

**Stories for Our Grandchildren**  
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**Stories for Our Grandchildren**

"Just sit down and start typing".. your Grandpa said, ignoring my protests that I had nothing to say! For some time he has been urging this Made-in-England, Prairie girl (that he brought to B.C.) to get a few memories down on paper. Most of this you will have heard before, or read in the Family Tree book I have made for each one of you. In many ways mine has been a "charmed" life and I am grateful to so many people who have helped to make it so.. (You are all included in that!)

**From England to Canada**

I had my 4th birthday on the Ship when my Mother was bringing my sister Rose Emily and me to Canada in 1920.. so for my first years I have to rely on what I have been told. Rose Emily was 9 at the time we sailed, and because she was older, she has many sad memories of when we lived in England. Our Parker Grandparents lived in the upstairs of #7 Hancock Rd., London, and we lived downstairs. Rose Emily said she loved to spend time

with Grandma, and was terribly upset when Grandma died in 1916. Our Father John Jones had joined up when War was declared in 1914, then our little brother John died, then Grandma died, and in 1918 our Father was killed. No wonder Rose Emily does not like to talk about her memories! And I never asked my Mum too many questions because I realized it must have been a terrible time for her. I have no recollection of all that trauma.

Years later, after we moved to Vancouver in 1942, Peter & I went to English Bay and suddenly I was stopped in my tracks by the smell of the Sea! My Mother had told of taking us to Southend-on-Sea for holidays when we lived in England..so I knew where I had smelled the Sea before! When Peter took me to England in 1981 (to "discover my roots"), we visited Southend, and I gathered a few of the little shells that somehow looked familiar. How they must have delighted me as a small child.

I really don't remember the trip from England to Canada, or how we celebrated my 4th birthday. But my Mum said she and Rose Emily were terribly seasick, and I was so pesky and wanted to go outside..which really made them feel better. When Peter & I went to Newfoundland in 1982 on a cross-Canada trip, I saw icebergs, and realized I had seen them before.

When our Father was killed, Mother had written friends of John's who had moved to Ontario, Canada. They suggested that we come out to visit them..and that is what we did. I have very few memories of that, either..except Mum had bought me a new pair of patent shoes..and a nice navy coat, with brass buttons! I also remember seeing a billboard which showed a pair of green colored hands..with the message "Nobody wants green hands!" I must have been able to read it..but couldn't understand what it meant, so I guess I puzzled over that one, as it stuck in my mind.

After we were in Stratford, Ontario a year my Mum's brother & family (wife & daughter) joined us. After working awhile, Uncle said he wanted to go to see the Prairie harvest, so we all went by train. That is how I became a "Prairie Lily"...After, all..your Grandpa was there, so I had to find him.

But before I introduce you to your Grandfather, there is someone I'd like you to meet. First you will have to go to your Family Tree book and read how my Mother met Ed Dumville, and their story there. Can you imagine what fun it would be to grow up on a farm? My sister, Rose Emily wrote some wonderful "Vignettes" and you have a copy of those in your Tree book. Please read them and imagine what a great family Rose Emily and I had "landed" into. And of course, after the 4 children of Ed and Emily were born there was all the more fun. Ed had built himself a lovely large house when he was still a "bachelor", so there was lots of room for us all.

There was no electricity in the farm district yet, so we used those coal-oil lamps that you have seen in antique stores. And every pail of water we needed was hauled up from the well at the bottom of a slight hill in our yard. But, of course we knew that was how things were for our neighbours, too..so it was "normal". And I remember on still Spring evenings how we used to play "anti-I-over" by choosing sides and throwing a ball over the house to our opposing team! The idea was that when you caught the ball you "snuck" around the house to see how many of the opposing ones you could touch..then they had to join YOUR team etc.

Ed Dumville was always in the middle of the fun! And we had wonderful games of "hide and seek" in the house..You can imagine us all running and hiding upstairs and down, and then the commotion when our hiding place was discovered and we had to race "Home"! Those stairs that we raced up & down were the same ones that I came down (with Ed) when Peter was waiting at the bottom to marry me, in 1937.

But..I am ahead of myself! Can't blame me for being impatient, can you?? Another thing I remember was the Eatons' catalogue, and the excitement when our orders would arrive. Such lovely warm underwear..(I bet you would hate having to wear it)..but it brought such comfort for our trips to school with horse and cutter in winter.

Rose Emily writes in her Vignettes of the material those parcels contained, and how Mum (and Dad) sewed us up some very pretty dresses and blouses. Do you know what hoarfrost is? It would coat the trees, and on bright, crisp mornings as we drove Daisy to school (we were bundled cosily under blankets, with hot rocks at our feet).. the sun shining on the hoarfrost would make the whole forest sparkle like the trees at Disneyland! There is a picture of the 'cutter' on this page.



Christmas on the Farm was the most exciting experience any child could have. Mum and Dad loved it as much as we did.. and I just can't put into words what a wonderful time we had decorating, making gifts, ordering from the catalogue, secrets galore! Mum tells about Dad on the first Christmas after they were married. I was 6, and they had bought me a doll that said "Ma Ma" when you turned it over. Well, Dad was so thrilled to have children to share, and when it was time for them to fill our stockings (hung at the bottom of our beds), he kept teasing Mum by turning this doll over..and she was having a fit that the "Ma Ma" would wake us up!

It was exciting when Ed built a big new barn, too. We would hurry home from school (as fast as our horse Daisy would go..which was much faster than when we were going TO school!), to watch the scaffolding take place and the cement being poured etc. Ed ran a mixed farm, which means not only growing grain, but also with lots of farm animals. It was a lot more work (year round) than just growing grain, but it meant chickens and animals that could be butchered. We were very fortunate indeed, as when the Great Depression hit and no grain could grow, we still had milk, butter, chickens, pork and beef. Also, we could exchange some of that produce for things we were lacking. We also had a small pension from England which Rose Emily and I received as long as we were going to school. Cash! A very scarce commodity during the Depression..So, as children we were very fortunate to lack very little. For Mum and Dad, of course it must have been a time of great concern. It was impossible to keep the dust out..there is always wind on the Prairie. Poor crops for several years naturally brought a lot of worry. Dad used to sit by the (battery) radio and listen to the grain reports, I remember. The radio was a new invention, and used only sparingly. Still, there were a few programs that Mum and Dad used to tune in, and we enjoyed them together. We also had a telephone..a "Party Line", which serviced several homes in the district. Each home had a certain ring, so that when the Phone Office forwarded a call, the home with that ring answered it. Of course, there was nothing to stop another home on the line from quietly picking up the receiver..and getting the news that way! When some news became "gossip" it was evident that someone had been listening!

On Sundays in nice weather we children could expect a picnic might be arranged! Mum and Dad always had a "nap" after lunch, and then we would pack a lunch and go to the Qu'Appelle River for a swim..or to visit Dad's sister and family. Rose Emily has written (in her Vignettes) about the wonderful visits to "the Littles"..Ed's sister Annie's family. It was also fun to visit Charlie & Elsie Dumville (Ed's brother) and family. Even today, we keep in touch with those cousins, and they sometimes attend our "Dumville Reunion"..which some of you also attend.

Dad made an enormous swing for us, in the trees near the house! And after the new barn was built, he put a swing from the rafters so that the young Dumvilles could swing and jump into the hay. Clifford tells me that after I had left home, one time when he, Fred, Lorraine & Elaine were playing up there, the boys threw a rope over the rafters and were swinging back and forth. Lorraine had a turn..and swung..but right through the loft door! She let go at the wrong time and landed on the ground! Lucky Kids..none of them broke bones in spite of all the tree climbing they did.

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When I got that far, I gave it to Peter to read and he said "Oh, you have lots more memories than that"..and sent me "back to the drawing board".

Rose Emily wrote of the beautiful display of the Northern Lights. There's something to be said for living away from the glare of streetlights..We also got used to the howl of the coyotes in the cold prairie night. It was just part of the "scene" to us.

But Spring was quite another thing! After the long winter, we finally were able to cut the legs and sleeves off of our long underwear..ah! freedom. But when a brief cold snap gave a last "hurrah" we were sorry we had been in such a hurry to do so.. Also in Spring we would go hunting for Crocus. And as we gently lifted the long dried grass in spots we thought they might be..we would be rewarded by their pale mauve blossoms heralding the miracle that was about to take place. There was a swampy area nearby, and when the blackbirds returned there to once again make their nest, it was truly exciting. But the best time was a bit later, when the Meadowlarks returned..they are a friendly bird whose distinctive song raises the spirit, wherever they are heard. In our later travels, Peter taped our holidays..and as we listen to them now, the songs of the meadowlarks he caught as we travelled surprise and delight us! In 1968 Peter took me back to the Farm and we spent hours wandering all around, as I relived my youth. And there, just where we found them as Kids, were the beautiful prairie tiger Lilies blooming! How delightful!

As Peter and I wandered through the pastureland in 1968, I told him about getting the cows when I was young. They were let into the pasture after morning milking, and one of us Kids was sent to bring them home for evening milking. It was a happy thing to do..the cows always spent their day near the slough, which was quite a walk. But we followed the cowpaths under the trees, listened to the birds, scared up rabbits, and looked for our favorite flowers. In later years I have read articles giving names to those flowers, but when we were young we named them as we liked. There was a gate through which the cows entered the pasture, and by which they gladly returned when we came to get them. They were happy to be milked. When Peter and I had our nostalgic visit there in 1968, none of the fence remained..only the posts holding the old gate, which creaked back and forth in the breeze. We have that sound on tape!

All children love to go barefoot, and we enjoyed the feel of the sand along the road which led to our house. After a rain there were warm puddles to walk through..how could life be any sweeter than this??

Summer also had its special times on the Farm. I was the resident "Babysitter" for the Family, and the 4 young Dumvilles and I spent many summer days in the coolness under the trees near the house. We played "House", "School", re-enacted special events we had heard about, and just had fun. Mum and Rose Emily were happy to have the house to themselves at this busy time of year.

## Summer Time in Rocanville

Summer time brought events into Rocanville, and Dad & Mum would take us. The Chatauqua was a travelling stage show, held in a BIG tent. You can imagine how excited we were! Also there was "barnstorming" when small planes would arrive to take people up over the farmlands..for those who had the money. I remember going to Silent Movies in the Community Hall..and later on we attended dances in that Hall. And it was a big deal when our school put on a Play for the Community there.

My friend Margaret McClelland and I spent a lot of time together, visiting back and forth. She lived with her Mum, Dad and brother on a farm farther from Town. I remember one time when she was "staying over" we got the big idea of staying up all night! We stayed in the kitchen, with closed doors, so that we would not wake Mum and Dad. Of course we had to have a fire in the stove, as it was winter..and a very cold night. After awhile we got bored, so decided to make a chocolate cake! Well, it was NOT a success, so we went out and fed it to the dog! (Your Grandpa would never have married me, if he had heard this story first). The poor dog took off..and we never did find out where he went! That is a true story..Mum and Dad didn't hear us, fortunately..but my brothers loved the part about the dog and the cake..and still tease me. In the morning, Margaret and I did my allotted work at our place, and then we went to hers. I had developed a cough, and her kind Mother made me a mustard plaster for my chest (ever heard of that?). Of course by that time I was zonked..and slept soundly while the plaster burned me! I had a bad case of blisters, but it was my fault..and I couldn't complain.

My room at home was under the gables (you can see in the picture in your book). Just like "Anne"! I had a desk where I did my homework, and it was nice. The mosquitoes in summer, and frost in winter were things we could have done without..but that is the Prairie!

I wrote of my friend Margaret. She and her brother Barkley also attended school in Rocanville...but they had a fast horse. We were always happy when they came along, as they would zoom past us, and Daisy would try her best to catch up! No way! But they kept their horse at the same stable we did, so sometimes we walked to school together from there. The people who owned this stable were old family friends of the Dumvilles..the Horsleys..and the sweetest of people. Both Elaine and Fred are named after them. On cold days they would warm our robes and heat the stones, so that they would keep us more comfortable for the drive home. And when we went in to Sunday School, we always got a red strawberry candy to send us on our way. I remember once, because it was my birthday that day, Mrs Horsely gave me a peach as a treat..but the fuzz irritated my face so. I still remember how it felt..Sometimes I stayed over at the Horsleys if it was stormy and I was alone.

## Rose Emily's Memories

My sister, Rose Emily (Jones) Rudd has put down her memories, entitled "My Early Life". Her Ladies' Group was sharing memories, so she shared hers with me, too. It helps fill in some of what is missing on my first page. Here is what she wrote:

"Most of us have early memories that we carry with us throughout our lives. Usually these go back to when we were 3 or 4 years of age.

When I checked my earliest memory with my Mother she said I would be 3 plus. I recall walking with my Parents near our home. We had gone to meet my Father (John Jones) arriving home from work. My Father is pushing a pram where my baby brother is sleeping. I am running ahead when I hear my Mother cry out, "Oh no, don't go! Please don't-don't leave us! I ran back and added my cries to hers "Don't go, Daddy-don't go!"

My Father picks me up and tries to reassure us "I have to go, but it won't be for long. I'll soon be back". I didn't know where my Father was going but you have probably guessed. It was 1914 and he was going to war. I was 3 years old and the pattern of my life would undergo a change.

For the next four years it changed many times. Within a few months my baby brother died of pneumonia, within a year my Father was home wounded. When he recovered he went to work in a munitions factory so he was with us again for nearly a year. Then, England was desperate for men, so with hundreds of others he was recalled back to the fighting, this time leaving a baby daughter with Mother and me.

For the rest of the war we shared a house with Mother's sister and her three daughters. They had the downstairs flat and we had the upstairs. (When Frank and I visited England in 1960 we visited the area and saw this house. The first house was gone. It was in an area bombed out during the 2nd war).

The women "carried on", routine took over. I went to school, played in the park with my cousins, visited the galleries and museums which were all boarded up against bombing. We suffered through the nightly air raids, watched the dog-fights in the air-refusing to go to the air raid shelters. But more changes were about to take place.

In June 1918 the dreaded letter came from the War Office. My father had been "killed in action" - killed by a sniper's bullet while removing wounded soldiers from the field.

I found it hard to accept the fact of my Father's death, particularly because in a few months the war was over and other fathers were being restored to their families; both my

Uncles were home again. There were even men "presumed dead" being found in hospitals or prison camps. What joy! But not for me. I just had a little blue & white cloth bag with his watch, a medal, and a rosary in it. What would become of us?

There is another clear picture I carry with me. I am sitting on a rug in my bedroom crying. My Mother comes in, sits down beside me and tries to console me. Pointing to the rug she says "There are many colors in this rug, some dark, some bright, but altogether they make a beautiful pattern. Our lives are like that, dark times and bright times. This is a dark time for us but the bright times will come - you'll see"....Rose E. Page 2

"Looking back I can see a thread emerging-a bright thread that will change the pattern of my life. When my Mother's younger brother returned home, his Mother (my grandmother) had died, so he came to live with us. He was an avid reader and he also took time to read to us. He was fond of travel magazines and loved to read about other countries, and he shared with us. Canada was our favorite. I realize now he was probably reading publications the government was putting out to encourage emigration.

At the same time Mother was receiving letters from former school friends who had emigrated to Canada before the war. They were urging her to try for a new life in a new country. They sent snaps of their children picking apples, carving pumpkins, but best of all playing on their sleds in the snow. I was intrigued, but Mother hesitated to take the step.

However, urged by her brother (with a promise to join her later) she started to make plans, while the relatives and friends got busy knitting long woollen stockings, vests, and sweaters-even woollen petticoats to keep the poor little girls from freezing!

On September 3, 1920 we boarded the S.S. Metagama and eight days later landed in Quebec City, then by train to Toronto, warmly wrapped in our woollen garments. Ontario was enjoying an Indian Summer, so Mother lost no time in going to the Y.W. and getting us back into our summer clothes.

We joined Mother's friends in Stratford, Ontario and spent a very happy year there. We were constantly amazed at the abundance of fruit and vegetables at the country fairs and in all the markets. Just imagine cutting up a huge pumpkin for a lantern. What extravagance. I fell in love with Canada!

The following June my Uncle, as he promised, joined my Mother, bringing his new wife and her 5 year old daughter. Unlike me, he was disappointed with what he saw. Stratford was too much like an English town. He had looked forward to the great open spaces and wheat fields he had read about.



Our friends explained THAT was to be found in western Canada. He got plenty of advise from others-go west-plenty of work at harvest time. There were even "harvest excursion" trains, very cheap transportation. One man said he had a cousin who lived at Rocanville, Saskatchewan. His name (Andy Lockart) became our rallying cry. My Uncle decided to go and Mother said we would go, too.

The Settlers cars (on the train) were very utilitarian, hard seats which pulled out into beds with a hammock overhead. We carried our own food and bedding. There was a little stove between cars where we could heat soup, and water for tea. To the children it was all a game but I'm sure that on that long journey my Mother had many questioning thoughts as to where she and her two girls would find a place to fit in. Rose E. Page 3

Winnipeg was reached-just another city to my Uncle. The name of Rocanville drew us on, so we boarded another train off the main line. Now we could see the open spaces and green fields. After a couple of days on this train the Conductor called "Rocanville, Saskatchewan" and we embarked, relieved to find that such a place actually existed but bewildered that there were no crowds of farmers waiting to welcome us - no Andy Lockart.

The station master heard our story but had to tell us that he knew Andy Lockart had filled his needs the day before - but wait - he understood another farmer, a widower needed man & wife, the wife to act as housekeeper. He would phone.

In the meantime he took my sister & cousin with me to play with his two daughters in their garden behind the station. At last I see a thread that will recur throughout the pattern of my life. (I still see those two Girls out here at the Coast).

The farmer (Joe Dumville) arrived in his Ford car, hired my uncle & aunt and started to pile the luggage in. My Mother said she would stay at the hotel while Uncle Alf enjoyed his adventure and they would all return to Stratford. The farmer protested, saying that he had plenty of room in his house for all of us, cranks up the Ford and away we go. How could this be happening to us?

We spent a wonderful Fall on the farm, becoming acquainted with the farm animals and farm life in general. The two women were very thankful that there were two of them to prepare meals for large numbers of hungry men. My uncle worked harder than he ever had before, taking the good natured teasing about his lack of know-how.

We were all happy in spite of the failure of our original plans as we realized we had fallen into the laps of a very caring, fun-loving family who, although hard-working, always had time to include the children in rides on the stook wagons or on top of loads of grain.

We met other members of the family, the married ones with children who lived nearby, and one unmarried son (Ed) who had a farm near the town of Rocanville. He had just finished building a house on it. We spent a few days there when his crop was being threshed and the two women prepared the meals for the gang of 12-15 men.

When school started in late August it was decided I should start to the little country school on the (Joe) Dumville land. I had to walk about a half-mile carrying my lunch in a lard pail (like everyone else). This was my first and only experience as a student in a one-room school and I was later very thankful for it.

At last the harvest was over and my uncle and his wife were hired to stay the winter with another farmer and his elderly mother. My Mother decided she and her girls should go to Winnipeg. This precipitated a situation as the eldest son (Ed) had fallen in love with my Mother and wished to marry her.

Not being one to rush into such an important decision she decided to go to Winnipeg and think it over. She didn't think she could ever measure up as a farmer's wife.

"We spent the winter in Winnipeg and in the Spring her persistent suitor came and persuaded her that he could teach her to bake bread and churn butter, and he would never ask her to milk a cow. She capitulated (much to my delight). They were married and we returned to the farm 2 miles from Rocanville.

I was now 11 years old and very happy to be returning to the farm. My new father took us to his heart and did all he could to fill the emptiness I had felt for the past 4 years.

I entered school in Rocanville, made new friends. The teacher asked three Girls to "show me around" and we became friends and remained so. At home there was plenty to do in a good size house with growing family. Dad bought me a pony and I learned to look after it and drive myself to school - sometimes in 30 degree below weather. My sister started in my second year, so I had company."

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These pages of Rose E's memories help fill in the missing parts of the first page of my memories that I wrote for our Grandchildren. I was too young to know much of what she has recorded.

(Lilian L. Jones Reimer)

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Rose E. also wrote Vignettes of our life growing up on Ed Dumville's farm..and I have included them in your book

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Our Mother Emily (Parker, Jones) Dumville told about her Grandchildren: One day little Eric Dumville asked her "Grandma, did my Daddy have a Daddy?" And another time, when she and little Geoffrey Boese were sitting in the car in White Rock, watching the people go by on the street, Geoffrey asked "Great Grandma, why do old men always marry old ladies?" It is questions like these that prompted us to put some of our memories down, in case other children wonder in the future.

## **Early Years at the Farm**

I am back again to my early years at the Farm. Grandpa Dumville (Ed's Dad) lived with Ed and Emily by the time I was in grade 3 or 4. He and I would make out orders from the Eatons catalogue..filling in the order forms to our hearts content. He would guide me to write numbers, date, article names etc in their proper places. Wasn't that a great way to teach? Anyway, I loved it..and the fact that the orders never were sent seemed to matter not at all!

I read by the hour to the 4 Dumville Kids. We got books from the school library. But some of my warmest memories are of my Mother reading to us on cold winter nights. Rose Emily would bring home books from the library and my Mother...(a beautiful reader) would begin. How fortunate we were!

I think my Mother had only a few years of schooling, but it really "took". She was a good speller..and also could always add up figures before I could. She had a way of counting with her fingers..and voila..the answer. She still used this method when she lived with us when she was in her 80's and 90's.

I was telling Peter about the time when I learned a "new" way of skipping, with 2 ropes. When I got home from school I was trying to explain it to the others. I was having a problem, however..so out came Mum and set us straight..and went on to skip both ropes like a Pro! It is always startling, isn't it when we find something new is really old? That happened with some of the songs Mother sang..in later years they were brought back as "new" and I chuckled knowingly!

We could always call on Dad when we had a problem with Math. We would get annoyed that he didn't do it the "right" way..like the teacher..but he would get the answer! They used slate and soapstone when he went to school. His Dad had loaned land on which to build Cambridge school, so Dad and his Siblings all attended there..as well as anyone who lived in that Cambridge area. He had the greatest bunch of poems he used to recite..see Rose Emily's Vignettes..all funny little rhymes we enjoyed. I wish I had written them down! After the Kids were bussed to town, Cambridge school was moved to the area Museum, but I remember Community activities we had attended there..and square dances.

There was a final "do" which Dad and Mum, Rose Emily and husband Frank attended..and they had a 3-legged race for former students in which Dad and a school Buddy took part! Wish I had seen that!

As you can imagine, there were times when winter storms and snowdrifts prevented us from using the horse and cutter. Then Dad would get out the team and sleigh, and either break trail for us, or (if it looked like an all day storm) he would take us to school and come to get us later. There was a phone in town we could use to call home before we left Town, in case of messages.

### **The Party Line: English Cousins Visit**

I wrote earlier about the Party Line Phone system we had. When Rose Emily and Frank had their first daughter in 1938, they sent a telegram to Rocanville. This had to be relayed by phone to the Farm. What a commotion that caused when the operator announced that Marian Florence had been born.. and over the phone it sounded like "Mary and Florence" had been born. Wow! Twins! Of course when the telegram arrived in the mail things were clarified...but when a cow had twins soon after.. we had calves named Mary and Florence!

We had a nice clothes basket we saved for clothes ready for ironing. But when it wasn't in use, it was hung up in the clothes closet in the main floor bedroom. When Baby Elaine arrived, the basket was used for her. One day along comes "that Lil" to tidy up the bedroom.. and you guessed it, I hung the basket in the closet.. Baby, blankets and all! Later someone asked "Where's the Baby?!! There she was on the floor, still bundled in her blankets and quite content! Poor Elaine!

We had neighbours on the next farm who had Kids about my age. On lovely spring evenings we could holler across the field and they would answer. We loved that. Sometimes that family would visit ours and the whole bunch of us would gather in our large living room to play games. The Mother was quite a giggler and it was fun to get her laughing at the entertainment we dreamed up!

The Dumville children would want me to tell you about the neat parcels that Mary (John Jones' sister) sent from England. She included a gift for each one of us, and they were extra special. However, it wasn't until Fred was grown that he realized who that Mary was.. he had thought it was from MUM's sister, Mary! Speaking of Mum's sister..the Hedges family came from England to spend one winter with us. They had 3 daughters about the same age as Rose Emily and me. That was a winter to remember! Lots of Hide and Seek, singing around the old organ, making programs to entertain the adults etc. The youngest girl, Lily (now in Montreal) writes to me regularly. She has fond memories of our Farm,

and how her Mum was petrified of the cows (called them "bulls"). And the horses scared her. Fred laughs remembering a later visit when Mary & Mum were having their picture taken..posing so nicely..when a pet horse came from behind, and stuck his head right between theirs!

Peter reminded me of the paths the rabbits made in the snow. It would delight us to see them scampering into the woods, little white furry bodies following the trails..More visible than any other animals, they shared our winter wonderland.

We are so pleased that our Pete and Bill both got to experience a bit of the Farm.. Pete for a whole summer when Rose Emily took him at age 4, along with Marian and Noreen to visit our Folks. I know he can remember quite a bit of that adventure, and how lucky he was to have that chance. Bill, also had a visit on the Farm when he was 4..Lorraine & Elaine took him by train.

## **Grandma Dumville on the Farm**

I really should add something about my Mother and her life on the Farm. Quite a contrast to her life in England! There, at least they had electricity and running water. But on the Farm everything came "from scratch"..and it meant long days and hard work. Still, she sang around the house (and she had a beautiful voice). All the bread making, baking, canning, cleaning, washing, ironing, mending, planting, weeding were made easier when she sang. And her knitting...sweaters, hats, mitts, socks, gloves, scarves, rolled off her needles. And she kept knitting till she was 96 years old..as you know!

I really liked school! I was an "average" student. We went 2 miles from the Farm to the town of Rocanville to attend school. There was a small school for the young children, and a "Big" one for Elementary and High School. It was Northfield School..and I was sorry to hear, years later, that it had burned down. But for me, there were only happy times there. We had excellent teachers right through Grade 12. I still hear quite regularly from two schoolmates, and it is good to keep this contact with the past. The teachers did a lot of extra activities with the classes...at Hallowe'en and Christmas, also concerts and field days. I played Softball and Basketball and we competed against nearby towns...great stuff! One year we had a student from "the Big City" stay in Rocanville to attend school, for some reason, and he got us working on a Year Book. It was the only year we did that..but I have my copy yet.

Saturday nights were very Special.. the Farmers and their families went to town to visit, shop, pick up the mail and get all the latest district news. Don't laugh! It was very important for Communities to touch base with one another. And of course, we kids loved it! Because we lived out of town, we went home directly after school each day, so being in town in the evening was great fun. We also went to Sunday School each Sunday, and I

always enjoyed that. We had good times there, too. At Thanksgiving the Church always had a "Fowl Supper", when all the Ladies brought great dishes to share, and pies galore! Yummy! There was a small charge, of course but it was one of the year's highlites. And the Church's Christmas Concerts were part of the Magic for us. We all had recitations or songs or whatever, to do..and each got a little parcel and some "goodies". I should add that before Peter and I got married, the Church Ladies had a "shower" for me.. and that was pretty exciting, too!

Now I think it is time to say that my High School days came to an end, and it was time for me to leave my wonderful Farm home and head to "The Big City". I was too young to go into Nursing (18 was the requirement), so I decided to go to Regina and take a Business course. At any rate, the arrangements were made and I went to stay with Dad's brother and his wife in Regina to take a 9-month Business course. Okay, Peter...here I come!

## **Peter's Activities**

While all this "exciting stuff" was happening to me, Peter was getting on with things, too. How very fortunate we were that we both had such wonderful Step-Parents! I have tried to show you what a great man Ed Dumville was, and how I appreciated what he did for me. And you certainly know how terrific Anna Reimer was (your Grandmama) and how she loved each one of you! We are so happy that you knew her and have memories of time you spent with her. I have put pages about Anna in your Family Book, so I won't repeat. Peter and his sister Elsie made a sequence of dates in their lives, and I will put it in here.

Peter Reimer's History...son of Peter J. & Margaretha..brother of Elsie & Dick 1915..Peter's Mum recorded that Peter was born May 25, 1915 at 4 a.m. The #'s on his birth certificate were those of the Hoffman farm..some distance from the Reimer Homestead. As "Granny Hoffman" was a midwife, we accept that he was born there. We know the families were friends. See Story Reimer family Book.1917.

The P.J. Reimer family moved from their Homestead to a house in Herbert before Dick was born April 27, 1917. Pete Penner (Margaretha's brother) told Peter J. about a job at the Power House in Regina..so the P.J. Reimers moved to Regina and Peter J. got the job. They lived on Lindsay St. (just off Victoria Ave). Margaretha died there Dec. 31, 1919. After his wife died, Peter J. quit his job in Regina & went back to Herbert.Peter was 4 1/2 when his Mum died, and he has a few memories of happenings in that house before his Mum died. One was when he put a bead up his nose..and had to go to the Doctor! Another was that his Mum & Dad took him to a show (he was carried), and the Show was Charlie Chaplin. Another episode was standing on an apple box beside his Mum (she was hanging out clothes)..the box tipped, and a nail gashed Peter on the forehead..leaving a scar.

Peter also remembers he could just look over the kitchen table at the time his Mum died.1920..After Margaretha's funeral Peter J's Mother took Elsie & Peter to Renata. She had married Diedrich Epp (her husband Jacob P. Reimer had died in Renata March, 1912). They kept the children there about a year, and then Peter J. took them back to Herbert with him. He was working in a Garage there. Baby Dick had stayed with Margaretha's Parents in MainCentre..not too far from Herbert.1921..July 31, Peter J. Reimer married Anna Neufeld, and the Family was reunited and lived in Herbert a short while but moved to Morden in 1922, as there was a job there for Peter J.1922..(Sept)

Peter started school at "The Tin School" in Morden (he had turned 7 on May 25).1923 (June) Passed to Grade 2 for the September term (age 8)1924 Taken out of school in the Spring & stayed on a farm with friends as his Dad & Mum had gone back to Regina. Peter attended a Country school while at the farm. He, Elsie & Dick joined their Parents in Regina during the summer. They travelled alone on the train..a "Travellers Aid Lady" met them when they were changing trains..they remember trying to sleep on the hard benches between train changes.  
1924 (Sept)

Peter went into Grade 2 in Wetmore School (Regina) but the Family moved to another house and so he attended Haultain School, and was put in Grade 3.1925 (June) Passed Grade 3 and in Sept went into Grade 5 (age 10).1926 (June) Passed Grade 5 and in Sept went into Grade 7 (age 11).1927 (June) Failed, & had to repeat Grade 7..(so did his Pal Charlie Swift.. Peter's lifetime friend. Many Stories!)1928 (June) He still has his great report! and passed into Grade 8..and so did Buddy Charlie! Peter was 13.1929 (June) Passed Grade 8. In Sept he went to Scott Collegiate (there was no Technical School then).1930 Left Scott Collegiate in April & went to St. Brieux (Sask) where his Dad was Boss of a Road crew.1930 September 29, Peter started a job at Simpsons Mail Order in Regina (age 15).The Great Depression..(Stock Market Crash of 1929 followed by prolonged drought..)1935..Lilian Jones started working in the same Department..So..Peter went to work at Simpsons when he was 15..and THERE he was 5 years later, watching me when I stepped from the elevator to start my new job!

## **The Simpson's Mail Order Department**

Let's ignore Peter..he was supposed to be working and not watching Girls coming off the elevator! I was directed to the area where I would be working, & 3 other Girls were filling orders in that Mail Order Dept. I was to fill Hat orders, the others were in charge of coats, dresses etc. Hats were a necessary item, for winter of course, but summer also because of the sun. And don't forget a new one for Easter! Lil MacDonald had her desk beside mine..and she became my dear friend. She attended St. Andrews United Church, and

I fitted right in there, and joined the Girls Group. Lil and I loved to go for long walks. We also roller skated at the Rink and played Bridge with friends.

In the summer of 1936 Lil and I joined the Simpson Bunch and went to the Company picnic at Regina Beach, travelling by train. It was to be the first of many trips out there, but this turned out to be the most exciting! On the way home, Lil "dared" me to sit on Peter's knee and of course I did! Lil had noticed that Peter watched me around the Dept. at work a lot, and thought this would be fun. And this little episode gave Peter the courage to ask me to go to the Regina Exhibition with him. Lil and I had been there twice already..but of course this was different!

I don't need to tell you we had a wonderful time..never had I dreamed of such a feeling of sheer joy! As we walked home, it seemed just too good to be true (it must have been a Friday), and when I didn't hear from Peter all weekend, I thought perhaps it was so.

But of course, it WAS true. Peter confessed he just hadn't wanted to seem too eager and spoil things. Anyway, from then on there was no doubt as to how we felt.

I have to make a confession, too. During those early months I worked at Simpsons I became very aware of the young man who worked down at the elevator end of our Dept. in the Ladies' Coats. He was very quiet, but whistled a lot. He was held in high regard by the Staff and our Bosses, and was a very conscientious worker. (Sounds like your Grandpa, doesn't it?) So really, when Lil dared me to sit on Peter's knee, I was more than willing!

And, the whistling I heard from the far end of the Dept. began to have special meaning..our very own songs that we danced to at the Trianon (where we had our first fleeting kiss under a blue light), rollerskated to at the Rink, favorites from the radio. Together we began to realize this was "IT" and we wanted it to last forever.

I went home for Christmas that year again (1936), but I left my heart in Regina! Still, going home was exciting too, and they were happy to have me join in. The 4 Young Dumvilles were now in their Teens and the house was alive with all their busy-ness. That is what makes a house a Home..and Ed Dumville had built that house in the hopes of having Children to share and enjoy it.

It would be my last Christmas in that house.

## **Life at the MacDonald's**

By late 1936 I had moved to MacDonald's..Lil's home. She had a brother and 2 sisters living at home with their widowed Mother. Another brother, John was taking Pilot training, and would soon go to England to join the Royal Airforce.



It was fun at MacDonald's, and my friendship with Lil was very special. We spent a lot of time together, with Girls in our Church Group and with two Girls who worked with us. Of course, Peter and I went out a lot, too..for long walks to Waskana Park, and for "Coffee" at the Stop-over Tearoom (which always seemed to be on our way from somewhere, and delayed our walk home!). Dancing and Rollerskating at the Rink were our Special times.

I wrote home each week, and during the time I was in Regina I had knitted two afghans for Mum and Dad. They used them always on the chesterfield. There were no hard-wearing synthetics in those days..just wool (at 10 cents a ball). The second afghan I knitted in sections..arms, back, seat etc. I would send each parcel as I finished it, and it created fun for the Family when another parcel arrived..what would it be this time?

It was February 5, 1937 when Peter gave me a diamond ring!! How I trembled with excitement, as I certainly never expected one! Who would be so extravagant during those tough times? At 30 cents an hour? You can imagine how delighted I was to show it off at work the next day!

Peter had two close friends (Charlie Swift & Bill McKechnie)..the 3 Musketeers. Charlie & Bill were not impressed when Peter started dating (I heard later). I also heard from Peter's Mum Anna that they knew Peter had a girlfriend, even before he told them. Those tell-tale signs! I enjoyed my visits with Peter's Folks, in spite of Mr. Reimer's teasing (You know Grandpapa!) Peter's sister Elsie had been transferred (by the Oil Co she worked for) to Winnipeg by that time. Peter's brother Dick was dating Elsie Brandt (the Brandts and Reimers were friends). Both Dick and Elsie (Brandt) worked at Brandt Electric & Machine Shop, owned by Elsie's Dad.

The western part of Sask. (around Herbert) suffered terribly during the Depression..large areas became dust bowls. A lot of those Farmers moved north, nearer to the tree line. But near the Manitoba border where Ed Dumville had his farm, there were trees and bush, which made life more bearable, and Farmers did get small crop yields and feed for their livestock. Ed had been persuaded by the Rocanville druggist to buy some grain futures stock (in flax or rye), and it paid off "big time". Ed celebrated his winnings by buying a new Pontiac! And he decided to take his family to visit Rose Emily in Vancouver. Rose Emily had taught in a country school near Herbert, after she graduated from Teacher Training in Regina. The following year she got a teaching position in a country school near Riverhurst (not too far from Herbert) and that is where she met Frank Rudd. They married Feb. 1935 and bought a small store in Vancouver.

## Wedding Preparations

I should have mentioned something else about 1936. It was the Year of Three Kings. King George V died and was followed by Edward, Prince of Wales. Edward wanted to marry Mrs Wallis Simpson, but she was American and had been divorced twice. The Church of England could not sanction such a marriage, so Edward abdicated the throne to his brother George VI. In Dec. 1936 King George VI and Queen Elizabeth (now called our Queen Mum) were crowned. They were the Parents of our present Queen Elizabeth.

Dick and Elsie (Brandt) were married on June 20, 1937, and moved into two rooms in her Parents' house at 2200 Winnipeg St. Later that summer Peter, Lil and I borrowed Mr Reimer's Model "T" and headed for Rocanville to introduce Peter to my Family! (Lil would visit her Aunt who lived near Rocanville). Of course it was wonderful for me to be back home! Also, Peter got to meet the Little's (Ed's Sister), Charlie & Elsie (Ed's brother), and our Cousins. We also explored Ed's Farm and the area around, so I could introduce Peter to all my "memories".

Although the economy was beginning to improve, there were ominous rumblings of a potential war in Europe.

But it was an exciting time in our lives. Peter had given me a Cedar Chest when we were engaged, and I had a great time gathering "dreams" in it. I was just so happy! We were making our wedding plans, and decided to try for November 11, if Peter could get the Friday off. I wanted to go home for our wedding, and Mum & Dad approved that and would arrange a gathering of relatives and friends. I planned to go home (by bus) a bit early, and Dick & Elsie would borrow her sister's car and bring Peter down on the 11th. We planned the time of the wedding for 2 o'clock. I shopped for a dress that would be "practical" and bought a navy blue with white trim on a bolero jacket. Of course I had a Hat..and it matched. We began receiving gifts from friends, and Simpsons gave us a nice armchair and lamp. We would buy a chesterbed, and rent 2 rooms. We bought a little set of kitchen table, chairs, cabinet that someone at work had made. In those days only the rich had fridges..the likes of us fastened a wooden apple box outside the kitchen window for storing foods. (It's a wonder we all survived!) We decided to rent from Nov. 1st so that we could move our things in..and found two rooms at 1308 Retallack St..in a Mr Brown's house. We had to share his bathroom on the main floor (he was a widower), but there was a sink and toilet on our floor (2nd) that we would share with 2 other tenants. All our rooms opened into a central area, so that to go from our bed-sitting room to our kitchen, we had to go into the hall. We paid 14 dollars a month...(Now Peter got 33 cents an hour).

So while I went home to help prepare for our wedding, Peter moved into our "suite"..and promptly leaned back in one of the chairs, and it broke! Never mind..we now had a bread board, and window stop!

So off I go back to the Farm!

## **Our Marriage**

While I was home Mum decided she should show me how to make an apple pie for Peter! Maybe she remembered the chocolate cake episode??

The large living room and dining room were great for our reception plans. Mum had baked lots of "goodies" and friends brought more, and helped get things ready. I would come down the stairs on Ed's arm, to the traditional music played by Kay Little, our cousin. Peter would stand at the bottom of the stairs in the living room. The Minister had been out to warn me of the pitfalls of marriage, but he assured me he would be out on the right day at the right time to make things official!

We were really taking a chance on November 11 on the Prairie..but it was cloudy and nice, so we were very fortunate. Dick, Elsie and Peter arrived okay, but had a funny story to tell. Evidently they had got started on their way when Peter realized he had forgotten his vest. So they had to go back and waken Mr Brown (he wasn't very happy), so that Peter could go get it.

The only other glitch was that the 4 Dumville Kids had gone outside and (Elaine's story goes) that I wouldn't let them come back in AND they were freezing! Well in my state of excitement I couldn't be sure...so for many years I had been reprimanded. However, when Lorraine finally heard this sad tale, she declared it wasn't me..it was one of the Ladies helping in the kitchen! I'm so glad to have been cleared of the charge, finally!

We all went out after the ceremony and visiting to have our pictures taken. As I look at those pictures of relatives and friends, it warms my heart to remember the part each played in my life. We owe so much to people who have helped us on our way.

After we said our "Thanks and Goodby" to all, Peter and I crammed into the Coupe (no seat belts then) with Dick and Elsie. They took us to the hotel in Wapella..then they went on toward Regina. As we compared notes, I realized that while I was having a wonderful Day and loving every minute among Family and Friends, it was not so great for Peter! He said he had been shaking all throughout the ceremony, and having a hard time straightening out who was who among the people! I suppose that is how it often is at weddings..but it was great for me, and I hope that he thought it was worth it!?

We caught the Bus to Regina the next afternoon..and big snowflakes (just like confetti) showered down on us. What a wonderful sight..

When we arrived at our "suite" the people there had gathered to welcome us..and Peter carried me over the threshold! We were "home" and it looked great..we have some pictures taken there (oh, how young we look!).

## **The Prewar Years**

The Simpson Mail Order policy was that only one member of a family was allowed on the payroll. In fact, most businesses were like that, as jobs were scarce and women taking jobs was frowned upon. However, they called me back for the Christmas "rush".

Then came our First Christmas together! But Dick and Elsie came over at Midnight Christmas Eve, and wakened us..what a joke! After they left I persuaded Peter that it really WAS Christmas..so please let me open my "big" parcel from him! It was a lovely knitted suit..but what a letdown when Christmas morning arrived, and my parcel was already opened..

I really didn't find time on my hands, even though I wasn't working. Peter came home for lunch, and Mr & Mrs Reimer returned from Renata where they had been visiting. So Peter and I moved up to the 3rd floor, where there was lots of room for the 4 of us. Then Mr Brown asked Mr & Mrs Reimer to caretake a big house he owned nearby. So they left, and a Chap who worked with Peter (Randall) asked if he could live with us. He was a lot of fun and we enjoyed his stay with us. But he fell in love and married a Simpson girl. Randall had been adopted and knew he had a brother somewhere, but records were not made available in those days. One day someone who worked at Simpsons asked Randall if he had a brother? He told her the story and she said he should check out a man who was driving a truck for Eatons, as he sure looked like he could be related! Well, Randall checked and it WAS his brother. (I thought you would like this neat story).

In 1939 the King and Queen arrived in Regina! War clouds were gathering and Britain needed help! How we enjoyed running back and forth across Regina, wanting to see them as often as we could. Such a fine looking Couple, and dearly loved. Queen Elizabeth (we call her Queen Mum now) was beautiful and looked so stunning standing at the back platform of the train as it finally left us. They were the Parents of our present Queen Elizabeth.

On Sept. 3, 1939 we were shocked to be awakened in the early morning by the calls of the Newsboys on the street yelling "Extra, Extra..War declared!" We knew that John MacDonald (Lil's brother) would be one of the Airforce pilots involved in the heroic effort to keep England free! It would be some time before Mum heard from her sister and Family. Harriet had been injured when their house was bombed. And it was not until 1986 that we once again made contact with our Jones relatives! (That story is in your family tree Book).

Besides seeing Peter's Mum and Dad, we kept in touch with other Reimer Family members who lived in Regina..aunts, uncles and cousins. But for the most part we spent our spare time with Dick and Elsie. We also had Peter's old friends Mr and Mrs Swift to visit (Charlie's Parents). The Swifts were very fond of Peter and made us welcome..They were a real fun Couple & I heard many stories of Peter & Charlie when they were schoolmates...

## **Working Woes**

I should tell you this story of an awful thing that happened to Peter when he was working at Simpsons. He was in charge of the stock of Ladies' Coats for the Dept. and Carrie Kurtz was the person who filled the orders for the customers. One day the two of them were called "on the carpet" by the Manager downstairs, who accused them of stealing fur coats! What a terrible accusation! Of course, they knew nothing about it, but the Manager didn't believe them and gave them a deadline to tell the truth! Can you imagine how Peter felt? Anyhow, after a few days they had a detective stay in the Dept. at night..and picked up the Retail Manageress as she came to pick up more coats! In her position she had free access all over the store. She had worked with an accomplice who was getting rid of the stolen coats..and he was charged, too. But no one ever came to apologize to Peter and Carrie!

When news of the War broke out, Peter decided to make a change of job. He asked Mr Brandt (who owned Brandt Elec. and Machine) for work, and was given 2 weeks in a manual job. Then Mr Brandt told him he could try out at his Machine Shop. One of the Machinists saw how enthusiastic Peter was, so encouraged and helped him all he could. So did Mr Brandt. And that was the very beginning of Peter's career in machining!

About that time we moved into two rooms at the Brandt house at 2200 Winnipeg St. Dick and Elsie had 2 rooms there, so the 4 of us spent a lot of time together, evenings and weekends. We played Bridge (of sorts), and also took outings together. Elsie and I knitted lovely suits for ourselves, too.

In September of 1940, Dick and Elsie's daughter June was born. But Dick (he worked at Brandt Electric as a welder) began to make plans to go to Vancouver, where things were busy because of the war effort. They left in 1941. Peter continued in the machine shop and was enjoying the work. By July of 1941 I was pregnant..and very excited! Except for nausea at first, I kept well. But it seemed right that we should go to Vancouver, too (I was very reluctant, however)! But Peter left the end of November (I stayed at his Mum & Dad's in Regina). In about a week Peter got a job in a Machine Shop (on night shift)..and sent for me. I arrived in Vancouver by train in early December..and was met by Rose Emily and Frank..who made room for us in their home! There were still roses in their garden..and I had left bitterly cold weather in Regina...it was unbelievable!

Peter Edwin was born April 8, 1942..and we were still at the Rudds! However, by summer we had rented a house in Grandview..and once more, we were "home!" But there were blackouts at night, and I hated to see Peter go out into the pitch darkness when he was on night shift! Submarines off-shore were causing alarm. The war news was very bad, and Peter felt he should join up. Our Bill was born in February, 1944. Peter got a release from his Shop, and by June he had joined the Navy, and was heading for Toronto!

## **The War Years**

Rose Emily and Frank were always "there" to turn to while Peter was away. They came over often..Marian & Noreen were 2 & 4 years older than Peter E. A lot of the time I had others to stay with me for short periods..a Macgregor cousin, and later a relative of Mom Reimer, but especially sister Lorraine. She had graduated from High School and moved to Vancouver to study and work. (During this time she met Harold Paget at our Church). It was great to have her stay with me..and the two little boys. I also had good neighbours, one of whom (Thelma Carle) checked in often, and I could always call on her. There were other helpful neighbours, too..some with children to play with Peter E.

I missed Peter terribly, of course! I wrote to him each evening! Peter must have been overwhelmed with ALL those letters..telling him about the smart things our two Babies were doing! I also took lots of pictures to keep him "up-to-date". I could have gone home to visit Mum and Dad..but I felt much more comforted to stay in our little house, where I could be contacted readily. First Peter had courses to take in Toronto, then he came home on Leave before being sent to Halifax to await a Ship, then he got "Ship's Leave" before they sailed for the Mediterranean. In all, he was away from us for 22 months. The ending of the war in Europe, and then the atomic bombs on Japan, brought a dramatic end to the conflicts. But how terrible wars are! We have been fortunate that our generation of Canadians has not had our Sons involved..and hopefully not our Grandsons, either...

It was wonderful to have Peter return to us! He went back to work at Progressive Machine Shop as before.

In 1946 Rose Emily took Marian, Noreen and Peter E. to the Farm to visit Mum & Dad for 2 months, and while they were away our Robert Parker was born. I was so excited about seeing Peter E. again on his return..and he walked right past me in the kitchen and asked "Where is Robert Parker?" I had become "redundant" ..

Bill had a chance to visit the Farm, too. When he was 4, Elaine, Lorraine and friend Eveline were going to visit Mum & Dad, and took Bill along on the train. I wonder how much he remembers of that?

Robert was about 2 when we sold our little house and bought a 2-story house in Kerrisdale (3215 W. 39). That is the house that our Boys remember fondly. I know they took you children to see that house, and you will have heard stories about when we lived there. I will leave that for them..but I have fond memories, too.

Both Peter and I enjoyed living in that big house. It was the original house on that property. A back kitchen had been added later. Peter put a foundation under the kitchen..hailed out the dirt, and enlarged the basement. That gave him a workshop, and improved the kitchen for me. The big living room with VERY high ceilings invited gatherings, and we had many happy times with relatives, and when Mum and Dad came to visit.

## **Life on 39th Avenue**

Having the school just across the road was great, too. The playground was perfect for bike riding as the Boys got older, and for playing baseball. I remember too, having the door of the house open and hearing the music as the classes practised for May Day, in the schoolyard. It was a more "innocent" time. Today, an open door would be an invitation that we could not risk taking.

I was very involved with the Youth Groups at Knox Church just a half block away. Our Boys were part of those Groups..and it was great. And we all remember Mrs Gibb with her basket of little pancakes. She led the Childrens' Choir, and at choir practise once a week, she handed out those little pancakes to hungry kids! Any child could join that Choir..a singing voice was not a "must"..just a love of singing was okay.

Not too long ago Peter E. set out to find that pancake recipe. I couldn't help, but he found someone in Knox Church..a friend of Mrs Gibb's, who gave it to him.

We lived in that big house about 7 years. Elaine lived with us, except for one year when she went to England with her friend Eveline. Bill was about 8, when he asked "Where's Aunt Elaine?" She had been gone a week or so..Elaine was not impressed, when she heard that story."

One March we had a big snowfall. I remember that, as Peter hurt his back about that time, and was in hospital a month! The Boys and I had to dig ourselves out, but we went daily to see Peter. (we trudged through the snow to the bus). The Boys took turns accompanying me.

You will have heard about the stretcher that Peter had made the Boys so they could haul wood into the basement for the furnace (we burned wood and coal).

About 1950, Peter brought a '36 Chev...our first car. The 5 of us set out on holidays..first to Bellingham so that we could buy a tent..then up to Penticton to camp at Okanagan Lake. When Peter put the tent up, he found that we had been given the wrong poles etc! At night a big wind came up, and the tent collapsed around us! The Boys and I (half asleep) bundled somehow into the car..and I guess Peter stayed in the tent mess. Next day he improvised, and we were able to continue our holiday. Of course, once we got home Peter made proper poles. Peter E. still has that tent, keeping it for the memories. He and his Girls also used that tent.

We had several camping trips with our 3 Boys, over the years. Once to Renata where Uncle Jake & Aunt Tina Reimer (Grandpapa's brother) welcomed us. We slept in a converted school bus they had in their orchard. It was used for fruit pickers. That was a great trip..especially memorable as Grandpapa's Parents are buried there. Years later, Renata was flooded when the Keenleyside Dam was built on the Arrow Lakes.

While we lived in the big house, the Boys took swimming lessons at Canadian Memorial pool. We would go once a week after school (by bus) and Peter would pick us up on his way home from work.

Peter E. had a job delivering groceries for Allen's Grocery store near us. We moved to the house next door (3211) in 1955. That was a newer house, and the Kingstons (our neighbours) offered it to us at a good price. They wanted to retire and didn't want the hassle of selling it. Peter couldn't find much to do in that house. He did build a "darkroom" in the basement. Also, he built dressers, bunks, desks in the large room upstairs..so our 3 boys had a lovely set-up together. Also, in 1956 Elaine and Ralph were married. Her company had sent her to Port Alberni to help out, and that is where she met Ralph. Also about that time, Thelma, Fred with Debra & Diane left the Farm and moved to Vancouver. They stayed with us till they got a suite.

While we were in that house, we got our first T.V..a "used" one from Woodward's. It was Grey Cup time, and the Rudds came to watch with us..they didn't have a T.V. at that time, either.

## **The Move to Marpole**

We lived in that house only a year. Kerrisdale was too "refined" for workshop activity, so Peter asked a Realestate man to look for an area where he would have freedom to perhaps start a Fix-It shop to work in part time. The Realty found a house in Marpole that would suit just fine (8792 Montcalm)..2 bedrooms, with another in the basement. It was zoned for light work. So that is what happened. Peter opened a little Shop in the basement for his Spare Time. He still worked at his job at Vancouver Iron & Engineering.



There was a garage for Peter E. to work "designing" cars. Bill got himself a job delivering meat (on his bike) after school, and Robert went to the Safeway each day to get our milk (instead of having Milk Delivery). He pocketed the 2 cents a qt. we saved.

Robert went to David Lloyd George School nearby to finish his last 2 years of Elementary. But Bill and Peter E. went to Churchill Jr.-Sr High (just built).

When Peter E. was 16 (1958) we wanted to take the Boys to Disneyland..we had a '52 Chev. Peter E. didn't want to leave his car projects..but we wouldn't go without him. Then Peter told him that he could drive part of the time..and that persuaded him! We had a great time, of course. You know how it is at Disneyland! We were all Kids again..

Marpole proved to be a good spot. Lots of small homes, so the Boys had friends to play "kick the can" etc. Also, Eburne Park was close by, so they spent a lot of time there..and I could blow my whistle to call them home when meals were ready. (And to think our Grandchildren would also play in that little Park!) Sometimes when our Boys talk "old times" their memories of this house seem most important to them..after all, they were older then and we lived there 6 years. Then the area was re-zoned for Apartments and one by one our neighbours sold and left. That was when we decided (with Uncle Frank's encouragement) to have our Apartment built (address became 1347 W. 72nd). We lived in a rented house on Hudson St. during that time.

## **Greatpa and Greatma in Newton**

Soon after we moved to Vancouver, Peter sent for his Mom and Dad, as there was a job for a Fitter at the Shop where Peter was working (Progressive Eng.). So our Boys had their Grandparents to share their lives while they were growing up. When Robert was born, they were living in row houses (on 16th Ave). Peter E and Bill both have faint memories of that place, as we visited Mom and Pa often. There were quite a few of Peter's Aunts, Uncles and Cousins in Vancouver then, and we had some great gatherings. Many of those were in our house, especially while we were in Kerrisdale.

Our Boys were still pre-teen when Mom and Pa bought 4 acres in Newton..on 72nd Ave. They lived there till 1973.

You have all heard stories about the fun our Boys (and their Reimer cousins) had on that acreage in Newton. (More about that acreage later). At the time our Apartment was built, the Reimers were still living there, Peter E. was 22, Bill was 20 and Robert 18. My Parents (Ed & Emily Dumville) had a suite on 71st at Fremlin. It was very sad for all of us when Ed died of a stroke while he and Emily were visiting Clifford and Ruth in Ontario in 1966.

Within a few years, our 3 Boys were all married: Peter E. & Arleen in 1965; Bill & Fran in 1967; Robert & Maureen in 1968.

So Peter and I were just the two of us again..that is, alone with an Apartment full of Tenants! Peter worked afternoon shifts so that his mornings were free for fixing things around the building, shopping etc.

Peter and I had many great trips whenever he had holidays over the years. We have boxes and boxes of prints, and boxes and boxes of tapes to remind us of those great times. We bought a new Volkswagen Camper in 1972 ..and it was ready to take off whenever we had a weekend free, or vacation time. Even after we had the Apartment we managed to get away for some good trips (some of them with you!)

My Mother moved into a suite in our Apartment in 1967. You Grandchildren remember how nice it was to have her join in whenever you came to visit us! Our Apartment was a great gathering-place for Family "do's" ..and after our Grandchildren started arriving, it became really lively!

You could all write your own memories of when you were growing up and played with your Cousins at our place. Remember too, the Tenants who loved to have you visit them. I remember one Christmas when Grandmama and Grandpapa joined in with us all at our apartment, and Great Grandma was there, too. We are very happy that at least our oldest Grandchildren knew and enjoyed these Great Grandparents.

You have more details about all our Family members in your Family Tree Books..

## **Bill's Letters**

Here is the letter Bill sent to Grandmama when Pa died. What a lot of joy our Boys had with their Grandparents on that acreage in Newton! And one he sent us when G'Ma died.(dated March 14, 1986)

Dear Grandma.

It is very difficult to express how we all felt at learning of Grandpa's death. The sadness was mixed up with the happy memories we have of our times together-as recent as our lovely visit this Christmas.

As we were exchanging our memories, I realized as well that Daegan and Jean Pierre have grown up to share in the more distant memories they have heard about you and Grandpa. I was surprised to hear from J.P. about the time when I helped Grandpa build the chicken house (from his account, though, you would think it was just Grandpa and I who did it all alone!), or when Grandpa blew a rock through the house wall while stumping, or how he kept the tractor running on

kerosene when gasoline ran out. From the way they tell the stories it is clear that they are just as proud of Grandpa as I am.

Of course, there are many more stories which Daegan and Jean Pierre have yet to hear.

For me, most of them are rooted in "the farm", where I spent so many hours in exploring, learning, and simply enjoying the love which we found there. They are also memories of the two of you - as much the button drawer as the tools on the garage bench, the turkey dinners as much as the rides in the rumble seat. I certainly have a great deal to be thankful for!

Although I am not with you now, I hope you know how much you are in my thoughts - in all our thoughts. It would be nice if I could somehow pass back to you some of the love and support which you have so willingly shared with us over the years..

(signed) Love Bill".

(Writing that letter proved too nostalgic..Bill decided to fly out for Grandpa's funeral)

.....

(dated July 1, 1989)

"Dear Mum and Dad,

I hope by writing. we will have some presence at Grandma's funeral. It felt good to have your calls, to hear your voice and to be included in some of the stories during this sad period, but the distance still gets in the way.

We have our memories, of course, and it is comforting to know that J.P. and Daegan have their own stories to tell of times they had with "Greatma" and "Greatpa", like skipping near the plum tree, exploring the button drawer, and browsing through the photo albums. Their stories don't include the joy of "the farm" years, but those parts are for me to tell. A good number of them have already been passed on: from rides in the rumble seat to picking raspberries and coloring goose eggs, but there are many more left, for evenings around the table, or bedtime chats.

For me, Grandma went with the smell and warmth of sawdust, since so many of my earliest memories were of her at work by the sawdust-burning cookstove. They are wonderful memories for they are associated with arriving in the warmth of the "farmhouse" to smiles, hugs, fresh buns (sometimes bubbat), cozy chairs, cousins, aunts, uncles, and the occasional neighbour. It was easy to forget the terror of the tram bridge with a welcome like that! There was always something going on: if it weren't time to gather the eggs with Grandma in the henhouse, then the

raspberries needed picking, or the plums had to be gathered, or they all needed to be canned.

Grandma is also in our wool comforter. J.P. and Daegan know it as the extra warmth which we pull out on especially cold nights, but for me it carries memories of nights at the farm. There was a special smell to those covers: perhaps from the moth balls with which they were packed, or maybe from the cedar chest in which they were folded. They also held the smell of the attic, where Grandma would rig up a light for us on rainy days. We would then explore the drawers, trunks, nooks and crannies, discovering the books, clothes, photos and tools that were part of our heritage. The sound of the rain on the roof above us merely added to the warmth of the moment...We all wish to celebrate Grandma's Life.

Love, Bill, Fran, Daegan & J.P." (from Montreal)

## **Peter's Stories**

During our years together it has been fun to share our early memories (that is why Peter wanted me to put mine down..guess he got tired of hearing them!)..But I have gathered some of his during these past 59 years, too..

You will have read what Peter remembered before his Mum died in 1919. Then Peter's Grandma (his Dad's Mum) took Peter and Elsie to Renata to live with her, her (2nd ) husband, and her Teen-age children. Peter was 4 years plus 7 months, so has quite a few memories of that experience. (Peter's Dad told me he never looks at the pictures taken in Renata (of that little boy) without crying!) What a loss, to lose Margaretha! But Peter and Elsie seemed to remember their Grandma fondly, and there were teen age aunts to keep them company. There were also teen-age uncles..and they teased Peter when he cried! But then there was "Collie"..the dog who liked Peter! The first thing Peter would do when he got up was call "Here, Collie, Collie, Collie!" and his day would begin. But that was sad, too. Collie was a Kids' dog, but when he began biting people, he had to be destroyed.

There was an argument in later years as to where the wharf was situated in those early days. But old pictures confirmed that Peter had remembered the exact location, and "won the bet". Good memory, had Peter!

After about a year, Mr Reimer went to Renata and brought Peter & Elsie back to Herbert with him. Baby Dick was with his Mum's Parents in Sask.

In 1921 Mr Reimer married Anna Neufeld..and in 1922 the family moved to Morden, Manitoba.

Peter started school in Morden..and he would add: "I was 7 years old, I went to The Tin School, and my teacher was Miss Pilkington..and that is where I learned the song "Good Morning, Merry Sunshine..." He has also said he remembers a little girl in Grade 1 who wet her pants and had to stand over the heating register until they dried..and she cried...

Peter seems to have enjoyed Morden. On our first trip through there in 1968, Peter pointed out the upstairs (over some stores) where they had lived when they first went. He added that he and his brother Dick spit down through a knot hole in the floor, onto the machine of the Tailor who was working in his store below! The tailor told Mrs Reimer! That building burned down two years after we were there.

We drove through the Park in Morden (on our 1968 trip) and Peter pointed out where a recluse man had lived when they were young. There are so many oak trees in that Park! The little creek that Peter remembered was still rippling over the rocks..and we taped its happy sound.

Morden is a prosperous town with many lovely homes. There are experimental farms there, growing varieties of fruits and vegetables which will withstand the harsh Prairie winters. My family had visited Morden when I was young, as one of my Mum's nieces had married Karl Thorkelson, who was a Principal and Inspector of schools there.

Our second trip to Morden was in 1982, and this time the weather was glorious, and we had gone to "explore". We stayed in a lovely campground in Winkler, which is close to Morden. We were anxious to find out about the Tin School, of Peter's memories. And anyone we asked said "Oh! You should have been here yesterday!" The town had been celebrating its 100th Birthday..and we missed it by one day! But we were directed to a Mrs Winkler and she invited us in to her home. We had a great visit..and she said that the reunion had been very successful, and all of the former pupils of Miss Pinkington had been gathered together to sing "Good Morning Merry Sunshine". She said it was hilarious to hear all those voices, re-living those childhood memories! The Tin School had been used for other things, but we bought a lovely book in which there are picture of it..and also of Miss Pinkington!

Those 3 years in Morden are noted on Page 9. Now on to Regina..and the next few years when Peter was 10-13.

Peter and Dick used to go down to the railway tracks and pick up wood from the boxcars to haul home. It was a help for the cookstove. Mrs Reimer was working. Also for some months Mr Reimer was in hospital with an infected kidney (he lost part of it)..and there was no such thing as hospital insurance then! In those years too, Peter and Dick made themselves slingshots..lots of fun! Of course, they knew they shouldn't have them, so hid

them behind the toilet in the Outhouse (no plumbing in those days!) But their suspicious Parents found them!

In 1930 when Peter started working at Simpsons, he started chumming with Charlie Swift and Bill McKechnie (he had known Charlie in Grade School). Those 3 had some good times..riding bikes (Peter had bought his for 15 dollars..a lot of money, really), and also they went into the country and shot gophers, and they also just "goofed" around together. Peter used to go to Charlie's home, too. The Swifts were Scottish and real "Characters". Peter, Charlie and Mr & Mrs Swift would play Bridge, and Peter said that often a real argument would break out between Mr and Mrs! I met them when Peter and I were dating, and after we were married, and really enjoyed them. In fact I can't think of them even now, without a chuckle!

The times spent with the Swifts were very special to Peter. Charlie and Peter always kept in touch, even after we moved to Vancouver. Charlie married (he and his wife Emily had 2 daughters) and always lived in Regina. However, he was a terrific letter writer and we corresponded regularly. He liked to enclose clippings from the Regina paper in his letters..to keep us in touch with what was going on there. He also enclosed Obituaries of friends and neighbours we had known. Sadly, in February of 1994, Charlie's name was there..he had died of Cancer, and Emily phoned us.

We still keep in touch with Emily Swift, and after Charlie's death, I bundled up and mailed a large packet of Charlie's letters for Emily to give to his Daughters..lots of neat stories!

Peter has outstanding ability in so many areas..and many of them are self-taught. As we look back on our lives, there are many people to whom we would like to say "thanks" ..and in Peter's life, one of them would be a young man named George Black. He was a neighbour, and he noticed Peter's interest in Electricity. Peter would be about 15 then. George was taking a course from the International Correspondence School, and he offered to loan it to Peter. How wonderful it was, and it all made sense to Peter, and he "lapped" it up! It was information he would use throughout his life! Popular Mechanics helped, too.

So it was, when he got the chance to work in Mr Brandt's Shop (in 1939). There was a variety of work there, as they did repairing..so Peter learned a lot just by watching, asking questions, and working on whatever he was allowed. They made and spray painted light fixtures, as well as repairing farm machinery, and repairing lots of road building equipment used for Municipalities around Regina. And when Peter was given jobs on the lathes, shaper or grinder he was really happy! He had the ability required to go on to work these machines well..and when we moved to Vancouver and he started at Progressive Engineering, Peter was accepted as a first class Machinist.

In 1941 the Machine Shop was planning to put in a Union. Peter was already getting Journeyman rate, and worried that he hadn't had a formal Apprenticeship. One of the Machinists told Peter just to report his years in Regina. And that was accepted. I should mention, that it was at Progressive Engineering that Peter met another machinist who would become a special friend. He was Dom Toporowski.

## **Life in the Navy**

When Peter joined the Navy he went to Toronto to take courses in Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry..and passed with his Electrical Artificer rating.

They sailed on the Destroyer Algonquin, and while on board Peter was to help maintain the gyroscope, and all the electric motors. That was when that Electricity Course that George Black had loaned him was put to good use!

I should mention here another "talent" of Peter's: cutting hair! There was no barber on board Ship, so when Peter let it be known he had hair cutting tools with him, he was asked to be the "official" barber! However, Peter did not want to spend all his spare time cutting hair..so he declined. But, whenever he ran short of spending money, he would put a stool out..and the guys would line up! He just charged 25 cents a cut..and everyone was happy. But when the Captain sent for Peter (twice) to come to his cabin to cut HIS hair..he didn't offer even 25 cents! And the 1st Lieutenant not only wanted his hair cut..but also his beard!

While Peter was on Board the Ship he sent all his paycheques home to me and our Boys..as he just cut hair whenever he needed spending money.

After the War, Peter was made Foreman of Progressive Eng. even without an Apprenticeship. It's okay, his Superintendent said..HE hadn't served HIS, either!

Your Grandpa was sort of embarrassed that I wrote all about him..but it is true. I heard lots of it from others, and learned a lot of it just from being with him all these years.

I forgot to mention that Peter has been taking and developing pictures since before I knew him. It has given us much pleasure, and you know how nice it is to have those (black & white) pictures he took of you as Babies. And your growing-up years have been recorded in color. All the negatives have been saved for you.

Somehow, even though I know it wasn't part of his childhood, Peter has devoted much effort into seeing that his Boys and Grandchildren had their share of picnics and outings. I know that when he was small, Peter's Folks visited with relatives (and Peter has fond memories of aunts, uncles and cousins). But family outings were not a part of his childhood. The opportunities were just not there.

However, our young Boys were taken to the beaches and parks on the bus..each got his turn to ride on Peter's shoulders. We "explored" Vancouver in those years, lugging all the necessary "equipment" with us. For days after I would find little piles of sand here and there, but the next weekend we would be off again.

After we got our first car ('36 Chev) about 1950, we had "wheels", so when Peter had holidays, we took off to introduce our Boys to B.C. It did not "blow" our budget, as we made our own meals, and tenting in Provincial Campsites (such as they were) was free. It was great to experience the outdoors and perhaps a bit of fishing, and of course, those Campfires! I hope that our Boys have happy memories of those times.

Peter also was determined that I should go back to those places I had known. When he came up with those ideas, I always said "Oh, I don't need (want?) to go. But go we did! And then I wondered why I was so silly as to hesitate. I have already written of our nostalgic trip back to the Farm in Saskatchewan, and you can imagine what that meant to me. But when Peter suggested we go to London and also to my Dad's grave in France, I really protested. But, just like all the other adventures I have mentioned, this too was "necessary". It was all just wonderful, and I was so fortunate to have the experience of walking the streets where my Grandparents and Parents had been; seeing the house from which Mum, Rose Emily and I left to go to Canada; going to the area in France where my Dad was, and to his grave.

I think Grandpa must have had you Grandchildren in mind when he bought that 1972 Camper! Wasn't it fun?! It seemed to be able to go just everywhere..on backroads, up mountains, into campsites, to waterslides and ski hills, just as easily as to Chuck E. Cheese and Toys 'R' Us (in Los Angeles). And also to Vancouver Island. There was so much to do inside the Camper that waiting for ferries was actually Fun! I know you each have your own fond memories, but to us they were priceless, and to me they were evidence once again of the good ideas that Peter made come true.