

**THE HISTORY OF
GEORGE KROELL, 1843-1925
AND
MARY JENNETT KROELL, 1844-1916
AND
THEIR DESCENDENTS, 1868-1996**

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WORD *Z*XPRESSED
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FRANCES KROELL HAILE: My name is Frances Kroell Haile. The date is February 25th, 1996. My niece, Patty Talley DeBardleben, daughter of my sister Dionetta, recently urged me once again to make a record of my knowledge of the Kroell family history so that anyone who might like to have that information, especially at some distant future time, would have ready access to it. Much of what I say will be known to others, but, since only 3 of my parent's 11 children are still living, it does seem important to make this record now. I will be as objective as possible, but, in matters in which I was personally involved, I cannot help being subjective.

Much of what I remember about this history was told to me by my mother and older sisters and others. To this, I have added facts based on my own research and experiences through the years. My father's family, to my knowledge, were not inclined to talk much about their forbears. Perhaps this was because of the hatred of Germans after WWI plus America's increasing distrust or dislike of immigrants in general as the years went by.

I know that I will have to rattle a few skeletons, for which I may be criticized, but, if I wish to present a true picture, that can't be avoided. In the weeks of unending hours of this preparation, I have had to recopy, annotate, add, and subtract countless times, so if I sometimes seem to be lost, I'm just searching for a clue. You will find that

I tend to be long-winded. So, as you begin to read and listen, do get comfortable.

My paternal grandparents were George -- I am not sure of his middle name -- Kroell, and Mary Jennett Kroell. Her maiden name is spelled J-e-n-n-e-t-t.

Grandpa came from Mierhofen, M-i-e-r-h-o-f-e-n, sometimes spelled M-a-y-r-h-o-f-e-n, a village about 100 miles east of Innsbrook in the beautiful Tyrol Mountain range of Austria. I had the pleasure of visiting the village in the 1970s when my husband, Michael, took me there to research my Kroell roots. When I went to the local priest to ask information from his records there, it was difficult for us to communicate because he knew no English and my German was elementary, but we managed. I know nothing of Grandfather's mother, but think her maiden name may have been Kiefer. (You will see why as I go along.)

The priest said he found the record of the birth of Grandpa's sister, Anna, in 1841. Grandpa's was not there, maybe because he was born near there and the birth was recorded in another church. Grandpa's father, Kaiden, who was called "Big Kaiden," pronounced Keyeden in Germany, was a successful restaurant owner. There were only two children, which was unusual for a Catholic family, but perhaps his mother had died. In German, Kroell is spelled K-r-o-l-l with an umlaut (i.e. two dots over the o), and it is pronounced Kroll (there is no way I can spell the way it

is pronounced.) You purse your lips and say Kroell.

When I told the priest that I was researching the family of my Grandfather Kroell, he said that was a very common name there, something like Smith or Jones, I assume - - I gathered. Actually, the owner of the elegant inn where we stayed, Herr Moigg, said his mother was a Kroll, but I knew enough by that time to not try to establish relationship with everybody I met who had that name.

Let me digress here to say that before we left for Austria, I happened to read in the paper here about a young ski instructor from Austria who had been working at Sky Valley, Georgia's only ski resort, near the Tennessee boarder, but who was leaving in two days to return home. His name was Wilhelm Kroell (nicknamed "Willy"). Michael and I rushed up there, found him to be a very personable, outgoing, medium tall, and blond young fellow. He was also an accomplished musician, playing the accordion and singing; was also a professional yodeler, all of which we got to hear at a concert that night. He was from Ginsling, G-i-n-s-l-i-n-g, near Mierhofen, believe it or not. He gave me his address and phone number and came to see me in Mierhofen.

I had taken along some old postcard-sized pictures of Grandpa's kin, which I happened to have, and Willy said he thought an old man in one of the pictures had often visited in his home when he was small. I didn't know who any of them were, but Willy and I both felt we had some family

connection. However, his mother was so opposed to his ever returning to America that she didn't even want him to come to Mierhofen to see me, refused to give him any information she might have had. She, a widow, owned a shop, and as her only son, she wanted him there.

Well, back to the priest: He asked me whether I knew Anna's married name. When I said "Wegselberger," he said there were almost as many Wegselbergers as Krolls in Mierhofen.

Hold the phone. I have just discovered some old notes I took in Mierhofen. Grandpa was born April the 23rd, 1843; his sister, Anna, in 1846. So the date the priest had given me for Grandpa's sister had to be for another Anna Kroll. It also explained why he evidently didn't look carefully enough for Grandpa's birth date. Grandpa's mother was Maria Geisler, G-e-i-s-l-e-r, daughter of Jacob Geisler, a farmer. These notes also confirm that Grandpa died in 1925, at 82.

Also in those notes, I had written down how to ask for a seat on a bus in German: "Danke für ein sitzplatz." Don't you love it.

Oddly, one of the first signs I noticed on the main street read: "Ana Wegselberger, Ladies Millinery."

In Grandpa's day, the law required that every able-bodied man of 18 had to serve at least two years in the military. This was strictly enforced, but there was an "out". If you had the means to pay somebody to serve in

your place, you could do so, and there was no stigma attached. That was what Grandpa's father was able to do for his only son. I was always told that Grandpa came to America when he was 16; if so, perhaps Big Kaiden just wanted his son to be sure to get to America and not get caught up in the terrible German war machine of the time.

There was a story in the family that when Grandpa arrived at Ellis Island not knowing a word of English, he asked a fellow immigrant how to say "Good day" in English because he wanted to make a good impression. For whatever reason, the man told him to say "God damn." So, when Grandpa approached the first official, he doffed his cap, bowed low and said the magic words. I can just imagine how well that was received.

Back to the priest for a moment: There was to be a wedding in the courtyard of the church that day in which all the wedding party, including relatives, were wearing traditional attire. He invited me to attend, which, of course, I did. All the men wore liederhosen and the short pants with embroidered bib and suspenders, short sleeved white shirts, and they wore pointed hats with the feather. The women wore dirndls, embroidered white puffed sleeved, low-necked blouses, low-heeled black slippers, and their hair in braids whenever possible.

They came down from the surrounding hills on foot in a group by two's and three's, so you got to see them all. It

was wonderful. We were invited to the party at the inn afterward. We went and enjoyed the beautiful music and watching the dancing, some of which was traditional folk dances.

When I took leave of the priest, he presented me with a sprig of edelweis, which was in a glass of water on his desk. I have it still, but, of course, it is no longer white, though still velvety. His kindness reminded me of Grandpa's courtliness. When I think of Grandpa, I think of how he looked and what he wore. He was rather tall, and fairly stout, had a white German-style mustache, like the Kaiser, had a full head of white hair. He continued to wear the traditional clothing of his homeland: handsome black alpaca suits with a vest and jacket of unusual styling. On cold days, he wore a full-length black heavy wool cape with a turned-up collar. He walked with a cane though he was still quite erect. He smoked fine Havana cigars constantly, or chewed on one. His voice was husky, and he had a slight smokers cough -- no wonder. He was not the kind of Grandpa you would run to and hug or climb on his knee uninvited, but I remember him as a very kind, calm, peaceful man not inclined to lose his temper easily, the opposite of Grandma in that respect.

He was, as you might say, "addicted" to the movies, had his own seat on the aisle in the back of the small local theater where he would slip in and out unobtrusively every

time the feature changed. It was known as "Mr. Kroell's seat," and no one else ever sat in it, even when he didn't come. He got along well with everyone, but was no namby-pamby. As you will see, he was a very astute business man. I forgot to say that he spoke with a very thick German accent.

Let's go back to his arrival. It was rumored that he got as far west as Chicago. I have just received information that he went first to Pennsylvania and worked in the mines. Eventually, he came south where he worked in a big bituminous coal mine near the little town of Aldrich, Alabama. At Aldrich is where Grandpa met Grandma's uncles who were miners and had worked in mines in Ireland. Through them, he met Grandma, courted her, and they married, probably in the middle 1860s. They had four sons: Frank, born 1868; Patrick, my father, born 1870; John, 1872; and George, Jr., born 1875, died 1878.

Mama said there was another Patrick, but he died, and then when Papa came, they decided to name him Patrick, too. He was named for Grandma's father, Patrick Jennett. They also had two daughters: Mary, the elder, and Kate, the baby of the family and the one we all remember as being the most fun; even my children do. I don't know their birth dates, but I think Aunt Mary was considerably older than Aunt Kate. They both lived, I think, to be in their 70s and 80s, respectively. I attended both their funerals when I was

grown, but, as I recall, their ages were kept secret when they were living.

Before I discuss Grandpa's children's lives, I will go back and pick up Grandma's early history. Grandma Kroell's parents, Patrick Jennett and Anne King, were married in County Wicklow, Ireland in 1842. Their first child, my Grandmother, named Mary, was born Christmas day, 1844. As an aside here, I will say that my husband, Michael, also took me to Ireland in the '70s to find my Irish roots. I had the pleasure of finding the above two dates and happenings in the records of St. Mary's and St. Patrick's Church in the village of Avoca, County Wicklow. I will tell you how I knew to go to Avoca.

Michael and I went first to Dublin Castle, where the genealogical records were kept; what an impressive place it was. It was apparent that they were accustomed to having Americans come to search for their ancestors. A nice gentleman was assigned to assist me and the first whole day we searched through all kinds of records: ships' sailing dates; along with passenger lists, both steerage and otherwise; records of deeds of every kind; property sales and transfers; Irish history books -- all to no avail.

The next day my helper enlisted the aid of the top official, the chief scribe himself, a kind and very knowledgeable older gentleman, and it was he who found in an obscure book that the family came from Avoca, spelled A-v-o-

c-a. I will add here that Michael lasted about an hour in the search process and left to check out some of those famous Irish pubs where the camaraderie and liquid refreshment are in great supply. I didn't blame him, because they weren't his kin we were looking for. We left the next day by bus for Avoca. He would never drive on the left side for fear of having an accident.

Avoca was a pretty village with a river running through it. The outstanding structure there was the huge grey stone church I mentioned above, and there were small, cottage-type industries that I visited, including one where they made beautiful hand-woven bedspreads, tablecloths, and linens of all kinds. The thatched-roof cottages, differing only in size, were clustered in the town and scattered through the valley, usually with the front doors open and, likely as not, chicken and pig pens in the back. There was an old cemetery, but it was neglected and overgrown. I was advised not to go there, a disappointment because it would have been a valuable source of information, too.

Everywhere we went in Ireland, including to Waterford to see the famous crystal being made, we were received with the utmost kindness and courtesy, with one exception: While walking in the garden of a hotel in Killarny one evening, I was talking to Michael, and a young man walking by turned to me and said, "What do you know about anything, Honky?" and walked on by. I guess he recognized my southern accent and

perhaps was a rabid fan of the civil rights movement, equating it with the IRA.

Back to Grandma: The whole family just picked up and left sometime after the dreadful potato famine, which occurred in the late 1840s. They apparently left around 18 -- the middle 1850s -- the whole family, aunts and uncles and possibly grandparents, if there were any left. They disembarked at Mobile, which is why they were already established in Alabama when Grandpa arrived there. They included mother and father, three daughters: Mary, the oldest at 17; and two little boys, Christopher and Edward.

Edward, probably the baby, who died on the way, was wrapped in a sheet and buried at sea. Christopher is buried in the old Kroell family cemetery at home, as are Patrick and Anne Jennett; he in 1890, Anne in 1902. Christopher's death is not visible because the grave had sunk too low when I happened to take down these dates years ago.

Incidentally, a second cousin of mine, Annie Gallagher, who lived in Birmingham, gave me the following information years ago:

1. Patrick Jennett, J-e-n-n-e-t-t, Grandma's father, was said to have been of the nobility, the landed gentry, and Anne King, Grandma's mother, was a house maid employed by his family. The Jennetts, of course, disapproved strongly of the marriage in those days of rigid caste systems. According to Annie, Anne King's people came

originally from France.

2. According to Annie, Grandma's parents had 11 children; some born in Ireland and some in America. She gave me the following names: Christina, called Senie, S-e-n-i-e; Mary; Ann; Sallie, who was Annie Gallagher's mother; Lucy, born 1865; Christopher; Edward; Patrick; Samuel; Katherine, called Kate; and Margaret, called Meg. I know that Christopher was born in Ireland in 1848, Christina and Samuel in Alabama. An odd thing about their births, according to my records taken from their tombstones, Christina was born September the 5th, 1855, and Samuel September 4th, 1855. Could they have been twins born a day apart?

3. According to Annie Gallagher, also, both Katherine and Margaret married Yankee soldiers. Katherine, to a Tom Courtney and moved to California. Margaret, to a French-Canadian named H-o-u-d-e, moved to Anacortes, Washington State.

4. According to Annie, also, the father came first, going to New Orleans, and the family came later. But I didn't get that from anyone else.

From the church records, I noticed that Anne King, Grandma's mother, also had a brother named Patrick -- I don't know how they kept them all straight. Incidentally, I found that the Jennett name was sometimes spelled G-e-n-n-e-t-t, or even G-e-n-e-t, the latter giving it a possible

French connection. I even tried to pursue that clue with no success. It was probably just a case of poor spelling on the part of the record keepers. Genealogy can be a very demanding hobby, as I found out when the "bug" bit me, but it is certainly fun.

Grandma Kroell died of Bright's disease in 1916, at age 72. I was four, and I'm sorry that the only memory I have of her was of being required to stand on a little stool placed beside her casket so I could look in and tell her good-bye, a custom in the family. It was also the custom to kiss the deceased, but if I was required to do that, I must have erased it from my young mind as soon as possible. The only professional photo I ever saw of her showed the face of a desperately unhappy older woman. I was struck by that because people try to smile when posing. I suspect she didn't smile much, but some of the events that I relate will make that understandable.

She was known to be very hard to get along with, had a violent temper and ruled her family with a will of iron. Perhaps that explains why Grandpa always left the house right after breakfast at 6:00 a.m., and could be seen sitting on a bench in front of the store, surrounded by the cats kept there to keep mice away.

There he greeted passersby until time to open the store. There is a story of a neighbor coming by one day and noting that Grandpa appeared upset, asked, "Mr. Kroell, are

you all right?" To which Grandpa replied, "Ach du lieber, Mein Gott, dot vife of mine vill be mein death yet." It was so unusual for him to ever say anything against Grandma that the man repeated it. Maybe she had given Grandpa one of her famous tongue-lashings before he left home.

I would like to pause here and describe Grandpa's house. He and Grandma must have managed his mining earnings well, for after some years of being in Aldrich, they moved to Montevallo, about two miles away, where he built a beautiful Victorian ^{three-story} ~~two-story~~ home, painted in unusual dark red, with turrets and cupolas, two encircling porches, lots of gingerbread carvings, beautiful stained glass front window and front door.

Inside were many handsome touches, such as dark paneling, formal patterned wallpaper, mahogany furniture -- huge beds, I remember. I believe there were four or five bedrooms. I usually didn't get beyond the living room, dining room, and front hall. I know there was a full bath upstairs. One bedroom was downstairs, Grandpa's room -- later Aunt Mary's. And I feel sure there was a bathroom there, also. I remember, especially, a beautiful Tiffany lamp that sat on a table in the entrance hall. I was always fascinated by the pictures that were on the walls as you mounted the stairs. The kitchen, as I recall, was big and furnished well with the types of kitchen equipment used at the time, including a big wood stove. It just occurred

to me that perhaps Grandpa received an inheritance from Big Kaiden, which could have helped in making that home a reality. In any case, it was a showplace.

The property was sold many years later after the aunts died and Louie inherited; it was sold to Alabama Power Company. The house was dismantled, I believe; it was sold piecemeal to eager buyers, so it still lives, so to speak, in many reincarnations. It was replaced by a horrid glass and steel modern monstrosity built by Alabama Power -- makes me wince to think of it. I am glad that I have happy memories of it.

Aunt Mary and Aunt Kate did all the work and were excellent cooks. I remember, especially, Aunt Kate's good fried chicken. They were two hospitable and most kind ladies.

Grandpa remained in charge of the store, at least technically, until he died; but Papa, the bookkeeper, assumed more and more of the responsibility for the business. I simply have to describe that marvelous store. You could buy almost anything there from a two-horse wagon to farm implements, grain to plant, tools of every kind, lumber, roofing, paints, clothing, hats and shoes for men, women and children, fabrics and sewing needs, toiletries, household needs, well everything but groceries.

There was always a big round of aged hoop cheese with its handy slicing knife, and nearby a barrel of the best

dill pickles with a fork to spear them, also a cabinet with glass-front compartments holding bulk soda crackers and cookies. Of course, there was also a glass candy case. Blanche Kroell, Hugh's widow, told me that they also sold bananas. I don't know why I didn't remember that.

The wooden floors of the store were kept spotlessly clean and very lightly oiled. The high windows let in light, but it usually was cool inside in summer. Of course, there were big plate-glass windows in front. Near the back of the store before you entered the huge storage area, was the office where Papa perched on a high stool at his tall desk, just like Bob Cratchett's in the "Christmas Carol." Grandpa's desk was a regular roll-top one.

The office was set off from store traffic by a low railing which contained a gate for entrance, and just across from the office was a huge potbellied stove where in winter you were sure to find a bunch of idle farmers in their overhauls, as they called them, laughing and talking and, likely as not, spitting tobacco juice at the red-hot stove, the liquid dissolving with a hiss. We children were not encouraged to hang around the store, but at inventory time were pressed into service. I remember well that my job as a young child was to count all the nails and screws of every size, each in its own drawer in a handsome, tall, wooden cabinet. I thought it was Purgatory.

Back to the shoes: If there were some that didn't

sell, Papa brought them home, and we had to wear them whether they fitted properly or not and whether we liked them or not. There is a snapshot of me wearing a party dress and high-topped, tan tennis shoes. No wonder so many of us had bad feet, including me.

Now for Grandpa's children: Uncle Frank, born 1868. Grandpa also owned a livery stable where horses were boarded and the horses, buggies, and surreys that he owned were available for hire, a profitable business at a time when the only means of transportation were horses or trains. Uncle Frank was put in charge of the livery. There was a Mr. Carey, who owed him a big livery bill but for some reason refused to pay it. He and Frank argued about it in front of Grandpa's house, which was on the main street of the town, as were the store and livery.

Mr. Carey announced that he was going home to get his gun and kill Uncle Frank, and he left. Uncle Frank, no slouch in the temper department himself, went in the house and over Grandma's frantic entreaties, got his pistol. Mr. Carey returned, they met in the middle of the street, both fired, and Uncle Frank killed Mr. Carey.

He was taken to the county seat, Columbiana, and jailed. At the trial, no one outside the family would testify that Mr. Carey had threatened to kill Uncle Frank, though there were witnesses who heard and saw it all. The jury of men from Montevallo, convicted him and sentenced him

to life in prison. I assume he was transferred to Kilby, a large prison near Montgomery. I don't know how long he was in prison, but he couldn't bear the thought of a lifetime there, and he killed himself by dashing his head against the wall, dying a horrible death.

A lot of people in Montevallo resented the fact that a foreigner had come there and prospered, especially a Catholic foreigner, for God's sake. I feel sure, in my own mind, that the good Baptists who ran the town were all on the side of Mr. Carey. Though Grandpa was highly respected -- there was no way he couldn't be -- Papa frequently had run-ins with fellow business associates, and maybe Uncle Frank had crossed the wrong people, too. Anyway, the whole thing was so very tragic. I firmly believe that if it had happened today and there was an unbiased jury, he wouldn't have gone to prison at all, certainly not for life.

Back to the religion aspect: We were the only Catholics in town, other than a couple on the faculty of the college -- that is when I was there. There was one Seventh Day Adventist and two Jewish families; they were considered even stranger than we were. My mother was Methodist, and under the rules of the Catholic church at that time, in order to marry Papa, she had to give up her faith if she didn't embrace Catholicism, which she didn't. To my knowledge, no one in the family ever tried to help her take instructions or do anything to teach her about Catholicism.

I think that rule about marriage was incredibly wrong.

Regardless of any affiliation, Mama was the most perfect Christian I ever knew. The young Irish priests who came occasionally from Selma and Mobile to say Mass in the two households adored her. They would hit the front door, removing their clerical collars and heading straight for the kitchen where Mama was and where a feast of fried chicken and all the fixings would be waiting for them after Mass. She reminded them of home and their mothers.

I want to be sure to mention that Mama would sometimes, without Papa's knowledge, let me go with my friends to Epworth League or other Protestant children's activities for she wanted me to be exposed to other faiths. If Aunt Mary and Aunt Kate had known, they would have had conniptions. So, you see, there was bigotry on both sides. I think it is interesting to note that all the children in our family, those who survived to adulthood, except my sister Patty and me, became Baptists, Presbyterian, or Methodist, very contentedly so.

Back to Uncle Frank: Mama said that he was Grandma's favorite of all her children, and Papa, her least favorite. Uncle Frank had her disposition, and from what I knew of Papa, he did too. But, once when he was old in a rare conversation we had, I got a glimpse of a boy who loved his mother very much, but was never loved by her in return, judging by a couple of things he told me she did to him that

I thought were very cruel, not physical, but psychologically damaging. It was so unusual for him to raise that curtain of his life, and I never forgot it. It helped me to understand him a little better, something all his children desperately needed. I don't doubt that if any corporal punishment was administered to the sons in that family, it was done by her.

I don't know how old Uncle Frank was when he died, but I'm guessing 35 or so. He had never married, so there was no son of his to carry on the Kroell name.

No. 2. Patrick Jennett, my father, born 1870. He was named for Grandma's father, Patrick Jennett. Mama said that they had another Patrick, but he died as a baby. So, when Papa came, they decided to name him Patrick, too. Papa and Mama were married in 1893 and the following year their first child, Georgia, named for Grandpa, was born. They had 11 children -- you just wait 'till I get to them.

Back to Mama and Papa: He married pretty Sarah Frances Collier from Shelby Springs about 12 miles away. She had come to Montevallo to attend school, but not college because the college was not established until 1896. Incidentally, it was the first public-supported college for women in the state of Alabama. Mama's family history is fascinating, too, but this is the Kroell saga. Back to Papa's children later.

Continuing with Grandpa's children now.

No. 3. Uncle John, ^{born 1872} ~~born 1872~~. He was a "drummer," as salesmen were called then. Pictures of him show a chubby, round-faced, pleasant appearing man with a kind face. I was told that he was "bad to drink."

He was often away for long periods of time. Fortunately, Aunt Mattie, born Martha Scott, was an accomplished seamstress, and she helped greatly to support the family, both before and after Uncle John died of a ruptured appendix in his early 40s. They had four children: one daughter, Louie Kiefer -- I always thought Louie an unusual name for a girl -- three sons, Frank, John, and Hugh. Hugh was nearest my age, and we often played together. He was a handsome boy with black, curly hair and hazel eyes -- lots of fun. He taught me how to shoot slingshots and marbles. He was eight months old when Uncle John died and ten years old when Aunt Mattie died of cancer, also in her early 40s. Then there was the dilemma of what to do with the children. Louie was 15, Frank 13, John 11 and a half, Hugh 10. Aunt Mary and Aunt Kate doted on Louie, called her "Sweet Thing," so they gladly took her. They really didn't want to take a boy, but did take Frank after he ran away to a Scott uncle but returned back home. John was taken by his Uncle George Scott who lived near Alabaster, so he was not too far from Louie and Frank. That left Hugh.

I remember Mama crying and begging Papa to let her take

Hugh and raise him, but Papa said, "Fanny, we already have so many children. I just can't take on any more." (Which was true enough, God knows.) Hugh was taken, but grudgingly, by his Uncle Bob Scott who lived in Hahira, Georgia. We were always told that he was not treated well, and this was confirmed recently by Blanche, Hugh's widow. I am told that Bob Scott was indifferent to Hugh, but his wife, Pearl, was cruel and abusive, made a servant out of him, even at age 10, making him do the cooking and cleaning, humiliating him every way she could. She even deprived him of food, so that he grew up malnourished. He learned telegraphy from his uncle and became expert at it, later working for Western Union.

When he reached the age to go to college, he discovered that Bob and Pearl had squandered the inheritance left him by Grandpa Kroell, so he couldn't go. He could have sued them, but didn't. He went to business school, was a plant manager for Foremost Dairies in cities like Savannah, Atlanta, Jacksonville, finally settling in Waycross, Georgia, in a partnership in insurance and real estate.

In 1935, he married Blanche Locklier, L-o-c-k-l-i-e-r, in Homerville, Georgia. They had two children. They are Matilda Martha, called "Tilly," named after Aunt Mattie. She is 50, is married to Dr. Donald Richard Lynch, called Rick. They have two children: son Rich, 25, who graduated from UGA, the University of Georgia, and is now attending a

prestigious culinary school in Charleston, South Carolina, with aspirations to become a chef; and daughter Katherine Bailey, called Bailey, 21, a junior at Vanderbilt, but presently an exchange student for one semester at Leeds University, Leeds England. She and her brother Rich hope to take a trip together to Europe during this Easter vacation.

Hugh and Blanche's son, Hugh Scott, called Scott, age 45, is administrator of a hospital in Hinesville, Georgia. He and his wife, Diane, have two daughters: Katherine Elizabeth, 10, and Victoria Blanche, 8. Scott has had an enviable record as administrator of several hospitals.

Back to Hugh. During their residence in Waycross, Hugh contracted TB. They built an open-air room onto their house, and Blanche nursed him back to health. Hugh, born in 1911, died of prostate cancer February the 23rd, 1995. He also had advanced glaucoma and wore a hearing aid. I am indebted to Blanche for the information on their family, supplied in two very enjoyable telephone conversations recently. Blanche said Hugh was 6'3" tall, as are their son and grandson. So, there must be something in the Kroell genes to continue producing tall children. Tilly is 5'10", ^{is 5'8"} ~~as is~~ my Gretchen. Tim is 6'1"; Patty (Talley) is also tall and graceful, as was Dionetta.

Hugh's brother John was a prince of a fellow, quiet, unassuming, hard-working, and well thought of. He and Mary, a teacher, were very happy together, but had no children.

He and Hugh remained close through the years. I understand that John died of prostate cancer approximately 20 years ago and that Mary died only recently. I remember Mary as a wonderful person, too, always friendly, and she was an excellent teacher. She often visited my sister, Mamie, who was in a nursing home in Alabaster for years.

Back to Uncle John's children. Louie married Henry Ben Wood, a store manager of Troy, Alabama, and she continued to teach there many years -- I think Home Ec. They had no children. They are both in very poor health; he in a nursing home, and Louie at home. She is deaf and wheelchair-bound after a fall last year which caused a broken pelvis. She is being cared for by a devoted black woman, Geretha Jackson, and by Geretha's sister who is also devoted to Louie and helps look after her. I had a long and interesting telephone conversation with Geretha. When I hung up the phone, I felt I had known her always.

Their brother Frank "came out of the closet" after service in the Army. He went to Mobile where he got a good job with the Port Authority, bought a house, and lived with a partner or partners until his death of pneumonia, I believe. Of course, he never married, so again, no Kroell son. I don't know the date of his death.

Now, back to Grandpa's other children.

Aunt Mary married Alec Creagh, C-r-e-a-g-h, a salesman, but she would not leave Daddy, as she called Grandpa, and

except for, perhaps, a couple of years, living in Mobile with Alec, she continued to live in the Kroell home in Montevallo, where Alec would visit her from time to time. (No wonder some of us were considered strange.) He was always very well-dressed, even dapper. It was well known that he had lady friends with one of whom he lived for years, but Aunt Mary would not give him a divorce, so he divorced her and married that lady, fortunately for him because he became blind before he died, and she took care of him. Aunt Mary suffered greatly from arthritis, which may also have contributed to her tendency to look on the dark side of things, unlike Aunt Kate, but she was wonderful, nevertheless. They would work all morning cleaning and cooking, and after dinner, as the noon meal was called in the South in my time, they would get bathed and dressed and ready for callers in the afternoon, sometimes taking their ease in the front porch swing, looking as relaxed and fresh as if they had done nothing else all day.

I forgot to mention that they also usually took a nap after dinner, as did Grandpa. She and Aunt Kate had lived together so long that often one would start a sentence and the other would finish it. They also tended to talk nonstop at the same time, so a visit with them was an exhilarating experience. They each called the other "Sister." I was very fond of them though admittedly intimidated by them, and I was resentful of the fact that they looked down on "Sister

Fanny," my mother -- why I cannot imagine. Come to think of it, they looked down on Aunt Mattie, too. Maybe they just thought no one was good enough for the Kroell brothers.

Now for Aunt Kate's ill-fated romance.

Cassie Fancher was a man hired by Grandpa to work in the store, and he and Grandma were so fetched with him that they allowed him to room and board in their home. (I don't know whether this was before or after he and Aunt Kate became engaged.) But, he was the fair-haired boy, as the saying goes. However, Papa became suspicious that Cassie was stealing Grandpa blind. (Remember, Papa was the bookkeeper.) He told Grandpa of his suspicion, but Grandpa refused to believe him, so Papa set a trap for Cassie. One night, he and a young Negro man he hired as a witness watched in the darkened store as Cassie and two men loaded a two-horse wagon with farm implements, tools, paints, lumber, etc. When they started to leave, Papa, with pistol in hand, confronted them and Cassie knew the jig was up. He had a "fence" in Birmingham who had been buying in quantity from Cassie at reduced prices, but, of course, it was 100 percent profit for Cassie. Grandpa refused to prosecute; Cassie left town, went to Australia where he married, raised a family, and died. Aunt Kate never married.

Aunt Kate had spent months and months making her beautiful trousseau. I'm sure many of you know that years ago Aunt Kate gave Patty Talley those embroidered linens for

Patty's daughter Missy to have when she grew up and married. Patty, with her mother's gift for working magic with a needle, incorporated those embroidered linens into making Missy's wedding dress for her marriage last October. I get goose bumps whenever I think of it.

More about Aunt Kate. She was diabetic, but you were never aware of that fact; I mean, she didn't mention it unless someone else did. She gave herself the insulin shots, stuck to her diet, and was usually full of fun. My children remember her with much affection, as being outgoing, kind, and considerate. The Aunts figured in my life is a special way which will be recounted later. I also want to mention that Aunt Kate used henna on her hair all her life, and I thought it becoming to her, though maybe a bit much when she got older.

Now back to the children of my parents in the order of their births.

No. 1, Georgia Marie, born 1894, named for Grandpa. She was a beautiful, fair-skinned girl with thick lustrous brown hair and beautiful brown eyes. She was Mama's heart and strong right arm as she grew up, helping to care for all the other children. She was known and loved by the whole town. When she was 18 and a freshman at the college, she became very ill. The old quack of a doctor in the town -- Doctors really didn't know a great deal then, and, of course, some less than others. Anyway, he treated her for

malaria, which was the worst thing he could have done, for she had typhoid fever, caused by the water in the well at Grandpa's store. Until she became ill, no one realized that the well was contaminated, but a local boy also got typhoid from it at the same time.

Georgia became weaker and weaker, but Papa refused to spend the money to send to Birmingham for another doctor, though it was obvious that the local doctor was not helping her. He finally relented and when the other doctor examined her, he knew immediately what she had, and he said, "You have waited too long to send for me. She won't live through the night." Which she didn't. I have a beautiful studio-type portrait of her lying in her casket, which has the side let down so she appears to be sweetly sleeping on a bed. She is beautifully dressed. She died in July 1912, when I was three months old. Mama said she had the sweetest disposition and never found fault with anyone. I forgot to mention that my sister, Dionetta, gave me the picture to take care of, and I cherish it. I also forgot to mention that, if I remember correctly, Dionetta came down with typhoid after Georgia died, but they knew what to do by then, and she had a relatively light case.

Mama was so devastated by Georgia's death that she couldn't care for a three-month-old baby, so Aunt Mary and Aunt Kate kindly volunteered to care for me until Mama could do so again. They used to like to tell about taking care of

me after Georgia died, and I would get amused at their saying how much I cried. Don't know what else could have been expected of a three-month-old, especially under the circumstances, but I always appreciated their kindness at that time. They also said that they faithfully shampooed my hair with Cuticura soap, brushed and tended it so that it actually was curly. I don't know whether that brought it out, but oddly I was the only daughter who had considerable curl in her hair, a fact that my sister Patty bitterly resented. God love her.

I forgot to mention also that Grandpa also built the St. George Hotel on the main street of Montevallo, opposite the store and livery. I don't think he ever operated the hotel himself, but leased it out. It was another example of Grandpa's business genius, for there was no other hotel in town, and you could always see drummers sitting on the wide front porch. My sister Mamie was often teased about an incident that happened when she was very little: She had slipped away from Mama somehow while Mama was bathing her. She was found at the hotel, buck-naked, talking to a drummer. Mamie, the most modest person I ever knew, would hate to be reminded of this, even as an adult.

No. 2, Margaret Elizabeth, born 1896, lived only three months and died of spinal meningitis. Mama said she was the prettiest baby she had, with dark hair and "gentian blue" eyes.

No. 3, Patrick J., Jr., born 1898, lived about 18 months. Mama was in a hospital in Birmingham, and a young Negro girl who was helping to take care of him at home gave him raw Irish potato to eat; he immediately developed acute colitis and died almost at once.

No. 4, Kaiden, christened Marion Joseph Kaiden, born 1899. He was very handsome with olive skin, dark hair and eyes. He was medium tall and had very friendly ways. When he was 16, Papa sent him to a boys' school named St. Bernard College in Cullman, Alabama, which was run by an order of Catholic priests. He was an excellent student and an outstanding athlete, especially in baseball, which pleased Papa because when he was young he was offered a contract to play baseball with a professional team in Birmingham.

At 17, Kaiden was engaged to marry a Montevallo girl, Mabel Hoskins, and they planned to marry after he finished St. Bernard's. However, when he was 18, it was discovered at school that he had diabetes, and he was sent home to die. Insulin had not been discovered in 1918, so there was no treatment except a rigid diet, which Mama faithfully tried to follow, including making an unappetizing gluten bread which he hated. He had a terrible craving for sweets, would slip off to the drug store and buy ice cream and candy, gorging, and afterwards, becoming very ill. Papa even hired a little Negro boy to follow him around and tell on him when he did. And, one day after Kaiden had gorged on sweets,

Papa upbraided the little boy for letting it happen. The poor little fellow said, "Mr. Pat, you knows I can't do nothin' with Mr. Kaiden." To which Kaiden said, "I'm going to die, anyway. Why can't I have what I want to eat?"

I was only six when he died, so I don't remember much about him, but my sisters said that his hair became gray and straw-like, and his skin like parchment. He looked like an old, old man. I failed to mention that he was a real "shutterbug," took countless snapshots with his box camera, which Netta had and also passed it on to me. I still have it. There were numerous books of snapshots which he took and which, I think, he developed himself, but I'm not sure where they are.

No. 5, Dionetta Rebecca, called 'Netta. Before I say any more, I want to talk about her unusual name. My grandparents were friends in Montevallo with a Mr. and Mrs. Louie Regenstein. (Perhaps my cousin Louie was named after him.) When Netta was born, Mama said that "old Mrs. Regenstein", meaning Mr. Regenstein's mother, begged Mama to name the baby after her mother, who was Italian, which Mama did. The Regensteins later moved to Atlanta where he founded the first of the famous Regenstein stores here.

When my own family moved here, I called the telephone number of a Louie Regenstein in the phone book. He was the grandson of the Louie Regenstein my grandparents knew, but he didn't seem to know anything about their ever living in

Montevallo. His mother, widow of the son of the original Regenstein, of course, was still living but was ill, so I never tried to talk to her.

Back to Netta. Absolutely, the beauty of the family, with black hair and dark eyes. She was tall and graceful, a beautiful dancer. She had a distinct flair for dressing differently, but tastefully, and was constantly changing her hair style, always to the envy of her contemporaries. I remember being allowed to watch her and her best friend, Sara Jeter, as they experimented by the hour with creams and lotions trying to make their already perfect young complexions more so. They also put all kinds of goop on their hair, but stopped that after one session -- I well remember -- which gave their hair a ghastly orange-green sheen. Her many beaux clamored for her attention, and one of them, a cadet at Marion Military Institute in Marion, Alabama, had her picture put in the beauty section of that school's yearbook, a special feature for which, you can imagine, she had a lot of competition for being included.

An excellent student, she majored in Home Ec., and was such a talented teacher that her pupils sang her praises and often returned to visit her and share their lives with her. It was said that when a girl registered for Home Ec. classes at the University of Alabama and it was learned that Netta had taught her in high school she was automatically placed in an advanced class.

As the oldest after Georgia and Kaiden, Netta was the one we all looked up to and depended upon, especially Mama, and I will say especially me. We were 10 years apart, but she was always so very good to me and we shared so much all our lives, words cannot express my love and admiration for her. She taught for many years, much of that time in spite of painfully crippling arthritis, seldom complaining. When she went to Demopolis, Alabama to teach, she met Hoyt Talley, who worked in the post office there. "Talley," as he was always called was a great favorite of everybody's. He had a friendly personality and a big heart, lots of fun, and a person who would go out of his way to help anyone. They married and had one daughter, Patty, named for my sister Patty, who was the light of their lives. More of her and her family in a moment. Talley died of cancer long before his time, I believe, of the lungs. He smoked constantly. Netta suffered almost all her life with the arthritis, had a mastectomy and died of liver cancer after lingering illness in 198⁷. She and Talley are buried in Lafayette, Alabama, his birth place.

Patty Talley married after college, John Murfee, Jr., from Columbus, Mississippi, and years later they bought Riverview, a beautiful and famous antebellum home there which Patty still owns. She and John had two children: John, III, and Melissa Kaiden, called Missy. Their father, John, a brilliant surgeon, suffered an untimely death, and

Patty later married Dr. Caldwell DeBardleben from Selma, where they live. John, III, lives in Nashville, is a stockbroker, and he and his wife, Alison, have two little boys, Penn, P-e-n-n, and Jack. Missy was married last October to Will Ketchum. They live in Jacksonville, Florida, where Will is an advertising executive and Missy teaches as head of the marketing department at Episcopal High.

No. 6, Mary Kate, always called Mamie, was born in 1904. Also talented, pretty, very hard-working, with a heart of gold. She was always self-effacing and insisted that superlatives did not apply to her. She also majored in home economics, was an excellent student, but, in December of her senior year, she ran away and married Robbie Gunlock, who lived in Wilton, a little town near Montevallo. Papa and Mama didn't oppose the marriage, but they wanted her to graduate first. Robbie said no, and they ran away. She later, for years, was postmaster in Wilton and never got a mark against her performance the whole time, a record for government work. She continued there until retirement, keeping up with all her duties at home, helping Robbie with the big farm. They kept cows, also, and sold milk and butter to augment their income.

They had one son, Robert Day Gunlock, III, who became one of the finest men I ever knew, quiet and unassuming, very dependable, was especially devoted to his mother.

Called Bobby, he married a local girl after his stint in the service, and he and Carol eventually settled in Plano, Texas, where he had a distinguished career with Western Union, the company where he had begun as a lineman, climbing poles. He and Carol had two daughters, Michelle and Patricia. Tragically, he became ill in his 40's and died of a rare form of cancer. Robbie also became ill before Bobby, with Alzheimer's, and was hospitalized a long time before his death.

Mamie suffered from cancer many years; was in and out of hospitals and nursing homes, even contracting TB from an attendant in one of them, and we would have to wear special gloves when we visited her. She developed gangrene from a bed sore on her right foot, and that leg was amputated. She died, also of a rare form of cancer, female cancer, on May the 3rd, 1993, just short of her 89th birthday. She is buried in Montevallo with Robbie and Bobby.

Here I wish to pay tribute to my brother, Walton, for his incredibly unselfish devotion to Mamie. His home is, I think, 75 miles from Wilton, farther from other places where she was hospitalized, but he made countless trips to all those places on a regular basis, took care of her business affairs including the sale of her home, arranged all details of her hospitalizations -- consulting me on all major decisions -- finally, moving her to the nursing home in Prattville, where he lived, visiting her daily, and he and

his wife, Eloise, always doing everything in their power to make her life as comfortable as possible. When she died, he arranged for her funeral, kept all the endless paperwork through the years. I am sure that Mamie, in heaven, knows his goodness to her.

I forgot to mention something important about Mamie. She was an absolute genius with a crochet needle, making well over 100 beautiful, colorful afghans, all of which she gave away to family and her legions of friends. She made sure that every niece and nephew had one and anybody who showed her any kindness was the recipient of one. She even made me a short skirt in the afghan pattern, a jewel of a gift I loved to wear. She could figure out how to make anything, and all her granddaughters had to do was to tell Granny what they wanted in the way of anything crocheted; headgear, scarves, vest, whatever, and it would be forthcoming in record time because Mamie crocheted with incredible speed. It was amazing to watch her with her often watching TV at the same time without missing a stitch. She also learned to make ceramics and produced them in prodigious quantities, giving them away, too.

No. 7, George ^{Francis} ~~Kiefer~~, born 1906, my sweet, good, kind brother who had a tragic life. My father was always very cruel to him; there is no other way to say it. George spent his life trying to gain Papa's approval and love, but received neither from him. He was devoted to Mama, who gave

him the solace and understanding she could. George married Helen Russell, an only child, whom he met in Modena, Pennsylvania, where he had gone to do construction work. While working with concrete, he suffered an injury to a hip and his back, with wet concrete getting into the bone before he could be treated, causing an infection. He walked with a bad limp the remainder of his life, and, I believe, suffered constant pain, but he never complained.

Also, his nose had been broken in an automobile accident when he was a teenager; it had been set improperly and caused him to have breathing problems all his life. I suppose it could have been rebroken and corrected, but I am sure he never had the money for that. The broken nose detracted from his appearance. He and Helen had two children, Charles Kaiden and Anne, so there was a son to carry on the Kroell name.

George and Helen lived some time in Pennsylvania then moved to Montevallo -- this before they had the children -- and George tried to work for Papa, an impossible task. They returned to Pennsylvania where Anne was born first. When Charlie was about 18 months old, if I remember correctly -- the age anyway, of the Lindbergh baby (and closely resembled him) -- George brought him to Alabama. I mention the description because of something that happened on the way home. George was stopped by the police in Heflin, Alabama, where he had stopped for gas, and someone noticed Charlie's

resemblance to Charles Lindbergh, Jr. Of course, George could easily prove he was not the kidnapper, but it must have been frightening, just the same. Charlie was the cutest little towhead you can imagine, bright and happy, good as gold, a real charmer. George stayed in Montevallo until Charlie was about three, trying again to work for Papa, with Mama taking care of Charlie while he worked, but George looking after him completely the remainder of the time. Netta, always helpful, gladly took Charlie for a while, and he charmed everybody in sight.

I can't resist telling of something when he was there. One day, Talley came home at lunch time with a bucket of sugarcane syrup, of which he was very fond. He set it down on the brand new green rug, for which he and Netta had been saving for a long time and which had just been installed. Talley left the room and Charlie, wanting to help, managed to pick up the small bucket. Its top came off; the bucket fell over, and there spilled the syrup all over the brand-new rug. Charlie said, "Uh-oh," and Talley rushed back, but, too late; the brand-new rug was ruined. Poor little tad. He was so distressed, Netta said they couldn't help laughing at his expression, and they rushed to assure him that it wasn't his fault.

Helen came, eventually, and took Charlie back to Pennsylvania. George's health wouldn't permit him to live permanently in that cold climate anymore, and Helen

preferred to live there, so they were eventually divorced. The children were reared in Pennsylvania and Maryland, but George tried to stay as close to the children as he possibly could. Helen continued to work until her retirement. She was exceptionally competent in her office work specialities, and her skills were always in demand. Helen has just celebrated her 90th birthday, lives with Anne in Glen Burnie, Maryland, near Baltimore.

Anne was widowed young, her husband, Charles Cramblitt, having died when their son and three daughters were quite young. They are Michael, Susie, Patti, and Beth. I believe Anne has five grandchildren. She went into library work, taught herself to type and has succeeded, as she does in anything she attempts.

Bad luck continued to dog George's footsteps. He tried several businesses, finally opened a small general store in Montevallo across the street from Papa's hardware store and was working hard to make a go of it. Papa always owned hardware stores, so George's general store was no competition for Papa.

One day, not long after I was married, George arrived at my house unannounced. (This was in Montgomery.) He, having walked all the way, a great distance from the bus station, -- he had come to get Grandpa's watch willed to him by Grandpa, the most wonderful one I ever saw, large, heavy gold, beautifully engraved with a heavy gold chain. It has

to be well over 100 years old. George had given it to me for safe keeping, so I got it, fixed him a good breakfast, which he ate with enjoyment, and we had a good visit, though I noticed that he seemed unusually quiet, almost withdrawn. I wanted him to spend the night, but he declined and returned to Montevallo. The next morning, November 15, 1940, he prepared a box of goodies, I believe one for each of the children, left Grandpa's watch and instructions that Charlie was to have the watch, wrapped the packages for mailing, I believe, also. Then he walked across the street to the back of Papa's store and shot himself to death. He was all of 33 years old.

I forgot to mention that George, though he had only a high school education, was very inventive; could make or fix almost anything, especially mechanical. If he had gotten a good education, he would have made a great engineer. I also failed to mention that when he was about 16 or so, the idiot dentist in Montevallo pulled all his teeth. -- He must have owed Papa a big bill and wanted to pay it that way -- So, George had false teeth almost his whole short life; his young peers unkindly nicknamed him "Mose" after an old toothless Negro man in town.

I don't wish to canonize my brother, but life handed him more than his share of undeserved difficulties. He had his faults; he did drink. (I would have, too, if I had been in his shoes.) But, he was a good, good man, and I believe

he is in Heaven now, regardless of what the Catholic Church teaches about suicide.

Walton had just told me something I never knew about George's funeral. Papa bought the cheapest casket he could get for George. Walton said it was just wood with a thin gray cloth covering, and he was buried in the box the coffin was shipped in, not in a vault. I was there, but I was so devastated, especially after having been with him just the day before, I really don't remember too much about the Mass in Grandpa's house. I do remember the priest taking me aside and quizzing me about George's death. I knew that a Catholic who committed suicide couldn't be buried in consecrated ground. Suicide, according to Catholic theology, was the unpardonable sin.

I felt sure Papa hadn't told him George had killed himself. (That would have meant he couldn't be buried in the family cemetery, and Papa would have had to buy another lot -- heaven forbid.) So, I just gave the priest vague answers. Oh, yes. Walton said Papa paid the undertaker, Mr. Rogan, with sacks of bulk peanuts, for George's burial.

1989
Back to George's children: Charlie lives in Troy, Michigan, where I had the pleasure of visiting him and his Marijean after my husband died, and I was treated like visiting royalty, their taking me to many fascinating places in the area. He has retired from General Motors after an impressive career there. He is an avid lily grower and

developer, and he and Marijean attend the annual meeting of the American Lily Society all over the United States.

He has patented -- I believe that is the correct word -- or registered -- excuse my ignorance, Charlie -- one lily, naming it for their older daughter, Yvonne. She is married, lives in Michigan not far from her parents, happily for all of them, has a son and a daughter. Diane, the younger daughter -- if I remember correctly, they are very close together in age -- is married, has a small son and lives in Switzerland, the birthplace of her husband, Mark.

The same year I visited Charlie, I visited Anne and her family and Helen in Glen Burnie, Maryland. I had such a good time there, too, enjoying being with Anne, the children, and their children. Anne took off from work, took me all around, including to Annapolis, and made me feel so welcome. I know it wasn't easy for her to have company, but she made me feel most welcome. Helen and I spent much good time together and reminisced at length of days gone by.

Interesting things are always happening to me. While changing planes in Pittsburgh on the way back, I heard a familiar voice and there stood a young woman with whom I had taught when I got reincarnated as a teacher (at age 50) here in Atlanta. She and I fell on each other's neck with loud cries of astonishment, of course.

Child No. 8, Patty Erlene, named for Papa, born in 1909. She was the only blond in all these children. She

was Papa's favorite, if he had one, and was definitely Grandpa's, I think, he calling her his little "Deutsch" (German) girl because she reminded him of his people. Patty also was extremely talented, creative and achieving. She also majored in home economics, excelled in school, became a successful teacher before going into the home demonstration area of that field, rising to an important director's position at the state level in Alabama before retiring in the early 1970's, traveling all over her district for years, earning an enviable reputation for fairness (this especially important in those days of integration), her high standards of professionalism and creative ways of making those women who worked under her as productive, and yet, as contented as possible, she earned the respect of all who knew her. She demanded good performance from all her employees, and set a good example by her devotion to duty.

I remember one black woman, especially, who, giddy with her new station in life, was a real thorn in Patty's side and everybody else's, but she never got the better of Patty. While working at the state office in Auburn, she was diagnosed as having cancer and for indefinite periods made the 100-mile round trip from Auburn to Montgomery daily for her radium treatments, returning to her office and usually completing whatever was supposed to be done that day.

Patty was never a gentle person. She could peel your skin back with a cutting remark, and she did not suffer

fools gladly. She was especially hard on me during our growing-up years, could and did reduce me to tears on practically a daily basis when we were young, but she never let any of us down, especially me, when we needed her. I didn't understand why, at times, she seemed to actually hate me until Mama put it in perspective when I was about 10, or so, explaining that I had "pushed Patty out of the cradle too soon." "Not my fault," I said. And my wonderful Mother said, "It wasn't her fault either." I didn't fully understand until I was older and realized that Patty wasn't even three when I was born, two years and eight months, to be exact. So, she truly didn't get to be the baby long enough.

Man, could she ever skewer you with a look or phrase, and she didn't confine it to me, by any means. Like a lot of people, who never have any children, she expected all of ours to be perfect and was not at all hesitant about their faults. Don't get me wrong, she loved all our children; it was just the way she was. She was generous to a fault, showered them with loving gifts, but you better mind your p's and q's kid. (Wouldn't you have loved to have her psychoanalyze me as I am doing her? I'm sure I'd come off much worse, and rightly so.)

In June of 1940, Patty married Dan Parkman from Langdale, Alabama, at Netta and Talley's home in Demopolis. Both Dan and Patty were working out of Brewton, Alabama, at

the time, he as an engineer with the Farm Security Administration and she as a home demonstration agent with the Agriculture Department. Dan was 6'2", a handsome blond fellow, with an engaging smile, marvelous openness, and sincerity. I never saw two people more suited to each other. The snapshots of them leaving Netta's for their honeymoon show a strikingly handsome blond, couple radiating complete happiness. They went on their honeymoon to the famous Grove Park Inn at Asheville, North Carolina, planning to be gone a week. But after three days, they each confessed to the other that they wanted to go back and get started on their life together, delighted to find that they both felt the same way.

Dan had always played second fiddle to ^{a younger} ~~an older~~ brother in every way, his mother being extremely partial to that brother, and he just couldn't get over being so loved by Patty. He was an architectural engineer graduate at Auburn, so he drew the plans and built their handsome home in Brewton, planning it so that a second story could be added later, if desired. They knew that Patty could never have children, but they planned to adopt later. They had a very happy two years there, working, doing everything together. He wanted to share every part of her life, even insisting that she teach him how to help her with the room-sized rag rug she was making, just so he could be a part of that, too. I was there, and I heard and saw that.

I believe that those two years were the only truly happy years of Patty's adult life. In 1942, Dan, knowing he would be drafted, enlisted in the Sea Bees, where he figured he could use the special skills of his chosen profession. I have pictures of him in his "bell-bottom trousers and coat of navy blue," like the popular song of the day. He was soon commissioned Lieutenant J.G., was sent to the Aleutians where he served a year. He was then told that he would be stationed stateside in California a year before being shipped out again. Patty joyously resigned her job and prepared to join him in California. Then she got a call from him saying, "I feel like going 'over the hill'. They are shipping me out tomorrow to Guadalcanal." (The scuttlebutt had it that he replaced the son of a Washington bigwig. I never doubted it at all.)

He was on Guadalcanal a year, died there on August the 5th, 1944. The crowning horror of that news was that Patty, coming home from running errands, found the telegram announcing his death, hanging on her front door knob. A Western Union boy had just ridden up on his bicycle and hung it there. That still makes me so angry, I could spit. Everyone knew that such messages were supposed to be delivered in person by at least one naval officer, and Pensacola was nearby, so there was no excuse for that incredible snafu. It seemed to me that the local Western Union office in that town where she was well known should

have had more compassion, but she would never even question them. I begged her to make an issue of it with the Navy brass, but she was too heart broken to pursue it.

Years later, Dan's mother wanted his remains returned from the Guadalcanal cemetery. Patty was content for him to remain there, but she acceded to his mother's wishes and so had to go through the pain of that funeral. He is buried at LaFayette, as is Patty and, of course, Netta and Talley.

Patty never got interested in anyone else, with one exception, though other men tried hard to get her attention. She did, for a short time, consider marrying a former comrade of Dan's in the Sea Bee's battalion, but it turned out disastrously as she learned he was more interested in her financial status; he was also a crook. So she couldn't win and stayed single all her life.

Patty died of cancer in 1976 after many hospitalizations and much suffering. Ever stoic, she had even begun a needle-point bell pull for me as a surprise present. Once, when I visited her there in the hospital, she was propped up in bed working on it; I commented on how pretty it was, and she said, "Humph." That was all. I didn't know it was for me until after she died; she had about half of it done, and a friend of hers finished it for me. It hangs on my living room wall.

Patty had an apartment in Montgomery after she retired, and I often drove from Atlanta to visit her. I had retired

from teaching, again, and had gotten very interested in quilting, especially the Cathedral window pattern. For once, I taught her something new, and we would sit by the hour sewing on our quilts.

Walton and Eloise were very supportive of and attentive to Patty also, and it meant a great deal to her to have them near by, as William, Netta, Mamie, and I were much farther away. I understand that Walton and Eloise had her over for Sunday dinner every week.

Well, onward and upward. We come to Kroell child No. 9, little-ole me. Frances Estelle, born April the 21st, 1912, named for my mother and her younger sister, my aunt 'Tell. I was the last of six girls, and Mama said, "I'm going to name this one after me." I was always happy and proud that she did. She decreed that I not be called "Fanny", but when I was 16, an old beau of hers found out where she lived and came from Birmingham to see her. He said I looked just like she had at 16, and he called me "Little Fanny." The name stuck, and all my Montevallo friends called me that, others, too.

At the suggestion, insistence really, of a caring high school teacher named Miss Rizpah Fel Dudley (Isn't that a marvelous name?), who taught history and who called me in at the beginning of my high school freshman year and helped me plan my study schedule, I completed high school in three years instead of four by taking five major subjects each

year instead of four, then finishing up in summer school in order to get in my senior English and history.

At the graduation ceremony in 1929, another junior girl, Ann Coleman, who had also finished high school in three years, and I were told to sit on the stage off to the side. So, Mama made me a beautiful outfit, and Ann and I took our places. The ceremonies went off with the usual valedictory, etc., and to this day, no one said a word about why Ann and I were there, making it appear, I guess, that we had failed at the last minute. If I'd been as uppity then as I am now, I'd have marched to the microphone and explained, but, I was too timid, believe it or not, and so was Ann. So, we just sat there and suffered in silence.

I think that experience was what instilled in me an absolute phobia about never embarrassing a student of mine, regardless of what he or she did. I think it also made me so determined to do well in college that I can say, with no apologies for lack of modesty, that in 1933 I graduated Summa Cum Laude with major in French, minors in Spanish and English.

I really call attention to this in order to stress the fact that after teaching two classes at the college that summer, one Spanish and one English, for the school year 1933-34 in the midst of the Great Depression, the only job I could get was in a two-teacher school out in the boondocks, fortunately, not too far from home, however, with the two

class rooms on the ground floor of a big 'ole frame Masonic Hall with me teaching fourth, fifth, and sixth grades in the same room. I still have the names of the children I taught. There were only 24 pupils among the three grades: 13 girls, 11 boys, some of whom were bigger than I, but I never had a moment's discipline problems. They and their parents valued an education above all things. It's too bad so many so-called students today don't feel that way. Those children soaked up everything I taught them like sponges in water. They taught me much of value that helped me all through my years of teaching. I was paid \$65 a month for eight months, the extra \$5 for being the principal. The other teacher had been there for years and it was offered to her first, but she declined for it really involved a surprising amount of responsibility. Also, she lived in the area and didn't want to have to make decisions as principal that might not be popular with the parents.

Case in point: We didn't use corporal punishment of any kind at Maylene School though in those days it was fairly common almost everywhere. However, one day, Abby came to me and said, "You are just going to have to spank Lloyd," (a perennial first grader in her room and a constantly disruptive influence). She said, "You don't have to spank him much or hard, but I am convinced that being spanked by the principal is the only thing that will ever calm that child down."

I did give him a little spanking, turning him on my lap, fully clothed, of course, in private and with Abby as a witness. For once, Lloyd was taken aback. The next afternoon after school, I looked out the door and saw a big, stout woman coming down the railroad track that ran by the school. She approached me and asked, "Aire you Miss ^{Korell} Kroell?" I admitted I was and braced myself. She continued, "I heered ye whupped muh Lloyd yestiddy." I attempted to explain, but she interrupted, saying, "Iffen you has to do that agin, jist send me word and I'll whup him, too." With that, she waddled off leaving me with my mouth open in astonished relief. Abby was right; Lloyd was never an angel, but he was never really disruptive again.

Another duty of the principal was that she had to put on a play for the entertainment and edification of the entire community at the end of the school year. Ye gads. I'd never been interested in participating in plays, but after much searching, I selected a comedy called "The Little Clodhopper," chose the cast from among the parents of the children, but with none of them being willing to take the lead part, guess who got to do that. There was a solid partition between my room and Abby's. If we had to communicate during the day, we had to go outside around the building and to the other door. But once a year at play time, the partition was taken down to accommodate the crowd, which frightened me even more. But, everything went off

well; the audience being generous with their applause, kind, good people that they were, bootleggers and all; we even got some foot-stompings: the ultimate accolade.

I forgot to say that my classroom had a big stage, very useful when the weather was bad and the children couldn't play outside. There was no curtain but there were reflectors on it in which were placed large candles for light, as, of course, we had no electricity.

I forget to mention that I was supposed to live in Maylene, a metropolis of one big store, but, when I made the rounds to find somewhere to stay, no one would or could take me, so I had to commute -- Oh, happy day. A rickety old school bus picked me up bright and early each morning. The bus had a screened section about three feet deep at the top of the bus on each side. I remember one morning when the snow sifted in on me and I sat there and cried for several miles; couldn't help it. The bus driver, Doc Phillips, never said a word to me. I guess he resented having to pick me up, and we rode in complete silence in an otherwise empty bus until we reach^{ed} Dogwood, a little town about 20 miles away where he picked up his regular riders. And I got in Abby's car for the remaining five miles to Maylene, reversing the procedure in the afternoon for we never kept the children in because they all walked to school, some of them for miles.

When I was interviewed by the school board, they said

candidly that they had reservations about hiring a young, inexperienced teacher, but at the end of the year, they asked me back; however, Netta had helped me get a better job in Demopolis, and I went there, at \$90 a month; a big difference in those days.

I'll come back to me and my family; it's way past time to talk about children No's. 10 and 11, our identical twin boys.

No's. 10 and 11. William Timothy -- William was a few minutes the older -- and Walton Joseph were born April the 16th, 1916, and caused much excitement in that little town, with the locals offering all kinds of name suggestions, from Pete and Repete to Ding-it and Dang-it. Papa was proud as a peacock, and Mama, bless her heart, welcomed them with joy and some surprise for at 44, she had thought she was finished with childbearing. They were so identical that even Mama had to make their little boy aprons different in color. They were sort of like a little coat buttoned down the front with a belt across the back; she made them of tiny-checked gingham, one blue and white checks and the other pink and white -- the only colors available, I assume. By the time they left babyhood, they had changed enough that you could at least tell them apart without difficulty.

William was named for Mama's brother, Uncle Bill, but I don't believe William was usually called Bill at home, maybe by Walton, though. Uncle Bill was a quiet, hard-

working man, actually extremely timid. At his family gatherings, he would enjoy them, but they would have to drag him into their conversations for he preferred to just listen to them. Mama said that at Grandma Collier's urging, he plucked up enough courage to ask a young lady to go to church (Methodist) with him one Sunday.

He picked her up in the buggy, all dressed up in his Sunday best; but on the way, the horse inexplicably ran away. Though there was no disastrous accident, the young lady was thrown from the buggy. Uncle Bill was so mortified, that he never asked a girl out again, remained a bachelor all his life. Now that's timid. I relate this because I don't know whether William knows about it.

I don't know how they chose Walton's name, have forgotten to ask him whether he knows. Timothy and Joseph, of course, are saints names, the twins' confirmation names. They are still very much alike in appearance; tall, still active, well-dressed, and handsome. I admit to some prejudice here. They had brown hair and eyes. When I say "had brown hair," I don't mean they don't have any hair now, but they do have "long faces," as the saying goes, meaning the hair line is receding.

Walton and William have both had some serious health problems, William a heart attack and Walton a bypass operation. But they are taking care of themselves and being taken care of by their devoted wives, Annette, William's

wife, and Eloise, Walton's. Annette and William have recently moved into a lovely, large home similar to the previous one, but without the huge lawn and grounds the first one had. It, the new one, is in a suburb of Memphis, Cardova, which they like for many reasons. Devoted to their Baptist faith, they are among the founding members of their new Trinity Baptist Church in Cardova.

The twins share a gift for creativity and mechanical and engineering expertise. I remember two miniature tractors that William built, the first for their daughter Elise, which was pedal-propelled and, as I recall, was a small-scale duplicate of the John Deere motorized tractor. Walton, whose hobby is woodworking, has made beautiful replicas of some very unusual chairs in Grandpa's house, making three different versions of each. Working with cherry and other hardwoods, he has made several kinds of cabinets, a dry sink, adjustable lamps, etc.

Walton and Eloise Penzel were married September 17, 1940, in Jackson, Missouri (Eloise's home town) in the Emmanuel Evangelical Church, a denomination which later merged with others and no longer exists. They are active, faithful members of the Presbyterian Church. If I remember correctly, Walton was working for the WPA in Tuscaloosa when they married. When he was working in Montgomery, also with WPA, he told me he carried his lunch and always made sure he had a dime in his pocket just in case he was overcome by a

desire for a Coke, but more often than not, returning home with it still unspent. (The things I remember, 'huh, Walton.)

That first year, Eloise was hospitalized for a long period of time, and the young couple weathered challenges that would have defeated less committed ones. Walton worked 29 years for Standard Forge and Axle Company outside Montgomery as materials manager. Later, worked for the Dana Corporation, also in Montgomery. They were manufacturers of axles for the big tractor trailers. He was purchasing agent for them when he retired, I believe, in 1981.

He had worked his way through Chillicothe Business School in Missouri, taking two years, 1938-1940, because his work to pay tuition and board, took so much time away from his classes. It was an excellent school apparently, teaching basic business skills. William also attended it for a time but didn't stay to graduate. Eloise has never worked outside the home, devoting all her time to her family and home. She enjoys her church activities, has many women friends with whom she often takes trips to interesting places. She and Walton have also attended a number of Elderhostel seminars at interesting places. They enjoy traveling together, but if Walton doesn't feel up to it, she goes with her friends. A very sensible arrangement, I think.

Walton and Eloise have three lovely daughters. I will introduce them in the order of their births:

No. 1. Karen: Married Tony Montgomery from Mississippi. Their two children are Stacy, now a registered pharmacist working for K & B Drugs in Montgomery; and Chris, who has completed his college courses in environmental concerns. But having been unable to find work desired in that chosen field, he is now planning to return to school to prepare to teach biology.

Karen is an excellent high school teacher and assistant principal; is much in demand as a tutor. The family lives in Prattville.

No. 2. Martha, "Marty": Married Michael Ramsey, lives in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. They have two young daughters, Ashley and Rachel. Marty, also an excellent teacher, taught in Montgomery before her marriage, especially black children, which requires special skill. Call that a racist remark, if you like. In Atlanta, a white person can't look sideways at a black person without being called a racist. I had some personal experiences tutoring black children at Sarah Smith School here in Atlanta after I quit regular teaching the second time, and my hat is off to anyone who teaches them full time.

Back to Marty: For a number of years in Oklahoma, she kept 8 to 10, or more, children in her home and I feel sure those children received much more than the usual home child care situation. She has now returned to teaching. She and the children get home to see Walton and Eloise at least

twice a year, Michael accompanying them when he can.

No. 3. Kim. She was an excellent student at Auburn, majoring in office administration. I understand she is a computer whiz. She is presently the manager of a nursing home. Kim is married to Steve Essig, E-s-s-i-g, of German lineage, also. He is a highly successful engineer with Delta Research Engineering. They live in Niceville, Florida. They have no children. I had the pleasure of attending their wedding in Jackson, Mississippi, several years ago; also attended Marty's in Montgomery, but, regretfully, was not present at Karen's.

Kim and Steve are both exceptionally tall, and I remember what a striking couple they make.

William and Annette Hurst, from Moulton, Alabama, were married in Decatur, Alabama, on August 21st, 1942. Annette, an accomplished bookkeeper, attended Bowling Green Business School in Kentucky. She worked off and on during their marriage as William built an enviable reputation in the automobile parts business, both as a successful salesman and store manager.

I forgot to mention that Walton, marrying first, was not subject to the draft at that time, but the draft board in Montevallo, grabbed William for they were determined to get "at least one of Kroell twins." They said so. After his army service, William embarked on his above-mentioned career. He was a store manager in Decatur in 1946, I

believe, in 1947, in partnership with Annette's father, owned a tractor dealership in Robertsdale, Alabama.

Their son, Russell, was born in nearby Mobile while they were there. Elise, their first child, was born I believe in Decatur. She is a registered pharmacist but works only occasionally now to keep her hand in, so to speak. She is married to Will Griffin, a developer and banker, and they have two sons, Will, Jr., and Russell, who are both in college preparing to pursue careers in real estate development and law, respectively.

Elise is most attractive, popular, and gifted. She was attending 'Ole Miss when the frightening events caused by integration occurred there. I believe she ventured into a telephone booth to call her parents, and William told her to get into her dorm room, lock herself in, and stay there; which she did. Elise is the same age as my Tim, 51.

Annette and William's son Russ, called Rusty as a child, is in banking after working in the auto parts business a number of years. He is married to Patty, a school counselor. They have no children. Rusty was always a great pet of his Uncle Mike, who loved to tease him. I can still see Rusty's twinkly eyes and happy smile when Michael would do so. I bet Russ will hate my saying that, but he, too, has always been a doll in my estimation. He is the same age as my Gretchen, 48.

I keep forgetting to tell things about the twins that I

think are important, especially relating to Papa. He had them working morning to night all their growing up years, treating them like bonded slaves instead of valued partners in his business, which they were, labor-wise. I have told you how he beat George. He tried to continue abusing the twins, threatening them with monotonous regularity, threatening to kill them. One of his favorite pronouncements to any of us was: "You aren't worth the powder and shot it would take to blow you to Hell." Papa bought, from time to time, the huge trucks so necessary in a hardware business, having them painted in bright colors and bearing the legend: "Pat's Red Baby," or "Pat's Yellow Baby." See, I told you he had some good unorthodox ideas.

Papa didn't drive, so that was an onerous duty of the twins. One day, Walton was driving and Papa didn't like something about the way Walton went about parking the truck. He got out of the truck, grabbed a club and returned, intending to attack Walton, who was still sitting in the cab. When Walton saw Papa coming, he rolled up the window, picked up a lug wrench from the floor of the cab, put the truck in gear, and headed for Papa, who promptly headed for the street. Walton followed him there, got out with the big wrench in his hand; Papa turned and bolted into his store.

On another occasion, Mama called the twins and begged them not to come home that night because Papa said he was going to kill them when they did. They immediately headed

home where Walton got a .22 rifle, and I believe William knocked Papa down. The latter said, "You are 21 now. Get out of this house tonight. You are on your own." William went to Aunt Mary and Kate's, with whom he lived for a while; Walton spent the night with a friend, but I believe returned home some time later, mainly because Mama really needed protection. I know this sounds like something I made up, but I assure you it is not. Mama's health was failing, at that time.

I simply cannot resist describing the two homes our family had in Montevallo. The little one, where all the children were born; then the one Papa built before the crash in 1929, which was about five blocks up the same street, named Highland. The "old house," as we all called it, had a parlor, used only for special occasions; two bedrooms, one shared by Netta and Mamie until they left home, then inherited by Patty and me, and the other, our parents' room, plus a big dorm-type room for the rest of the brood. There was the dining room and big kitchen, with wood-burning stove, sink with running water, and a wooden cabinet with tin doors called a pie safe, where leftover food was placed. It never stayed there long enough to spoil.

There was a big ice box with a hinged top, which the ice man lifted in order to place in a zinc-lined compartment the daily block of ice. Various ones of the children were assigned the responsibility of seeing that the drip pan

underneath the icebox never filled to overflowing. Beyond the kitchen, in my time, had been tacked on a small room for storage and off to the side of it, there was a big bathtub.

We had a big, fenced back yard where there were a smokehouse, a sort of storage barn, the flower pit where Mama's plants were kept in the winter, the storm pit that we were supposed to get into in the storm, and beyond that were a big chicken yard and chicken house, the privy (oh, yes, we had one, complete with the discarded Sears-Roebuck catalogue -- I kid you not.) Next, the pig pen and beyond that, the cow lot. It took a lot of milk for all those hungry mouths. All of the girls tried to learn to milk, but only Patty and Mamie succeeded. Papa bragged mightily on Patty, but afterward she said, "Now wasn't I dumb to do that?"

Mamie needed that skill, however, in later life. There were always calves for slaughtering, and we had plenty of veal and beef to eat, and, of course, chicken and pork. Papa always had a big garden along side of all these animal lots, so we enjoyed delicious vegetables, both fresh and those from Mama's skillful canning, which she produced in great quantity and variety.

Back to the house for a moment. There was an attic with two small rooms with a dormer window, the rooms not furnished, but a marvelous place to play games, cut paper dolls, read, or just stretch out on the floor and dream. There was a cellar lined with shelves for Mama's jars of

canned jams, jellies, preserves, and vegetables. In summer, it was a cool place to go and sit on the steps and have quiet time. I was told that my brother, Kaiden, sometimes walked in his sleep. Did so once and they searched everywhere for him to no avail, until someone thought to look in the cellar. There he was, sitting on the steps, "watching the picture show" in his sleep.

In the backyard, there was a big peach tree, also a pear tree. In the side yard, a big cedar tree, especially useful for supplying the sprigs of needles over which the hand irons, called sad irons, were pressed to keep the bottoms smooth during getting tremendous ironings done. I have two of those irons, which Mamie gave to me after keeping them all those years. I use them for bookends in my kitchen.

The front yard was kept swept clean in the old-fashioned way, and there were Mama's flower beds in different geometric shapes, formed by bricks set in the ground at such an angle that the pointed ends were up. There in Spring, Mama had masses of tulips, daffodils, narcissus, and snowdrops (my favorites); all perfuming the air and a delight to the eye.

For summer, she planted all kinds of seeds, annuals and perennials, daisies, asters, cosmos, columbines, etc. One bed was reserved for roses, and I remember a sweet shrub bush, the blossoms of which, or rather the tight buds,

purplish-brown in color, were great for tying in the corner of a handkerchief and carrying with you to enjoy their special fragrance for hours. I have such a bush here.

Mama did the work of a corps of servants, aided by her daughters and sons, of course, but we never had regular "help" to use the vernacular of the time. In our family, older black people were called Uncle and Aunt. (Mama's idea, I'm sure.) Uncle Munro drove the store delivery wagon; Aunt Lou Winn was pressed into service when we had special guests for supper -- Her waffles were famous, cooked on an iron contraption on that wood stove; they were crisp on the outside, soft and tender on the inside -- she was also pressed into service on the rare occasions when Mama had to be away from home for a length of time. We children were taught by Mama to obey her without question and to give her the respect she deserved. I can see her now, big and fat; her shiny ebony face, often breaking into a smile, looking for all the world, like Mammy in "Gone with the Wind."

There was also Aunt Nanny Johnson, our washwoman, who boiled the enormous loads of clothes in iron pots in her backyard and dried them on long clothes lines and on her fence. Amazingly, the whites were usually snowy, and the colors kept pristine.

Aunt Nanny had been run over by a yoke of oxen when young, her neck being especially involved, and she spoke

with a kind of croak. She was often pregnant at the same time Mama was. She named one of her girls after my sister, Mamie. Poor Mamie was teased unmercifully about having a "sister" named Mamie Johnson.

Papa actually hated black people, but Mama loved them; she kept whole families going with our outgrown clothes and food. She had no money to give them. They loved her dearly, and when she died, an old Negro man walked 10 miles to Montevallo to pay his respects at Miss Fanny's funeral, standing off to the side, his head bowed in grief throughout.

I must also tell you about hog-killing time at the old house before describing the new house. These are things that children in the future can't imagine, maybe not today. Every winter, on a day when the cold had reached just the right temperature, a regular army of black men and women arrived, each one skilled in a special aspect of the day's work. I remember that one named Jeems was especially skilled in killing the hogs, draining the blood in just the right way so the meat would be properly conditioned. Also, the blood was not wasted, but used to make something called blood pudding, especially enjoyed by the Negroes. I have no idea what it was like, for I couldn't imagine eating it.

The pigs would be knocked in the head, then their throats slashed. I can still hear the squeals, remembering covering my ears and sometimes weeping over their plight.

There were always numbers of pigs killed on that day, so there was a lot of work to be done. Certain workers cut the meat into hams, shoulders, ribs, and so on. Meat was chosen carefully to make the sausage, making sure to have the right proportions of lean and fat. Two of the women, of course, were specialists in cleaning and preparing the entrails used to make the stuffed sausage, a delicate, and, I'm sure unpleasant task because the casings had to be as devoid of holes as possible when finished.

The women making the stuffed sausage operated a large hand-held grinder, passed huge quantities of lean and fat into the casings placed on the aperture of the grinder. Much was kept for bulk sausage to make patties for frying, the remainder used for stuffing.

All our meat was packed and salted in large wooden boxes and kept in the smokehouse in winter and in the cellar in summer. Before it was stored in the smokehouse, most of the stuffed sausage links had to be smoked, both for preservation and for taste. A bucket of hickory or corncobs, chips on coals of charcoal, had to be kept smoldering constantly for the smoke to cure the ropes of sausage hanging from the rafters. I remember being one of those assigned to check periodically to see whether the chips had not caught fire; if so, just the right amount of sand from the dirt floor of the smokehouse had to be sprinkled on to keep the smoke rising steadily.

I remember that smokehouse, too, because of a special game we had, called "Annie over." One stood in the back, another in the front of the narrow, not very tall building. The one in the front threw a rubber ball over the roof, calling out at the same time: "Annie over." The one in back tried to catch it, then race around to the right as the one in front raced to the left to try to catch him; something like "drop the handkerchief," but involving more skills. I never heard of anyone else ever playing it, expect it was invented by "those Kroell kids." Well, those were simpler times.

The Negroes were paid well, in kind, for all their work that day, taking home all they could carry of the large pieces of hams and so on, as well as sausage, and, I'm sure, the kidneys and hearts and such. Of course, Mama and Papa were both there all day, supervising and working, too. Keep in mind, that often as many as four or five, or more, pigs were involved. The meat was shared with Grandpa's family and neighbors, too. Keep in mind, too, that all this happened right in town; we were not out in the country. Our whole lot was fenced, the back with wire fencing, the front and sides with wooden slats, lots of fun to walk past with a stick and make a satisfying noise.

This house was just outside the college campus, which was surrounded by a hedge on our block. That hedge required almost constant clipping, all by hand, of course. Just

beyond the hedge a short distance away, was my very favorite place in the world, the college library; all I had to do was walk west down the sidewalk about a block, go over the stile in the hedge, and follow the path to the library, spending hours and hours there or coming home with armloads of the precious books. How fortunate we were to have that opportunity and to have a mother who encouraged us to use it to the fullest. She loved to read and how she managed it, it don't know, but I remember her taking some time in the afternoons to read or to crochet or sew, at both of which, she was very competent, the sewing done on a manually pedaled machine or by hand. We had electricity when I was a child, but it was very expensive and there were, of course, no refrigerators or electric stoves, though in the "big house" we had all such appliances.

Now to the big house: it was set back from the street on a very large lot, was two-story brick with two dormer windows in front. The wide front walk had an open strip down the middle filled with soil, in which Mama kept planted in flowers. I've forgotten their name -- I believe it was periwinkle -- but they grew in bunches, planted close together so that the glossy, dark green leaves and delicate rose-purplish blossoms made a pleasing picture. They were perennial and we looked forward to their returning each spring. They were also hardy and lasted through the heat of summer.

The house had a wide front porch; to the left was the sun porch. The front door opened on the big living room, which had built-in bookcases beside the big fireplace. To the right, was the dining room with its big table and chairs to seat eight to ten, and a big side board. Right out of the dining room through French doors, there was a large raised terrace, which could be entered from the porch, also.

Going through the dining room, to the left was the smaller breakfast room with one wall of built-in glass-fronted cabinets and one window, and off it was the big kitchen where Mama finally had many built-in cabinets, large ironing space, big electric stove, double sink, and the refrigerator had a small alcove built off the back of this room. From the living room straight ahead was the back hall, off which, was the guest room, my parents room, bathroom, George's room, and the twins'.

Up the stairs, are the big bedroom, which included the dormer windows in front and a side window making it bright and airy, shared by Netta and Patty; across from their's, my own room -- oh, happy day -- medium size, very pretty and comfortable. Down the hall on the left, a big storage room where we girls did our ironing, and the bathroom. We had the first baths in town with colored tile and fixtures -- green downstairs, pink upstairs -- lovely, both.

As I said, this was built before the crash. Because Papa was always in the hardware business, I understood that

he was able to buy most of the materials for the house at cost, or at a cost discount, but even so, I'm sure it was expensive to build and refurnish throughout. Though Papa had some good business ideas, he didn't manage his finances too well at all. As the saying goes, "His reach was greater than his grasp." Mama inherited some property, later sold. Kaiden left her a \$5,000 insurance policy, the proceeds of which he fully intended her to have, but which Papa pressured her to cash and give to him. She never saw any of it; well, you get the picture.

As the years wore on, the children saw to it that Mama lacked for nothing material, as we should have done, though we could not be there to give her the daily loving care she needed, for Papa grew more irascible as the years went by. His violent temper never lessening. Mama's health failed; she had a complete breakdown, but Papa continued to demand the same routine of cooking, cleaning, and so forth, while still refusing to pay a servant. The children would hire maids, but Papa would drive them away, except for one, Lilla May Nunn, who stood her ground and stayed a long time. I'll love her till I die.

George came to me one day when I was about 21 and said, "Frances, we have to do something about Mama; Papa's going to kill her with his treatment of her." He said, "I can't do much about it with my family situation, neither can Mamie or Netta for many reasons." Patty was single, but had had a

series of operations, was in the hospital at this time, and the twins were still too young, so George said, "That leaves you." We agreed to have me appointed her legal guardian, as I had just reached majority. This was all carried out without consulting or involving Papa, though, of course, we informed him of our intentions. He had no objections, though he hit the ceiling when he learned by law I could use the rentals from his properties, a large store on the main street, a smaller building on the side street around the corner, which was rented for a small restaurant. At that time, Papa had a medium large hardware store next to the restaurant. With the \$100 monthly rental from the big store, about \$30 a month from the restaurant and the remainder of the cost of her care supplied by the children, she was well-cared for. Not one penny did he ever spend on her care. Incredible, isn't it. He bitterly resented my collecting the rents, but never gave me any real trouble about it for he knew that I would haul him into court in a flash if he ever did, and wouldn't hesitate to do it.

Often the renters would get behind in pay -- this was depression time, remember -- and they thought maybe because I was so young they could snooker me, but soon found out they wouldn't be able to stay in a arrears very long. When they did fall behind, I had found a banker in Montgomery who had been reared in Montevallo, and when I was in desperate straits, he would lend me the money to ^{tide} tied me over until I

could collect the rents again. Mama was hospitalized; I don't remember exactly how long, it seemed forever, maybe six months to a year. Then I moved her to a wonderful family-type nursing home only about 15 miles away in Prattville. The home was big -- was a big rambling house with many rooms. There was a big oak tree with a swing in the big front yard where the residents often sat or walked in the cool of the evening.

Mama had her own room; her meals were served there because she wanted it that way, saying, "I don't want to eat with all those old people." At last, she had her privacy, spent her days reading, writing letters to her children, and treasuring the flood of letters we sent her, keeping all of them to reread or just have.

Mama was short, not much over five feet, and after having all those children, in middle age she was stout, but was thin in old age. After Michael and I were married and lived in a little house at Nine Early Street in Montgomery, I would take her to spend the day as often as she would come. She would stay through lunch, but soon afterwards, she would say, "Honey, don't you think you'd better take me home." I was glad that she spoke of it that way, for it meant that she was comfortable and contented. There, Mr. and Mrs. Ogelsby, who owned and ran the nursing home, were very good to her and all their patients, of whom they had quite a few.

When we moved to Texas, Walton, who lived in Prattville, took over her care, though I never relinquished legal responsibility for her. I remember a man coming to see me the morning after she died, wanting to buy the big store, but I explained that I was no longer legally involved and couldn't have sold it anyway because Papa still owned it. She was at the nursing home for years, and only once did Papa express a wish to come to see her. I asked her if she was willing, and in fear she begged me, "I never want to see him again. You aren't going to let him come, are you?" I assured her I would not, passed the word to him, and he never mentioned coming again.

She developed what used to be called [dropsy], heart failure, which the doctor treated by giving her diuretics to drain off the fluid from the tissues, a job which her heart could no longer handle. After so long a time, the diuretics also proved useless. Walton called me to come from Texas to talk to the doctor. I took my first airplane ride and came. The doctor was a very kind man, who explained that he had done all he could, suggested that, if we wished, we could certainly consult specialists. But, after he explained the situation thoroughly, I realized there was no point in subjecting her to that.

When I reentered the room where Walton and others were waiting with her, she looked up expectantly with an expression that said, "Frances will make it right." I weep

now to remember it. I could only say, "It's going to be all right, Mama." The doctor kept her as comfortable as possible for the remaining months of her life, and she died May the 3rd, 1949, at the age of 77.

She was never told of George's suicide, but the day of the funeral, I made the mistake of stopping by to see her on the way home. During our conversation, she suddenly said, "Frances, I'm worried about George. He's so good to write, and I haven't had a letter in some time." Caught by surprise, I babbled something about his being busy. I never could lie with a straight face, and with the funeral so fresh in my mind, I'm sure my face was a dead giveaway. She never took her eyes from mine, and when I finished talking, she said, "So, that's it then," and she never mentioned him again, to me, anyhow. She knew he was dead, but she didn't want to hear about it.

Papa grew quite stout in middle age, but then too, when he was old. I've simply got to tell you a yarn about something that happened when he was just -- when he was at least in his late 70s. The phone rang in Fort Worth one day, and this abrupt voice that I immediately recognized said without preamble, said, "Frances, I'm at the airport. Come get me." Just like that. I obediently gathered up the children, Gretchen, the baby, and Tim, three, and raced to the airport. He informed me that he was on his way to see Mrs. So-and-so in California. I don't remember her name,

never thought I'd forget it, because she was one of Papa's extracurricular lady friends, and was said to be quite a looker.

At this time, she was widowed living in California, and he was on his way to see her. When he opened his suitcase and I saw a wad of bills and a pistol, I nearly fainted and said, "Papa, you shouldn't be carrying that money and gun in your suitcase." He said, "I'd like to see anybody stop me." And off he went, saying he'd be gone a week. Two days later, again the same telephone call. When I asked him why he didn't stay longer, he said, "Saw everything I wanted to see in California." I asked, "How's Mrs. So-and-so." He replied, "She's done got old." End of conversation. Like I said, he was pushing 80; I went in a room and stuffed my mouth to keep from howling with laughter. He stayed a few days, then returned home.

Michael's father was in his 80s when Michael and I married. Pap-Pap was quite different from Papa, at that time. Almost totally deaf, he had one of the first hearing aids I ever listened to; it sounded like ocean waves roaring to me, but he managed nicely with it. I understood that he had been a martinet in his younger years, too, but had mellowed as the years went by. Papa did, too, but only to a certain degree.

Papa died in a nursing home in Greensboro, Alabama, at age 90. His funeral was held in the Catholic church built

on the site of the big home, which caught fire mysteriously and completely burned sometime in the late 30s.

I may be accused of belaboring the point writing about my father, but he had such a tremendous impact on our lives, I feel it is necessary to relate some of the incredible events connected with him. He would make an excellent character in a movie or even a series of them.

Papa liked to brandish a pistol. I remember one instance when a business competitor had angered him and one morning, before going to work, he was in one of his tirades, brandishing the gun and swearing to kill the s.o.b., with Mama hanging on his arm and pleading, "Don't, Pat. Don't, Pat." Only the twins and I were home, and they were toddlers. The poor little things came out on the porch where I was cowering, and huddled close to me. After a while, Papa pretended to be swayed by Mama's entreaties, put away the gun, and went off to work, whistling -- I kid you not -- leaving us still petrified.

I was told that the ladies considered him quite dashing and handsome in his youth and even afterward, and he was always charming and considerate to them, I remember.

Back to the beatings: I witnessed one he gave my brother George, which is burned in my memory forever. In our first small house, they built on a kind of dormitory-like bedroom on the back, as the family grew. I guess, I was about 12 years old when this happened. The house was

arranged so that we had to go through our parents' room to get to the dorm room. George, a teenager at the time, would sometimes go out at night with his friends for a while. So this particular night, he had come in and gone to bed when Papa stormed into the room, yanked him out of bed and whipped him unmercifully with a buggy whip, shouting obscenities all the while. George never uttered a sound. The reason for the beating, George had failed to do something he was told to do that day.

On a lighter note about George, one night he had been out, it was a bitterly-cold winter's night, and he accidentally left the front door open. Keep in mind that the rooms were heated only by coal-burning fireplaces, and, of course, they were banked for the night. Papa was a thunderous snorer, and slept with his mouth open. So, this night, the icy air froze the moisture on his mustache. Even Papa had to laugh a bit about that.

I hope you don't get tired of my yarns. As Jimmy Durante used to say, "I've got a million of 'em."

One thing, Papa never whipped any of the girls. I don't know how Mama ever did it, but there was an unwritten law that he was never to do that to us. I don't know about the other sisters, but when I was especially naughty, she would switch my legs a few times with a little switch she would take from the peach tree, after stripping it of its leaves. I would go off by myself afterwards and think how

sorry she would be if I died. This poor mistreated child. People would pass by my coffin and say, "How beautiful she is. How sad, how sad." I told Netta about it one day when we were laughing about a lot of things; she said, "You never told me about that." I said, "Of course not. I was too busy planning my funeral."

I forgot to mention that Papa had -- oh, I'm sorry. I'm getting ahead of myself -- I forgot to say that when the twins were teenagers, they spent a lot of time working on old jalopies in the back yard; working in tandem, one having his head down in the innards of the engine, the other standing by watching. The one inside would put up his hand, and the other would hand him the desired tool, all from without a word being spoken. (You guys didn't know I used to watch you, did you?)

Special notice: To you who have continued to follow this epistle thus far, please be advised beginning with the following page, this report basically contains the history of me and my family, the Michael Haile Family, for I have written it for Tim and Gretchen, for Tim's Eva, my only grandchild, and her children, if any to come. You are, of course, welcome to read it. Naturally, I think it is interesting. But, if you don't wish to do so, you may turn now to the final pages of this history.

I taught in Demopolis three years, the first year all of sixth grade and one high school Spanish class. The

superintendent, Mr. Watt, also kindly let me "handle" all his correspondence, check the teachers plan books for his perusal, and lots of other stuff he should have done. He was a real bird. But there were no serious behavior problems in that school. He walked around all day with his cane. I don't think he needed it to walk, but it was definitely a psychological authority symbol.

One time in a fit of insanity, I got the one and only permanent I ever had; it was a total disaster. The next day, he popped in the room, as he often did in all the teachers' rooms, took one look at me and boomed, "Good God, Miss Kroell. What have you done to your hair?" I needed that like a hole in the head.

The third year my schedule was the same, except he decreed I should teach a typing class at 7:00 a.m. There was no other time except after school, and I didn't think it fair to the children to do that. It was a small class of about ten, and every one of them did well. They really needed that skill in those depression times.

In my four years of college I had had two electives. Used my head and took typing for one, the other, German, for obvious reasons. After I left Demopolis, that wonderful Netta taught herself to type and taught that class.

At the last faculty meeting of my third year, without saying a word to me beforehand, Mr. Watt announced just as he had done about the typing, "Next year, Miss Kroell will

also be teaching shorthand." I said, "Mr. Watt, I've never even had shorthand." He said, "That's okay. You can study it this summer while you're working and learn enough to stay one jump ahead of the kids." See, the job in Montgomery was supposed to be temporary. I loved teaching there and living with Netta and Talley, who were so wonderful to me, but I never had a raise from \$90 a month, and I began to have second thoughts.

Talley's sister, Sara, was secretary to the chief of personnel in the district office of the Farm Security Administration, first called Resettlement Administration, in Montgomery. It was she who suggested I apply there, guided me through all the necessary steps, including getting congressional approval, it wasn't easy to get a government job with so many people out of work and looking for one. When I went for my interview, her boss, Pat Conner, really gave me a going over. He had a special telephone made. It had a leather pouch attached to the mouthpiece into which he spoke. You couldn't hear what he said, but he'd call someone, presumably to talk to them about you, never taking his eyes off you. Very disconcerting, to say the least. Afterwards, Sara said, "Why did you give that girl such a hard time?" He replied, "I don't want these college graduates coming in here thinking they're better than anyone else." Sara said, "Well, that one would never do that."

I was given a very monotonous job at first. We were

working until 11:00 at night and all day Saturdays, but I persuaded a dear maiden lady who taught secretarial skills at 50 cents a lesson to teach me shorthand at 6:00 a.m., five days a week. That's the only subject that completely threw me, don't know whether I was just too tired, didn't have enough time to practice, or what, but she finally told me, "I'm not going take your money anymore. You simply can't handle this with your schedule." I still use what little I learned sometimes. Tried once with Gretchen at Oglethorpe University night school; I flunked again.

In case you didn't know it, the Farm Security Administration was formed to assist tenant farmers in the South, black and white, in getting their own farms instead of living out their lives working for absentee owners and forever in debt to the company store, an all too common feature in the agrarian South.

I finally landed in the office of Franklyn H. McGowen, again, I'm sure, with Sara's help, bless her heart. He headed the architectural and engineering division of Farm Security and was one of the most brilliant, charismatic, fair-minded men I was ever privileged to work for. He was about 45 at that time. He and Sara were married not long after I began work there, and they had a long life together. I am sure he was very hard to live with, but my, he was an interesting man.

He had crews in the field at all the projects in

Alabama, Georgia, and Florida, and nobody who was qualified who asked him for a job was ever turned away. In the office, he gave you all the responsibility you could handle. He caused me to stretch and try to do many things I would otherwise not have attempted. He had the complete loyalty of everyone who worked for him, treated his -- us, his kids -- like family, especially his boys in the field. A lot of his peers didn't like him, but he cared not a whit. One of his favorite words was bastard. Sara taught him to say "bas."

He took us, all the office help plus his key architects and engineers and surveyors in the field, to very beneficial conferences. The first one at the elegant, now abandoned Biltmore Hotel here in Atlanta. He had various employees speak, especially from the office, for the benefit of the field people, and vice versa. Even I spoke, petrified because a "bigwig" from Washington was present. We also had a conference in Daytona Beach and a very special one in Beaufort, South Carolina. He had in the office both long experienced engineers and architects, as well as young ones. He even employed a young woman architect, most unusual for the time.

The projects were aimed at both black and white farmers, and their names usually had a connotation of their location, like "Gee's Bend" at Camden, Alabama; Flint River Farms and Wolf Creek Farms in Georgia, and so forth. In case

you don't know, the Farm Security Administration was formed to assist tenant farmers in the South, black and white, getting their own farms instead of living out their lives working for absentee owners and forever in debt at the company store; an all too common feature of the agrarian South.

In Demopolis I had met and fallen very much in love with a young man, Ed Bailey, 6'2, blond, very handsome; the son of a doctor and from a long established family there. I had had other beaus, but he was the first one I ever got serious about. He was a wonderful dancer, and we enjoyed the many dances in Demopolis. He could even -- he was even adept at doing the "dip", which was very popular at the time.

Demopolis was a good time town. That was another thing. Montevallo was always such a stiff, tacky town. Demopolis, in the Alabama black belt, so called because of the soil, was a holdover from the south of "Gone with the Wind", lots of wealthy people, especially the Webb families. The city sits at the confluence of the Tombigbee and Black Warrior Rivers, and, as I said, was then a high-heeled town.

Mr. Watt commissioned me to write and direct a pageant my first year there, and I based it on the arrival at Demopolis of the first settlers, French-Huguenots, who called the settlement the Vine and Olive Colony; it failed. Every child in school was in that pageant; the teachers and

parents outdid themselves, especially with all the dances.

Back to Ed: We went together my last two years there, but money was a big problem. He lost his job, couldn't get another for a long time. His mother was opposed to our marrying, couldn't blame her; we would have had to live with his parents. Don't think she actually liked me all that much, and so forth. Well anyway, when I didn't return to teach, we still stayed close, with me often coming to Netta's on weekends and he to Montgomery. He was the most considerate, gentle, caring man I ^{ever} knew, bar none. He later became a very successful business man, was elected mayor, and guided the city through the shoals of integration with the minimum of disturbance.

This is funny: He married one of my former sixth-grade pupils, an absolutely brilliant girl. They had two sons and two daughters. I think your first love never is forgotten.

Back to those dances: Louie Armstrong was in town one night playing at the Peacock Ballroom, a popular black dance location. He had promised faithfully to come to the community center at 2:00 a.m. to play for us, until dawn. Everyone waited, but he never called or showed. Surprised?

In Montgomery, I met Michael J. Haile, Jr., from Shamokin, Pennsylvania, a Yankee no less, but one who loved the South with all his heart. He would tell people, with a straight face, that he was from Montgomery. When they would ask him about his accent, he would say in all honesty, "Oh,

I've lived in the North a long time." Michael had always been the different one in his family. Often tilting at windmills, trying new things, interested in many things. A friend called him a Renaissance man. Brilliant, but I may as well say it, very difficult to live with. Don't know why he ever noticed me; he didn't date much anyway, was a confirmed bachelor at 32.

He had many good friends, both male and female, was the hail fellow well met type. He told me I reminded him of his mother, whom he had adored. I never knew her, but by all accounts, she was a saint, which should have warned me because I never pretended to be one. I must have looked something like her, at least, because he had an odd way of sitting while in a group, and looking at me steadily for long periods of time, disconcerting, but still sort of flattering, you know?

We dated casually for about a year (I was still dating Ed). Finally, Michael asked me to marry him, and I consented. I was 28. He was Catholic, a lifelong Catholic, Catholic schools, the whole bit. But, when we met, he hadn't received the sacraments in years, though he went to Mass regularly. Being Michael, he disagreed with some of the teachings of the church, and in a time when Catholics simply didn't argue with priests about church policies and teachings, he did.

He had left home right after high school; never lived

there permanently after that, but stayed very close to his family always. All his life, he wrote his dad a penny post card every single day. His dad would have paid for him to go to Georgetown, but only if he took law. Michael had no interest in that and refused. He got involved with a repertory summer theater group based in the Catskills, for which he served as business manager and fell madly in love, unrequited, with an actress named Dorothy Dearhorn, a real piece of work. The company fell on hard times, and he took himself to New York; worked days, and attended Columbia at night. Fine, you say; yes, but the trouble was he took just the subjects he was interested in, earned enough credits to graduate, but couldn't because he had never followed a -- an accredited course. Get the picture.

He came home for a while and raised mushrooms in the basement to make some money. Finally went off to Washington, worked in the Agricultural Department. That's how he ended up in Montgomery after having worked in Dallas, which he loved.

Back to the Catholic bit: We dutifully went and talked to a priest in Montgomery. Unfortunately, he took a hard-nosed tack regarding Michael's situation. There weren't a huge number of Catholics in Montgomery in those days, maybe he just wanted to hold on to any he could find. Anyway, he told Michael he would have to do a year's penance before marrying. Michael thanked him, respectfully. Going down

the steps, he said, "Huh, if he thinks I'm going to do that, he's crazy. You'll marry somebody else in that length of time." I might have at that, because I thought it was silly, too.

A good friend of his, Mike Mascia, another displaced Catholic Yankee, had married Trudy, a staunch Presbyterian, very active in her church. Trudy insisted we be married in her church. We didn't have to make any commitment to her faith to do so, and we gratefully accepted. We were married by her pastor, Dr. McGuire, who was very kind to us. Trudy and her family got into the spirit of things, even decorated the church. They ordered huge cartons of smilax from south Alabama where it grew wild, and using it with white chrysanthemums, all of which I paid for, of course, they did a magnificent job.

Trudy got me a soloist, a friend of hers with a beautiful voice, who sang Goanod's "Ave Maria", Michael's favorite hymn, and "Oh, Promise Me", which I love. Walton gave me away; Patty was my matron of honor. I still remember starting down the aisle too fast in my excitement, and Walton said, very kindly, "Easy does it." The groomsmen were Patty's Dan; my brother, William; Bill Wood, best man and Michael's best friend and also chief of finance at FSA; Mike Mascia, another good friend; Red Eiseman, who got Michael working with Lion's Club in their efforts to help the blind; and lastly a friend of Michael's whom I couldn't

abide, for good reasons, but after all it was Michael's wedding, too.

My bridesmaids were Doris Wood, Bill's wife, whom I had taught typing and Spanish in Demopolis and we became lifelong friends. I had helped her get a job with Mr. Mc. She met Bill, and they were married. Plus, Margaret Turner, also from Demopolis, whom Mr. Mc. also hired. We have been close friends -- she is a wonderful person -- we have been close friends all these years. And the last bridesmaid, June Reid, a girlhood friend from home. June, the nut, borrowed my wedding dress, kept it for two years, always had some excuse when I thought to ask about it. Finally, when I was leaving for Washington, I called and told her I was coming for it, and did. She gave it to me in its box, and when I got home, I found the pretty lace yoke was ruined. She had spilled something, if I knew June, it was alcoholic, and it was ruined. It was covered in brown splotches. People are really strange sometimes, except me, of course.

Michael was transferred to Washington in 1942, continued with Agriculture. I had worked after we married with Alabama State Headquarters of Selective Service, so in D.C., I applied at National Headquarters. What an interesting job that turned out to be. We had our own building, several stories tall, and on my first day when I joined a group of new employees, we couldn't believe it when we were greeted by name by Director Lewis B. Hershey,

himself, a courtesy he extended to all new employees on the first day. After a couple of days in the steno-pool, I was assigned to, what was called, the headquarters division which handled personnel, finance, and odds and ends, a sort of catch-all department, but very interesting to me.

As one of my duties, I was made notary public for the building, still have my commission signed by Franklyn Delano Roosevelt. Through that little job, I got to meet many of the department heads, all high-ranking military officers of the Army, Navy, Coast Guard, or Marines. Most of them a credit to the service, but some of them just figureheads, I thought.

One of them, a colonel, was amused one day when I refused to notarize a legal document, something to do with the sale of property. He wanted me to back date it to a date when I happened to know he wasn't even in D.C., and I didn't feel I should swear that he had appeared before me on that date. He didn't give me a hard time, but did say I was too meticulous. I felt that if some way that date might prove significant, and anyway, it wasn't kosher, so he had to go someone else to get it notarized.

Another little assignment I was given, was to go in an army car with Negro sergeant driving, twice a month to pick up all the salary checks for the building. It was a nice break, even, and I enjoyed it. But after I became pregnant in late 1943, one day on this jaunt, I became nauseated and

had to ask him to let me out; he did and stood by with his face averted so as not to embarrass me. When I finished, he helped me back in the car, and we continued on our way as though nothing had happened.

I remember that a lot of girls from the South who went to D.C. to work put on an exaggerated southern accent. Never could figure out why. One gal from Birmingham did so to such an extent that you could hardly understand her. One day a fellow worker said to me, "You don't sound like So-and-so." I said, "Neither does anybody in Birmingham."

I forgot to mention about the wedding that none of Michael's family attended it. His sister Betty wanted to -- wanted to come and asked for a dispensation from the church for just that one time, but the priest reminded her that Catholics, at that time, could not attend a non-Catholic wedding, refused to give her the dispensation. That's all changed now, and high time.

1943: Michael enlisted in the Navy, was accepted in spite of the fact that he was totally color blind. They were more concerned that he had two less teeth than he should have, which I thought was hilarious. Of course, he could not be assigned many jobs on account of his eyes, but there were a lot of others he could do. So he got waivers for both. He was commissioned Lieutenant J.G. and went off to Connecticut for training, where at 35, he was the old man in his squadron.

I forgot to mention that the WAVES had been organized at that time, and Michael thought it would be a great idea if I also got in the Navy, this, of course, before I got p.g.

I gathered all of the necessary credentials and recommendations, took off from work, took the written and physical examinations, passed them, and they proposed to swear me in on the spot. But Michael thought that by some miracle, we might even be assigned to the same base. So, I asked them to let me wait to be sworn in later. They agreed, which was fortunate, because the next week, I learned I was pregnant. I told an admiral about that once, and he said, laconically, "Short Cruise." My friend, Margaret Turner, became an officer in the WAVES, was sent to Hawaii to replace a male officer and served there with distinction. Another friend of hers and mine, Lee Jones, also joined the WAVES; was not commissioned, but had an enviable record at her job at Hunter College, I believe it was.

Michael and I took a trip once to meet Margaret and Jonesy in New York. Had to stand up all the way from D.C. on the train to get there, and arrived to find them at the hotel. But our reservations had been canceled due to a huge influx of West Point cadets who were milling around in the lobby there for some big government whoop-de-do. We grabbed a taxi and spent hours trying to find some place to sleep.

Finally did at some flea bag somewhere way the heck and gone, but we didn't care; we had a good time -- good visit just the same.

After the war, Margaret came to Fort Worth and rented a business with Jimmy Boggess, a fellow WAVE friend with whom she had served in Hawaii. They opened a small variety store, and I was delighted to be able to be with Margaret again. She is a wonderful, talented person, and I treasure her friendship; also, Jonesy's, who went back home to teach in Enterprise, Alabama, the town with the monument to the bullweevil, erected to honor the pest that got the region out of the cotton-raising merry-go-round. We also have stayed friends. Actually, she was teaching first grade in Demopolis when I first went there, and, I believe, it was that through her that I met Margaret to begin with.

Back to Michael: He was assigned as aide to the executive officer of the brand-new Essex-class carrier, Bennington, the biggest class carrier at that time, and off they went on the shake-down cruise in the Gulf. I was seven months pregnant and had planned to stay on in Washington in the apartment we rented from one of the most fantastic women I ever met. I insist on telling you about her in a little while.

But when Patty heard about my plans, she got on the phone and said, "The very idea. You get on down here to Brewton and have that baby here. Dan's overseas, as you

know, and I'd love to have you." Of course, I happily agreed, and we shipped our furniture to be stored in Patty's big attic. Michael took off for the Pacific, happy as a clam, and I headed home to Alabama. A friend of his, Bronte Medlin, yearned to get out of D.C. too, but when Michael asked why he didn't apply for sea duty, he said "Teddy," (his wife) "won't let me." Well, I could have made a fuss, but I knew there would be no living with him if he had to spend the war at a desk in Washington, so I waved good-bye and took my fat self away.

Patty was absolutely wonderful, refused to accept any money for my long stay, but I took over the cleaning and cooking except on weekends, because she was working, and it worked out fine. I arrived in May of 1944.

Alabama has state-owned liquor stores, and Michael had impressed upon me to go to the one in Brewton each month and get his monthly allotment of his beloved bourbon. He would never drink anything else, and I have bad memories of many years later cooling my heels for an entire morning in Rome, as he tried in vain to wheedle some bourbon from a United States military instillation there.

But back to Brewton: I had never been in a liquor store, and embarrassed about being there pregnant, I said something to that effect to the clerk, he responded, "Yes'em, you air a little fleshy." How's that for tact?

One day, a hot one, Patty and I picked blackberries in

a nearby field, and I was pooped when we got home, envisioning a nice lie-down under an electric fan. Patty looked at me and said, "Aren't you going to help me make the jelly?" So, I got my fat self up, and we made scads of jelly. It never occurred to me to object. When Tim began to announce his impending arrival, I didn't awaken Patty; continued to count the pains from about 1:00 to 6:00. When I did tell her, she jumped out of bed saying, "You've got to have some breakfast before we go to the hospital." That was the last thing I wanted, but she insisted on fixing bacon, eggs, and toast, yet, which I obediently ate. Of course, it came right back.

So then we headed for the small hospital a few blocks away. Tim was born at 9:00 that morning, to the delight of all the family and friends. We named him Timothy Reck, Reck being Michael's mother's maiden name.

My obstetrician in Brewton, Dr. Holly, was a brilliant young man, but he had got hooked on booze and drugs, would go off on binges, but when he got sober, he'd return to his practice. We learned later that the night before Tim was born, the nurses were walking Dr. Holly up and down in front of the hospital, trying to sober him up. I was at home peacefully counting pains, so it was a good thing I hadn't rushed off to the hospital at the first twinge. The scuttlebutt was that the head nurse actually delivered Tim; if so, she did a good job, and I expect she had to do it

before.

Tim arrived on August 3rd, 1944, and a better baby there never was. When he was about three months old, Michael's ship had some trouble with its guns, and it had to return to Connecticut for refitting. He couldn't get leave and so asked me to come while he was there. Patty urged me to go; so we hired a wonderful black woman named Sally Mae who had a lifetime of looking after young -- new and young babies.

I was torn, but did go. He met me in New York; we had dinner at Jack Dempsy's and had our pictures made. We went on to Connecticut where I got to go all over the ship, including walking the length of that huge flight deck. His guns were on the forward starboard side, and when there was a kamikaze attack at night, he had certain sailors assigned to lead him up the ladders and to his gun emplacements because, of course, it was lights out during those attacks, and he couldn't see anything at night. I suppose he operated the guns by touch, but everybody else did, too, I am sure.

I rushed back to Brewton after my visit with him. Sally Mae was bathing Tim in the kitchen sink. I don't know what I expected, but of course he didn't remember me. I hadn't been gone that long, but he was only three months old. What did I know. I broke down and cried anyway, vowed I'd never leave him again. I was 32, considered pretty old

for a first baby then, but would not be now.

Patty adored him, but wouldn't let him be spoiled. He thought he had two mamas. He was good as gold and the pet of the neighborhood. When he was about a year old, he developed terrible infections, like boils, on his arms and I would have to take him to the hospital 'round the clock for penicillin shots, which was newly developed, thank goodness, for we would have lost him without it. Apparently the infections came from his tonsils, and in Fort Worth later they continued. His pediatrician kept putting me off about removing them until he was three, until I threatened to take Tim somewhere else, and he did remove them, no more trouble.

Michael returned after the war ended in 1946. The Bennington had been a part of the convoy of ships in Tokyo Bay for the surrendering -- the surrender signing, and he happened to be part of the first party to go ashore after the signing. He said the people stood silently, watching him with baleful eyes, but there were no incidents. Of course they wore side arms, but no one bothered them; wouldn't have dared, I guess, but there's always a fanatic somewhere. They went to several big department stores, but he said they were absolutely bare. He did pick up, somewhere, a Japanese rifle which he brought back to Talley, who I don't think cared much about it, but accepted it graciously. After he died, Netta gave it back to Michael, and it hangs now on our den wall.

Michael stayed in the reserves, retired in 1968 with rank of Commander after fulfilling all the various obligations, including a cruise on a submarine and many seminars at places like San Diego.

Back to his color blindness: He had adjusted well to his world, and many people never knew it. He had no trouble driving. You might say, "Well, he knew red was on top and green was on bottom." But, oddly, one day on a trip, we stopped for a light, and he said, "Mama, aren't those lights reversed?" I looked, and they were. Since he had never seen color, he couldn't tell you what he could see. I assume it was shades of grey. There must have been a sort of aura around colors is the only explanation I can come up with.

I bought a dress one time because of its style, not because of the color, which didn't do anything for my dark skin, a really not good shade of yellow. I put it on one day, and he frowned and said, "I wish you wouldn't wear that dress any more. The color isn't good on you." Go figure. I gave the dress away, pronto.

When I visited his family in Shamokin before we married, I noticed that all of them referred to him as "poor Michael", like it was part of his name. Puzzled and incensed, I asked his sister, Betty, about it and she passed the word. It stopped. I then realized that they had treated him like a cripple all his young years, a terrible

injustice, I thought.

I've gotten ahead of myself, but I'll go on. When he returned after the war, of course, we had to go back to Washington to the job he had left. So, off we went, this time with two-year-old Tim. We moved back into the same apartment with Mrs. Hoskins -- will still tell you about her.

Michael was very nervous when he returned. He had had an appendicitis attack during a typhoon, and they had no choice but to lash him to an operating table, stabilize the table, and operate in whatever light they could muster. Afterwards, they transferred him by Breeches Bouy to the Island of Ulithi for R&R. There they also pulled all his teeth, so he had false teeth when he came home. He thought I wouldn't notice, but they looked so much better than his own that, of course, I noticed right away. I didn't care if he didn't, and the dentist knew his business. I bet he became a millionaire after the war. I've had a lot of trouble, always, with my teeth. The dentist at home traded with Papa, and when his bill would get big, he'd call and say, "It's time for Frances or whoever, to come for a check up." He always found something wrong. And after Dr. Mitchell retired, a fine young dentist replaced him.

When I had trouble with a molar one day, I went to him, and when he ground out the filling, he swore. He was a mild-mannered man, but he was beside himself. He said,

"Some so-and-so has ground out this perfectly good tooth and filled it without properly drying it out, and it has continued to decay like crazy. I'm certain Dr. Mitchell, who was not a teetotaler, did that to all of us.

Back to Michael: Somebody suggested that he take up whittling to calm his nerves, so he did; got quite good at making little figures. But one day the knife slipped and gashed his left thumb; it got infected. He went to a doctor near us in D.C. who, in lancing it, slipped and jabbed the instrument into the bone, carrying the infection there. He wound up in the VA hospital where, at first, they said his thumb would have to be amputated, but after much therapy and excellent attention, it was saved, though never really too useful.

When we went to Washington in 1941 during the war, apartments, even rooms, were almost impossible to obtain. A friend happened to know Mrs. Hoskins and suggested we approach her. She was the first registered woman pharmacist in the District of Columbia, was in her 80s when we met her. I am the proud possessor of the picture of her in her graduation dress, a beautiful, black-lace, formal gown in the style of the 1880s, train and all. Her husband, also a pharmacist, had owned a drug store across the street, and she, a widow, owned the handsome three-story stone mansion where we lived until Michael went to sea. It was at Nine East Capitol Street, as its name says, just nine blocks east

of the Capitol. All that area is now black for miles and miles, but wasn't then.

She insisted I call her by her whole name, Florence Virginia, but Michael would never call her anything but Mrs. Hoskins. She was fond of me, but Michael was to her the son she never had. She also said he reminded her of her favorite nephew, so we were "In like Flynn." She lived on the first floor; the second floor was occupied by two cousins, genteel maiden ladies who retired from the State Department after 50 years service while we there.

We were on the third floor; had a huge living room with a big bay-window facing on East Capitol Street, a bedroom, ^{small dining room} bath, and a kitchen just big enough to turn around in, containing a built-in cabinet, and, I think, the first gas stove ever invented for cooking. I got the hang of it, though, and even learned to bake on it, always enjoyed making cakes to take to the office when we could get enough sugar and butter stamps. Mrs. Hoskins even had our apartment partitioned off with a door at the top of the stairs so we could have more privacy and maybe cut down on the noise of the young couple klunking around up there, although we did try to be considerate.

Our apartment had been the servant's quarters in the days gone by, which accounted for the tiny kitchen. I don't remember what we paid her; am sure it wasn't very much, but that apartment was a pearl of great price. We had never

bought any furniture except a bedroom suite because Michael -- because the house at Early Street in Montgomery was furnished -- but, before we were even married, Michael rushed me out to buy bedroom furniture so we'd be sure to have twin beds; he had never slept with others at home growing up, and I had hardly ever done anything else, so it suited me.

In Washington, we bought a small dinette set, which I still have, and some living room furniture, and settled in for the duration. Ha!

The street car ran right by the house, and I took it to work and back each day. In the crazy D.C. weather, sometimes leaving in bright, warm sunshine and coming home with it snowing like the dickens. Washington was an electric place in war time, and we took in everything in our spare time: the Smithsonian, the Watergate concerts where you sat on the grass on a knoll and listened to the music wafting from the bandshell on the Potomac, the marvelous zoo, Georgetown, well, just everything.

I couldn't get over all the ethnic food restaurants, and there was one regular restaurant where you could actually get the most delicious steaks, for an arm and a leg, of course. You had to call weeks ahead, and the line extended a block away, but they were worth it. Took me a while to learn how to drive there without meeting myself coming back when I met one of those many circles.

When we returned the second time after the war, one afternoon Tim and I had been to the hospital to see Michael and stayed too long. It was getting dark when I darted into a 7-11 type store to get a loaf of bread, foolishly leaving Tim in the car. When I returned, the little dickens, who had never been out of my sight those few seconds, had flipped the lock on the driver's side door. The side glass vents were closed, and I had even left the keys in the car. He knew exactly what he had done. He had locked Mama out, and he was tickled pink. I threatened and cajoled. As people came out of the store, I begged them to help me, but no one would. Finally, the store was getting ready to close and the lights put out, and I was frantic. A black man came out and was disgusted with that stupid white woman who would get herself in such a predicament, but he took something and broke one of the glass vents and left, refusing my offer of payment. Believe me, it taught me a lesson I never forgot.

We didn't stay long with Mrs. Hoskins the second time; I can't remember why. We moved to Fairlington, a huge apartment complex in Arlington across the Potomac. I hated it, even though we had more room. The apartment building, row on row, reminded me of dominoes standing on end. I even got lost a couple of times in the beginning trying to find my way home. When we were leaving there, I was cleaning the apartment, and a janitor came in and said, "Why are you doing that? That's my job." He was black. I said, "Yes, I

know. When we moved in, somebody had put fresh varnish onto dirt on the floor, and it was an unholy mess." I didn't want somebody else to have the same experience.

We had one neighbor, a new mother, who would throw the dirty diapers down the clothes chute to her basement and leave them there, sometimes a day or so before washing them. Soon all of us were wondering where all the roaches were coming from. Gross.

We kept in close touch with Florence Virginia, after we moved to Texas, and she stayed interested in our children. Several years later, we were in D.C. on an unplanned trip, called wanting to surprise her, were devastated to learn she had had a stroke and was unconscious. She died soon after, a great lady and good friend.

Michael was determined to get out of D.C. the second time, got transferred after about a year to FAA (then CAA) and we went to Fort Worth, Texas, bought on the GI Bill a little two-bedroom one-bath house in Ridglea, a nice suburb on the west side of town, on Curzon Avenue. As I remember, it cost a little less than \$10,000. Can you imagine? Only the foundation had been laid when we entered into the agreement to buy it, so we continued to live in the small motel with cooking privileges until the house was completed. We moved in, put up a cyclone fence and started planting trees and shrubs like mad. I couldn't stand that West Texas barrenness.

When we drove into a filling station on arrival, I asked the man what the weather was like. He said, "Lady, there's nothing between us and the North Pole but a barbed-wire fence." He wasn't kidding either. He could have added about the dust storms, the infrequent but very real, swarms of grasshoppers, and all the other good stuff. But, we were glad to be there anyway.

There on January 23rd, 1948, our long awaited, beautiful daughter was born at four minutes before midnight. We named her Gretchen, and she was welcomed joyously by family and friends as Tim had been. When she and I left the hospital, we rode home in style in the special little lavender ambulance used only for transporting new babies and their mamas. Neat, huh.

The area was relatively new, and soon, all the young mamas, especially, began working to get a grammar school built there. We organized a preschool PTA, something I had never heard of. Somehow I got to be president, and it was a great experience. Later, a junior high was built. Mary Louise Phillips Grammar School was soon a reality. It was just about three long blocks from our house, so Tim and Gretchen walked to school, even in kindergarten.

Tim hates it when I tell this story, but I will, anyhow. On his first day in kindergarten, I got all ready to gather up the baby and go with him, but he said, "Mama, you don't come, too." I was crushed, but he really wanted

to go alone. So I stood on the front stoop and watched that little towhead (he was blond until he was preteen) trudging off, looking back every now and then to make sure I wasn't following. Later on, the junior high school, Monnig, was built, which Tim attended, but not Gretchen.

In 1954, we built a much larger house on five acres farther west, seven miles outside the city limits in a brand-new subdivision called, without much imagination, El Rancho Estates. Before I go on here, I want to tell about something that happened in Gretchen's kindergarten, too. I'm sure she's tired of it, but she doesn't have to read it. I was often in and out of school for one reason or another, and one day in her kindergarten a little redheaded boy looked at me and said, "I didn't know your mama was that old." I had never thought about my age, being so tickled to have my children, but he had a point. I was 40; his mama was 20-something. I was almost 36 when Gretchen was born, and Mamie wrote me, "I'm so happy about your little girl, but let this one be the caboose." Gretchen was.

Our favorite neighbors in El Rancho were Dolores and Edward Love and their four children: Vincent, L-i-s-a, pronounced Lissa, David, and Anne Marie. We became fast friends, and our lives will forever be enriched by our knowing them.

We had hardly moved in before we set about -- you guessed it -- planting trees. Michael went down to College

Station, the agricultural experiment station, where you could get for the asking, all the seedling trees you wanted. He brought back 100 of them about 6 feet tall, I guess, all especially grown to withstand West Texas weather; cottonless cottonwoods, that is without that terrible little white stuff that regular cottonwoods produced, fruitless mulberries, non-fruiting mock-orange called bois d'arc, and mimosas, also hardy. We planted every blessed one of them, about a third of them survived, and our place looked like an oasis in the desert after a while. The neighbors, West Texans, all, thought we were out of our ever-loving minds.

A neighbor walked over one day when I was working in the yard and said, "You realize, of course, you are going to have to rake a lot of leaves." I said, "I most devoutly hope so." He walked away, shaking his head.

Michael would mow the lawn occasionally, but that was the extent of his yard work, and not even that after Tim got big enough. I sprigged the lawn, almost an acre of it. I really enjoyed yard work; fortunately, had inherited a pretty good green thumb from Mama. When I tackled the lawn project, I began as soon as it got light enough to see because mid-morning it was too hot to continue. The same neighbor came over one day and said, "I just wanted you to know that the neighbors are all -- all have bets on who is going to win here, you or Mother Nature. I'm betting on you."

They also thought I was daffy because I planted gardenia bushes on the north side of the house. I had seen some pitiful little gardenia things in people's yards always planted on the south side, so they would just cook. I put mine on the north side and they flourished like the proverbial greenbay tree, so beautiful and fragrant in the spring; they're still there, thank goodness. Will tell you why I say that later.

Netta and others gave me bushels of beautiful iris rhizomes. Oh, how they reminded me of home. Didn't try to grow too many flowers, though, I mean annuals. Netta and Patty came to visit us once after I had been doing all this. Patty took one look at me and said, "You look just like a (the 'N' word)." I guess I did. I never blistered, just got darker.

When we bought the El Rancho house, the only thing growing there was one little thorn bush and a lot of wiry grass, which even the horses couldn't eat. Michael and Tim strung barbed-wire around the big pasture, and we built a small barn there.

I forgot to mention that in Ridglea, Michael built Tim a small play house that had a sign above the door saying "no girls aloud", spelled a-l-o-u-d.

At El Rancho, we had two horses, Gretchen's mare, Lady, who turned out to be too skittish and Gretchen never took to riding anyway, though we kept Lady a while just in case.

Tim's gelding, Rex, suited him just fine. He rode Rex like he was born to the saddle. After a while, Michael and Tim went down to Mexico and brought back, in the back seat of my car, a young Mexican burro, all the rage as pets at that time. Because of her color, we named her Ginger, and she was a character if there ever was one. No one could ever ride her. She'd plant those slender legs, and you simply couldn't budge her. She'd let Tim sit on her back, but that was it. She had so much curiosity you wouldn't believe.

One day, Lady had run into the barbed wire and had a bad gash on her leg, so the vet came and was bent over examining her when Ginger came up noiselessly behind him, saw him bending over, and seeing something in his back pocket, nibbled it. He whirled around and glared at me with the iciest blue eyes I've ever seen. I couldn't help it; I roared with laughter to think that he thought I was trying to pick his pocket. He was so embarrassed he would never come back, but would send somebody else.

One day, Ginger nibbled at the latch on the gate into the backyard until she opened it, prissed herself to the back door, and announced that she was hungry. I got some oats and coaxed her back to the gate. She got halfway through and planted those little hooves. I pushed and I pulled. I coaxed and berated her. A neighbor drove by and waved, noticing me and Ginger; an hour later he came back and we were still there, so he drove into the driveway and

said, "What, may I ask, are you doing there?" I said, "I'm trying to get this confounded donkey back into the pasture, but I'm not strong enough to budge her, no matter what I do." Of course, he had Miss Ginger back in the pasture in no time. Actually, she figured out right away that he was a different kettle of fish, a stronger person than I, and she calmly walked through the gate with hardly any coaxing.

One day I was slaving away in the yards, when a longtime Texas friend of Michael's, Ted Watson, appeared around -- came around the corner of the house, took a look at me and said, "Why you look just like Babe Didrickson." I knew she was a marvelous athlete, and he meant it as a compliment, I guess, especially since she was a Texan, but she was also homely as a mud fence. I went in the house, bathed, slathered lotion and face cream all over, muttering, "Babe Didrickson, indeed." Didn't go outside again, that is, until the next day.

One night, Michael and I were sitting in the back yard and all of a sudden, I heard the most wonderful sound: leaves rustling in the wind. We realized the trees had finally gotten big enough to rustle. The wind never stopped blowing. Hot as blazes in the summer, like the man had said, off the North Pole in Winter.

One hot day, I noticed something strange. The brick wall of the kitchen had actually moved away from the framing, about two or three inches. I rushed into the house

and called, I think, Edward Love. He said, "Calm down. Just take a hose, set it so the water is running in a slow stream. Set the hose against the foundation (there were no basements in Fort Worth) and let it all run all night very slowly. It will move back. I thought, "Yeah, right." But, you know, it did exactly that. I say "I" here so much, because Michael was away so much in the country of Panama, especially, where he was negotiating for enough land for FAA to build housing for a large contingent of employees going there. Nothing tends to happen fast in Spanish-speaking countries, and land is scarce in Panama, so it took a lot of negotiating. He had to go back and forth many times before Panama and Washington could agree on terms. His work often took him to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, also.

Without the children, I don't know what I'd have done, especially Tim, with the hard work, caring for the animals and all kinds of chores, and Gretchen helping me in the house. We had a wonderful German Shepard named Lana, the most intelligent dog I ever knew. She could actually talk to you. I'll give an example. She was really Tim's dog; followed him everywhere. One day, he and some other boys were trying to catch minnows in the little creek over the hill so they could go fishing. Directly, he brought Lana back and said, "Mom, please keep Lana in. She's scaring the fish," and he went out closing the door. Lana looked at me and said plain as anything in dog talk, "I don't want to

stay here." I answered right back, "Now Lana, you know you're scaring those fish." She said, "No, I'm not." I said, "You are too. Now lie down on the floor and behave." She sighed, "Oh, all right," and lay down and stayed there until Tim came home again.

It was just uncanny the way she understood what you said to her. We also had a "cat factory" until I got tired of trying to give kittens away and we had her spayed, as Lana already was. One pitch black night when Tim was away too, I heard a noise at the back door. There were Lady, Rex, Ginger, Lana and assorted cats. I'd forgotten to feed the big animals and they had gotten out of the pasture gate and come looking for food; nearly frightened me out of my wits when those big shapes loomed up out of the dark. They'd found the dog food and were having a ball.

Not once when he left on any trips either at home or abroad, did Michael ever ask me whether I had enough money to tide me over until his return. He came from a totally German background on both his mother's and father's sides. Men of that ethnic group (at least in my day) were convinced that men were endowed with some kind of God-given right to totally control the family finances, doling out to their wives what they, the husbands, thought proper. (Like Papa did.)

One reason, among many others, for my working almost throughout my married life, was so that I would have money

of my own. Even after he retired and was flitting all over the world and I was still teaching, he asked me to give him \$300 a month out of my salary check, which I did, maybe because he did ask, not demand. Through the years, I paid the grocery bill, my personal and clothes expenses, bought furniture and all the other household furnishings (on time).

There was always enough money in his budget for cartons and cartons of cigarettes and bourbon for the nightly drinks. Michael did not ever get drunk, but he was a type of alcoholic nevertheless. Anyone who cannot go through a single day without drinking is an alcoholic, in my opinion.

And the cars -- Michael was absolutely hooked on them, very seldom finishing paying for one before trading it in and starting over again. I had everything from a big old green four-holer Buick to two Pontiac Grand Prix'; two Ford Thunderbirds and a Chevrolet (hated it because it didn't have power steering), a Volkswagen, and finally the Lincoln Continental, the last car he bought me. I finished paying for it after he died and drove it a total of 10 years. His cars were traded equally as often and almost in as much variety. When the children were teenagers, Tim had two Corvairs, and Gretchen a Pinto, I believe.

While we were living in El Rancho, a neighbor, Mr. Allen Bronston, a geologist, gave me a part-time job. I didn't ask for it, he approached me and I gladly jumped at the chance. It was interesting and I learned a whole new

line of work and vocabulary; learned to read plats. Mr Bronston spent a lifetime trying to make a big oil strike, but never succeeded.

His wife was a "horse nut;" she owned a purebred stallion and spent a fortune breeding him trying to get a strain of Palominos from which she was supposed to make a fortune. Didn't work out. Every time a colt of Sir Mallie's was born, Lorraine just knew it was going to be a Palomino filly, but it never was. Male colts arrived with monotonous regularity without the Palomino strain.

Well, back to Michael Haile. In 1961, Michael requested and got a transfer to the newly reopened FAA district office in Atlanta. This office had been closed some years before in one of the government's ill-considered economy moves. He was given carte blanche to choose his key personnel in his department; traveled all over the country to interview people he wanted.

Tim and Gretchen enrolled at North Fulton High School; Tim a senior and Gretchen in eighth grade. I had told them the children here would be friendly; they were not. Treated Tim and Gretchen like intruders into their tight little cliques. Gretchen said all the little girls were petite types with names like Tammy Sue and Mary Alice. "And here comes this giraffe from Texas named Gretchen," (her words, not mine.) However, they made friends and both did well. I hated for Tim to have to spend his senior year away from his

lifelong friends, but it couldn't be helped.

Tim attended Mercer at Macon freshman year; transferred to Emory and graduated. Returned to Mercer for pre-law; was persuaded that UGA had a better law school; transferred there. But he was drafted. Was selected for OCS but turned it down because he said he just wanted to serve his two years and get out. He had ~~not~~ interest in a military career. He spent a year in Vietnam and you have my word that a mother can hold her breath that long.

When he returned, he worked for C&S Bank and Southern Bell; became a stockbroker for 10 years, then decided a few years ago to make a change. He is a top salesman for Mark Shale, ^{and women's} mens' clothiers in Atlanta at Lenox Square. Last year, he received special recognition at the main office in Chicago for having sold \$400,000 worth of merchandise the previous year. The very thought boggles my mind. He is divorced and the proud father of my only grandchild, Eva, 13, who lives in Atlanta, thank goodness. (More of her later). {Page 67 - notes}

[BEGINNING OF TAPE 7] *Re Michael's smoking:*

-- he would light up when he finished eating, whether we were still eating or not. He seriously tried to stop once. His idea was to gradually wean himself off by smoking just one an hour. The trouble was he spent most of that time looking at the clock, becoming so jittery that I said,

Gretchen attended UGA one year but didn't like the hugeness of it, having to go by bus from class to class and, likely as not, arriving to be "taught" by a tape of the professor's voice. For a number of reasons, she asked to come home, enroll at Georgia State and graduated there. We were delighted to have her do so. She always did well in school and her career since graduation has been outstanding. At Michael's suggestion, she first applied at Southern Bell, where she worked her way into positions of responsibility and opportunity for growth. This was at a time when women had to work twice as hard and produce twice as flawlessly as men in order to get anything but low paying, mediocre jobs. People would ask me, "What is Gretchen doing now?" When I'd say she was with Southern Bell, they'd assume she was a telephone operator but I would explain that she was a Junior Executive. Before long, she went with Cox Cable, which is headquartered in Atlanta. There, after fighting the gender barrier and proving her abilities and work ethic, she was promoted to Vice President and General Manager for Cox Cable at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

In 1973, Gretchen had married Pat Shine in the Convent Chapel of St. Jude's Church in Atlanta. Pat was a crackerjack salesman with a beverage producing company and he often won trips to such places as the wine-producing regions of California, the Revolutionary War areas around Boston, to Europe, etc. They spent several years buying and fixing up two homes (at separate times) in the Oglethorpe University area, both of them having excellent ideas about decorating and fixing up these homes. In Myrtle Beach they built a beautiful home in a new subdivision which included a golf course, important because Pat is what Michael called a "scratch golfer."

When I visited them there, Gretchen often had to work late and Pat, who likes to cook, would have dinner waiting when she got home. I would go sometimes with him when he played golf after work, would ride in the cart or walk some of the course with him. At Myrtle Beach Gretchen entered into many civic activities as Cox Cable's representative, served on boards and was known and respected for her abilities and interest in everything involving the city. During this time, Cox built a new headquarters there and she got to add her suggestions in the planning and building processes.

Unfortunately, after almost 20 years of marriage, she and Pat divorced. He stayed in Myrtle Beach but they sold the house. She was promoted to Vice President and General Manager of Cox Cable in Roanoke, Virginia. I visited her for Thanksgiving in 1995 and got to see the lovely home she was then having built there. She has continued in Roanoke the excellent work and reputation for executive ability that has made her well known throughout the industry.

"For Heaven's sake, go back to smoking." He would have anyway.

In 1980, he was diagnosed as having lung cancer, entered West Paces Ferry Hospital ^h where he took a carton of cigarettes with him, but was ordered to give it to me to take home. He went into surgery at 6:00 a.m. At eleven o'clock, I was in the waiting room, a friend, Winnie Wallace, was with me. I had told the children to go on to work and come when the operation was over. I felt sure that the finding -- what the findings would be, but you always hope --

At eleven o'clock, the surgeon came in, said that the operation was over, indicated that it had proceeded as anticipated -- a lie -- and that Michael was in recovery. He was not. Long afterwards we ferreted out the information, that the anesthesiologist had allowed his blood pressure to get too low, and he actually had a stroke. Gretchen came and we sat there until 2:00 p.m. with no further word, no one came near us. I said, "Gretchen, something is wrong." She ran to the correct door, and the nurse who answered it, said in surprise, "Didn't you know they have taken him to X-ray?" Tim arrived; questioned the anesthesiologist, a mistake because it alerted those involved that we knew there was a cover-up. Much later, I paid \$250 to get Michael's record of that operation subpoenaed, and, guess what, there was no mention whatsoever

of anything unusual happening during the operation. I have a copy of those records. We consulted a lawyer, not for remuneration, but for justice. But he said too much time had passed and they had covered their tracks too well. I learned much later that that same surgeon and team were blamed for the paralysis of a young girl I knew of at St. Jude's.

A very haughty specialist came and told me that Michael would never speak again, but that he would understand at least some of what was said to him, and that he would possibly recognize people at least some of the time. Don't get me wrong. I knew from the beginning that in all probability they would not be able to remove the cancer, all the cancer, which they couldn't, but, if ever there was a botched operation, that was it.

He stayed in the hospital for weeks, in a coma. I asked for and received a bed in his room and stayed around the clock; this after he came out of the coma, going home to shower and look after things. Of course, they would let me; I relieved the nurses of some of their surveillance of him.

Our doctor, ^{Leigh} Lee Scott, was very good to us, doing everything he could to keep Michael in the hospital as long as possible, but the day came when he said to me, "Mrs. Haile, I'm sure that the hospital board is going to rule that he has to leave because he can't get well." I was frantic, wanted to take him home. But he said, "He has to

have around-the-clock nursing, and I know you can't afford that."

Sure enough, he was dismissed from that hospital, and I put him in a nursing facility across from Northside Hospital while waiting to get him into Our Lady of Perpetual Help cancer home, a nursing home for terminal cancer patients. It is run by an order of nuns who spend their lives caring for those unfortunate people. The patients are taken in without regard to gender, age, color, or creed. It is not a huge hospital, and was full when I applied for Michael. He had to wait until someone died. I didn't know that at the time.

There's always a waiting list, and I feel sure that our Pastor, Father Morrow, put in a good word for him, though I didn't ask him to. I will always be grateful to him. It is unlike any hospital you can imagine. The rooms are spacious and bright; the walls are soft pale yellow as are the bed curtains; there are pretty live plants, and a live bird in a cage in each room. Also a TV, which is turned on in the daytime with the sound turned down, but the pictures moving on the screen make it possible for the patients to relate to the outside world. You are not allowed to pay for the care while the patient is there. But, after they die, the home gratefully accepts donations or services from the families. I go in to all this detail because I know of no other place like that other than the homes the sisters have elsewhere.

When Michael was there, no one else was ever put in his room, I don't know why, as there were, I think, four beds. Perhaps, it was because they were short of nurses. His nurse was Sister Aquinas, Sister Mary Aquinas, a feisty little thing in her 60s. The day the children and I brought him in with me riding in the ambulance with him, she got him all settled then turned to me and said, "Go home and get some sleep. You look like you could use it." Almost all the nuns, at that time, were getting old, in their 60s, 70s, even 80s, two of whom I know have died, including Sister Aquinas, she of cancer.

Michael's orderly, Willie, was equally kind and expert. Everyday the good Lord sent, he would lift Michael in his arms, place him on another bed, go over every inch of his bed with disinfectant, change it, and place Michael back in it. I shall love him forever, too.

When Michael died, I called Sister Aquinas and asked whether she and Willie could come to his funeral. I don't believe any one had ever asked that before, judging by her reaction, but, bless them, they both came, as well as an old priest in a wheelchair, who was in a room next to Michael's and was always interested in him.

Michael's brother, Eddie, came from Shamokin once, he and a nephew, Eddie Campton. Michael obviously recognized Eddie Campton and tried to speak to him, but only looked in puzzlement at his brother. His favorite niece, Rosemary,

also came with Eddie Haile to the funeral, and accompanied also by her husband, Vincent. William and Annette came, as did Dionetta, Margaret, and Jonesy, as well as, Dolores and Edward Love from Texas.

I forgot to mention that I was not allowed to visit until afternoon, don't really know why because he was usually heavily sedated by then and seldom roused, but I went everyday, hoping he would. Once it happened that "Taps" was played on the TV on some program. Michael's eyes opened wide; he looked toward the TV in puzzlement. I took hand sewing and reading material, but I don't know whether he ever knew I was there. Gretchen and I visited him the night he died, but he was struggling so, it would have been better for us if we hadn't gone. Before and after the funeral, loving friends from the Sandy Springs Woman's Club received the food, served it, and cleared up afterwards.

I wish to thank, especially, my wonderful friend, Kitty Brasfield, for visits and countless evidences of her love for me. I offer her mine in return, with all my heart. If there is a person without fault, it is our Kitty.

After Michael died, I made 16 white uniforms for Sister Mary Aquinas, plus seven of those so-called slips they wore, so modest they could be worn outside. After he died, I joined the hospital auxiliary, and a small group of us, Kitty among them, went once a week to play Uno with patients in wheelchairs, who felt well enough to do so. Someone had

the bright idea that we should make goodies to take to the patients on those Tuesdays, but we soon realized that we were just treating the black employees, and we cut that out. The patients were usually too sick to eat the goodies, anyway.

The nuns constantly needed donations of used sheets for bandages, so I took on the job of contacting all of the hospitals in my area for donations, several of them responded, and one day I arrived at the home with the Lincoln packed front and back to the roof, also the huge trunk. I could just see to drive. It was packed with sheets and pillowcases, which were gratefully received.

Unfortunately, the home is right smack up against where they are building that zillion dollar Olympic stadium, now, and I am so afraid that some big-wig, like Ted Turner, is going to want to have the home demolished to make more room for those ~~stupid~~ Braves. Don't let me get started on the Olympics; they ought to be called the Moneylympics. If I ever had any illusions about a city wanting to host the Olympics, they are long gone now. I'm not talking about the athletes, of course, just the money-grubbing city, and if I have to see Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter's names, Jane Fonda's (Mrs. Ted Turner), and Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, in the paper or on TV more than another thousand times, I'm going to throw up. Add to that list Hank Aaron, Andrew Young, and Coretta Scott King, all deserving of praise, I am sure, but

enough is enough already.

Let me go back to 1966 a moment. I decided I needed to make more that year, so left St. Jude's and went to work at the brand new VA hospital in Decatur. My first job was to take, into the typewriter, the applications of the returning veterans wishing to enter. Too many of them just needed to be dried out, but a lot of them, I enjoyed getting to know.

I forgot to mention that during the physical I had to take before going on duty, the doctor asked me if I smoked. I said I never had, and he said my lungs had scar tissue on them, so I must have lived a long time with a smoker.

My next job was in charge of the paperwork in all details in connection with the death cases, including notifying the next of kin that their father, brother, son, or whoever had died. If they lived far away, I had to make a recording and play it on the phone, I guess to prove that they were notified. Then saw to the disposition of their personal effects, some pitifully few. The record was the easy part. I never got used to delivering the news face to face.

When the young boys started coming in from Vietnam without arms, legs, or otherwise grievously wounded, I could hardly bear it, especially since, in the beginning of the war, they didn't even have veteran status. They were really treated like charity cases. I knew a lot of people wouldn't believe that, but I know whereof I speak. Don't

misunderstand me; they got the medical attention that they needed, I guess. It was just the attitude of those in charge that got to me.

The day a boy of about 19 came in with both legs gone, and someone said, "Oh, another non-veteran," I knew I had to get out of there. Another reason was that I realized that the first thing I turned to in the morning paper, was to the obituaries to see whether Mr. So-and-so had died during the night, so I'd know what was waiting for me at the hospital.

One day I went to lunch with friends and found my parked car badly damaged on return. A visitor ^{whose} ~~who's~~ brother was a patient had just had bad news about his brother and was so upset, he hit my car. He went to the trouble to locate me and paid for the damage. Someone also crushed one whole side of my car at the cancer home, but that time, the offender didn't leave any word. I began to think the Lincoln was a target.

Anyway, after a year at the VA hospital, I resigned. They took me back at St. Jude's where I stayed happy as a clam with my little second graders until the 1973-74 term, a total of 11 years at St. Jude's.

One summer, I also took a temporary job with the Internal Revenue, which was then located downtown in temporary quarters. I could write a book about that, but I won't. Relax. Never regretted it though. I guess I just never learned to say I can't, was always like the little

engine that could.

It's more than time to talk about Tim's Eva, my only grandchild. Tim's daughter, Eva, lives with her mother and stepfather in Atlanta. She and Tim have a special relationship, enjoy being together, very much. If her homework permits, they get together one evening during the week for supper and, as often as possible on weekends, going to the fabulous Fernbank museum, to the zoo, to movies, or whatever suits them. Ever since she was three, when Tim and Eve divorced, he has taken her on a great trip in summer to the beach, Disney World, Dollywood, and so forth. She attends Lovett School, an excellent private school with extremely high standards. Her teachers give her high praise for her achievement in all areas. Lovett doesn't ^{only} give ^{also} letter grades on reports. Instead, each teacher gives a narrative report on the child, which I think tells a great deal more than just grades -- letter grades. Eva has always had a copy made for Tim. He and I bask in the glow of the teacher's comments.

When there are events at school to which parents are invited, Tim never fails to go, to get off from work and go, that is to chorus concerts, softball games, special programs, and the like. She is starting to grow taller, which pleases her greatly, as she wants to be tall. She has beautiful dark hair and eyes, is wearing braces now, courtesy of her dad. I think, she is, and has always been,

the most mature child for her age that I have ever known. She is very sweet to me, and I cherish any time spent with her. It's fun to see them together. They have a good time whatever they do, and where ever they go.

Recently, she went to her first school dance with a boy. Most girls would be all fluttery, but when I asked her about it, she said, "It was okay, no big deal." She has started to baby-sit some after school for a couple living near them, and I think the parents are fortunate to have her. She likes to operate remote control airplanes -- model airplanes and cars with Tim. On the other hand, she truly appreciates the ten or so beautiful Franklin Heirloom dolls I collected for her when she was small. She took some of them home, but doesn't have room for all of them at the present time.

Patty Talley will also know what I am talking about when I say that I also collected a group of the unique handmade dolls originated by Mrs. Mary Self in Demopolis. Netta helped me get them, for they were never made en masse.

Oh, back to dolls -- to the Self dolls. Neiman Marcus approached Mrs. Self about making them in quantity, and I was glad to know that she declined, for they would have had to be mass produced. I later saw some of the latter, and they couldn't compare to Eva's, which are now collector's items.

Eva was born exactly one week after Michael died. He

would have been as delighted with her as I am. I am leaving her my sterling silver flatware, I bought Gretchen's for her before she and Pat were married, and I know Eva will love and appreciate it as much as Missy does Netta's, which Netta left her. Coincidentally, Eve has the same pattern, Gorham's Chantilly.

Tim and I think Eva is a Kroell. He says in many ways that fact evidences itself. I hope she will consider that a compliment someday. Once, when she was a toddler, I kept her for a week while Eve and Tim went to New York. A friend loaned me a baby bed and I loved having her with me, especially appreciated Tim and Eva entrusting her to me. Of course, Eva doesn't remember it. I think Eve has done an excellent job of rearing Eva, and Tim has been an excellent, though absent, father.

To bring me up-to-date, I have had two bouts with chemical dysfunction in recent years, both following surgery. The first in 1983, after having two steel clamps, or staples, put into the bone of my right foot. The second in 1990 after having one-third of my pancreas removed in order to remove a small tumor called an insulinoma. I was told that an insulinoma is a very rare occurrence. My doctor Fitzhugh said he had one case in 30 years, and I just as soon not have had one either. As I understand it, it's just the opposite of diabetes, which is a lack of insulin. If I ever let my stomach get empty, I would become

disoriented, would still function, but, at worst, wouldn't know where I was.

Once on a trip to LaFayette to visit the cemetery and see Talley's sisters, Kate and Julie, I evidently hadn't eaten enough, got lost, and wandered around that little town for an hour before I finally found the house. Kate, who had worked in a pharmacy and had read up on all sorts of things, knew exactly what was the matter when I finally showed up. They fed me, and, after a nap, I was okay again.

On a visit to Patty Talley during that time, I had a similar experience before arriving and [Caldwell] cautioned me to never drive without something sweet to eat. Advice which I followed. Finally went to Dr. ^{Fitzhugh} (Inaudible), had an episode while waiting in his office; he knew exactly what was wrong and what to do about it, popped me into the hospital.

I've had a pacemaker since 1988. It has been monitored each month by telephone since then. It's remarkable how they can do that. A very nice black girl calls me each time; I do certain things; she makes a tracing on a machine of some kind; a doctor reads it; and, I get a bill. Beats having to go to the doctor's office each time. It was weird when the pacemaker was being inserted. I was conscious, of course, and the technician was explaining to someone there what he was doing every step of the way, so I got to watch my own operation, so to speak. My head was covered, but I

could hear everything.

I have the infamous Kroell arthritis, especially in my hands and ankles, but I am thankful for many years of good health, during which, I was privileged to have a good life and care for my beloved family, enjoy outside activities, and the good friends who have honored me with their friendship.

Before I go, I hope you won't mind my sharing with you a few of the many adventures that Michael and I had on our many trips abroad. Just pretend they are about someone you don't know.

No. 1. On a trip to England, I ventured out one night by myself. I took one of those famous London taxis and attended a performance of Agatha Christie's most famous mystery, "The Mouse Trap". It was in a very small theater, which I didn't know. I had paid extra for a seat in the dress circle, so as to be sure to see and hear. As it turned out, my seat was almost on the stage, but, it was a marvelous performance, nevertheless. The lights had gone down before I entered, and to reach my seat, I had to get past several other people, whose voices I recognized as American. At intermission we exchanged identities, and I discovered they were from Sylacauga, Alabama, about 40 miles, I guess, from Montevallo, and the home of Jim Nabors of Gomer Pyle fame.

When the play was over, everyone rushed out to grab the

taxis lined up and waiting for their fares. Everybody but me seemed to be with a group, so, of course, the taxis took them instead of me. In no time at all, I found myself alone outside a darkened theater on the deserted street. I waited, and just before panic set in, along came a lone taxi and rescued me, taking me to our hotel.

No. 2. On another trip to London, we were traveling with Lee and Thelma Williams, good friends from Atlanta. Thelma would never go anywhere without Lee, but one night I persuaded her to go with me to a larger theater -- I asked more questions that time -- to see a play called "Rain Drops on the Moon" with Ingrid Bergman, who was middle aged and had the good sense to be playing a part suited to her age. She was superb. As we left the theater, again, there was the big rush of taxis to fill up with lots of fares. Thelma and I stood on the walk outside the theater, and I wished I could do that whistle with the two fingers in the mouth. I could tell she was really frightened, but I assured her we'd eventually get a taxi, and, sure enough, we soon did.

No. 3. In Mexico City once, I was determined to see a performance of the world-famous Ballet Folklorico. Michael, of course, declined to go saying he didn't care for ballet even after I explained that it wasn't ballet, per se, but a collection of traditional native Mexican dances, representing the various sections of the country, and all different. He did walk the three or four blocks with me to

the wide boulevard in the zona rosa, or pink zone, of the city, where I caught a street car.

The performance exceeded even my expectations, and I sat enthralled for three hours as those incredible ^{troupes} ~~troops~~ of dancers performed. I left the theater at eleven o'clock, got a street car and headed back. I had picked as my point of reference for getting off the street car the American Embassy, which was near where we had walked for me to catch the first car. Well, of course, the street car went lickety-split, and in the night, I missed my point of reference. I was hanging on a strap, as were a couple standing behind me. I turned to them and said, "(Spanish)", that is, "Please, can you tell me where the American Embassy is?" They replied, "We're sorry, we don't speak Spanish. We are from England." We had a big laugh over that.

Incidentally, one thing I always noticed in Mexico City, was that the Mexicans of Spanish decent were always the ones standing up on street cars. Those in the seats were invariably, obviously, of Indian ancestry, who sat like statues, expressionless and silent. I finally decided that the country was so proud of its Indian heritage that, in many ways, the Indian ones were favored over descendants of the Spanish conquerors.

But, back to my predicament of where was I. The English couple got off, the car zoomed along, and I soon realized we were heading out of the city, towards

Xochimilco. I got off, stepped on to the narrow traffic island in the middle of the boulevard, there I stood for seemed like forever. Mexico City's taxi drivers drive like bats out of you-know-where, and they were whizzing by on both sides. The breeze caused by their passing making my skirt fly in all directions. Finally, the traffic thinned, and one driver -- [END OF TAPE 7] *See p. 135*

*This is about my
dear friend,
Tess Brown
Higgins*

I can't tell you how it grieves me to think of that wonderful, vibrant, loving person being the victim of that cruel disease. Jimmy, whom we loved also, died young, and Tess moved to Birmingham, bought a house, which was ideally arranged for having company. The Haile's were frequent visitors. Ever so often Michael, who adored her, would call and say, "Tess, is the Higgins Hilton available for this weekend?" And she would never fail to make us feel as though we were doing her a favor by coming.

I have had other good friends, but none like Martha and Tess, ever. I never knew Martha's daughter, Claire, but Jade and Charlotte have always treated me like kin, especially Jade, who has nagged me for years to do exactly what I am doing now, write the history of the Kroells. She will definitely get a copy of it. *re: ahoffey*

Michael retired from the reserves in 1968 with the rank of commander, also retired from FAA the same year. I continued to teach until 1974, and during much of that time, he had a great time traveling space-available to Europe and

South America as a military retiree. After I retired, I joined him on many trips. We'd go space-available to our destination then go on our own way by plane, train, or bus. Space-a is not the most comfortable way to travel, but it saved us thousands of dollars.

We went to England several times, also Ireland, several times again, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, (one of my favorites,) Spain, Hawaii, and so on. I guess my favorite flight was from Madrid to Dover, Delaware on a C5A, one of those marvelous enormous cargo planes. How it got off the ground much less fly, was beyond me. I hardly even minded having to climb a ladder the height of a two-story building to get to the seats near the top of the plane.

I've had acrophobia, the fear of heights, all my life. Michael spent years trying to cure me of it. His idea was to expose me to heights a lot, like making me go up to the top of the Empire State Building and look over the parapet at the lights of the city, the same from the balcony of a hotel over-looking Puget Sound; even had a friend take me up in a helicopter. I almost had a heart attack. His idea didn't work.

Well, back to the space-a travel. Once when we were flying from Naples to Dover, a young Negro from North Carolina -- soldier -- was sitting to my left. He was trying frantically to get home to his father's funeral, had had flying delays, and was exhausted. Soon, I felt his head

go down on my left shoulder, and he was fast asleep. Michael, on my right, motioned to me he would change seats with me, but I shook my head. The soldier slept for a good two hours, was completely embarrassed to think he had slept on my shoulder. If this had happened today, he'd probably have tried to push me off the bench so he could lie down.

Mama said Papa never cared anything about us, except when we were babies. I had an example of that once when he came to see us in Fort Worth. He was sitting with Gretchen, about eight months old, on his knee, and Tim, who was three, pressed against his chair. Papa pushed him away, barking, "Get away, you ole rough boy. You'll hurt your sister." I took him aside later and said, "Papa, Tim just wants you to love him, too. If you can't treat my children alike, I don't want you around anymore." To give him his due, after that, he really was kind to Tim, would send him a little folding money with his infrequent letters and always asked about him in those letters; was sincerely interested in him.

Papa was especially hard on Dionetta as she grew up. I don't know why. But, she always looked him in the eye, and especially didn't mince words about his treatment of Mama. When she first left home to teach at the Dowaing Industrial Institute on the Alabama Gulf, his good-bye to her was a sneering, "You'll be home in a week." She said, "Just watch me." And more than proved him wrong.

Ironically, when he was old and ailing, especially with

arthritis, she was the one who took him in and cared for him a long time, though she was suffering from crippling arthritis herself.

The day Grandpa and Mama were married, Mama said that Grandma Kroell told her, "He is the meanest man that God ever let live, and you will come to know it." How's that for a new mother-in-law's send off. Sadly, it was no exaggeration. He was mean and cruel with a hair-trigger temper. And, as I said, he liked to brandish a pistol, only at home, of course, and threatened to do in anybody who crossed him in the business world. We weren't sure, at all, that he wouldn't do it to us accidentally.

Another thing, he couldn't speak five minutes without swearing, especially loved taking the Lord's name in vain. I'm just tacky enough to wonder if he ever told that in confession. If he did, he had to do it every time he went. I wouldn't bet the farm on it, anyway.

About Papa's roving eye: Once when Mama learned of some gossip along those lines, she said, "Frances, I want you to go with me to Mary and Kate. For once, I am going to tell them something about their brother. The aunts were outraged at my mother, saying brother Pat would never do anything like that. With that, they showed us the door. I was a teenager, and I never felt quite the same toward them again. I'm quite sure they knew about Papa's philandering because he was very open about it, and in this small town,

there were very few secrets, but their Kroell pride would never let them admit it.

My sisters told me that Mama had at least three miscarriages that they knew of. If my mother isn't in Heaven, no one is.

Back to more recent times. I hope you are still with me. Michael never really got over his jealousy of Tim. When he returned from the Pacific, he fully expected everything to be exactly as it was when he left. He loved Tim in his own way, but, in other ways, he was cruel to him. He made a great difference in his treatment of the children. Gretchen once told me that his being partial to her was harder on her than if he had been mean to her, a very astute observation, I thought.

He would beat Tim sometimes when he was about 12 to 14, actually taking out his own personal frustrations on the boy, for Tim never caused him any trouble, other than teenage scrapes.

Michael could have kept Tim from going to Vietnam. In his position at FAA he could recommend one young man of his choice to attend some kind of draft re-training at home. I'm vague about the details, but I remember, quite clearly, that instead of Tim, he recommended Charlie, the son-in-law of my dear friend, Tess. Go figure.

Both Tim and Gretchen, I have learned recently, fault me for not interfering when Michael would beat Tim. I can

only say that I felt sure at the time that if I had, he would have beaten him even worse, and there would have been a serious confrontation between Michael and me. I firmly believe, even to this day, that he would have had. My conscience is clear because I know of many times when I stood between him and Tim in other ways.

Michael, like most other men I've known who was of German lineage, firmly believed it was the husbands prerogative to control the family financial resources. I believe I have already said that. I will go on.

Michael had smoked nonstop all his adult life, like most of his generation, pooh-poohed the idea that cigars -- cigarettes could be harmful. I never smoked; Tim has hated it, always, and never smoked; Gretchen has smoked from time to time.

[END OF TAPE 8]

See p. 130

-- and he took me straight there. He could have taken me all around the mulberry bush because I had no idea where I was, and he could have run up a big tab, but he was honest, and soon deposited me at the hotel, where Michael, for once, was concerned, pacing up and down in front of the hotel. What's that saying about the Lord taking care of children and fools?

No. 4. On a space-a trip once to Germany, Michael and I were staying in a military facility in Garmisch-Partenckrchen, Bavaria, the town where, in 1932, Adolf

Hitler had opened the Olympics. In order to host the Olympics, those two towns had merged into one. Some miles from Garmisch, as it was usually called, was the famous castle, ^WNeweschwanstein, said to be the model for the Disney castle at Disney World. I wanted to see it; Michael didn't.

So, I took a tour bus with an English speaking guide, and we set off, arriving at the base of the mountain from the top of which the castle rose, as if reaching for the sky. We had to leave the bus to either walk up to the castle or pay to ride in the carriage, actually a sort of wagon with seats and a covered top.

The carriage was drawn by four matched white horses. The snow was pretty deep, and I wasn't dressed for walking in it, so I and several others elected to take the carriage. They sat in the back, but I hopped up on the seat beside the driver. He looked exactly like Grandpa Kroell. And, all the way up the mountain, he and I had a good time talking, me in my broken German, and he, in his broken English. As he cracked his whip at the horses straining to get up the steep grade, ~~The~~ castle, a perfect example of the feudal age, had been built by mad King Ludwig, II of Bavaria, who had a passion for building fabulous castles, almost bankrupting his country before being mysteriously murdered. He had built three, each one totally different from the others, and the country had had the good sense to preserve them all.

When I got back, I raved so over ^uNeueschwanstein that the next day Michael went to see it for himself. And the day after that, he actually took me to see another of the castles. I have forgotten its name, but it was as different from Neueschwanstein as you could imagine. It was in the style of France's Louis XIV, elegance itself, all gold and silver, with beautiful marble floors, Grecian statuary everywhere, a huge ballroom with entirely mirrored walls, and incredible huge crystal chandeliers. Unlike the feudal castle, this building was long and low. If I remember correctly, it had only two stories.

No. 5. Another time in Mexico City. I very foolishly ate a green salad, an absolute no-no, unless you have taken the precaution of swallowing tablets to prevent diarrhea, which I hadn't done. As everyone knew, at that time, maybe still, I don't know, the Mexican's fertilized their fields with human excreta. But one night at dinner, the spinach salad looked so sparkling, fresh, and appetizing I couldn't resist it. Wrong. I woke in the middle of the night violently ill; spent almost the entire night in and out of the bathroom. Michael, who at home complained that he was awakened if anyone even dropped a pin, slept soundly through the whole thing. The next morning he wanted to go to a nearby hotel to watch the Super Bowl on one of the few TVs in the area. I was glad, because all I wanted to do was collapse, sleep all day, and convince myself that I really

was going to live after all.

When the poor maid arrived in the afternoon to clean the rooms, she almost left again, but I extra tipped her with several Kennedy commemorative half dollars, which I chanced to take with me for some reason. She recognized their value and decided to stay.

When Michael returned in the late afternoon, he had chanced to meet an American doctor who sent me some tablets, which he, smart guy, always carried with him in Mexico to counteract the effects of "Montezuma's Revenge". I left Mexico five pounds lighter than when I arrived, not a particularly pleasant narrative, but worthy of mention, I thought.

As these yarn illustrate, I was never willing to go on trips and spend my time sitting around hotels or bars.

No. 6. I must not fail to mention one of the other trips to London. We met Annette and William there, he having won the trip with his good salesmanship. They were staying in a different hotel, but we decided to take a short walk one slightly misty morning. Annette and I were walking in front and missed the fellows. Retracing our steps, we found them with their noses pressed against a glass window of the display room of a dealership selling Bentleys and Rolls Royces. We coaxed them away and all of us decided to take a short train trip to a little village, believe its name was Amersham, near London. It proved worthy of the

trip, with an inn dating back to the time of Cromwell and quaint shops lining the two, as I remember, village streets.

Annette bought Michael a plaid cap which he loved, wore it till it fell apart; had his picture made in it many times, as he loved head gear.

No. 7. When I found additional information on Mayerhofen, I was reminded again about Dublin and a delightful evening I spent at the Abbey theater in Dublin at a performance of "Much Ado About Nothing." This was not the famous original Abbey theater, of course, which had been destroyed by fire long before. Michael didn't care to go, so I took a bus. At the interval, which they called intermission, the nicest Irish lady engaged me in conversation and asked me to share a refreshment with her. I had no trouble going about by myself, because the bus operators, recognizing my accent were always kind and helpful. In queuing up for a bus, as they called it, once I accidentally got ahead of a lady in line, she politely, but firmly, let me know my mistake. I also had an enjoyable visit, at that time, at the Trinity College library, to see the Book of Kells and others of Ireland's greatest treasures.

We took in a horse race outside of Dublin once, too, a very different experience from those here, but most enjoyable, also. On that same trip, I was commissioned to purchase for St. Jude's Church material for altar cloths,

hand woven linen made in northern Ireland. It had gotten very scarce, and the gentleman who sold it to me assured me that I was very lucky to get it. I was also asked by a friend to buy some Waterford crystal for her, I think two goblets, as I recall. I did so, and carried it with me all the way; the linen was shipped back. When Mary realized that I had brought it back in person, she said, "I didn't mean for you to bring it back." But, it got here in good shape, anyway, thank goodness.

Ireland has many marvelous castles, but the one I remember our going to was Ashford Castle in Galway. We spent a good deal of time in Cork, a favorite place of mine.

I just realized that in writing about my sister Mamie and her son Bobby, I didn't complete the information about Bobby's daughters. If you don't mind, I will add it here.

They didn't keep in touch very much after Bobby died. When Carol married, she came back to Wilton to do so, showed up at Mamie's house without any prior warning in her white wedding dress and announced, "Mom, I'm married." It nearly broke Mamie's heart. We tried to warn Mamie that Carol would remarry because she was young and there was no reason why she shouldn't. But, Mamie would say, "No, Carol will stay true to Bobby." So far as I know, Carol still lives in Texas. As Bobby's heir, she inherited the many, many acres of prime virgin timber, the Gunlocks had owned for generations, which she sold, of course, and, I'm sure at a

tremendous price. It was all cut to the ground.

The Gunlock's country home is gone, I understand, as is the mill where Bobby used to grind corn for them and for others. When Michelle, Bobby's older daughter married the first time, I put Mamie in the Lincoln. We took off for Plano for the wedding. Mamie and Carol had always been jealous of each other. I would have to say that Mamie erred in this regard more than Carol. But, Carol really didn't want Mamie there for the wedding, apparently. Her family, the Byrds, lived right there in Wilton, but they didn't ask Mamie to go with them in their cars, I guess, wanting to stay neutral.

Mamie fretted about it until I asked Michael if he objected ^{to} of my taking her. He said he didn't, so I took her to Birmingham to select a new dress, and we headed for Texas, after notifying Bobby and Carol, of course.

When we checked into our motel, we discovered that Carol's folks were there, too, and the two of us couldn't help enjoying the shock on their faces when they saw us. When Bobby came to take us to the house, he hugged his mother like he would never let her go, so happy he was that she came. When we got to the house Carol hugged her, too. They both cried, and all the storm clouds disappeared in time for the wedding. Mamie, with her silver hair and wearing the beautiful sky-blue dress we had selected, was a cynosure of all eyes.

This will kill you: Afterwards, she told Patty, "Frances made me buy that expensive dress. I had to pay far too much for it." I think it was \$80, but I knew she could afford it, so I did insist. She wanted lavender, but I convinced her blue was a happier choice. We couldn't find lavender anyway. They destroyed the mold when they made my sister, Mamie, God love her.

Michelle's first marriage lasted about a year. She later married a Jewish boy, converted to Judaism, and, I understand, takes her new faith very seriously; teaches in their Jewish school, and, I believe, works for the Rabbi. The last I heard, she had three sons.

Patricia, Bobby's younger daughter, spent her growing up years trying to make up to her dad for not being a boy, something he was almost paranoid about wanting. She was his shadow, learning about everything he did, chores and working on the car, everything. She is blonde; Michelle, brunette. She first -- Patricia first married a brother of Michelle's husband. That marriage soon ended, and she married a wealthy man, old enough to be her father. They divorced, also. I don't know what her marital status is now.

When Bobby died and I went to Wilton, I discovered that Carol had not even asked Mamie to come to the funeral home to see her beloved son. She did not consult Mamie about any of the arrangements there. When Mamie called and begged -- When I arrived at Wilton, I took Mamie to the funeral

home at her request. And, when we arrived, Michelle, Patricia, and Carol were bending over the open casket stroking his features: his hands, his hair, his lips, his eyes, his closed eyes, and his nose. They didn't acknowledge our presence until I asked whether they would let Mamie close enough to see Bobby. At that, they did allow us to come closer.

At the cemetery before the funeral, Mamie and I were sitting on two chairs on the front row beside the waiting closed casket talking softly about Bobby when an undertakers assistant officiously told us we had to move. I said, "This is his mother." He said, "That makes no difference; you have to move." So help me. Mamie moved to the back row of chairs under the tent, and I stood behind her with my hands on her shoulders. I don't know whether Carol left those instructions, she must have, but Bobby's mother sat behind all of Carol's kin at that funeral. Thank God, that Mamie was in such a shock that she was almost oblivious to what was happening. She never uttered a word during all this.

During the funeral service, I thought Carol was surely going to throw herself into the grave with Bobby, the horror of it is with me, yet.

I was so angry about the way Mamie was treated, that I fully intended to go to the owner of the funeral home, whom I knew personally, and give him a piece of my mind, but decided the damage had been done and changed my mind. I

still wish I had, though. Carol and the girls went back to Texas, and Mamie, at least, had her only child nearby where she could tend his grave and keep fresh flowers there, both planted and placed.

When Bobby was discovered to have cancer, Mamie simply blocked that fact out of her mind. It wasn't true period. She even bawled out a neighbor who had, she heard, talked about Bobby having cancer. So Bobby and Carol pretended, until he became so ill that she had to face the reality and went to Texas to see him. How ironic that she, too, died of cancer for she had a perfect horror of it.

Another addendum: Patty Talley, will always call her that, has reminded me -- and I'm glad she did -- that she also has been to Mayrhofen, going there by bus during a trip to Europe several years ago. She took a picture of a plaque on the side of a hotel on which plaque was the statement that the hotel was owned by a Kroell family. I'm glad she has been there and hope that someday others will go there, too.

I forgot to mention when I told about my visit that Caroline Kennedy, then a teenager, had spent that summer in Mayrhofen staying where we did. She was there learning to ski in the nearby mountains which have snow, even in summer. We were there in October and especially appreciated a feature of the Inn. That is, on the huge bathroom walls were good-sized pipes through which constantly coursed hot water,

making the room toasty warm -- which was welcome, especially at night -- though the days were still warm.

The Inn had beautiful marble floors covered with gorgeous oriental space rugs. Incidentally, we made a later, different trip to Austria to Vienna, also marvelous, seeing the famous Lippizano horses perform; the opera; the Vienna ^Woods music concerts, and so forth. Wonderful, but nothing compared to our stay in Mayrhofen.

A final note of interest, I think. According to my calculations, there are today 49 living direct descendants of George and Mary Kroell, their lives and the lives of their progenies ^{see below} spanned over 150 years. And, so, my friends, we come to the end of this history, the Kroell saga. In reading over it for the umpteenth time, I realize I have repeated some things, also have back-pedaled and put things out of context sometimes, but it will have to do. I have spent three weeks working ten hours a day or more. Tim will come home and exclaim, "Mom, you said you'd finish today." But I would have talked to someone, got new information, or thought of something I wanted to add or correct.

It is also entirely possible that some dates may not be exactly correct or a description not be entirely accurate, but I really don't think that is often the case, for I have truly attempted to keep everything as accurate as possible. So do overlook any errors.

* There are also 19 deceased descendants, a total of 68 descendants of George and Mary Kroell.
* Charlie, William, Ross, Walton and Scott are the only remaining male Kroells.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to make this record, and I hope from this barrage of information you will glean much a value, also that it may encourage future family members to add to it. I am glad Patty prodded me one more time to get on with it. I propose to put this on a tape, have it transcribed, and copies made. I will send each family and friend a copy, and you may then have as many copies made from it, of course, as you wish. I think it will comprise will over 90 pages, single spaced, so you know how carried away I've been.

My love to you all. Adios. Auf wiedersehen.

Frances Kroell Haile - March 18, 1996.

Rec'd 1st 1/4, 1998

ADDENDUM TO THE KROELL HISTORY

Dear All of You:

I wish to correct some omissions in the above history and explain how they came about. When Tim and I employed a company to transcribe the history, we were not told that the material would be "farmed out;" that is, given to an individual to do at home.. By the time we learned this, it was too late to make a change though we were not pleased with a number of results of the transcriber's work. Inasmuch as I had both written the material and made tapes of it, I didn't expect any problems with the transcribing. How it happened, I don't know, but much of what I had written about Gretchen got left out. I can't rest until that is corrected, hence this addendum:

When I was pregnant the first time, I was sure the baby would be a girl, remembering the old saying, Your son is your son until he gets him a wife, but your daughter's your daughter all of her life." So - I always referred to the coming baby as "she."

At about 6 months, I had to make a trip to Alabama from Washington to attend to some business concerning Mama. I became ill and had to be put to bed at Netta's. When her doctor came to check me over, as he was leaving he said, "you have to be more careful. We have to get this boy here in good shape." I said, "It's not a boy, it's a girl." He just smiled knowingly and squeezed my toe as he left. When Tim arrived, of course I was delighted with him and forgot all about calling him "her."

However, when I became pregnant the second time, I really was sure it would be a girl because I carried her so differently and the whole time was so different. Gretchen was due in February but around the middle of January I went into labor, was rushed to the hospital but everything stopped. I remained overnight, was sent home the next day with instructions to go to bed and stay there. A week passed with no sign that the baby was alive and visitors who came to see me couldn't hide their concern.

Finally, labor began again, we rushed to the hospital again, and everything stopped again. I heard the doctor whisper to Michael, "we'll keep her overnight and send her home again tomorrow." I began to cry and said, I'm so tense, if you will just give me something to knock me out and make me relax, I'll have this baby." To humor me, he did so and sure enough, I awoke at 11 o'clock with strong labor pains. I couldn't resist saying "I told you so." Our beautiful daughter was born at 4 minutes to midnight, January 23, 1948.

We named her Gretchen Frances and joyfully took her home. She, too, was the best baby imagineable. As a matter of fact, she was always a sweet tempered, obedient child. She was so pretty, I could never get over her fair skin and blonde hair, so different from my dark skin and hair. In kindergarten her teacher, Mrs. Ellis, chose her to be the bride in the Tom Thumb wedding the class put on and what a pretty little "bride" she was. Actually, the only complaint I had when she was growing up was that I couldn't get her to eat enough, especially vegetables. She was healthy but too thin, I thought. Her pediatrician finally convinced me to stop fretting. In the first grade I put her hair in pigtails and I often thought, "If Grandpa Kroell could see her, he would call her his little "Deutsch" girl, too, just as he had her Aunt Patty.

All through school she was the kind of motivated, achieving, well-liked student that teachers long for. After we moved from Ridglea she had to go to a different junior high school from all her former classmates but she didn't complain, adjusted and continued her steady progress in school, making new friends there.

Her best friend from the time they were small was Helen Willard, who lived across the street from us on Curzon. After we moved to El Rancho, Helen's mother and I took turns taking the girls back and forth to play, spend the night, etc. When we moved to Atlanta she maintained her ties with Helen, was in her wedding, etc. She also joined a group of her Texas friends to study panish in Monterey, Mexico the summer between their junior and senior high school years.

At North Fulton in Atlanta she tried out and won a place on the girls' drill team, the Pepperettes, which she enjoyed very much. In her teens she was very self-conscious about her height, wore the flattest shoes she could find. She was not exceptionally tall; just happened to be taller than most of her friends. But the day came when she realized it was fashionable to be tall, straightened up, put on high heels and knew her height was an asset. At 5'8" it still is.

In Atlanta once a high school English teacher assigned the class to interview an important person and Michael suggested to Gretchen that she try to interview Governor Lester Maddox. When she called the Governor's Mansions to try to make an appointment, she was surprised when Gov. Maddox himself answered the phone. He agreed to be interviewed and was very gracious to her. A lot of people made fun of Gov. Maddox but we always appreciated his kindness to our high school daughter.

During Gretchen's teen years she and I, like most mothers and daughters, I think, had differences of opinion about things like make-up, clothes, curfew times and boyfriend choices and such, but, it was all part of growing up and I hoped she knew that my rules were for her own good. Michael could never bring himself to say no to her so when it was necessary to do so, especially for her own protection, I was the one who had to take on that responsibility.

She worked part-time at Davison's at Lenox a while to make spending money and also get purchase discounts (Tim did likewise for a long time while in school, working at a men's clothing store, at Lenox, possibly laying the foundation for his present occupation).

When Gretchen and Pat still lived in Atlanta, it was wonderful knowing she was still near. They were especially good to me after Michael died, had me stay with them after my foot surgery. They felt free, also, to call on me to go to their house to let in workmen or cleaning people while they were at work.

Her job with Cox Cable has always involved a lot of flying and we have often laughed at how afraid she was of flying when she was a teenager. The son of a friend went to California to work and invited her several times to visit there. Michael bought her several plane tickets but she chickened out every time. Don't know how she managed to fly to and from Mexico that summer. Now, of course, she flies everywhere.

At Roanoke she has been called upon a number of times to go to Washington and lobby several members when Congress was considering legislation affecting the cable industry. She had to take lessons on how to lobby, made several trips there to do so. Once she was scheduled to see Senator Strom Thurmond, South Carolina's 90-something year old senator but it was cancelled at the last minute, a pity because I think he would have been interesting.

She is also chosen often to help plan the agenda for Cox Cable's many conferences that are held in various states.

Gretchen has always been the daughter I longed for: talented, beautiful, loving, unfailingly thoughtful and considerate. I visited her in Roanoke over Thanksgiving in 1995 and had the pleasure of seeing the lovely home that was being built by her there. She keeps me advised of her landscaping and all the things she does for the house since moving in; it means a lot to me that I can visualize how everything must look now.

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I want everybody to know both my children well, for nothing in my life has ever approached the feeling of being blessed like knowing I am Mom to Gretchen and Tim.

Again -- au revoir, adios, auf wiedersehen.

Frances
May 30, 1997