's Welfare and got on the list. They didn't give us any encouragement – there were many applicants.

In 1950 we finally bought a house and I went into the welfare to report our new address and status as homeowners. I asked if our ages were against our chances – I was now 33 and Harold 43. Mrs. Thompson, the head of the Welfare, said they weren't too concerned about age at adoption, almost anyone could care for a baby – what they did consider was your age when the child was a teenager (many years later, I appreciated their thinking)!

My favorite Aunt Florrie was visiting us from Canada when we got a call in June that there was a baby boy available for us, if we were ready. Such excitement! We went into their office, were pleased with the Baby's background and agreed we could get him the following week, when court proceedings, etc., were taken care of. Aunt Florrie was a great baseball fan – at that time Cleveland Indians were doing well, the great Bob Feller was pitching. Thinking this was our last chance to be free to go, we drove up to a game in Cleveland. About half way there, I ran into a car at a "yellow" stoplight and bent the front end of our car so it couldn't be driven – so we were shamefacedly towed home! Harold was great – just glad no one was injured!

We were instructed to meet Mrs. Thompson with the baby in Mill Creek Park. Like a cold-war clandestine assignment! We got the baby – a 2 month old boy dressed in a sickly yellow silk outfit. On our way home we got a flat tire! Harold had to call one of his men to come to our rescue! Eloise had had a baby in May – a beautiful tiny girl, like a doll. With this beautiful vision in my mind, our baby was completely different, much bigger, a wider face. I thought sort of Slavic looking, especially with the yellow suit! That evening several of our friends stopped in to see this magic baby – it was chaos! When I finally got to bed and had time to think I was depressed. They talk of picking out a baby for adoption! I would not have picked John! I'm sure it wasn't two weeks later, at a Metzger family gathering, I looked around at the little ones and thought John was the best looking of all!



We were told at the Welfare, not to expect more adoptions – there were so many applicants. Through a Christian friend in Canada, I heard of a little boy that was being boarded with a friend of hers and may be available for adoption. I went to Hamilton to see the child – an absolutely beautiful baby boy with red curly hair. I was really enthused. The mother, a single woman, was interested in what she'd heard of our family and wanted to meet me. We met in St. Catherine's and had a good rapport. The father was a married man (what else!) and she wanted to see the child in a home of her choosing. Our County Welfare said they would work with the Canadian Welfare to set up adoption proceedings. It happened at this time that a scandal was much publicized of Canadian babies in Quebec being placed in US homes. Anyway – the upshot was that Canadian welfare would not help to place the child in a US home when many Canadian couples were waiting for a child. Because of the Christian friend, and the offer coming out the blue, I was sure this was God's way of answering my prayers for more children. Apparently not!



I went into the welfare one day to inquire about foster care for a child. John was three by now and I felt sorry he was an only child. We did get a little two year old boy to care for. He was adorable and all our friends and family made lot of fuss over him – John was sort of left out! He never acted as if interested in playing with Bobby. I could see that my purpose in having another child wasn't working well. Bobby was an easy child to have – no problems – but when I put him to bed at night he would cry quietly. It broke your heart. I wasn't his Mother putting him in! About two months later when I got him up from his afternoon nap, one side of his face was all bruised, as if some one had hit him! I was aghast – ran next door for my neighbor! I called Mrs. Thompson to tell her, explaining he had been fine when I put him in bed! I really felt guilty, although I know I had not touched him! Mrs. Thompson

came and got him and took him to the Doctor, who also had no explanation. Bobby's parents were alcoholics and he had been taken from them. However, they had been in rehabilitation and the welfare decided to put Bobby back with them. I never again considered another foster care adventure!

A year or so later, our minister told us of the Methodist Children's Home in Berea planning to place the little children in individual homes. We went up for an interview. The man in charge spoke of their regulations, etc. They would come into a prospective home and check it out. They would look in the refrigerator and if there was beer or wine there, the home would not be considered suitable. I said we might as well end the discussion; there was beer in our refrigerator. Alcohol was not a problem in our home, but it was there. I was crushed and wanted to leave immediately, but Harold carried on quite a discussion of the unreliability of their stand, etc., etc. We went home, very dejected. Another of what I felt was God's leading come to nothing!

I could hardly credit the fact that a couple of months later I found I was pregnant! Unbelievable! After 14 years! All our family and friends were delighted for us. I was 39 – the Doctor suggested I should consider a section, which suited me fine! When we were driving down to the hospital for the birth, I felt that Harold still couldn't believe this was happening! I had an easy pregnancy, mostly spent on Cloud 9 – and Stephen was born – at last – God came through.

We had the great joy of a long awaited baby for adoption, and the joy of long-awaited pregnancy and a brother for John. Our cup runneth over!



Entertainment, U.S.A.

Harold was never a “joiner” – stuck very closely to his business, working with his two brothers, Arthur and David, to build it up from nothing in the depression and continuing for 50 years until it was the outstanding landscape and nursery company in the Youngstown area.

While he was engrossed, I was free to develop our social connections, based almost completely on friends we made from the New Neighbors group. The basic eight of our bridge club were all people who liked to entertain in their homes and were all great cooks. The memories of those good dinners now make restaurants seem mediocre. We had a supper club of six couples one Saturday a month – hostess provided main course and drinks – others rotated hors d’oeuvres, salad, vegetables, potatoes or rice and dessert on a setup schedule. After dinner we played bridge.



That same group and other friends got together for a Square Dance at Pioneer Pavilion in Mill Creek Park one Saturday night a month. That was very informal, none of the fancy costumes I see square dancers sport now. I don’t think any one can not enjoy square dancing – the music is so bouncy and happy. We had coffee and sandwich to end the evening – provided by members on committees in their turn. At Christmas and in September corn roast time, we had special dinners before we danced. Such wonderful food we had – everyone made their choice recipes – I still have two or three that I got from them.



Often there would be impromptu dinners. If one of the couples who had been transferred returned for a visit, one of us would organize a dinner party. I remember when John DeHetre had been salmon fishing in British Columbia and had a supply of smoked salmon to be used up, Gertrude quickly had a dinner. Another was when Koslings came back from vacation at Kennebunkport with a lot of fresh lobsters that had to be used we had a dinner the day after they got back. We were all always ready to contribute food to complete the menu.

At holidays, and sometimes for no special reason, one of us would have a party with additional friends. If there were too many for bridge, we usually divided into two groups and played “Charades”. At every gathering, some one would play the piano and we have a sing song. This was like my parents and their friends did, and I enjoyed the memories it evoked.

This was a delightful group – all outgoing and fun loving. As the years went by, our financial position improved, and we got nicer homes. Many became “well-to-do” but there was never a touch of snobbery. Some were transferred away, and others would come in to fill their places, but our relaxed enjoyment of each other continued.

I’ve told about our picnics with this group and their other friends at the nursery. John DeHetre had gone to University of Southern California. Every year they played Notre Dame. On the alternate year, when the game was in Indiana, John got tickets and our group made a weekend outing of it. Sometimes a group went down to Columbus to Ohio State games. We went to all weddings as our children grew and married. Any event was a reason to get together.

Some of the group got a dance club started – Carnival Club. Since Harold didn’t round dance, we did not join in, although most of our friends belonged. One couple was being transferred away. At a party we were all gathered, and in a weak moment, probably after a few drinks, Harold was persuaded to take over this membership. So – we were dancing! Harold got a tux, including a white tux for summer dances. But he couldn’t dance – never got the beat of the music! Very boring to dance with him, but fun to be with our friends. I remember one New Year’s Eve I had a cocktail party before the dance. Harold’s bachelor brother Paul dropped in and our next door neighbor Lou dropped in (His wife was very pregnant and they weren’t going anywhere to celebrate New Years). Everyone kept staying and staying – I got nervous that they wouldn’t take off for the dance!

Harold’s family lived in Youngstown and Cleveland and we had many family gatherings. We always had the Christmas dinner at our house – my Mother and Dad came down from Canada and those times have become great memories for our children. We vacationed in the summer with Harold’s sister Eloise and Jack and their three children. Usually we went to a lodge in Muskoka, in Northern Ontario – where we ate in the lodge and enjoyed swimming and boating in those lovely clear lakes – no cooking for Mothers – a real holiday.

Our two boys and Eloise’s two boys and a girl spent a lot of time together. John has spoken of his regret that his children here in California away from the family, haven’t had the pleasure he had growing up with his cousins, spending summer days in Mill Creek Park and enjoying family gatherings.

Youngstown had a symphony orchestra and a playhouse. Monday Musical Club brought outstanding artists every year. We attended when it was something we wanted to see; mostly our entertainment was family and home centered.

I told of our having a dinner for our 50th anniversary and inviting “our group” who were mostly scattered now. John’s wife, Laura, wrote to all of them asking for pictures and anecdotes of our years together. She was surprised to hear from all of them and made up a wonderful memory book for us that we cherish, and John wants, “after we’re gone”. Over 50 years have gone by since we first met; many have died or have health problems. Eloise is the only one left of the Metzger generation. The thoughts of our many good years with those friends and family are always with us and are an everlasting enjoyment.

Back to School

When my parents died, I was no longer making frequent trips to Canada. John was away at school, Steve in High School, and it seemed that I faced a sudden drop in responsibilities.

I was busy with activities with a group of good friends in Canfield – we went bowling, played golf and bridge – all very enjoyable. But I realized I didn't want to look forward to years like this. I was 53, I'd kept house for 25 years, and was ready for a change.

At secretarial school, years before, I had excelled in bookkeeping but had never used it in my work at the telephone company. I thought a bookkeeping job at my age was more suitable than secretarial work. I took two semesters of accounting at Youngstown University and was pleased to find I could still learn. The course was not for credit, but I got top grades and thoroughly enjoyed that type of work.

The teacher told me of a job opening at a local car dealer in Canfield. I applied and got it. Part of my job was handling repair bills – it seemed there was always a lot of action from 4:30 to 5:30. I found I needed to be home making dinner at 5:30, so the work interfered with Harold's dinner time, which was pretty fixed at 5:30 to 6:00 most times when he ate and went back to the nursery. I asked for part-time work, but they couldn't arrange it and I left that job.

I saw an item in the Canfield paper that Canfield was instituting a city income tax and they advertised for a clerk. I applied and got the job of setting it all up and administering it. I worked a few years as Income Tax Clerk and enjoyed it very much. From the beginning, the pay was very low, but it didn't matter to me. However, one summer I noticed that they were paying the boys that cut the lawns the same that I was getting for handling a job involving thousands of dollars a year! That got to me and I said I needed more money. They said the city couldn't pay more then, perhaps in another year they could. I gave notice to leave if they didn't give me a raise. I didn't think they'd let me go! But they did!

A tax accountant in Canfield who had dealt with me in connection with his client's city income tax asked me to work with him during January – April, the busy time for tax accountants. I enjoyed the temporary job. When it ended, I realized I felt less of a person when I wasn't employed! I could imagine how traumatic it would be to be out of work when the wages were essential for your living!

I told in the account of Terrace Gardens (Harold's business) that David Metzger died suddenly in March 1977. Jack Bare took over as office manager, in addition to his growing duties. After a few months, the bookkeeper resigned – she had worked for David for several years and didn't adapt to the change. I was not working at the time. Jack called to see if I would take over the job, which I did. It was just what I like doing, accounts and payroll and reports. I stayed with that until the business was sold in 1981. All told, I had worked another ten years. In my 25 years as a housewife I had never liked to do any of the housekeeping duties, cleaning, cooking,

sewing. But I had finally found an activity I enjoyed doing – bookkeeping. I read this in a Dear Abby column:

THOSE FOUR LETTER WORDS

Some four-letter words offend me,
Whether by ear or in a book;
The ones that evoke the worst feelings in me
Are: iron, dust and cook!

We had gone to California Methodist Church all the years we had been in Canfield. The retired bookkeeper who was the treasurer died suddenly of a heart attack in December. Paul Baringer, who had been our CPA at the nursery, stepped in and carried on with the job. He was coming into the busy accounting months and didn't have time to do it. He asked me if I'd take over the job and I was delighted to do so. I went into the office every Monday and worked on account and payroll – made out the monthly report. I figured I spent about 30 hours a month. I had never done volunteer work, so it satisfied me to volunteer at something I enjoyed doing. I did that for 13 years, until we left Canfield in 1995.

1982

Harold's business was sold in November, 1981 and we were "retired". About that time, our friends John and Gertrude DeHetre were passing through Youngstown from a visit to South Carolina on their way home to Huntington Beach, California. As we always did when one of our "gang" happened to be in town, we had a dinner and caught up on each other's news. John suggested we use their condo for a couple months while they were in South Carolina at their daughter's and on business.

We were there December 15 to February 15. John and Laura were in San Diego and Steve and Tricia were in Bakersfield. We were able to get together for Christmas 1981 at our place in Huntington Beach. It was a hot day and we all walked out on Huntington Beach pier – a little different from Christmas in Ohio!

I told friends we would be in California for a few weeks and they should come visit us. And they did! My telephone company friend, Elinor Munroe and her husband came from Vancouver, Canada. My cousin Eric Barnes and his wife Barbara came from Littleborough, England – my mother's home town. Their visit was a little like "The Man Who Came to Dinner." Barbara came with her foot in a cast, a result of a fall the previous week! She was pretty heavy and announced she was on a strict diet! They wanted to go to Disneyland, which we did, Barbara in a wheelchair. (One advantage of that was we were at the front of the line for events, etc.). For someone on a diet, Barbara was a BIG eater – polishing off great quantities of French fries and pasta at a turn! They had come on Laker airlines to Los Angeles. Soon after they arrived, Laker went out of business and they were stranded – at the mercy of any airline who would take them, on a stand-by basis! We made another of our, by now frequent, drives to LAX. We went early in the day, hoping to line up a flight for them – no one would commit to 2 seats, we'd have to return later in the afternoon and be on stand-by.

It didn't seem practical to drive back to Huntington Beach for a few hours, so we went to Universal Studios to use up the waiting time. That was a pleasant time filler. Back to LAX and wait until almost flight time to get two seats! Can't remember which airline took them.

This was the first of many winter stays in California. A friend knew someone who went to Rancho Bernardo each winter. I went to see her to inquire about possibilities of renting a condo for 1982-83. She gave me a realtor's address and I wrote to reserve a condo December 15 to March 31. My sons in California drove over to check on the condo I had lined up. Steve called and said he knew I wouldn't like it – it was furnished like a cheap motel! They drove over to Solana Beach and happened in to a real estate office where Joann Andriko was working. She had a condo that had just become available and showed it to them. Steve called me and said "Boy, do we have a condo for you!" It was in Country Club Villas and turned out to be lovely. We rented it for December 15 – March 31 and canceled the Rancho Bernardo rental.

In October, Steve's school, Cincinnati University alumni sent word of a trip they were organizing to Switzerland and Austria. Eloise and Jack and we signed up for it and had a delightful time in beautiful Switzerland and Austria.

At the beginning of November, the church I had attended in Hamilton, Ontario and where we had been married, were celebrating their 100 year anniversary. We arranged to go up for the dinner and had a great time seeing old friends, some of whom had traveled from many parts of Canada and USA. Since my parents weren't there, when we went up to Hamilton we stayed with my cousins Alan and Joyce. We left Monday morning for an easy trip home – by now there were freeways all the way – very different from the 1940s and 1950s with two lane drives through the cities of Erie, PA and Buffalo, NY.

After lunch we continued on New York Route 90. I was doing something I had never before done in all our thousands of miles of travel – I was doing a crossword puzzle while Harold drove. There was very little traffic. Suddenly, Harold swerved off the road into the median strip – he had dozed off. I hadn't noticed – before he could get back on the road we slammed into a grove of trees. I had no seat belt on and slid against the dashboard. The medics arrived and took us to the nearest center at Fredona, New York. Harold had very few injuries – a cut on his leg and minor head and chest abrasions. I had apparently automatically put out my arms – and found myself on the floor of the car and unable to pull myself up on the seat – I knew nothing until they were giving me transfusions. I had a shattered left leg and both arms broken. They took us by ambulance to Dunkirk New York where there was an outstanding group of orthopedic surgeons. Ironically, Harold was fined for driving on the median.

I was in intensive care until Thursday when I was moved to a regular room – with my leg in traction. On Saturday, they finally operated on my leg and left elbow – they said it was delayed because they weren't sure what they could do with the shattered leg. They fastened a 12" plate to the bone with 12 screws – repaired my left elbow with screws and plate. The right arm was splintered and they thought it may heal together so they did nothing to repair it during the long surgery.

Harold was able to be around with his minor injuries, but I was in bed, having to be fed and washed and combed, etc., with both arms out of commission. After nine days, Harold could go home. Our friends, Maxine and Larry, came up to get him. It was November 10, our 40th anniversary and they brought a bottle of wine and the nurse brought in a cake and we had a little celebration – while I lay helpless with a drain in my collapsed lung!

In spite of my injuries, I was not in a lot of pain –everyone in the small hospital was great and I seemed to float in a detached world. One night there was a fire alarm – nothing in our area – I couldn't have moved anyway! One of my roommates (I had about three while I was there) was a lot of fun and we found ourselves laughing with the nurse in the middle of the night!

The doctors thought I'd be better in a hospital near home and I was transferred by ambulance to South Side hospital in Youngstown. I would have preferred to stay on in Dunkirk – I didn't care about people coming to see me! The ambulance ride was a story in itself! I was flat on my back with an IV. I was supposed to drink a lot of water – there was no water on the ambulance. It was cold – no blankets – they finally put towels over me. We hadn't gone far when they had a flat tire and had to pull off into a roadside station to fix it. They finally brought a can of pop for me to drink – no straw – impossible mechanics for someone laying flat! They finally got going. In Youngstown, they didn't know how to get to the hospital – so I had to try to direct them in an unfamiliar part of Youngstown – asking which street we were on, etc. – I wouldn't see street signs. We finally got in hospital – in rolling me to a room they bumped my injured

elbow in a door way! A couple of klutzes! Harold and his sister Ruth came to the hospital when I arrived. Harold left the car in the parking garage with the engine running and the door locked! A complete comedy of errors!

In a few days, an orthopedic doctor operated on my right arm – he said it would never have knit together on its own – he put some screws in to hold it.

Finally, after 5 weeks in the hospital I was free to go home – advised not to put weight on my leg until after the end of December. About time! We had planned to drive out to California. That was impossible now. Larry McCully got air reservations for us for December 21 and arrangements were made to ship our car out. When the doctor said I could leave the hospital – I said “just in time – we’re going to California next week!” He said – “but you can’t walk”. I went out to California in a wheel chair.

The flight was early morning and we planned to go the day before and stay in a hotel at the airport. Weather in Ohio is uncertain in December. The McCully’s drove us up to Cleveland reluctant to stay for dinner – it was sleeting and they didn’t know how bad the snow might be. Laura’s Mother and Dad came in from East Cleveland and had dinner with us. We were supposed to be on a direct flight, but when we got to the airport they said they had to stop in St. Louis and we’d have to change planes! And I couldn’t walk! They landed out on the tarmac and I had to go down steps and up to another plane!

We finally got to San Diego – Steve met us with a wheelchair for me. We finally got to the very nice condo we were to enjoy for the next few months. We had Christmas with the family and New Year’s Eve at the Charthouse. A fitting end to an eventful 1982.

The Canfield

Years: 1957 - 1995

As I write this in 1998 and look back over our years in Canfield, Ohio, I realize they were idyllic years of love and contentment with our family and good friends all still living.

When Steve was born in November, 1956, our two bedroom house was no longer adequate and a change had to be made. Harold had always liked the idea of a place on a few acres in the country, but I felt country living had its disadvantages, well water system and oil heating. Then it would be easier to live in an area where there were homes and children for our boys to play with. We found a house that was just being built on ½ acre lot in the town of Canfield. At that time the population was less than 5000. I liked the house and Harold liked the soil and yard potential and the fact that the house was built by a Swedish builder well known for lovely home he had built. So it was ours! We sold the Boardman house to the first person who looked at it! Then you feel you could have asked more! The new house was a colonial ranch, brick and frame – large rooms – large windows – Forest Glen bright and cheerful!

Ours was the third home occupied in the new development. We had all facilities; city sewer, water, and gas. In the next couple of years houses were added until streets were full. Almost every family had children, many of the age of ours, so there was always some one for the boys to play with. They were out most of the time – just in for meals and bed. There were many empty fields for ball games and other play. Almost every house had a basketball hoop on the garage. I had a long acquaintance with the owner of a bicycle shop in Boardman with two boys, starting with a tricycle for Steve and on through many changes of size.

Through children we developed friendship with the neighbors as they moved in. There was a Canfield branch of the new neighbors, which many ladies joined. As in Youngstown, several bridge clubs were formed. I still had our original group from Boardman, but gradually got involved in Canfield. I'd often be called to fill-in when another "body" was needed. Harold asked me if I ran an ad in the paper so they'd know I was available!

The Canfield Women's Club membership was filled to the capacity of the homes where they met monthly. They sponsored a second Canfield Women's Club to be formed and Lou Brenner invited me to join. This became a great group involving community service and interesting speakers and activities. In later years, our group sponsored an annual "country market" on the picturesque village green. We charged each exhibitor for space. It grew from a beginning 12 stalls to over 25 through the years. It was a great one a year money raiser for our club – money we raised was given in \$500 scholarships to Canfield students graduating from High School or

already in college. In later years, we'd raise over \$2000 each year – a lot for a small group of 20 women and a fun project to boot!

Our boys went all through school and high school with the same students. This seemed good to me, who had sadly changed schools often when I was growing up. Some children's parents were graduates of Canfield High School and had themselves been raised in Canfield.

Canfield had been a small farming town, surrounded by farms. Within 5 minutes drive, you were in the country, beautiful grain and corn fields. Immediate access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Harold had a pleasant five minute drive past undeveloped fields to his work at the nursery on Tippecanoe Round in Canfield Township. Quite a contrast to the present-day local bumper-to-bumper ordeal in San Diego, or any city. When we first moved there, there was still an A&P store where they got you groceries off shelves behind the counter and a hardware store with screws and bolts in big bins.

Canfield had been the County seat in the 1800s. The courthouse had been moved to Youngstown, but the annual county fair was held in Canfield. Harold remembered coming from Youngstown to the fair when he was a boy and it was a big outing by horse and buggy. All the children in Canfield enjoyed the fair – the fairground was a ten minute walk from our house. All the animal and tractor exhibits, and the rides, and the wonderful eats were a big drawing card. 4-H clubs showed their animals and crafts. Our neighbor, Sue McCully, showed her horse. Our boys would be there every day of the five days that always came over Labor Day weekend. Many former Canfield residents came home "for the fair" and as the boys were older and away at school it was always a great reunion time.

The other annual Canfield binge was the 4th of July on the village green. Starting with a parade, bands, antique cars and floats; followed by patriotic speeches on the picturesque gazebo. Games and eating contests for the kids, an annual running race from the Fairgrounds to the center of town; many booths offering eats – hot dogs, hamburgers, etc. Our next door neighbor, Frank Welsch, had a big barbecue contraption he had built. The spit held several beef roasts a time. His was always a feature of the 4th – wonderful barbecued beef on a bun – for the benefit of the local Republican club. For many years I was involved in being the cashier for this. This was another great reunion time for Canfield residents – every one came home for the 4th and it was a delightful time of seeing friends that had moved away. Of course, there were fireworks at the fairground at night.



The Family in The Canfield Years

We moved to Canfield July 1, 1957, the height of summer in Ohio. As we settled in the new house, it was discovered the refrigerator wasn't working when connected after the move. This was July 4th weekend, few repairmen working. We had a 7-month old baby, so milk and formula had to be refrigerated. I went to our next door neighbor, Mrs. Moody, to request use of her refrigerator! A quick way to meet your neighbor. I remember having a sense of disappointment in this brand new house – nothing looked “at home” as it had in Boardman! Very soon, we had decorating, carpeting, wallpaper, etc., and through a couple of years it became our home.



OUR HOUSE IN CANFIELD

Our older son John went into second grade when school started in the Fall. By 3rd grade his teacher, Mrs. Post, called to ask me to help him with his reading—they couldn't understand a high IQ student having that problem. I did work with him, the next year we sent him to a tutor with no result. We know now that his problem was dyslexia, not recognized in those years. If you remember readers of that time, the ridiculous pages of “see spot run”, it was no wonder there was no incentive for some pupils to make an effort to read. Our readers, from the very first primer, had stories with lessons implied, like “little Red Hen”, the Story of the Battle between the sun and the wind, snippets of famous poems and Shakespeare. In desperation, in 5th grade, John went for an hour every morning 8 to 9 to a retired Canfield teacher, Mrs. Westmore. She found that he was interested in science and found a simplified book about that, and got him reading! When he graduated from High School, he was the top Physics student and had won a Westinghouse award for a science paper, so – he learned to read!

My parents lived in Hamilton, Ontario, and I was their only child. Even though Harold was busy with his work, I took the children up to visit about 4 times a year – whenever there was a school break – at Easter, for Canadian Thanksgiving in October, and when we went to Northern Ontario for vacation in the summer. Going to Canada was an enjoyable memory for our boys. Usually, when we drove back, I'd bring my mother or her sister, Aunt Florrie, for a visit. Sometimes, Florrie's son, Alan, would bring one or the other to Erie, PA. We'd meet for dinner at the Holiday Inn and exchange passengers. We had quite a taxi service set up! By that time, train travel between our cities had disappeared. Mother and Aunt Florrie fitted in with our activities and all our friends knew them well.



MOM AND DAD DARLINGTON

We were not close to a lake, but Eloise and I took the children swimming to pools in the area. Several years, we went to a resort in Northern Ontario with Eloise and Jack and their 3 children. Our families had a close relationship; the children were close in age and were together a lot. We had many family gatherings at holiday times. Christmas dinner was usually celebrated at our house. Mother and Dad came down from Canada. Alma and Harry came from Cleveland. Bachelor Uncle Paul always was a part of the group.

John was a cub scout, and I was, per force, a scout mother. He went up into Boy Scouts for a couple of years – did not advance up the ranks. He played in Little League baseball. The games were always at our supper time. Harold was usually home by 5:30, ate dinner and went back to work. I had to be home to fix dinner. So – we never saw any games – a fact that John never forgot. When he had sons involved in games of YMCA activities, he was always there for them! When Steve wanted to be a cub scout in his turn, I again became a most reluctant cub mother. He did not go on to boy Scouts or Little League, and the attendance problem did not arise.

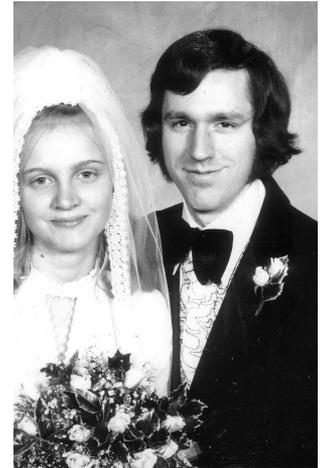
John was into basketball in school, played on the High School team. We went to the games (since they were not at supper time) and enjoyed them. After he graduated we thought we would continue to go, but found it wasn't so interesting when he wasn't on the team, nor most of his contemporaries whom we had known for years. Because of his basketball, John never started smoking. For many of his high school years, he dated Linda Welsch, an only child who had to be home by 11 PM. There wasn't much drinking among his group of friends, so we didn't run into many behavior problems with him. He was interested in photography and rocket science. So the teen years with John were fairly calm. He went to Case Western Reserve College, got into the early stages of computers – and that became his career.

Steve was a different boy – in a different era! He had knee surgery about 7th grade, so his career (?) in basketball never developed. He didn't date much at all, but ran with a group of boys who had dirt bikes. After he was 16 and had a driver's license, he seemed to be in car trouble a great deal – speeding, accidents – he lost his license for a year because he accumulated 12 points. By this time (6 years after John's time) drugs had come into the picture. One of Steve's friends had a brother who sold marijuana! Also drinking and smoking were in the picture. Many nights I'd be awake until he came in.

Steve went to Cincinnati College – studied electrical engineering and graduated – some how! He was about to lose his Ohio drivers license again, so he took off for California, where John lived. He was dating a girl he met at College, Patricia Fogarty, who was from Youngstown. He was home over Decoration Day and called to say they thought they would be married over Labor Day weekend!

I was shocked! “You don’t have a job”, I pointed out! He got a job with Westinghouse, who had a trainee program of once a month for a year. He started in Bakersfield. The wedding went off as planned, over Labor Day weekend. His pals from Canfield were ushers, even though they were now in different parts of the Country. In the line for dinner, I was next to John Mahony (our neighbor whose brother sold drugs). I said how sharp they all looked in their usher’s outfits. He said “We didn’t turn out so bad after all, Mrs. Metzger.”

John got a computer job at Moffett Air Field near San Jose in California. He was dating a girl he met at Case, Laura White, whose home was in East Cleveland. He had brought her home and we liked her immediately. She was a political science student and had had a semester in Washington DC. She graduated in December 1974. John had an apartment in Mountain View. Harold and Steve and I went out to spend Thanksgiving with him. Had a great time touring that that area, San Francisco, Napa Valley, had Thanksgiving dinner in a charming Inn at Santa Cruz. We went to see where John worked at the Air Base. It was a room filled with huge computers. A tremendous contrast to computers 25 years later! I was shocked to see his co-workers in jeans and beards! Not like my very proper Bell Telephone staff!



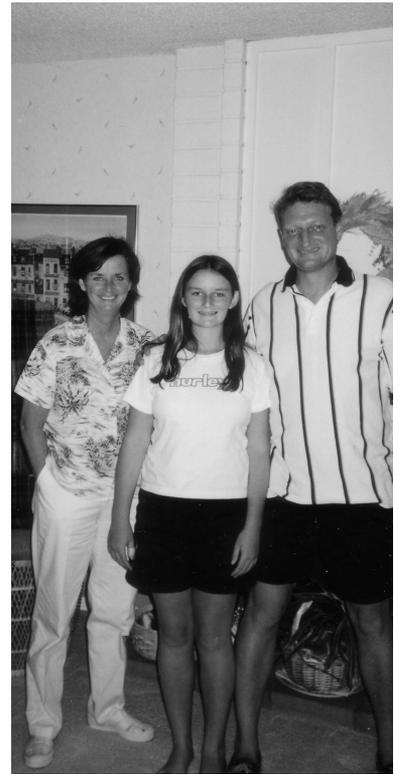
Laura and John were married December 28, 1974 in a lovely Presbyterian church on the Case campus. It was still decorated with hundreds of poinsettias – Laura had a white velvet dress. All our family and long-time friends and cousins from Canada were at the wedding dinner. John’s fraternity friends serenaded them with “The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi.”



EDITH, JOHN, LIZ, LAURA AND
HAROLD



EDITH, LIZ AND GWYNETH,
LAURA AND JOHN



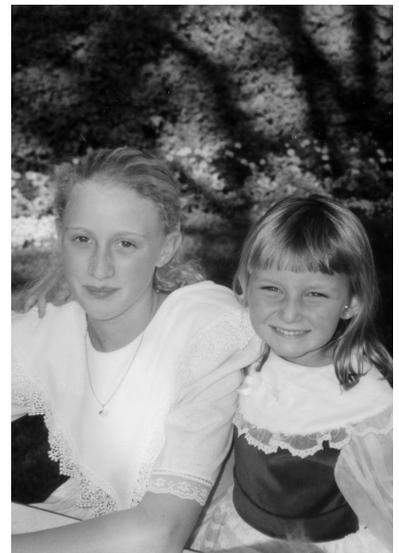
TRICIA, KATIE AND STEVE



DAVID, ANDY AND LIZ



STEVE AND KATIE



LIZ AND KATIE

The Canfield/California Years

After enjoying three winter months in Solana Beach in 1991, we decided that was “for us”. Our wonderful Realtor, Joanne Andreiko, was able to locate rentals for us from that time on. Usually they were in the Country Club Villas, but three years they were across Lomas Santa Fe in St. Francis Court. We flew out around December 15 for Christmas with our boys. After New Years, our nephew, Russell Bare, drove our car out, visited in California and returned on the other half of Harold’s round air trip. At the end of March, we drove to Ohio in time for spring – so—we had the best of both worlds. We never minded the 5-day drive back. We shared the driving and enjoyed the variety of USA we drove through the desert states, the farming states, and finally reached Ohio with all its beautiful trees and greenery.

Our nephew, Russell, had started his own landscaping business and I did his bookkeeping. I worked (volunteer) as treasurer and bookkeeper at our Methodist Church. With golf, bridge and Women’s Club, I was pleasantly busy. Harold worked every day with our yard and gardens – his own type of work that he enjoyed. Our place was always beautiful with green lawns, pine trees, and other shrubs and flowers. Of course, it should be an example of Harold’s know-how.

I remember one summer, there was a drought and all the town was forbidden to water lawns—our lovely sweep of lawn at the front browned out – very ugly – it was a struggle to bring it back in the fall. Harold remarked that if he died, his ashes should be sprinkled on the lawn, because that was what had killed him!

We continued to enjoy good health and getting together with friends and family. Sadly, as our friends retired they moved to warmer parts of the country: Florida, South Carolina and California. Our long-time “group” were dissipating! A dinner-bridge group in Canfield invited us to join them. They ate at Salem Country Club once a month, then went to one of the homes for bridge. I enjoyed that very much, I had played golf and bridge with those ladies for years. However, Harold apparently never felt at home with them after so many years with our long-time friends and told me he didn’t want to do that any more – so we “dropped out”! I was sorry to lose that activity with Harold – I could keep very busy with ladies groups, but our social time with couples came to a halt.

In 1983 John and Laura bought a house in Solana Beach. David was born January, 1984. They already had Elizabeth – born in San Diego in 1979 – Harold’s pride and joy. Steve and Tricia were transferred to San Diego which made it perfect for us – all the family in one place. Steve lived in Rancho Bernardo, still very close. Steve’s Katie was born September 1986 and Laura had Andrew in June 1990. That completed the family, of all ages, very enjoyable for us when we were in California.

During the winter of 1990-1991, I had a couple of incidents of complete exhaustion when walking – but it was not constant and I thought nothing of it. Soon after we were back in

Canfield, one day I went out for my usual walk and found I was unable to put one foot in front of the other. I walked by the house next door and had to return home. Alarmed, I went to our family doctor – he sent me immediately to a heart doctor who said I needed a pacemaker – the natural one in my heart was not functioning! In May 1991 I had a pacemaker implanted – a very minor operation. It was set at 70, when I went into surgery my pulse was 25! Immediately, I was back to normal, able to walk and golf as I had previously – a medical miracle for which I was very grateful.

We were coming time to leave California in March 1992 when Harold fell as he was helping John in the yard. HE wrenched his ankle, but in true Harold style, made nothing of it. By the next morning his leg was horribly black so we had to see a doctor. They thought it may require surgery to repair the ankle. A friend of Steve's in Canfield was becoming known as an expert orthopedic surgeon. We called him and made arrangements for him to do whatever was required. We had to fly back to Canfield. Russell came out on Harold's return flight and drove our car home. Fortunately, no surgery was necessary. Harold went through the misery of a cast, but no complications.

I don't know if that alarmed Harold – he never said so, but suddenly he said he didn't want to go to California for the whole winter. I called our trusty Realtor, Joanne, and she was able to get us a 1-month house rental on Solana Circle for March. This was a lovely place – beautifully furnished – high up so you overlooked Del Mar track and could see the ocean. Harold said it was like Switzerland! We rented that for three winters.

In the summer of 1995, Harold said the yard was too much for him and we'd have to sell the house! I didn't want to leave our pleasant home – thought we could get help for the yard work. However, one day in July, Harold came back from the barber's where he had gone for years and said "I got lost coming home". It was like some one had stabbed me in the stomach! Visions of Alzheimer's filled my being. Harold had always walked every morning since he had retired – suddenly he was falling, for no apparent reason. He went in the hospital for tests that weren't conclusive – they claimed he had not had a stroke and suggested therapy.

I reluctantly felt we had to move to California where we would be near the boys if I was to need help with Harold. It was getting late in the fall for selling homes in Ohio, so it was up for sale and quickly sold by October. I called our trusty Realtor to try to locate an unfurnished condo we could rent and went to California the first weekend in November to see what was available. There was one, facing the golf course, which had just been renovated. It was perfect for us and I signed a lease, as of December 1. I didn't look any further, although Steve hoped we might find a nice place in Rancho Bernardo.

Random Christmas Memories

I have written about our homecoming Christmas, 1945, when the Metzger Family gathered after the separation of the war years. Harold and I were living temporarily at his Aunt's big old home and I, from a small family, was overwhelmed by the sheer numbers of Metzgers.

Our first memorable Christmas was 1950. We had, finally, bought a house, we got 2-month old John, and Harold asked me if I'd like a piano for Christmas. What more could anyone ask – a house – a baby and a baby grand! From then on, my parents came for Christmas – first by train, then as that transportation withered, we drove up to Canada to get them. It was about a 5 hour drive each way, sometimes getting into snow near Lake Erie and Buffalo. From then on – Metzger Christmas was at our house. Alma and Harry came from Cleveland. John's wife made up a memory book for our 50th anniversary and many family members recalled our Christmases throughout the years.

Often after dinner, we'd gather around the piano and sing Christmas songs and hymns. My Mother sang "alto" and we had a great time singing. One year, John taped our "concert" and the playback was awful – so humiliating!

One year, Harry and Alma were down – they had a new car. When Ruth's husband Erwin (a used car salesman) came and saw the car that they hadn't bought from him, he turned around and left! I suppose he made his point. One Christmas day, as we were enjoying the children and presents before we got into final arrangements for dinner, the phone rang and we learned that Harry had died from a heart attack on Christmas Eve.

In 1968, Mother had been ill – had a slight stroke in September. But she wanted to come for Christmas as they had for years. We drove up and back to get them. Dad at 84 had emphysema, but got along OK, except for being out of breath walking. Over Christmas, he caught a cold that became pneumonia. That was more than he could overcome and he died January 4. Mother stayed on with us, until her death in 1970 at age 87.

After we started to winter in California, we would go December 15 and Christmas dinner was at John's. The Metzger Christmas had moved to California!

Travels with Harold

In the last months I worked in Toronto, I got used to traveling and arranging transportation and lodging. After we were in Youngstown, the Nursery Association that Harold was a member of were having a conference in Milwaukee and we planned to go. In my role of “subservient wife”, I did nothing about arrangements – it was Harold’s outing. After the meetings we left the hotel to go to Racine, where Harold’s favorite aunt and uncle lived. (Harold always spoke of how Julia and Phil would come at Christmas with gifts for the Metzger kids.) On our way to their place, I suggested we should get a room, but Harold didn’t think we needed to do that. When we got there, we found Aunt Julia had broken her right wrist and her daughter Elizabeth, had come down from Menomonee Falls to help them. After dinner, Julia insisted we shouldn’t go to a motel, they could put us up. I can still remember, 50 years later, Uncle Phil saying flatly, “where will they sleep?” We ended up sleeping two in a twin bed, with Phil in the other twin! On the way home, we got a motel near Gary – there were trains at the back of s all night long going in and out of Chicago and big trucks on highway at the front going all night also. Absolutely not possible to sleep!

From that time on, I made all arrangements and reservations for our trips! I know that as John got older, he felt I was bossy – but there was a vacuum that had to be filled!

We had many good trips – several to nursery conventions in Boston and Washington D.C. While Harold attended meetings, the boys and I would see the sights. In Washington I sent for attendance tickets to the Senate and was shocked to see so few senators there. There was an Ohio senator speaking and others all chatted and moved around – they couldn’t be paying any attention to him. So much for democracy! In our tour of the White House I was surprised to see the covers on dining room chairs were shabby and worn. I guess Mrs. Kennedy found a lot to be done when she moved in!

We went on many trips to northern Ontario with Eloise and Jack and the children. Happy memories for us all. One summer, we rented cottages at Kennebunkport. One summer, we rented cottages a Kennebunkport. One evening Steve came running home, aghast, Aunt Eloise was “skinny dipping.”

When the Montreal Expo was on, I had a note from Elinor Munro who had been at the telephone company with me and was now living in Montreal. She said we should not try to get rooms – they would put us up – she was setting up a schedule of visits! So, we went – after a few days we went on to Ottawa and stayed with our forever friends, Helen and Ray. Then we moved on to Severn Falls to a cottage with Florence Markle Dulmage. I was a little leery of taking two boys to people’s homes, but it all worked out well and enjoyably.

My mother had kept in touch with their families in England. Her niece, Evelyn, came for a visit and Aunt Florrie went over and stayed with her, but Mother and Dad never went. Harold and I decided to go to England. Of course, we couldn’t go until November when the “season” was

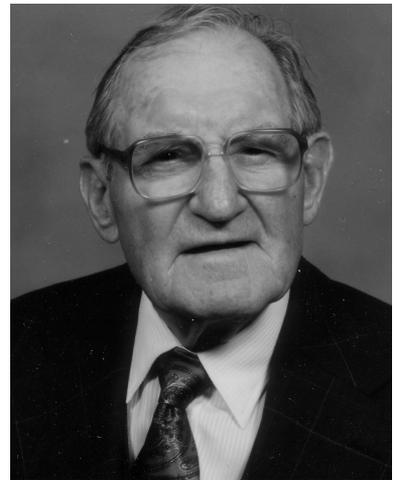
over at the nursery. We had a delightful time – rented a car, which Harold, thankfully, drove on the “wrong side”. We went to Oxford and Stonehenge (we were able to walk among the stones, which was not possible in later years). We visited my Mother’s family in Littleborough, staying with Evelyn. We were most interested in meeting our cousins and seeing their lovely homes. They had a family gathering for us, much wonderful food, including English trifle. We had a couple of days with my Dad’s family in Crewe – stayed with my cousin Joyce and her family. There again they had a family gathering for us. All were most cordial and it was a nice break from hotels to stay in homes. We went on to York and had Thanksgiving dinner in Edinburgh. There were some American students in the dining room, so we felt we had kindred spirits. I always wanted to try “haggis” that I’d read about in books.

We had a few days in London and Bath that were wonderful, seeing things you’ve read about for years. We were impressed by the gorgeous cathedrals with their carved wooden choir stalls. When we saw the “Crystal Cathedral” later in California it seemed a travesty. All in all, the whole England experience was great!

Because Harold couldn’t get away earlier in the year, I got the bright idea my cousin Grace and I should go to England in September when the great castles were on view. We touched with the families, as Harold and I had done – went to Stratford and Oxford and Bleuheim Castles and the Lake Country – then down to Bath. When I was checking out at Bath I found I’d left my credit card in the Lake Country. Fortunately, we had enough money between us to pay for our hotel, but I made up my mind then I wouldn’t go on a trip like that without Harold. It was hard for me to drive there, I had a few car problems, windshield wipers were spasmodic and it rained every day. When we first got to London after a night flight from Toronto, we couldn’t get into our hotel until later – how we wanted to just lie down! However, we went to church at Westminster Abbey while we waited! In London, we saw the play “Chorus Line” which has become my favorite. I got to see it whenever it is in my area.

When we started to winter in California, that took up our travel money. Harold and I went to England again, spent a few days driving to cousins, then a week long bus trip to Cornwall and that part of England we hadn’t seen.

I told about the lovely trip we had to Switzerland and Austria with Jack and Eloise. Harold and I had previously gone on a Switzerland trip sponsored by John’s school, Case Western Reserve University. It was wonderful; we stayed in a gorgeous ski lodge in the mountains (out of season) and went on side trips as we wanted. So, our foreign travel was very good. When Harold got to be 80 plus, he said he didn’t want to go out of the country again. We had many trips across the USA, both north and south, and really enjoyed seeing the country, which is as beautiful as any other place we’ve been. When my Mother was with us, we didn’t take vacations. After she died, we were able to take three weeks to catch up. I had always wanted to see the Canadian Rockies, so we were able to make that trip to Banff, Lake Louise, Victoria, and San Francisco – a very memorable outing.



In Defense of Faith

I have read some articles about prayer and man's relationship to God that seems very logical. They say it is beyond belief that God, who controls the magic of the universe, could possibly be aware of each believer's entreaties. Even the Bible says, in Psalms, "when I consider thy heavens, the moon and the stars, which thou has ordained, what is man, that thou art mindful of him". However, the Bible also says "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen".

When I consider my life, there comes a realization that there was an underlying thread of events that have lead to good, satisfying years. I believe that God has been my guide in all essential phases of my life, education, work, friendship, love and marriage, children and family, health, and not wealth but more than adequate prosperity, and finally, death of loved ones. An unfolding of events that, in most cases, was not as I hoped and prayed for.

I have lived all my life in homes where there was no support for my lifelong urge to be part of religion as expressed in churches. My desire has not been derided. I actually have not had to defend my faith; but I have had to defend it to myself.

Many of these thoughts have been expressed in earlier narratives, but this is a recap of events that have evolved in different ways than I would have planned. Perhaps this happens in every life. I can only feel that my faith has been supported at every turn.

My family did not attend any church by the time I was aware of such things, although I had been christened as a baby in the Presbyterian church. It may have been losing their lovely 11-month old daughter to diphtheria was the last straw of hardships that turned them away from religion. It was never analyzed in my hearing.

I always went to a local Sunday school that changed as we frequently moved. When I was going to High School, I have told of meeting and walking with three girls who became my lifelong friends, Clara Smith, Helen Cronsberry and Joan Cornford. They all went to Sunday school at a big downtown evangelical church. After much persuasion, I finally went with them. Clara Smith's family lived two streets away and I rode to church with them. Many times I stayed at their home for Sunday dinner. Clara had three younger brothers and wonderful parents – they became my second family, there always seemed to be fun and activity at their house. The Sunday school class was a group of great girls; we stayed together through many of our teen years and into adulthood. The teacher, Mabel Penhall, was a fine, intelligent person. she taught from the New Testament and made the teachings very real and applicable to daily life.

In High school I was a shy, homely, 12-year old in a group of mostly 14-year olds, many of whom had been together most of their public school years. I never dated anyone in school, although there was a red-headed boy (shades of Charley Brown) named Russell Wray I would

certainly have liked. However, I enjoyed school, happy to be learning languages and math, like my big brother. (He was out of high school by the time I was there, but he could help me with homework.)

Those teen years were during the Depression. No one had money or cars - the grim business of providing food and shelter were my parents' responsibility. I was not involved, other than earning spending money by baby-sitting. My Father was a builder, which industry became almost non-existent at that time. They lost their home and had to move into an apartment they got for doing janitor duties. Their apartment was owned by Clara Smith's uncle, so my connection with the Christian Smith family was a factor there (and God's leading!)

When I finished high school, my friends went to Business College for \$20.00 a month. There was no money for that and I went to the public commercial high school that offered a special secretarial course for high school graduates. When I completed this, I tried all summer to get a job - most places were not even taking applications. By September I went back to the commercial school to keep up my skills. All these months I was praying for a job, a very urgent need.

In November, a friend told my Mother that she had heard the Bell Telephone Co. was hiring operators. I certainly didn't want that job, but I applied and was hired. What a disappointment! (thought I was a skilled secretary!) Didn't you hear me, God? I have written about winning first place in the special course. My picture was in the paper along with other winners in different courses. The telephone company management saw it and moved me to the stenographic department - just what I had been wanting for months! The telephone company was a choice place to work and I spent ten happy years there. This was perhaps my first realization that my ideas were not God's and I had to wait on Him - a situation many times repeated in my life.

For many years I was involved in the evangelical Baptist church -- went to church, Sunday school and Young Peoples. However, I never joined that church - my 'unreligious' home life prevented me from espousing many of the ideas presented by ministers and traveling evangelists. But I was very happy with the friends and activities I was a part of. I have told about dating Bob Wade (and his car) along with Helen and Joan and their dates. By this time, many couples were forming - Clara was dating her witty Jim Tierney - but there wasn't any one I was interested in. I would have liked to have a special boy friend - which didn't happen.

I have told about my friendship with one of the girls at Young Peoples. Helen Bakody. She and her two older sisters ran a market gardening farm in Burlington after their parents died. One summer her cousin, Eloise Metzger, from Youngstown, Ohio came to stay with them. She joined in the activities at church and I got to know her. I spent some weekends at the Bakody home. Eloise was an 'effervescent' girl who really sparked the life of the three Bakody sisters who worked hard at their farm and marketing their specialty produce -- celery and strawberries, on the Hamilton market three days a week. She seemed to make everything 'fun'. I enjoyed her and we seemed to develop a special 'rapport'.

The next year Eloise invited me to spend my vacation at her home in Youngstown. Our good friendship continued. Her two older brothers, Harold and David, were still living at home. They had a landscape business and seemed very handsome and 'outdoorsy' in their work clothes. At that time, they wore a type of jodhpur britches and high boots - looked like movie stars to me,

compared to the office people I worked with. This was their busy season and I saw them only at dinner time.

I have told of the progress of Harold and my courtship that developed a couple of years later - very long distance between Hamilton and Youngstown. We planned to be married in the fall of 1942 when the busy season at the business was over. Harold was drafted into the army; we got married, but it was three wartime years before we started our life together in Youngstown. We had 56 good years together. I don't think I could have found any one easier to be with. We both had the same pleasures in home and family. This had certainly not been in my thinking of a possible husband, and I have to feel that God was a factor in the many happenings that led to a Canadian meeting an American and 'living happily ever after'.

I have written about our desire for a family not happening in spite of years of fervent prayer and doctoring for sterility in 1950. We finally were able to adopt a fine, healthy, 2-month old boy through the County Welfare. Fortunately, Harold and I were of a like mind about adoption. In the next few years we twice thought we were getting a chance to adopt another child. In each case I felt it was God's hand at work because of the source of information, but it didn't happen. After the last disappointment, I miraculously (!!) found I was pregnant - after being married for 14 years! A lot of praying, but, again, not what I thought should happen when I wanted it.

We have had so much pleasure from our older son coming to California, and in his wife and three children. Steve also came to California, married a great girl and had a little girl. Both eventually moved to San Diego, where we could winter for many years enjoying the family together. Even I could not have prayed for such an outcome for our family. It seemed that God was with us every step of the way.

I have told of my parents growing too old to continue in their own home in Hamilton. They had always come for Christmas at our place. We again drove up and brought them down for Christmas 1968. My Dad was 84, had chronic emphysema. He caught a cold and developed pneumonia and died at our home January 4. He had been anxious to get back to their own place, although Mother was no longer able to keep going. He would have been unhappy living with us, God intervened and we didn't have to work that problem out.

My Mother was very content to live with us. She was 87, with problems that age brings very painful vertebrae disintegration in her back. I had a nurse come in three times a week to bathe her and dress a leg ulcer that never healed. I was waking up in the night and wondering how long we could care for her - I couldn't think of putting her in a nursing home. In August 1970 she died in her sleep - surely God's mercy again!

We continued to enjoy our home in Canfield and wintered in rented condos in Solana Beach. In the summer of 1995, Harold said "We have to sell our house"- the yard work was too much for him (He was 88). We had a beautiful yard and flowers that kept him occupied at work he loved. I didn't want to give up our home - thought we could get yard help. But, one day that summer Harold came back from a trip to the barber a few miles away where he had been going for years. He said I got lost coming home! Wow! What a blow! Thoughts of Alzheimer's immediately in my mind! Soon afterward he started falling during his daily walks. Tests in hospital showed nothing tangible. However, in September we put the house up for sale and it was sold in October. I flew out to California to find a condo to rent. There was one on the golf

course at Solana Beach Country Club that was just being finished from a complete overhaul. It was perfect for us - bright and cheerful in a lovely setting.

We could only feel God's continuing to lead us through the problems old age was bringing.

We continued to enjoy good health. Harold had no more falls after we came to California. We had pleasant walks every day by the golf course or at the beach, when low tide permitted. Harold was 91 in July 1998. He seemed to have more occasions of confusion and I was uneasy about him. When I got up September 1, I found him on the floor in his room, unable to move. I called John, who was there in two minutes and called 911. He was taken to Scripps hospital. He had had a massive stroke - couldn't speak, no movement in right side. We had both previously signed the authority to limit intervention. He was diagnosed as terminal and all health measures except IV were stopped. He lived only four days - had wonderful care - some one in the family was with him all the time.

We had cemetery lots in Youngstown where his family were buried. His ashes were buried there and we had a memorial service in the cemetery chapel. Many friends and neighbors and family joined us for the service and afterward at Harold's sister's beautiful garden. A very warm sendoff for a wonderful husband and father.

So many of our friends are coping with sad problems of Parkinson's disease. When I'd pray for them, I would pray that Harold and I would have the strength and courage to cope with whatever would be our lot as we aged. I had to feel grateful that Harold had come to the end of his long life without months or years of incapacity and suffering. Thank you, God.

Now, I'm 82 and do not know what is ahead for me, but I can calmly rely on God to strengthen me for whatever comes my way - as He has so wonderfully all the years of my life.

Interjections About Love

In this time, when parents end a telephone call with their children with “Love You” and Leo Berscoglia makes a living on television and books telling everyone to tell everyone “I love you” and give them a big hug, I look back on my life and think “what did I miss?” My parents were English and I can say I never heard them say to each other or to my brother and me “I love you”. My Mother said of the first time she saw my father “I’m going to marry him.” And they were marred, but she never told of their courtship, did she “chase him” or did he “chase her” – I haven’t a clue.

I do remember when I was getting big, 4 or 5 or more, crawling on Mother’s lap while she sat in a big rocking chair we had and rocking and singing to me. I don’t remember what she sang, some must have been Methodist hymns she knew all her life. When they are sung in church to this day, I have a warm feeling of family. My Father never “laid a hand” on either my brother or me. When we did something stupid, he’d get a stern look on his face and say “What did you do that for”. Amazingly this ability he had was still effective with my children. That was love.

My brother was a mild person, never given to anger. He was 6 years older than I and while we played together a little and read the funnies in bed on Sunday morning, we had little relationship until I got into High School and needed his help on Latin and Geometry. He played the violin and this was a big incentive for me when learning to play the piano, to be able to play accompaniments with him. We enjoyed together the early radio shows with Bing Crosby, Russ Columbo and the big bands. He taught me to dance, as it was done in those days — cheek to cheek, “slow” dancing. He worked in a bank. In Depression era, they were not allowed to marry until they were making a certain wage (probably a defense against desperation and theft) so he and his pretty girl friend, Mary Cross, dated for years. They finally “had to” get married in the depth of the depression. Bill suggested they live with us. My Dad hadn’t worked for 2 years and they badly needed Bill’s board, but my Father vetoed that idea saying “No house is big enough for two women”. That is love. I accidentally found out that they were married later than Bill had said (Mary was pregnant). I was 18 at the time and was completely crushed that my brother whom I adored, was so human.

I always hoped I’d marry someone like my brother, we had such mutual enjoyments. After Harold and I were married, and Harold away in the Army, Bill enlisted in the Canadian Air Force in 1942 and was trained as a navigator. His wife was resentful that he went voluntarily without being drafted. When his plane was shot down in March, 1945, just 2 months before the war ended, I was devastated – that was the biggest loss I suffered in my entire life, to date. My parents were never the same people after that – something had gone out of them. That was love. Many years later, after Dad died at home in Canfield of pneumonia at age 84 Mother lived with us for a year and a half. One day, John (our adopted son), then in college, said “when you and Dad get old, we’ll look after you like you looked after Grandma.” That is love. When

my 13 year old grandson says, in a sweet loving voice, "Thank you Grandma" as I drop him off after picking him up at school – that is love.

I have many more things to say about family love, friendship love, marital love, parental love, but basically I feel we say "I love you" by our actions, not by our words. So, I'm not a "love you" and hugging person, I have lived my life surrounded by love and don't feel I've missed the casual hugs and "love yous".

Family Evolution

Over my 80 Years

Our parent's parents had many children – seven in my Dad's family, five in my Mother's. In most cases that was an accepted way of life, whether you could "afford" them or not. My parent's generation usually didn't accept this pattern. My parents had four children – two died as infants and they decided not to have more (How? My Mother never discussed it). Harold's parents had 9 children.

After many families were interrupted by WWII, there was a "boom" in families as homes were made in the suburbs and the 50's were a hive for families, and little league and cub scouts. Mostly mothers didn't work outside the house. The family seemed a unit, with parents and children mingling. Many parents striving to send children to college. After which they often moved out of the family area.

When girls got college degrees and got into career jobs, the family unit changed. Both parents working, children became a problem and day care and nannies and many arrangements were set up for fewer children in the family. How these children will work out their family problems is not yet known – it will be interesting to see it evolve.

Even when we were children, it was still the old adage "children seen and not heard." In my case, my builder/father built and sold our houses and we moved frequently. Where we would go to school wasn't a factor. While our children became busy with structured activities, they were still very much part of the family. Then, the children people did have become important and in some cases dominant. When my son was recently transferred to Sacramento, their home location was determined by choice of school district for their only daughter, age 14.

It is hard to believe such vital change has occurred in my lifetime. I was shocked to see the picture hailed as "best picture" American Beauty, which was an ugly picture of a dysfunctional family. I'm glad I'm as old as I am. Now as parents age and retire, many move to where their children live (especially if it is San Diego). So we have come full circle.

