

The Lowther and Ruddell families of Crawford County, Illinois, and their ancestors

Jan Strasma
April 2026

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Cover image is the Lowther family crest in a stained glass window of St. Michael's Church in Lowther, England

Images are from the family photo collection of Jane Lowther Strasma and from Steve Lowther

Ancestors are recorded relative to their relationship with the four Lowther siblings, Jane, Mary, Steve, and Dan, children of Bill and Josephine Lowther.

Information is drawn from numerous sources including family records and images, online information at ancestry.com and findagrave.com, and the comprehensive family history, "My Lowther Family," by C.T. Lowther, 1985, who did his exhaustive research without the benefits now available with the internet. The reminiscences of Thelma Lowther Otey were recorded by Jane and Jan Strasma during Thanksgiving visits in Robinson, Illinois, in 2004 and 2005

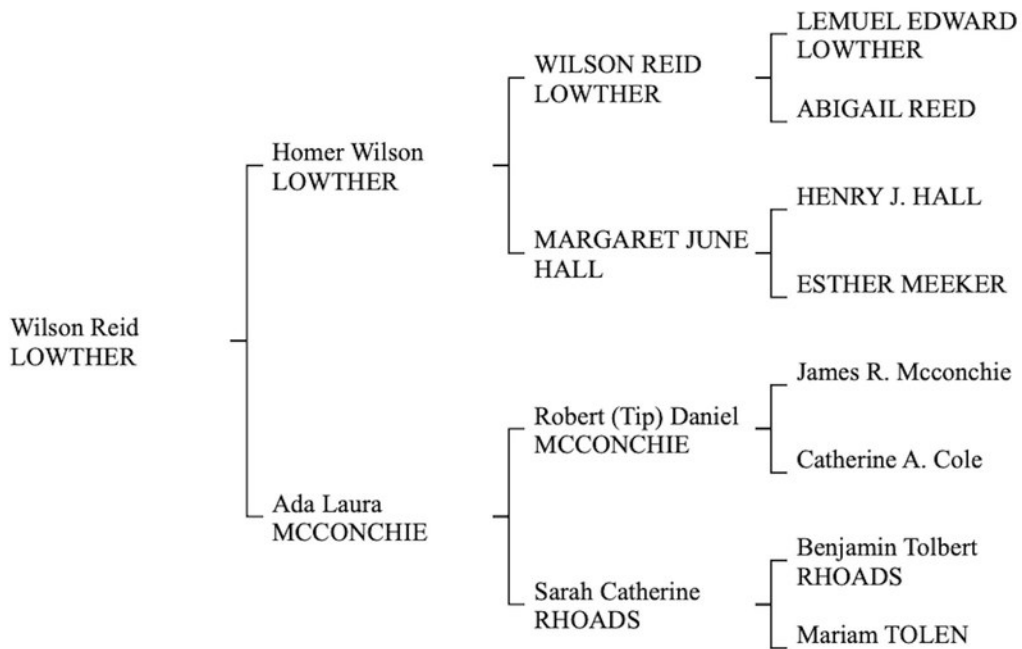
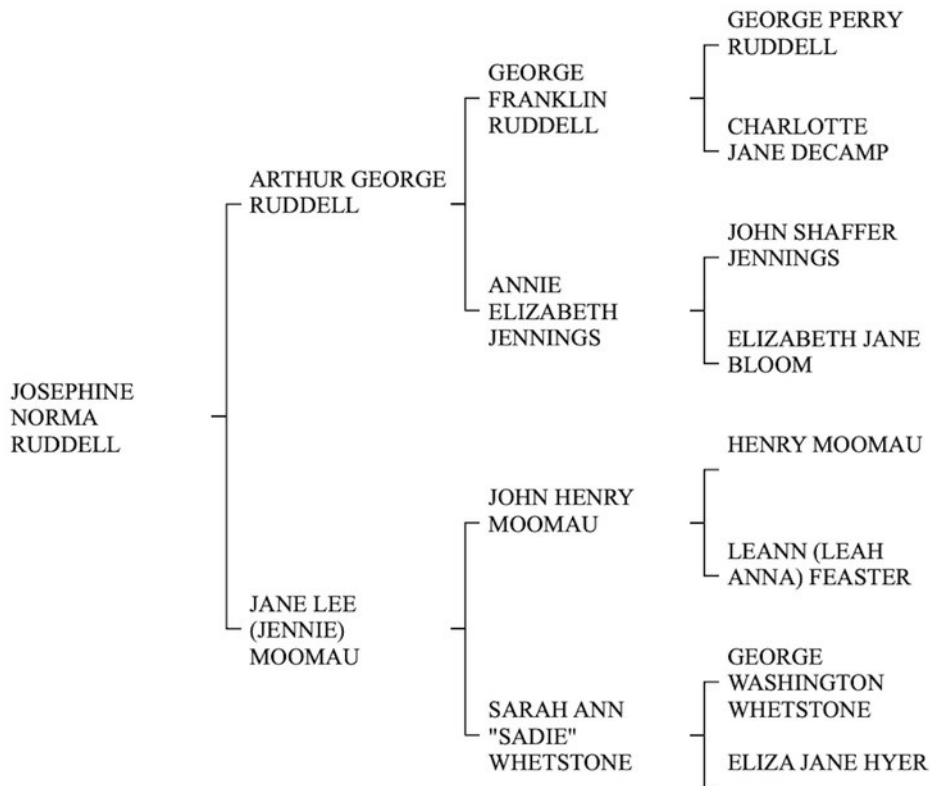
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Lowther siblings in 1977 (from left) Mary, Steve, Jane, and Dan - with father Bill in background



Origins of the Ruddell and Lowther Ancestry Lines in America

The ancestors of the Ruddell and Lowther families of Crawford County, Illinois, were among the early settlers of the American colonies and the early years of the new nation. In fact, most, if not all, of the direct ancestors of Jane Lowther and her siblings arrived more than 200 years ago - the earliest of these settlers emigrated to America to escape religious persecution in England, France, and elsewhere in Europe.

At least four families reached these shores in the 1600s — each of them led by the 8th and 9th great grandparents of the Lowther siblings. If all of the Lowther and Ruddell family lines were developed, the 8th great grandparent level would represent more than 1000 individuals. Research has identified a few of these ancestors as early settlers while many ancestral lines were still back in Europe - "immigrants in waiting."

Likely the final direct ancestor of the Lowther siblings to emigrate to the United States was George Jennings, their 4th great-grandfather and an ancestor in the Ruddell line. George's first appearance in U.S. records is in the 1850 federal census for Concord in Miami County, Ohio. At age 84 he was living with his son, William, a shoemaker.

George was from Epping which is now a suburb of London. His wife, Ann, died in 1837, and George, then, emigrated to the US to join his son sometime before the 1850 census. He died before the 1860 census.

His son, William, was born in 1804 in Epping and emigrated sometime prior to 1823 when he married Ann Parrish in Baltimore, Maryland.

Subsequent to the 1850 census, William and his wife Ann moved to Robinson in Crawford County, Illinois. Ann died there in 1857. William remarried in 1860 to Jane Nevitt and they had one son, Richard. William died in 1867.



William Jennings and his second wife Jane - William emigrated prior to 1823 and his father, George, joined William and his family in Ohio after George's wife died in England in 1837, making him the latest immigrant to the US among the Ruddell and Lowther families.

Tracing early ancestry in America can be challenging with similar names and few formalized church and government records. Some families have published histories and others are included in localized histories of colonial America. Census records of the new United States included only the heads of households until the 1850 census which was the first to list all family members.

Jane Lowther Strasma's DNA analysis shows roughly two-thirds of her ancestry from the British Isles and one-quarter from Germanic Europe - and these percentages are born out by the immigrant ancestry reflected in records and research.

The Ruddell line originated in Wiltshire in southern England while the Lowthers trace their heritage to nobility in northern England as far back as the 12th Century.

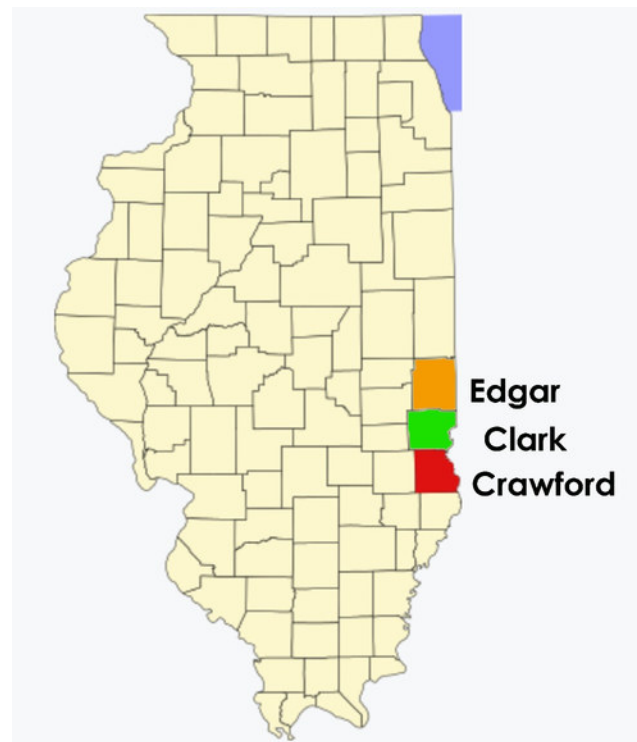
While English ancestry predominates in the family tree, there is a Scottish element, including the McConchies, and a tiny sliver

from Wales. James Rees emigrated from Wales in the early 1700s and his daughter Aquilla married Robert Lowther.

The German heritage includes protestant Huguenots who moved through Europe to escape religious oppression before emigrating to America. Many of the German surnames became Anglicized over time - Wetzstein became Whetstone; Roth or Rhodt became Rhoads; Wacker became Walker; and Blum became Bloom.

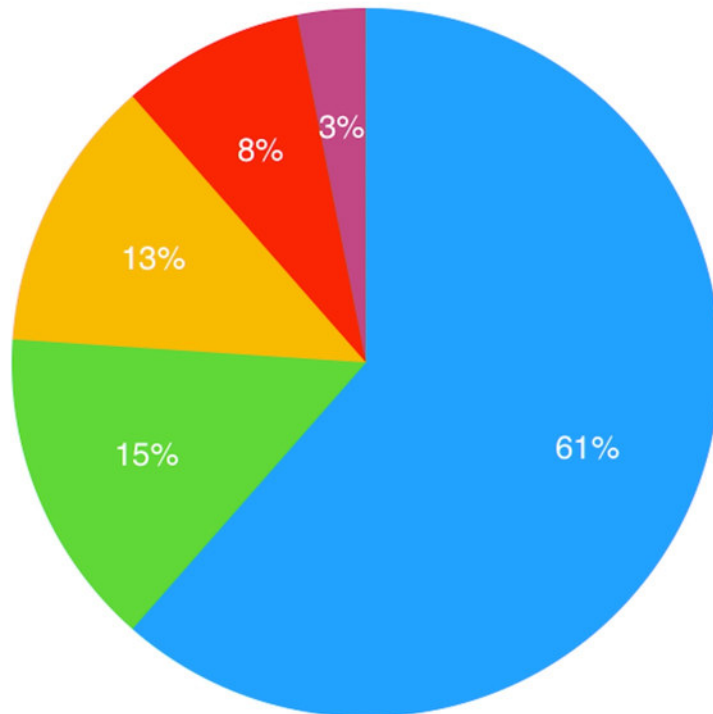
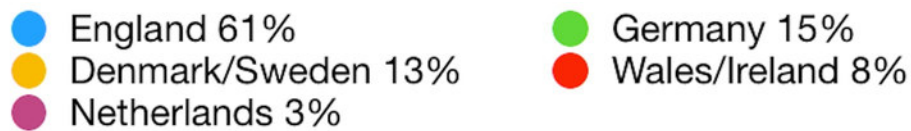
The DNA analysis also shows one-eighth of the ancestry of Danish and Swedish origin - while none of the family immigrants were from Denmark or Sweden, the ethnicity factor may reflect the historic Viking influence in both northern Europe and the British Isles.

The immigrants landed largely in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania and then moved westward through Ohio and Indiana and southwards through Virginia and into Kentucky. Eventually, they found their way to three adjoining counties in Eastern Illinois - Clark, Edgar, and Crawford - in the first half of the 19th Century. The three counties form the Illinois side of the Wabash River which was a major waterway in the 19th century northward from the Ohio River.



DNA Analysis

Jane Lowther Strasma's DNA analysis, updated in 2025, shows a predominant ethnic background as English with lesser percentages of other European origin. Family tree research would support the English/Welsh/Irish and Germanic origins while the Denmark/Sweden background is less clear but may reflect a Viking influence in England and northern Europe.



First Arrivals Among Ruddell and Lowther Ancestors

Thomas and Elizabeth Harris - 1630

9th Great-grandparents to the Lowther siblings

Thomas and Elizabeth Harris and their six children are believed to be the first Lowther/Ruddell ancestors to emigrate to the American colonies. They were among some 80 passengers on the ship Lyon, sailing from Bristol, England, in February 1630 as part of an early Puritan migration and arriving at Salem, Massachusetts in May. Captain Daniel Harris, their son in the Lowther/Ruddell line was 4 years old when the family emigrated.

The captain of the Lyon, William Peirse, was already a seasoned trans-Atlantic ship master, having made two previous trips to Massachusetts. With the Lyon he made four trips from England to the colonies from 1630 to 1632. Captain Peirse settled in Massachusetts where he was engaged in coastal shipping before he was killed by Spaniards in 1641 during a voyage to the Bahamas carrying passengers for a settlement there.

Thomas Harris is actually listed in the passenger records as "Thomas Williams alias Harris" - with only later speculation why he was so listed. As Thomas Williams, he took the required loyalty oath on 18 May 1631 and was admitted to the colony as a 'freeman.' Court records on that day show him to be the operator of a ferry between Winnesimmet (later Chelsea) and Charlestown.

The Winnesimmet Ferry was the first ferry established in Colonial America and continued in operation until 1917.

Thomas died in March 1634 at the age of 49. His widow Elizabeth married William Stitson who continued operation of the ferry. Elizabeth lived to be 93, dying on 16 February 1670 in Charlestown.

The ancestral line continued with Daniel Harris who was

Map showing
Winnesimmet
Ferry, the first
ferry in Colonial
America,
established by
Thomas Harris



born in England in 1618.

John and Hester Cram - 1635

8th Great-grandparents to the Lowther siblings

John Cram and his wife Hester, 8th great grandparents to Jane and her Lowther siblings, emigrated to the American Colonies in 1635. John was born in Bilsby, Lincolnshire, England, and baptized 29 January 1596 or 1597. His parents were Thomas and Jane Cram. John's wife, Hester White, was born 7 June 1598, also in Bilsby., John and Hester were married 8 June 1624.

Some researchers have suggested that John Cram was of German descent from Hans Von Cramm who came to England to fight the Scots for King Henry VIII. This is likely a fanciful story which cannot be substantiated.

John and his wife Hester White emigrated to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1635, arriving initially at Boston and later moving to Exeter (now part of New Hampshire) in 1639 and ultimately to Hampton, Massachusetts.

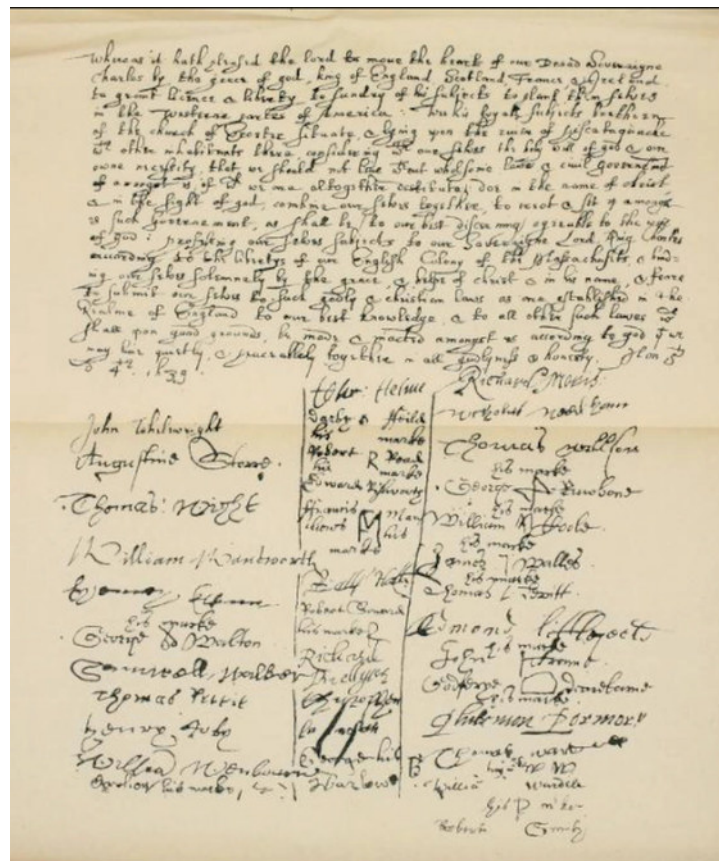
They had eight children, four born in England, one of whom

emigrated with the parents. Four more children were born in Massachusetts, including Thomas, a direct ancestor of the Lowther siblings. Hester died in 1677 and John died on 5 March in 1681 or 1682.

John and Hester were Puritans and followers of Rev. John Wheelwright who ran afoul of the leadership of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and was expelled from the colony. He led a group his supporters northward into New Hampshire where they founded the town of Exeter. On July 4, 1639, John was among 35 settlers who signed the Exeter Combination which established a government for the settlement. The document declared loyalty to "King and God" but declared separation from Massachusetts. John and his family later returned to Massachusetts where he died in Hampton in 1681 or 1682. "Good old John Cram one just in his generation departed this life on the 5th of March," according to the record of his death.

Son Thomas married Elizabeth Weare in 1681. They had at

The "Exeter Combination" signed by John Cram and 34 others to establish government for Exeter, New Hampshire.



least one son, John Jacob Cram. John Jacob's daughter Elizabeth married Jonathan Chamberlain Sr.

Laurence Jansen De Camp - 1664

8th Great-grandparents of the Lowther siblings

Another early direct ancestor to arrive on the shores of the American colonies was Laurence Jansen De Camp, a French Huguenot who arrived at New Amsterdam (now New York) in 1664. Huguenots were French Protestants who followed the teachings of John Calvin and faced severe religious persecution in Catholic France.

George Austin Morrison Jr. published his De Camp genealogy in 1900, relating:

“Laurence De Camp, the son of John De Camp, was probably born either in the province of Picardie or Normandy about 1645. He arrived at New Amsterdam in 1664, in company with other



First Dutch Church

Mrs. Bleecker Bangs in her 1912 "Reminiscences of old New Utrecht" describes the church: "It was built of stone, octagon in shape, and had a steep shingled roof, with belfry, surmounted by a gilded rooster. There were no pews in this queer little structure, each worshiper providing a chair.

'On each side of the middle aisle, near the pulpit, places were provided for forty-five women's chairs, while nearer the door were forty-five chairs for men. A "free" bench was also provided. No fires were known, and in winter the women carried "warming pans" to church, placing them underfoot and at back. '

Huguenots from Holland.”

Laurence Jansen and wife Altje Gillis (now DeMandeville) are listed among the first 27 members of the New Utrecht Church in Flatbush in 1677. The congregation built the first church in 1700.

Thomas and Elizabeth Coebourne 1681

8th Great-grandparents of the Lowther siblings

The next family in the Lowther-Ruddell line to arrive was that of Thomas Coebourne, English Quakers, who were on one of three ships which sailed from England in 1681 to begin settlement of the new colony of Pennsylvania. The colony was established by a royal charter to William Penn who offered a new home to English Quakers.

Thomas was an early convert from the Established Church to the Society of Friends (Quakers) and suffered hardship as a result. Joseph Besse recorded the persecution of English Quakers in his 1753 history: “Sufferings of the People called Quakers.” On May 27, 1660 some militia invaded a Quaker meeting at Kingston Lisle, Berkshire, beat Thomas Coebourne, dragged him outside and threw him in a muddy pond. Asked to show the commission by which they acted, one of them held up his sword, saying "This is my warrant!"

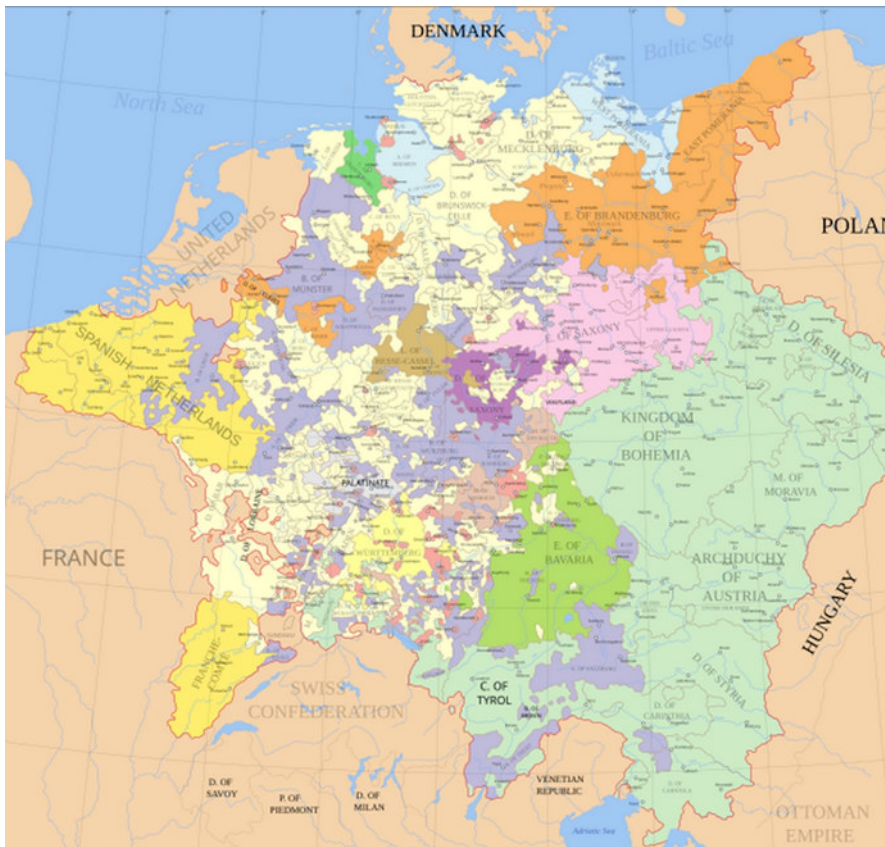
Twenty some years later, Thomas, his wife Elizabeth, and and their five children boarded the ship, Bristol Factor, in October 1681, one of the first three ships to depart England with settlers to the Pennsylvania colony. The ship carried just 29 passengers. The ship arrived 15 December 1681 - and the following years another 20 ships made the trans-Atlantic journey with further settlers for the new colony.

The Coebournes had agreed to purchase 500 acres of land, qualifying them as what became known as “First Purchasers” among the Quaker founders of Pennsylvania. They weren’t the first settlers to the area, finding a mix of English, Dutch, Swedish and German immigrants who had arrived over the previous several decades.

German Immigrants - 1700s

In the 1700s there was no unified German nation - rather an intricate jigsaw puzzle of independent states, free cities, and principalities. Religious conflicts contributed to the tensions between these many political units with the cities and the northern areas being protestant (Lutheran and Calvinist) and the southern and western areas being Catholic. Many of the German immigrants in the 18th Century were protestants fleeing oppression in the Catholic regions.

These German immigrants included the Rhoads who married into the Lowther line, and several families in the Ruddell and Moomau lines.



The jigsaw map of 18th Century Germany

First immigrants from German areas

Henry Rhoads (Lowther Line)

1712–1774

Birth 23 JANUARY 1712 • Mannheim, Erftkreis, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany

Arrival 1737 Philadelphia

Death 7 APR 1774 • Somerset County, Pennsylvania, USA

5th Great Grandfather

Lenhart Mumma (Moomau line)

1670–1750

Birth 1670 • Stolberg, , Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany

Arrival 1732 Philadelphia PA

Death JUL 1750 • Lancaster, Pennsylvania, United States

6th Great Grandfather

Peter Wetzstein (Moomau line)

1706–1778

Birth 1706 • Grötzingen, Alb-Donau-Kreis, Baden-Wuerttemberg, Germany

Arrival 1732 Philadelphia

Death 1778 • Hagerstown, Washington, Maryland, United States

6th Great Grandfather

Jacob Stookey (Moomau line)

1710–1783

Birth 1710-08-30 • Breilfurt, Pfalz, Bayern

Arrival 1737

Death 1783 • Lancaster, Pennsylvania, USA

6th Great Grandfather

Jurg Phillip Philhower (Ruddell line)

1724-1803

16 Sep 1748 Arrived on ship "Patience" from Rotterdam and took oath of allegiance - name recorded as "Jerg Pilipps Wulhauer"

Birth 17 SEP 1724 • Neckargartach, Württemberg, Deutschland
Death 26 FEB 1803 • Tewksberry Twp. Hunterdon Co., New Jersey,
United States
6th Great Grandfather

Johan Peter Bloom (Ruddell line)

1731–1814

Birth 25 JULY 1731 • Puderbach, Neuwied, Rhineland-Palatinate,
Germany
Arrival 1752
Death 4 MAY 1814 • Mount Pleasant, Hunterdon County, New Jersey,
United States of America
5th Great Grandfather

Johann Martin Hoffman (Moomau line)

1706–1782

Birth 30 AUG 1706 • Frankfurt am Main, Stadtkreis Frankfurt,
Hesse, Germany
Arrival 1766 Pennsylvania
Death FEB 1782 • Nockamixon, Bucks, Pennsylvania, USA
6th Great Grandfather

The Lowthers

The Lowther family traces its roots to English nobility as far back as the 13th Century when Sir Hugh de Lowther was Attorney General to King Edward I. The king granted Sir Hugh the right to land at Lowther, establishing the estate that has been the seat of the family's noble tradition.

But the family's history goes even further back, according to the family's web site, to Dolfin, a descendant of a Viking settler, who named the River Lowther which gave its name to the later family dynasty.

The Lowthers played a major role in the reigns of King Henry VIII and Elizabeth I. Later descendants migrated first to Ireland and then, in the early 1700s, to America as Quakers, settling first in Pennsylvania and then moving to Virginia where they played a role in the Revolutionary War.

In England Sir Richard Lowther was born 14 Feb 1532, the grandson of Sir John Lowther, who was captain of Carlisle Castle and twice High Sheriff of Cumberland during the reign of Henry VIII. Sir Richard inherited the family estates at Lowther and elsewhere in Cumberland in 1552 on the death of his grandfather.

In 1560 he was named Deputy Warden to the lands on the English side of the border with Scotland, and his principal duty was to lead raids into Scots territory. He was knighted by Elizabeth I in 1565 and appointed High Sheriff of Cumberland.

Sir Richard Lowther and his Royal Women: Elizabeth I, and Mary, Queen of Scots

(A summary prepared with the help of Perplexity AI, an online answer engine)

Elizabeth I and Mary, Queen of Scots were royal cousins who were bound by blood but divided by religion, politics, and rival claims to the English throne, and their relationship shifted from cautious kinship at a distance to hostile imprisonment and execution. Their connection was less a personal feud and more a

long power struggle in which Mary became the main focus of Catholic opposition to Elizabeth's rule, forcing Elizabeth to treat her as both family and mortal threat.

Mary, Queen of Scots was the great-granddaughter of Henry VII, which made her a cousin to Elizabeth I and gave her a strong hereditary claim to the English throne. Because some Catholics viewed Elizabeth as illegitimate, Mary's Catholic lineage made her a potential alternative monarch in the eyes of English and European Catholics, turning a family relationship into a dynastic rivalry.

Despite their famous rivalry, Elizabeth and Mary never met in person, interacting instead through letters and intermediaries over many years. In their correspondence they sometimes used warm, almost sisterly language, but beneath this politeness lay constant tension over succession, religion, and Mary's refusal to renounce any claim to the English crown.

Religious division sharpened their conflict: Elizabeth ruled a Protestant England, while Mary remained a Catholic queen whose faith made her a natural figurehead for Catholic plots and foreign powers hostile to Elizabeth. Mary's marriages and the controversies around them, especially her union with Lord Darnley and the suspicion surrounding his later murder, further damaged trust and allowed Elizabeth's ministers to portray Mary as dangerously unstable and politically toxic.

After being forced to abdicate in Scotland in favor of her infant son James, Mary fled to England in 1568 seeking Elizabeth's help and protection as a fellow queen and kinswoman. Elizabeth instead ordered Mary detained, fearing that her presence in England would inspire rebellion, so Mary spent about 19 years in honorable but strict captivity, with Elizabeth keeping her alive yet contained as a perpetual diplomatic and domestic problem.

Over time, Mary became the central figure in several conspiracies that aimed to depose or assassinate Elizabeth and place Mary on the English throne, culminating in the Babington Plot, in which intercepted letters were used as evidence of Mary's complicity. Elizabeth's government had Mary tried and found guilty of treason, and although Elizabeth hesitated over executing a fellow

anointed queen and relative. Mary was beheaded in 1587, turning their long relationship into a story of royal cousins who ended as rival queens, one authorizing the death of the other

Sir Richard Lowther's Role

Sir Richard Lowther played a significant role in the episode of Mary Queen of Scots' flight to England following her defeat at the Battle of Langside in May 1568. When Mary sought protection, she sent a letter to Lowther, who was then Sheriff of Cumberland and Deputy Warden of the West Marches; he responded evasively but indicated he would protect her if she entered England.

On May 16, 1568, Mary landed in Workington, Cumberland. The next evening, Lowther, accompanied by an escort of local gentry, personally conveyed her to Carlisle Castle, effectively taking her into protective custody. During her brief stay at Carlisle, Mary held a small court, and the Earl of Northumberland arrived, claiming the right to custody. Lowther refused to relinquish her, backing his stance with the castle garrison.

While in Carlisle Lowther imprudently allowed Mary to meet with the Duke of Norfolk, a Catholic and supporter of Mary. This meeting later drew the ire of Queen Elizabeth I, leading to Lowther being heavily fined by the Star Chamber, a secret court used against nobility, for permitting the encounter. By the end of May, Mary was handed over to Sir Francis Knollys and Lord Scrope, ending Lowther's immediate custodianship. When Mary left Carlisle en route to Bolton Castle, she stopped the first night at Lowther's residence, praising his hospitality.

Lowther's actions—protecting Mary and allowing her influential visitors—were seen as controversial. He was later involved in schemes and uprisings tied to Mary, including efforts to support or liberate her, though these ultimately failed. Lowther's reputation with the English crown suffered due to his association with Mary and the events of 1568. He was twice imprisoned in the Tower of London for his actions appearing to support Mary.

Sir Richard Lowther's arrest and imprisonment were directly linked to the dramatic political turmoil following Mary, Queen of

Scots' flight into England in 1568. At the time, England was tense over fears of Catholic plots and the challenge Mary posed as a figurehead for Catholic interests opposed to Queen Elizabeth I. Mary's arrival triggered intense negotiations and suspicion, particularly because many English nobles, especially Catholics, saw her as the legitimate sovereign.

When Lowther, then Deputy Warden of the West Marches, received Mary and resisted turning her over to the Earl of Northumberland, he entered the heart of a political struggle. The English government was determined to control Mary's fate very tightly, fearing her ability to inspire rebellion or intrigue. Lowther's further facilitation of an unauthorized meeting between Mary and the Duke of Norfolk—a powerful noble later implicated in the Ridolfi Plot (an international Catholic conspiracy)—heightened the government's suspicion and anger toward him.

In this fraught context, Elizabeth I's ministers, especially William Cecil, viewed any deviation from strict control of Mary's custody or unauthorized contact as a serious threat to the state. This led to Lowther's punishment in the Star Chamber, heavy fining, and his subsequent imprisonment in the Tower of London as a political measure designed to deter similar breaches of protocol and to assert royal authority during a period of heightened anxiety about Catholic conspiracies in England

The geography of Lowther England

Lowther landmarks are located in the historic county of Westmorland, now Cumbria.

The principal feature is the Lowther River which may have given the family its surname. The River was recorded as “launder” about 1175 - perhaps meaning a washing or bathing place or, alternatively, it may be from the Old Norse for “foamy river.”

The family name Lowther likely originated from the existing River name when they family moved into the area.

The family seat is Lowther Hall which was rebuilt on a grand scale in the late 17th Century. That structure partially burned, and the family continued to live in the undamaged wing of the hall. It was later demolished and replaced by Sir William Lowther, the first earl of Lonsdale, on an even grander scale by what became known as Lowther Castle, built in 1806-1814.

In 1882 Hugh Lowther inherited the title and castle unexpectedly after the death of his older brother at the age of 26. He was known for his extravagant life style and squandered the family fortunes. After selling other family properties, he was forced to close the castle in 1935 and during the war it was used for military purposes. The family treasures were sold at auction, and, in 1953, the roof of the castle was removed to avoid paying further taxes.

(Hugh Lowther's financial woes which eventually led to removal of the castle's roof were international news - even the Alton, Illinois, Evening Telegraph reported in 1932 that the castle was being closed.)

In 2000 the Lowther Estate, English Heritage, and local authorities began an extensive

Briton Gives Up Castle But Keeps Racing Stable

LONDON (AP)—Give up his home? Yes. Horses? Never!

Which is the state of mind which has led Lord Lonsdale to close Lowther Castle, which he spent a lifetime in beautifying in order to economize.

But at the same time it has let him keep up his racing stable and announce that he expects during the coming flat racing season to win a few first class races with horses of his own breeding.

“I have to economize in every conceivable way,” he said. “Close Lowther, let the shooting there, and do all I can to reduce expenditures.”



De-roofed
Lowther
Castle
Today

restoration of the grounds and stabilization of the structure. The site was opened to the public in 2011 and restoration efforts continue.

Lowther church — St. Michael's — overlooks the River Lowther. The church dates from the 12th Century, but was largely rebuilt in the 1860s.

Lowther Village adjoins the church and castle. When Sir John Lowther rebuilt the church he demolished the existing Lowther Village and built a new one, Lowther New Town.

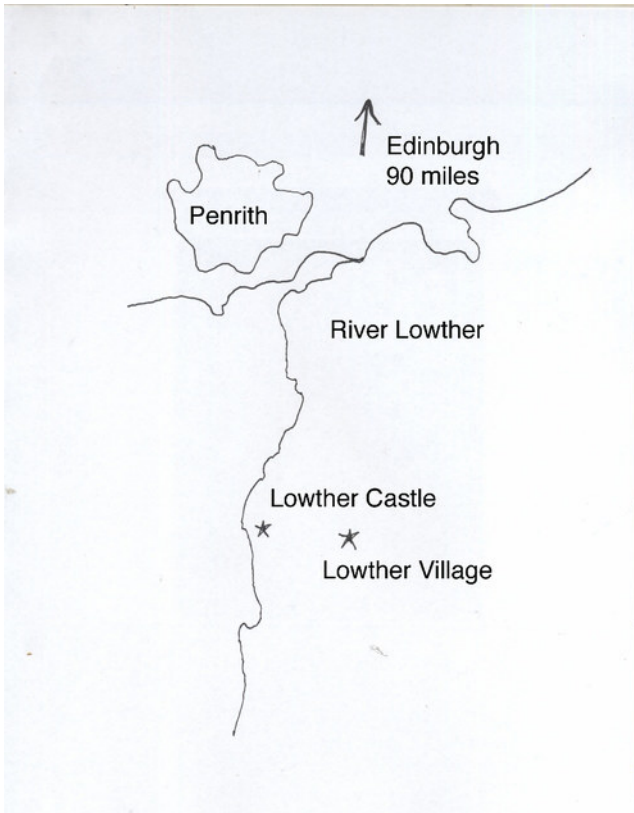


The castle in
1938 before
abandonment



Vintage 19th Century Print of Lowther Castle in its prime, above, and 1810 Painting "Lowther Castle - Evening" by noted British artist J.M.W. Turner, below





Map showing location of Lowther landmarks near Penrith in England



Lowther Castle - Jane and Jan Strasma's 2000 Visit prior to restoration and public access



"Rebirth" of Lowther Castle

Lowther Castle in Cumbria began the 20th century as a grand Gothic Revival country house, but financial pressures, death duties, and the impact of two world wars led to its abandonment after 1937 and partial demolition in 1957, when the roof was removed and the interior stripped, leaving a picturesque but decaying shell. For decades the ruin stood as a symbol of the Lowther family's lost fortunes, its once-formal grounds turned over to timber and its forecourt and lawns used for utilitarian purposes, until the early 2000s brought a new conservation plan involving the estate, heritage bodies, and major public funding to stabilize the structure and rethink the gardens for public access.

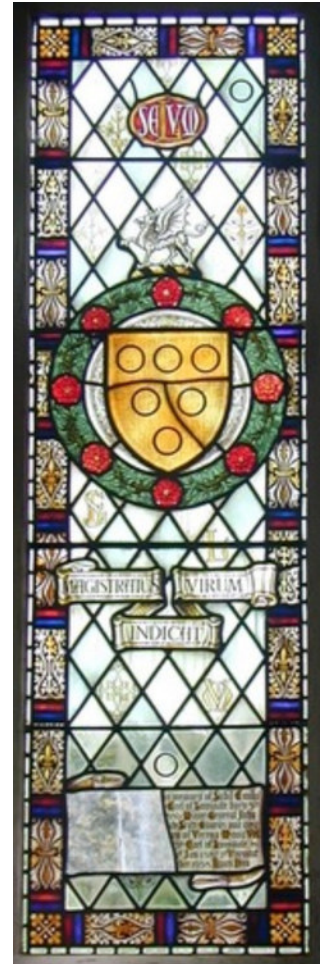
In 2008 a dedicated trust was created to restore the 50-acre gardens and make the managed ruin safe for visitors, leading to an initial £9 million program that consolidated the castle shell, converted the stable block for visitor facilities, and cleared and replanted key landscape areas. The castle and a portion of the gardens opened to the public in 2011 and, with continued investment, new exhibitions, and family-oriented features. Lowther has since evolved into one of Cumbria's most successful tourist attractions, drawing hundreds of thousands of visitors while still presenting itself consciously as a romantic ruin set in a revived historic landscape.

(Summary prepared with the help of Perplexity AI, an online answer engine)

St. Michael's Church - The "Lowther" Church



St. Michael's Church dates from 1686 but incorporates older features dating to the 12th and 13th centuries. It is part of the Lowther Castle Parkland and, in 2025, it was leased to the castle trust for management and development. It is no longer used for worship or other religious activities.



Church window with Lowther crest, above, and tomb and effigy of Sir Richard Lowther (1532-1607), left

The River Lowther

The River Lowther flows 21 kilometers from what is now the Wet Sleddale Reservoir in an upland moorland, passing the village of Lowther and Lowther Castle, to its junction with the River Eamont west of Penrith.



Here the River Lowther passes under the Askham Bridge, built in 1897, with St. Peter's Church nearby and Lowther Castle just to the east.

The Lowther Hills

Further north, in the southern uplands of Scotland, are the Lowther Hills which were the site of lead mining since at least the Middle Ages. The oldest use of the Lowther Hills name was a map from 1654. The origin of the name may be an early Irish word - loather - meaning trench or perhaps a pass through hills. There appears to be no link between the Lowther Hills and the Lowther family name.



The Lowthers of Ireland

The Irish branch of the Lowther family begins with George Lowther, who found himself the youngest son of William Lowther and the youngest grandson of Sir Richard Lowther. George is the 9th Great-grandfather to the Lowther siblings.

Historically, title and property were inherited by the oldest son on the death of his father with the remaining offspring receiving lesser or even no inheritance.

George was born in 1618 to William and Eleanor Lowther in North Yorkshire England. He moved to Ireland, where two of his uncles, Gerald and Lancelot, were living and both of whom became judges there.

When Lancelot died in 1638 George inherited the estate of Skreen in County Meath - Skreen was a 300 acre property with a fortified house and remains of an ancient abbey. He married Frances Piers, the granddaughter of Thomas Jones, archbishop of Dublin. His second marriage was to Elizabeth Fitzgerald, daughter of Richard and Alice Fitzgerald.

George and his wives had five children including William, was born in 1642, who was born at Skreen. William inherited the Skreen estate from his father. William was a skilled weaver. He married Jane Kelso in 1671 and four years later joined the Quaker faith. Jane became a Quaker in 1676 and died the following year. William married Isabel Lancaster in 1679.

Son William was born to father William and Isabel in January 1694. He married Martha Vastine Laybourne, who had been born in 1691.

William and Martha had six children, including Robert, 7th great grandfather of the Lowther siblings. They and, presumably their children, emigrated to the Pennsylvania colony in 1727. All six children were born in Ireland, and all died in America. Martha died in 1748 and William died two years later. Both were buried in the Buckingham Friends Cemetery, Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

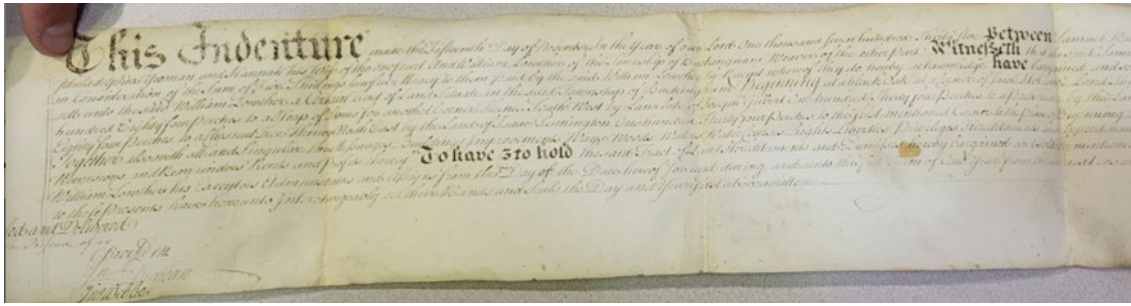
Lowthers in America

William and Martha were the first of the Lowther line to emigrate to America, arriving in 1727 with their children, including Robert, to continue the family line leading to the Lowther siblings.

William and Martha Lowther and their children were the first of the Lowther family to emigrate to America, arriving in Massachusetts in 1727 with their six children and settling in Pennsylvania where they were part of the Buckingham Friends community. Their children included Robert, the 6th great-grandfather of the Lowther siblings. He was born in 1714 in County Westmeath, Ireland. He was 15 at the time of the family's emigration.



Home identified as the site of William and Martha Lowther's home in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, although the current structure may date from 1820.



William Lowther's deed for purchase of land in Bucks County in 1730. The original is housed at the Mercer Museum in Doylestown PA.

The staff of the Bucks County Historical Society, located at the Mercer Museum in Doylestown PA, has identified the likely residence site of William and Martha Lowther in Doylestown, although the current owners identify the home itself as being built Circa 1820. The house and outbuildings are tucked into the corner a development of million dollar homes.

Son Robert was married to Aquilla Reese on 20 February 1736 in the First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, (Both Robert and Aquilla were disowned by their families for leaving the Quaker faith.)

Aquilla was born to a Welsh immigrant father, Joseph Reece, and Rebecca Reynolds, whose family can be traced to John Reynolds, an early immigrant to the Massachusetts Bay Colony. He would be Aquilla's 2nd great grandfather and 10th great-grandfather of the Lowther siblings.

(It is unclear when John reached America but he apparently had settled in Middlesex County, Massachusetts by 1635, when son Jonathan was born, and subsequently moved to Hartford County, Connecticut. There is some uncertainty among online researchers over the family connections between John Reynolds and great-granddaughter Aquilla.)

Robert and Aquilla's family left Pennsylvania in 1740 moving to a succession of places in Virginia and what is now West Virginia. Robert died at Hacker's Creek in Lewis County.

Robert and Aquilla had 10 children, including William who was

born 22 Dec 1742 in Albemarle County, Virginia. He married Sudna Hughes on 1 June 1763; she was born about 1748, the daughter of Thomas and Susanna Hughes.

Minnie Kendall Lowther, a family historian of the early 1900s, reports that the Hughes were Welsh in origin and traveled to America with the Lowthers. Others list Thomas Hughes' birthplace in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Ireland. He is reported to have been killed by Indians at Hacker's Creek, Virginia, in 1778.

William Beamer Lowther, 5th Great-grandfather to the Lowther siblings, was captain of a Virginia militia company in an 1774 war with Indian tribes in Virginia and Ohio, and, in 1781 he was commissioned a major in the militia by General George Rogers Clark. He was in charge of a line of scouts along the Ohio River, protecting settlements there. He rose to the rank of Colonel. Later he was a Justice of the Peace, the first Sheriff of Harrison and Wood Counties, and a member of the Virginia General Assembly.

William and Sudna had seven children, including Robert, who was born 1 October 1765. William died in Ritchie County, Virginia, on 28 October 1814. His wife Sudna died there in 1829.

Their son Robert married Catherine Cain 21 January 1787. He served as a sergeant with the Sixth Virginia Rifle Regiment in the War of 1812. He died 16 November 1832 from a fall while re-roofing his late father's cabin near West Milford in Harrison County.

Robert and Catherine had 10 children, the oldest being William Lowther, who was born 4 Mar 1787, West Milford, Harrison Co, Virginia, later West Virginia.

William married Margaret Coburn 29 August 1809 in Harrison County. Margaret's ancestry is traced through four generations of Coburns to William and Elizabeth Coebourne who were among the first group of settlers to William Penn's Pennsylvania colony, arriving in 1681.

They had at least 8 children, including Lemuel, their oldest son, who was born 25 January 1811. William died 19 Oct 1867 at the age of 80. His wife, Katherine, lived another 15 years to her death at age 95.

Lemuel Lowther and Abigail Reed Lowther (The Lowther siblings great-great grandparents)

Lemuel Lowther was a boot and shoe maker living in Leonidas, Michigan, when he enlisted on 10 May 1863 as a private in Company I of the 9th Michigan Cavalry. His service records shows that he was 45 years old when he enlisted, but in reality he was 53. This correct age is reflected in later disability records.

Lemuel had married Abigail Reid (or Reed) in Knox County, Ohio, on 20 September 1840.

Lemuel was born 25 January 1811 in Virginia, the son of William B. Lowther and Margaret Coburn Lowther. Abigail was born 29 August 1822 in Ontario, Canada, the daughter of Joshua Reed and Elizabeth Alward.

Abigail and Lemuel had six children, one of whom, their only daughter Sarah, died at the age of 4. Abigail's surname, Reid, was carried down through ensuing generations as a son's middle name.

The 1850 federal census, the first census to include names and details for all family members, finds the 39 year old Lemuel listed as a Cooper. The family is living in Burlington, Calhoun County, Michigan.

The adjacent family listing in the census is for William D. Glasner, a physician, and his wife Fanny (birth name Reed) who is sister to Abigail Lowther, Lemuel's wife. Son Wilson Reid Lowther is to marry Sarah Glasner, daughter of the Glasner neighbors, who is just 11 at the time of the census. Wilson Reid and Sarah married in 1870.

Two sons, Wilson Reid and Albert, also served in the civil war, joining the 11th Michigan Infantry Regiment near the end of the war. Twenty-one-year-old Wilson and 19-year-old Albert enlisted as privates on 24 Feb 1865. The regiment was sent the next month to Tennessee where its duties included guarding the Chattanooga & Knoxville Railroad. They were mustered out in September 1865 at Nashville, TN, after serving just over six months.

Wilson Reid Lowther was born 7 March 1843 in Knox County, Ohio.

The 1850 census for Calhoun County, Michigan showed the

close relationship between the Lowthers, the Glasners, and the Reeds — all with adjacent listings. Lemuel Lowther and wife Abigail Reed, William Glasner and wife Fanny Reed (sister of Abigail), and Joshua and Elizabeth Reed (parents of Abigail and Fanny).

Twenty year later - after the Civil War - those relationships apparently continued in Clark and Edgar counties in Eastern Illinois. Lemuel Lowther and three of his sons, Wilson Reid, William, and Albert were there after their military service (while mother and wife Abigail remained in Michigan); William Glasner and Fanny Glasner and their family moved there prior to 1860; and Joshua and Elizabeth Reed and their family moved there prior to Joshua's death in 1866 (still in Michigan for the 1860 census).

Elizabeth Reed, now widowed is shown in the 1870 census as living with what appeared to be two of her Lowther grandsons - Mitch Lowfer (perhaps William Lowther) and Albert Lowfer (Lowther). Their ages are consistent with the Lowther siblings, and the two brothers were later in Clark County, Illinois.

After his civil war service, Wilson Reid Lowther married Sarah Glasner, now 20 years old, in 1870 in Clark County, Illinois. Sarah's family was living in Wabash Township, Clark County. Father William, who had been a physician in Michigan is now a farmer. The 1860 census had shown the family in Clark County where father William is listed as a cooper. Sarah's younger siblings had been born in Illinois, indicating a move from Michigan prior to 1854.

Wilson Reid and Sarah had two children, Ada, born in 1871 and Ollie (or Olive), born in 1873. Wife Sarah died in 1876 at the age of 26.

Two years later Wilson Reid married Margaret June Hall in Clark County, Illinois, on 17 March 1878. Wilson Reid was 27, with two small children, and Margaret was 19.

Ada (or 'Addie') died in 1888 at the age of 16 or 17; Olive (Ollie) married Austin Meyers and, after his death, married his brother, Fred. She had no children, lived all her life in Clark County, and died in 1934.

Margaret was the daughter of Henry Hall and his wife, Esther (Meeker) Hall, both of whom had been born in Butler County, Ohio.

Henry and Esther had 11 children, and Margaret was the youngest daughter, born in June 1858. According to Henry's obituary, the Halls moved to Clark County in 1842 and settled on the farm where he later died 56 years later at the age of 83.

A published Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of Clark County the Henry Hall family:

“The Hall family ranks among

Right: Esther Meeker Hall, 2nd great grandmother of the Lowther siblings and her daughter Margaret who was to marry Wilson Reid Lowther. In the image below: Wilson Reid Lowther (seated) with son Donnie (with horse) and son Bernice.



the pioneers of Eastern Illinois, where Henry and Esther (Meeker) Hall settled shortly after their marriage. Both were natives of Ohio, where he was born in Butler County November 18, 1815, and her birth occurred in 1820. Edgar County was still in an undeveloped condition when they established themselves among its pioneer farmers and from that time forward until their demise they were earnestly affiliated with movements tending to the revisions and educational development of their locality.”

Wilson Reid and Margaret Hall had six children. Homer, the oldest and the Lowther siblings’ grandfather, was born on 23 Jan 1880.

Albert, the second son with Civil War service, was born 20 April 1845 in Knox County, Ohio. He married Emily Lowry in 1874 in Clark County, Illinois. Albert, a farmer, and Emily had three children. He died in 1920.

Father Lemuel's service records show him on detached duty in September and October 1863 in Cumberland Gap, Tennessee. Later in January and February 1864 he is listed as sick in the hospital in Knoxville, Tennessee, and in July through October he is convalescing at Camp Nelson, Kentucky. He was discharged from the army on 19 October 1864 at Camp Nelson. He is found to be unfit for duty due to chronic bronchitis and old age, correctly listing his age as 53 years old.

Lemuel documents his injury and illness in his application for an invalid pension:

"The first appearance of my disabilities was from an injury in the small part of my back by my horse jumping a board fence in the dark not knowing the fence was there. At the time, the horse jumped it gave a severe wrench to my back.

"This happened in December 1863 near Russellville, Tennessee, in a skirmish fight with the rebels."

In another pension document, he adds that near Strawberry Plains, Tennessee, about 2 January 1864 he contracted chills and fever caused by exposure. He was treated first at a field hospital at Bell House, then at a military hospital in Knoxville, and later at Camp Nelson, Kentucky.

After his discharge, he returned to Leonidas, Michigan, where he remained for a year unable to perform any kind of labor.

Lemuel and his wife, Abigail, apparently separated with the younger children remaining with Abigail in Leonidas, Michigan. The 1870 census shows Abigail with two teenaged sons living in Leonidas with no mention of Lemuel. She remained there until her death in 1901; she was buried in a small prairie cemetery, next to her daughter who had died fifty years earlier. Also buried there was Abigail's mother, Elizabeth Reed, who died in 1886.

The 1900 census for Leonidas shows Abigail living with her son, George, 43, a shoemaker like his father. He is unmarried. The next listing in the census is another son, James Riley, 47, his wife Cora and their five children. James Lowther is the township clerk for Leonidas Township.

Lemuel moved to Bissfield and then Ossian, both in Michigan. In Ossian, he worked part of the time in a grocery and provision store for \$8 a month, a sum, he says, barely sufficient to pay board.

He then moved to Decatur, Indiana, where he worked a little as a shoe maker, but was discharged on 29 December 1872 because he was unable to perform the amount of labour required of his position as a "hand."

He moved then to Clark County, Illinois, where he had some acquaintances, but was unable to perform any work.

The 1880 census for Auburn Township, Clark County, shows Lemuel, aged 70, a shoemaker. He is listed as a widower, although his wife was still alive in Michigan.

His 1881 pension document reports that he is living about 3 miles from McKeen, Illinois, with a soldier friend "upon his expense and charity."

He says, "Since my discharge I have tried all remedies recommended by friends, and [in 1879] consulted Dr. Frank Jennings in Marshall, Clark County, Illinois. He gave me some medicine and afterwards told me, "He could do nothing for me, that I would have to bear the disease out if it did not wear me out."

Lemuel adds, "The doctor died. I think in July last."

Lemuel died 12 October 1881 at the home of his son, Wilson,

in Clark County, Illinois. He is buried in the Asbury Methodist Church cemetery in Wabash Township, Clark County.

Also buried in the church cemetery was Lemuel's father-in-law, Joshua Reed, who died in 11 May 1866, at the age of 64. In 1860 the Reeds had been living in Burlington Township, Calhoun County, Michigan. They apparently then moved to Clark County, Illinois, where Joshua died in 1866, and four years later the census shows Elizabeth living near her daughter, Melvina Sally, and her son-in-law Martin Kimball. In the 1880 census Elizabeth is living with the Kimballs and died in 1886 with burial being back in Michigan where her daughter, Abigail Reed Lowther, was living.

Wilson Reid Lowther and Margaret had six children: Homer, born in 1880; Florence, born in 1882; Riley, born in 1886; Sarah, born in 1887; Donnie, born in 1894; and Bernice, born in 1900.

Wilson Reid's wife Margaret died in 1900. Her obituary in the Clark County Herald reported:

"Mrs. Wilson Lowther of Douglas died very suddenly Sunday evening. She was as well as usual at noon that day. She ate freely of watermelon in the afternoon and along toward evening was taken with congestion and died in a short time. She was an estimable lady and her sudden death was a shock to the entire community."

Her granddaughter, Thelma, tells a different account of her death:

"Grandma was making kraut and she was eating all the cabbage hearts to the kraut you know that stalk that comes up in the cabbage and she got some gas pains and she went in and thought she was getting a box of soda and she got a box of rat poisoning and she took a dose of that and she died pretty quick."

Homer, the oldest son, was already planning to marry 19-year-old Ada Laura McConchie. His mother's death left his father with three teen-aged children, 6-year-old Donnie and 9-month-old Bernice.

Thelma tells the story:

"Dad called Mom up and said that his mother had died and they have Bernice and Donnie there to take care of so they needed help and they needed someone to take care of those kids. Mom

married him and took care of the kids. She always said I was married one day and had a nine-month old baby the next. So I don't think that would be a very good proposal to say we need help, come and work but that's what he did."

Homer's father, Wilson Reid Lowther, died in 1917.

His obituary in the Marshall, Illinois Herald read:

"Wilson R. Lowther of Oliver, an old soldier, died Saturday at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Charles Wilson, in Paris, aged 74. He is survived by three daughters and four sons. Funeral services were held in the M.E. church at Oliver yesterday."

Homer and Ada Laura had seven children: Eulala, born in 1903; Ionia, born in 1905; Owen, born in 1909; Orville "Bus," born in 1911; Thelma, born in 1915; Wilson Reid, born in 1920; and Kathryn, born in 1924. They also had two unnamed infant daughters who are buried in the family plot at Forsythe cemetery in Clark County, Illinois.

The 1900 census shows Homer as a railroad laborer living with his parents in Wabash Township, Clark County, where his father Wilson was a farmer. Homer and Laura were married 20 October 1901. Thelma recalls that Homer was transferred to Birds, a small village about 15 miles south of Robinson. Eulala was born there in 1903.

The family moved to Oliver where Laura had a restaurant and small store which catered to railway workers. A 1910 map of Oliver shows Homer's residence between the railroad tracks and the village school.

Later the family moved north of Oliver on what Thelma called the "Joe Greg place" where she was born in 1915.

Then they moved to Robinson where they are listed in the 1920 census. Thelma recalls that Laura was pregnant with son Bill at the time and, though Thelma, at 5, was too young for school, she went anyway.

The Lowthers returned to Oliver shortly thereafter and remained there until 1925. Oldest daughter Eulala was now living in Robinson and Thelma liked to visit her there.

Homer would put her on the train by herself in Oliver for the 35-mile journey to Robinson.

He would tell the conductor on the train: "Now you watch her, take care of her, her sister is going to meet the train, and you be sure she gets off in Robinson. Don't let her go on any place else."

Thelma continued, "Eulala worked at an office, Mahutska Oil Company office, and there was a table in the corner of her room and I had color books and I went to work with her."

They moved back to Robinson in time for Thelma to begin fifth grade. entering fifth grade. They remained there when Homer died in 1945. By 1950 Laura was living with her daughter, Thelma, and her husband, Paul Otey. She remained with them until her death in 1969.



Lowther house in
Oliver in 1995
(roof damage
from recent
storm)



Bill Lowther with "kiddie car"



Above: Eulala
Lowther with
unknown male



Left:
Lowther siblings
(From left) Iona, Bus,
Eulala, and Thelma



Above: Formal Portraits of Laura and Homer Lowther
Below: Homer and Laura



Homer and Laura Lowther Family - Summer 1942



Back row standing: Wilson Reid Lowther, J. Maxwell Hocket, Pete Schwartz (Thelma's first husband), Thelma Lowther Schwartz, Florence "Flossie" Wilson Lowther, Orville "Bus" Lowther, Ernie Shepherd
Middle row seated: Josephine Ruddell Lowther, Iona Lowther Hocket, Eulala Lowther Shepherd, Bonnie Hocket
Seated: Kathryn Lowther, Ada Laura McConchie Lowther, (Bill Lowther in lap), Kent Shepherd, Homer Lowther, Maxine Hocket

Laura's Letter to son Bill who was still overseas informing
him of the death of his father, Homer

Aug 15 1945
Dear Bill :- I just don't know what to
write for Bill this has been such a blow
I can hardly take it but have to for you
children's sake, every thing was done that
could be done and I am so thankful for
it but he wanted to live to see you after
Bus came he told me that he never would
live to see you, Bus was here from Sun.
to Thursday before Dad died I never gave
up until the night before he died the
next morning he got so weak that night
but he never gave up to lay in bed all the
time he sat in his chair at the window
and watched us count the glads that
morning but every thing is for the best
I don't know what you children could
of done with him had it been me went
first for I could not be out of his sight
5 min with out him calling me.
I got the pictures they are nice but I
sure am waiting to see you in person
Bill I will write again soon as I am so
absent minded right now I cant think
of any thing but my trouble, so hoping you
get this after you get home.
Loads of Love

Tracking the Moomau Family Migration

Lenhart Mumma was born in 1670 in Stolberg in Rheinland-Pfalz near the border with Belgium and the Netherlands. He married Juliana in 1722.

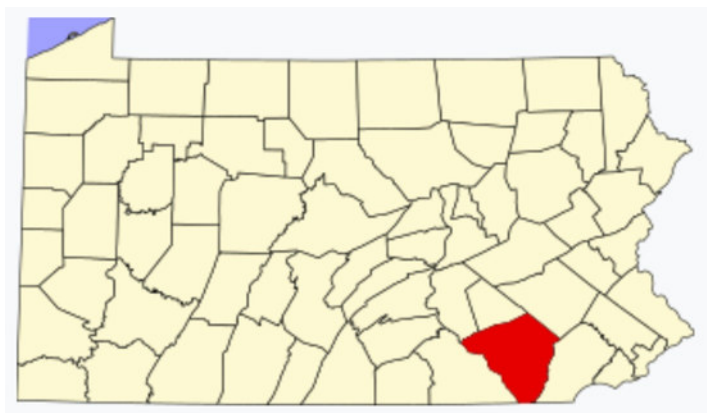


Lenhart and Juliana emigrated in 1732, arriving in Philadelphia on the ship 'Johnson.' They settled in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania Colony.

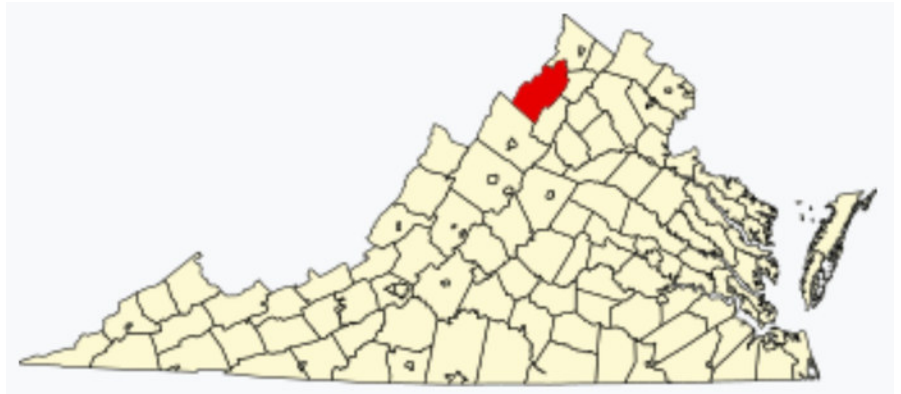
Their son, John Leonard Mumma, was born 10 March 1742 in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania Colony. He married Maria Catherine Langenecker in 1762 in Lancaster County.

Johann Leonard and Maria's son, David Mumaw, was born in 1764 in Lancaster County. He married Elizabeth Frey in 1785 and after her death he married Rosina Beck in 1790. Their oldest son was Christian Mumaw, born on 26 April in Lancaster County. Christian married Elizabeth Walker in Shenandoah County, Virginia, on 12 September 1815. The family continued to live in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, where their children were born until late in the 1820s.

Lancaster County
Pennsylvania



Shenandoah
County
Virginia



While their other children were born in Pennsylvania son Henry's birth in 1821 has consistently been recorded as being in Virginia. (His mother, Elizabeth, was born there and she and Christian were married there.) Sometime after the birth of their daughter Sarah in 1828 (and the death of Christian's father David) the family moved to Shenandoah County, Virginia, where they were included in the 1830 census. Five more children were born in Virginia bringing the number of children born to Christian and Elizabeth to thirteen. The family was listed in the 1850 and 1860 census there. Christian died in 1874 and Elizabeth died in 1878, both in Shenandoah County, Virginia.



Son Henry married Leeann Feaster in 1846 and the family, now with two children, is listed in the 1850 census for Barbour County, Virginia, which is now in West Virginia.

Barbour County in what is now West Virginia

Douglas County Illinois



Ross County, Ohio



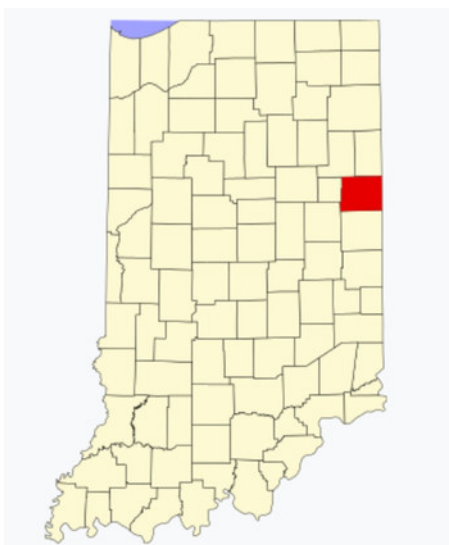
Henry and Leann and their children then moved to Ross County, Ohio, where Henry is listed as a farmer in the 1860 census. Their daughter's later obituary records that they moved to Arcola, Douglas County, Illinois in 1867 where the family is listed in the 1870 census. Henry died there in 1879 following a rattlesnake bite. Leann then moved back to Ross County, Ohio, where the 1880 census finds her living with sons Abraham and John.

Their son, John Henry Moomau, was born in 1858 in Ross County, Ohio, and moved with the family to Illinois. Following his father's death, he returned to Ohio. There he married Sarah Ann "Sadie" Whetstone on 3 March 1881. Their son and five oldest daughters were born in Ohio.

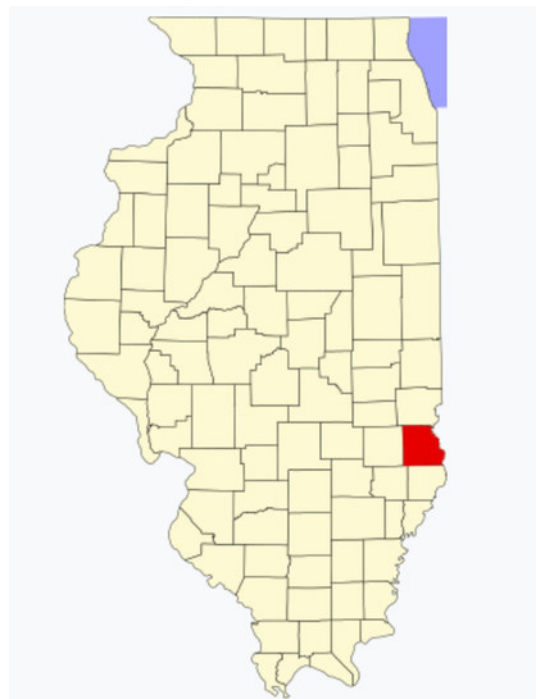
In the late 1800s, oil and gas were discovered in Jay County, Indiana, leading to a boom that attracted many seeking employment. - including John Henry. Their youngest daughter Iva Dale, was born in Jay County in 1895 and the 1900 census records John Henry there as an oil pumper. John Henry's mother died in 1893 in Jay County, Indiana, likely having moved there with her son John.

From Jay County, the Moomaus moved to another county experiencing an oil boom - Crawford County, Illinois. In 1906 oil was discovered there with a well that immediately produced more than 1,000 barrels of oil a day and Illinois became the nation's third largest oil producer. The Moomaus settled in Oblong in Crawford County and the 1910 census records John Henry as an oil lease laborer. By 1920 though he had returned to farming. The next census - 1930 - shows that he was once again in the oil business as an oil field laborer. Sadie died in Oblong in Oblong. John Henry died in 1940 in Toledo, Ohio, where his son George lived.

John Henry and Sadie's daughter, Jane (or Jane Lee or Jennie) married Arthur George Ruddell in 1930. At age 20 he had been listed as an oil field laborer in the 1910 federal census for Oblong. He was recorded as a welder and blacksmith in the subsequent censuses for 1920 and 1930. Arthur George Ruddell died 11 September 1937 at the age of 48. His widow, Jane, listed no employment in the 1940 census and, in 1950, she is recorded as a domestic in a private residents - working 74 hours in the week prior to the census. She lived another 30 years after Arthur's death, dying 1 January 1967 at the age of 75.



Jay County
Indiana



Crawford County Illinois

Rhoads Family Story

The first Rhoads ancestors to arrive in the American colonies were Heinrich Rhodt and his son, also Heinrich, or Henry, and his son's family, who arrived in Philadelphia in 1737. The Rhoads family came from Mannheim, Baden-Württemberg (now part of Germany). Heinrich, the father, is 6th great-grandfather to the Lowther siblings. The family surname has been variously records as Rhodt, Roth, Roesch, and Rhoads.

Transcribed Mennonite records record that son Heinrich/Henry was born 23 January 1712, the son of Heinrich and Catherine Roth. Henry, the son, married Catherine Cable in about 1730. They had ten children, two of whom were born in Germany.

Heinrich's wife died in 1733, and Heinrich joined his son's family in their 1737 voyage to the British colonies.

The families settled in Bedford County, Pennsylvania, In the early 1760s the Rhoads family moved to what is now Somerset County, where Henry acquired large amounts of land and built a mill.

Henry, was a faithful member of the German Baptist Brethren Church - meetings were held at his Grist Mill until 1771 when his son Henry Jr. built the congregation's meeting house. He was selected as a minister in 1768 by the local church which became known as the Stony Creek German Baptist Church. He was also a Supervisor for Brothers Valley Township.

Daniel, youngest son of Henry and Catherine and 4th great-grandfather of the Lowther siblings, was born 5 October 1755 in either Frederick County, Maryland, or Bedford County, Pennsylvania.

Henry died 7 April 1774 on his farm near Ursina in Upper Turkeyfoot Township in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. Wife Catherine died the following year.

Daniel enlisted in the First Pennsylvania Rifle Regiment in June 1775, serving as a private, and was discharged in June 1778, according to his pension papers. \

He married Eva Foust, then aged 15, on February 10, 1777.

The family moved to Nelson County, Kentucky. They had eight children, including Jacob, who was born May 10, 1785 or 1786. Eva died in 1792.

Daniel married his second wife, Elizabeth Newman, on March 15, 1794, in Nelson County, Kentucky. They had seven children, including Thomas Foster, who was born in 1796. Daniel died in 1838 in Edgar County, Illinois. Elizabeth died in 1855.

Jacob married Elizabeth Ripple on 23 July 1808 in Muhlenberg County, Kentucky. She was born 29 Aug 1788. Jacob and Elizabeth had nine children, including Benjamin Tolbert Rhoads, who was born 28 Dec 1815.

Jacob and Elizabeth remained in Kentucky until the 1820 when they moved to Edgar County, Illinois, along with Jacob's half-brother, Thomas Foster. Thomas Foster later became a Mormon, playing a major role in the migration of Mormons to Utah.

Jacob and Elizabeth's son, Benjamin Tolbert "B.T." married Miriam Tolen on 10 Jun 1838. She had been born 3 May 1815 in Bath County KY. They had nine children, and Sarah Catherine, their youngest daughter was born 8 Nov 1853. She married Robert Daniel McConchie on 28 Nov 1873 in Edgar County.

B.T. died in 1887 in Edgar County at the age of 71, and Mariam died in 1896 at the age of 81.



B. T. Rhoads house, today.

Jacob Rhoads half-brother, Thomas Foster

Thomas Foster Rhoads, who was to become leader in the development of the Mormon church, was born 13 July 1796 to Daniel Rhoads and his second wife, Elizabeth Newman, in Muhlenberg County, Kentucky. (The Lowther-Ruddell family line is traced through Jacob Rhoads who was born to Daniel's first wife, Eva Christine Faust.)

Thomas married Elizabeth Foster in 1817 in Muhlenberg County and, in 1820, moved to Edgar County, Illinois, with his brother Jacob (in the Lowther-Ruddell family line). He worked as a surveyor. He and his wife had nineteen children, including one set of triplets and four sets of twins.

In 1834 he and Elizabeth converted to Mormonism. In the mid-1840s, experiencing persecution because of their faith, their home was burned while they were attending church. They decided to migrate west, joining the Mormon leader Brigham Young. They were designed to lead an exploratory wagon train westward in 1846. Lending some 200 settlers, including 14 of their children with their families. The wagon train passed through the Salt Lake Valley and reached California's Sacramento Valley in October 1846. They associated with John Sutter who later made the gold discovery that triggered in 1849 gold rush.

Thomas built a fortune from the California gold mines and was summoned to Salt Lake City by Brigham Young to aid in building the Mormon community there. His gold was subsequently minted into coins for the Mormon settlement and, some stories indicate, also used for the gilding of the statue of Moroni on the Mormon temple. He became an influential leader in the development of the Mormon community in Utah.

Elizabeth died in California in 1847 and Thomas died in Utah in 1869.

Unraveling the McConchies

Tracing the family Robert Daniel “Tip” McConchie — great-grandfather to the Lowther siblings — has proved to be a challenge.

His father died when he was 4 years old — US Federal Census Mortality Schedule records that James R. McConkie died in September 1849 of “bilious cholick” after an illness of two days. He was listed as a laborer. The family, headed by his widow Catherine Cole McConchie is recorded in the 1850 census for Rappahannock County, Virginia: Catharine A McConchie, 25; Mary, 6; Robert D, 5; Douglas T, 3; James W, 10/12.

The earliest certain record of the McConchie family comes from the family Bible of Catharine McConchie and a listing of family milestones.

The first family record listing shows that “Tip” McConchie’s father, James R. McConchie was born 3 April 1820 to James R. McConchie and his wife Elizabeth. The family lived in Culpeper County, Virginia. (Culpeper is about 70 miles southwest of Washington DC.)

The 1820 federal census, which lists only the head of household by name, shows James R. McConchie, identified as being over 45; a female, age 26-44, presumably wife Elizabeth; and seven children. Thirteen slaves are also enumerated in the census listing.

Father James McConchie is believed to have been born in 1770, but no details about his birth or parentage have been found. There are other McConchies in the adjacent counties of Rappahannock and Fauquier in the early 1800s, but their relationship to our McConchies is uncertain.

James McConchie may appear in the 1820 will of Gilley Stevens, who was the widow of General Edward Stevens, a Revolutionary War officer and later state senator. She died in December of 1820 with no surviving children. The will states: I give to my friend Dr. James R. McConochee the sum of five hundred dollars which is to be considered by him if he accepts it in full for all services rendered me during my last sickness since the 19th day of August.

Was this the same person as our James McConchie? And was James a Doctor? There's no further evidence to answer those questions.

James apparently died before 1840 when the federal census for Culpeper County shows Elizabeth McConchie to be the head of household with four children, age 5 to 19. (These ages do not match the earlier 1820 listing and there are no slaves listed.)

James R. McConchie's wife, Catherine, was born 24 June 1824, the daughter of a slave-holding Virginia farmer named Daniel Cole and his wife Elizabeth Whitehead.

Daniel's family line can be traced through four generations to Arthur Coale who was born 1 June 1563 in London, England, emigrated to Massachusetts where he married Lydia Barrett in 1673 in Cambridge, and died in 1676.

Daniel had served in the Revolutionary War as a private in the Continental Army, enlisting in 1780 in Virginia.

The government summary of his service, contained in a 1920 letter:

"Daniel Cole, son of Daniel, was born 20 February 1765 near Dumfries in Prince William County, Virginia

"He enlisted in the later part of the year 1780 and served about nine months as a private in Captain John Britt or Bret's Company of Virginia troops. Soon after the expiration of this service he aided in building a road for the army from Fredericksburg to Alexandria, Virginia, and was so occupied for fifteen or twenty days."

(Rev. R. S. Cole, grandson of Daniel Cole, writing from Carrollton, Illinois, recalled that Daniel was married twice and had 21 children, 16 of whom grew to maturity. "His family was scattered by removal or death," Rev. Cole wrote, "and his last years were spent alone among his slaves.")

This observation was borne out by the 1850 census and slave schedule which show Daniel at age 87 living in Culpeper alone except for his slaves. In 1850 Daniel owned six slaves, women aged 41 and 67, a man aged 28, and three children 7 and younger. He died on 17 July, 1851.

At that point, daughter Catherine had just lost her young

husband, James McConchie, and moved to Rappahannock.

Her father's will left made these bequests to Catharine:

I give to my daughter Catharine McConchie or her heirs one girl by the name of Caroline and increase forever

All the residue of my property I will to be sold and after all my just debts shall have been paid, I give my daughter Catharine McConchie twenty dollars and the remainder to be equally divided between the following children viz Jane E Freeman, Adaline Kempler, Catharine McConchie, Richard, Henry, and Daniel.

There is no record of Catharine receiving ownership of the slave Caroline.

James McConchie, the son, and Catharine were married 20 July 1843 in Culpeper. They had four children: Mary, born in 1844; Robert Daniel, born in 1846; Douglas, born in 1848; and James William, born in 1849.

James, the father, died 3 September 1849 at the age of 29.

The 1850 census is the first to list all family members; previous censuses named only the head of household while enumerating other household members. It shows Catharine, 26, as a widow with the four children, now living in Rappahannock. Almost all of her neighbors are shown as farmers. A separate document, called a mortality schedule, records that James, a laborer, died 13 September 1849 with "bilious cholick" of two days duration being the cause of death.

Catherine Cole McConchie, married again on 3 May 1852 in Rappahannock County, Virginia. Her new husband, Joseph W. Garner was seven years younger than Catherine, just 20 years old at the time of their marriage. Catherine's son Douglas subsequently died in 1855 at the age of 7.

The family then disappears from official records, and none of them appear in the 1860 federal census. They may have been on the move at time of the time of the census - Tip's obituary reports: "Just before the outbreak of the Civil War, the family came to Edgar county, the journey from Cincinnati, O., being made in a covered wagon."

Just over a year before the end of the Civil War Tip enlisted

as a private in Company K, Indiana 129th Infantry Regiment on 25 March 1864.

Thelma Lowther Otey described Tip as a rascal and story teller — he told her he had enlisted on the side of the Union because he wanted to free his “mammy” and that his father and brother had fought for the Confederacy. However, relatives may have had slaves in Virginia, but his family had none. Further, his father died in 1849, long before the war, and his brother would have been just 12 at the time the war began and did not serve in the army.

Thelma recalls that he would tell of his involvement in General Sherman’s “March to the Sea” campaign — not marching, but riding in an ambulance. This tale was true since his later pension application confirms that he contracted “scrofula of both legs caused by eating salty meat and lying on the ground” while on duty near Atlanta. He was given a pass to ride in an ambulance as the march continued.

Disease among Tip’s infantry regiment was far more dangerous than the Confederate army. Twenty-one officers and enlisted men were killed or mortally wounded in battle while 168 men died of disease.

Following the war, the 1870 federal census shows the Garner and McConchie family living in Paris, Illinois, where Joseph W. Garner, 39, is a photographer and his wife Catharine is shown to be 44. Two of Catharine’s sons, Robert, 22 and James, 20, are living with them along with three additional sons of Joseph and Catherine Garner: Thomas, 18; George, 12; and Joseph, 8.

Tip's older sister, Mary, had married John D. Noel on 5 March 1868 in Edgar County.

Ten years later, the 1880 census for Paris shows the the Garner family with Joseph, 47, as a clerk and Catherine, 55, keeping house. Two of their sons are living with them along with Catherine's daughter, Mary Noel, and her two children.

Tip's younger brother James, a painter and paper hanger, continued to live in Paris. He married Sarah Francis Reed and they had five children. Sarah died in 1893, and James was killed by a train in Decatur three years later.

In the 1900 census, Catherine remains in Paris, living with her son, Joseph, and daughter, Mary Noel. She died in 23 November 1904 in Montgomery County, Indiana, at the age of 80.

On 28 November 1873 Tip married Sarah Catherine Rhoads in Paris, Illinois. Tip was 27 and Sarah was 20. Sarah came from a family with German roots that came to Pennsylvania before the Revolutionary War and moved West through Kentucky before settling in Illinois in the mid-19th century.

She was the daughter of Benjamin Talbert Rhoads, born in 1815, and Mariam Tolen, born the same year.

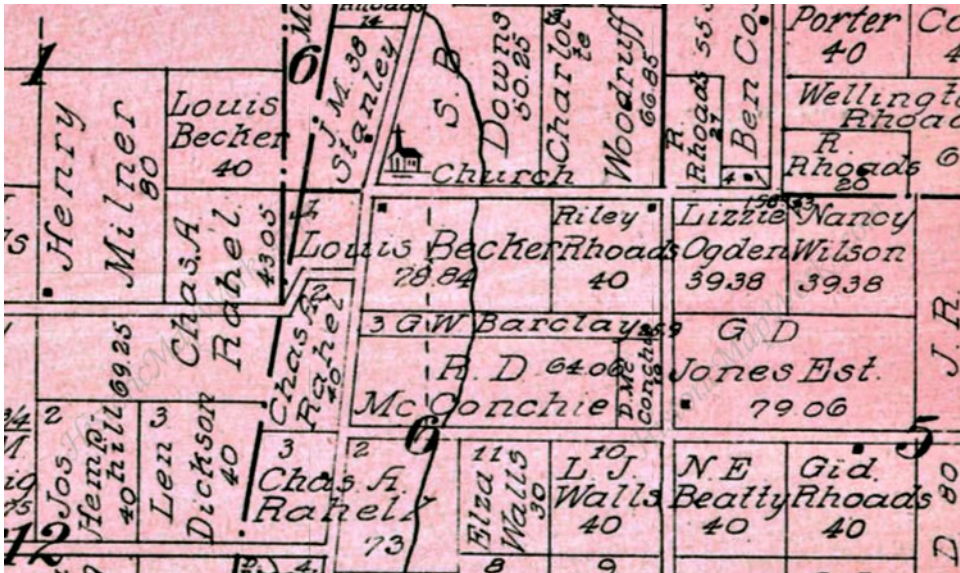
Benjamin or B.T. was the grandson of Daniel Rhoads, who was one of the original “minute men” who marched from Pennsylvania to Massachusetts in the early days of the Revolutionary War arriving in time for the Battle of Bunker Hill.

Thelma Otey tells the story of Tip and Sarah’s courtship:

“Well Grandma [Sarah Rhoads] told her Dad that she was going to marry the first man that asked her. She was going with three different men, and she said the the first one that asks me I’m



McConchie house today on Highway 1 south of Paris, Illinois



McConchie property in center of 1910 map of Edgar County, Illinois

Note: other parcels owned by members of the Rhoads family

going to marry. And Grandpa Tip said, “Yes, and by God, it had to be me.” He just never could say the right thing, I guess.

“Grandpa Rhoads, Grandma’s Dad, had a section of land [and he gave part of it to each of his children when they married].... They lived on one corner of the land, and he put put Grandma and Grandpa diagonally across from there on the other corner of the land because he wanted them as far away from him as he could get him. He didn’t like him.”

Thelma recalls that Sarah Rhoads McConchie was a large woman, while Tip was slight — his civil war pension applications shows he was 5 foot 6 inches tall and weighed 116 pounds.

“Yeah, she was big. She was German, and she carried herself with, I thought, dignity. But everybody said you didn’t tease Grandma, but I would tease her. Grandma and I had been, had always been awful close. Grandpa, course I loved him dearly. I liked to go any place with him.”

Sarah and Tip had 8 children — Claude, Dess, B.T., Robert, Foster, Ada Laura, and Ruth. Maud died in infancy. Tip died in 1937 at the age of 91. When he died he was the last surviving civil war veteran in Edgar County. Sarah died the next year just before her 85th birthday.

Ada Laura married Homer Lowther, grandfather of the Lowther siblings.



"Tip" and Sarah McConchie



DEATH TAKES LAST MEMBER OF G. A. R. POST

**Robert D. McConchie Dies
at Home Near Oliver;
Was 91 Years Old**

Robert D. McConchie, 91, last member of Driskell Post, G. A. R., of Paris, died at 12:30 o'clock Wednesday afternoon at the residence two miles north of Oliver, Ill. Last Saturday evening, he was injured by a fall and several days ago pneumonia developed.

Funeral services will be held at two o'clock Friday afternoon at the home and burial will be at Edgar cemetery. The body is at the residence.

The deceased was born January 28, 1846 in Culpepper county, Va., a son of Samuel and Catherine McConchie. Just before the outbreak of the Civil War the family came to Edgar county, the journey from Cincinnati, O., being made in a covered wagon.

Mr. McConchie enlisted at the age of 17 year, in Clinton, Ind., with Company K, 129th Indiana Infantry and served until the close of the war, participating in several major battles and numerous skirmishes. He had resided in the house where he died for the past 55 years.

Sixty-three years ago he was united in marriage to Sarah Catherine Rhoads, who survives, with the following seven children: Claude, Dess and B. T., all residing south of Paris; Robert of Terre Haute; Foster of Dennison; Mrs. Laura Lowther of Robinson; and Mrs. Ruth Eldredge of Terre Haute. One child is deceased. Also surviving are thirty grandchildren and fifteen great grandchildren.

The Ruddell and Moomaus of Crawford County Illinois

The Ruddells trace their family roots to the pre-Revolutionary War days when the first family members emigrated from England to America. Almost 200 years later they were united in Crawford County, Illinois, with another early American family, the Moomaus, who came to the US from Prussia, part of what is now Germany.

That union was the 1910 marriage of Arthur Ruddell, a 21-year-old blacksmith, to Jane Lee Moomau, 19.

Through the years there have been numerous spellings of the Moomau surname, beginning with Leonard (Lenhard) Mumma who arrived in America on 18 September 1732 from Rotterdam on the ship "Johnson" with his wife and five children. Four additional children were born in America. He was born in 1694 in Stolberg, Rheinland, Prussia.

The Mummas of America are believed to be descended from the Momma family who were thought to have been French Huguenots who were driven into Belgium and the city of Aachen in the late 1500s. They later spread into other parts of Europe, including Prussia.

Among Leonard's American-born children was a son, John Leonard Mumma, who was born 10 March 1742 in Earl Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. He was baptized a month later in Trinity Lutheran Church, New Holland, Pennsylvania. He died in 1817.

John Leonard was married to Maria Catherine, and they had 13 children. Their second son, David, was born in 1768 in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

David's first wife died, and he subsequently married Rosina Beck. David and Rosina had a son, Christian, born 26 April 1792 in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. David and Rosina moved to Virginia about 1799-1800 where they raised their family. David died in 18 Sep 1828 in Shenandoah County, VA. The 1850 federal census for Shenandoah County shows the 85-year-old Rosina living with her son David, and next door to Christian and his family. (Son David and Son Christian both had wives named Elizabeth, no doubt to confuse future genealogists.)

On 12 September 1814, Christian married Elizabeth Walker, daughter of Henry Walker in Shenandoah County. She was born in 1794 in Virginia. They had eleven children, including a son Henry was born in 1821. The family remained in Shenandoah County. (Their youngest child, Rebecca is 6 in the 1850 census, suggesting that her mother was 49

at the time of her birth.) Both Christian and Elizabeth are recorded in the 1860 census for Cabin Hill, Shenandoah County, Virginia. the 1870 census shows Christian, aged 79, living with Elizabeth, 42, who may be his daughter. (Brother David and his wife Elizabeth are still next door.)

Henry married Lee Ann Feaster in 1846 in what would later be West Virginia (West Virginia did not exist until the 1860s when Virginia was split by the Civil War). Henry and Lee Ann had five children.

The 1850 census for Barbour County, Virginia, records Henry Mumaw, a 29-year-old farmer living with his wife Leah Anna, 34. They had just two children at that time.

By the 1870 census, Henry (now Moomau), 51, is a farmer in Arcola Township, Douglas County, Illinois, with his 53-year-old wife LeeAnn and five children still at home, including John Henry Moomau, 12.

Henry died 30 June 1878 in Douglas County, Illinois, after being bitten by a rattlesnake as he was hoeing broom corn. He is buried in Broadus Cemetery, Carmargo Township, Douglas County, Illinois, under a gravestone showing his name as Henry Mooman.

John Henry Moomau had been born 6 February 1858 in Ohio and later moved with the family to Illinois. After the death of his father from the rattlesnake bite, the family apparently returned to Ohio. The 1880 census for Concord Township, Ross County, Ohio lists John Henry, age 22, living with his brother Abram and his wife Elizabeth along with their widowed mother Leanna, age 65. Abram is a farmer and John a farm laborer.

The next year, John Henry married Sarah Ann "Sadie" Whetstone, who was born 6 Sep 1860 in Buckskin Township, Ross County, Ohio. They were married 3 Mar 1881 in Ross County, Ohio. Sarah was the daughter of George W. Whetstone and Eliza Jane Hire.

John Henry and Sarah Ann had six children - Ella Mae, born 3 Dec 1881; George, born 26 Dec 1884; Ethel Pearl, born 10 June 1886; Mary Sabrina, born 24 Jan 1889; Janie Lee, born 26 Jan 1891; and Iva Gale, born 5 August 1895.



Left: Henry and Leann Moomau
Above and below: John Henry and
Sadie Moomau





Above:
Moomau family - Jay County,
Indiana - Circa 1900
Back: Ella Mae, George, Ethel, Mary
Sabina
Front: Jane, Sadie, Iva Gale, John
Henry
Left: Mary Sabina, Ethel, Jane

Sometime between the birth of Janie Lee in 1891 and that of Iva Gale in 1895, the family moved to Jackson in Jay County, Indiana. The 1900 census shows the family there with father John employed as an oil pumper. (The family name is recorded as Moorman — one of the many variations through the years.)

The family then moved to Oblong, Crawford County, Illinois, apparently for a job in the oil industry — the 1910 census shows John to be a laborer on an oil lease. Only Iva Gale remains with her parents. Their son, George, and his family are neighbors, and George, too, is an oil lease laborer.

Janie Lee married Arthur George Ruddell in March of that year and the census, recorded in May, shows them in Oblong with Arthur working as an oil field laborer.

The Ruddell family had led an adventurous life in America, serving in the French and Indian War, the Revolutionary War, and the War of 1812. Later, a Ruddell would head west in the Gold Rush before returning to settle in Crawford County, Illinois.

The Ruddell family is from Bishops Canning, a small village in Wiltshire in the southwest of England (just about five miles from Avebury, the location of the Avebury Stone Circle and other ancient sites). John Ruddell, who was born in 1696, immigrated to America in about 1715 and settled in Chester County, Pennsylvania. He married Mary Cook that year. Their son, Archibald was born in 1727, joining three older brothers. Another brother, Isaac, was born two years later. The family later moved to Virginia in about 1740, and John was authorized to build a water mill there. He died in May 1781.

Archibald — of our family line — served in the French and Indian War as an officer in the Virginia Colonia Militia. Later accounts lists him as a private in the Revolutionary War.

His brother Isaac became a Captain in the Revolutionary War, serving under George Rogers Clark on the western frontier. In 1779, along with other family members, including Archibald's son James of our line, he fortified an existing settlement in Kentucky, forming Ruddell's Fort. In June of 1780 the British, together with Indian allies, captured the fort and many of the settlers were taken as prisoners.

James, his uncle Capt. Isaac Ruddell, and others were taken to Detroit and later Canada and imprisoned for two and a half years. Other family members were taken by the Indians and a few children were “adopted” in to Native American families.

James Ruddell had been born August 20, 1758, in Shenandoah, Virginia. After his release from captivity, he returned to Kentucky. He married Jane Mulherin, who was the widow of James’ cousin, Cornelius, who had been killed by the Indians.

Jane died around 1835 and James died in Boone, Kentucky, around 1840 when he was 81 years old.

Charles Mulherin Ruddell, was the third child of James and Jane. He was born 8 March 1791 in Bourbon County, Kentucky. He became an officer in the War of 1812. In 1818 he married Polly Collier. Charles was appointed Sheriff in 1818 in Grant County, Kentucky, where he held other local government positions as well. Charles and Polly had — children, including George Perry Ruddell, who was born 4 May 1824 in Grant County, Kentucky,

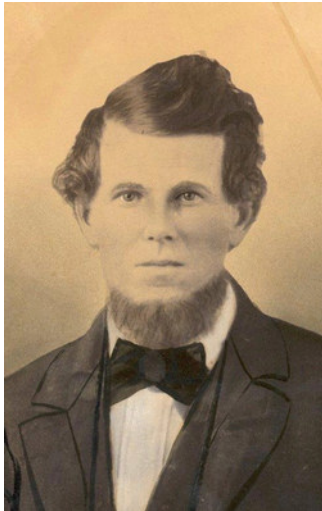
In about 1852 the family, along with brother George Ruddell, moved from Kentucky to Crawford County, Illinois. Charles settled with his family in Robinson Township several miles east of Robinson while George located near Palestine, Illinois.

He and his wife, Polly Collier, later moved to Crawford County in about 1852. They settled in Robinson Township, several miles east of Robinson. One of their sons later served in the Confederate army while two grandsons fought on the Union side.

Polly died in 1875 and Charles lived to the age of 94, dying in 1886.

Son George Perry went west with the Gold Rush and while there married Charlotte Jane DeCamp. Charlotte had been born 21 Feb 1832 in Connerville, Ohio. She is listed in the 1850 census for Elkhart County, Indiana, living with her married sister Louisa. George and Charlotte were married 12 April 1855 in French Ravine, Sierra County, California. (French Ravine was in the heart of California gold county where gold nuggets weighing more than 25 pounds each were found in 1851 and 1855.).

The 1860 census for California lists George Perry Ruddell's



George Perry Ruddell (Lowther Siblings
2nd great grandfather)



George Franklin and Anne Elizabeth Jennings Ruddell (Lowther
siblings great grandparents) and, standing from left, Arthur George,
Emery DeCamp, Perry Jennings, Charles Raymond, and Nora Ethel

occupation as blacksmith while many of his neighbors were recorded as miners.

That census shows their post office as being Alleghany — which still exists in Gold Country in Sierra County, California, with a population of just 58. Their first three children were born in California: Richard, born 1 Jan 1856; Lizzie, born 13 April 1861; and George Franklin, born 1 June 1866. Lizzie later died at the age of 6.

The family returned to Illinois, and the 1870 federal census shows them living in Crawford County next to George Perry's brother Charles H. and his father Charles M. Son Elmer was born on March 25 that year.

Back in Crawford County, George and his brother Charles were blacksmiths. George died 20 July 1873 at the age of 49, and Charlotte lived another 25 years until her death 4 Feb 1898 at the age of 66.

Their son, George Franklin, married Anna Elizabeth Jennings on 30 June 1887 in Crawford County. Anna was born 13 Aug 1867 in Eaton, Crawford County, Illinois.

They had five children: Arthur G., born in 1889; Emery D., born in 1890; Nora, born in 1894; Perry, born in 1895; and Raymond, born in 1904. The 1910 census for Oblong, Illinois, records that George Franklin is a blacksmith in his own shop.

He was also a Justice of the Peace -- an elected position with limited jurisdiction to hear misdemeanor and other minor cases -- and served several terms as a Village Trustee in Oblong. He was also a candidate for Sheriff in 1910. There is no evidence that his candidacy was successful.

The Robinson Constitution reported on Oct 12, 1910: *Candidate for Sheriff, George Ruddell, the Prohibition nominee for Sheriff, was born in California, and came with his parents to Crawford county when he was two years old. Resided one and one half miles east of Robinson with his parents until he became of age. Meantime he learned the blacksmith trade with Beam Brothers, at Robinson. Afterward he lived at Annapolis two years, when he removed to Oblong, where he was since resided. He has been a citizen of Oblong for the last twenty years, and has been elected as Justice of the Peace of that township and it is the unanimous opinion*

of every lawyer of the Robinson bar that he is one of the best Justices of the Peace in the county, well informed as to the law for one of his opportunities and absolutely honest in all his decisions. He is a member of the M. E. church, and stands for all things honest and upright as a citizen. He has also served several terms as Village Trustee of Oblong, and if elected Sheriff will put an end to the bootlegging and gambling conditions which are so common in almost all parts of the county."

George died in 1918, while Anna Elizabeth lived another 20 years, dying in 1938.

Arthur George was the first born son, born 2 June 1889 in Oblong. He married Jane Moomau in 1909. Jane was born 26 January 1891 in Ohio, and the 1900 census shows her living in Jackson Township, Jay County, Indiana, where her father was an oil pumper.

The 1910 census records that Arthur is an oil field laborer. His 1917 draft registration stated he was a tank builder in the oil fields. He was a blacksmith in the 1920 census, and 10 years later he had added welder as an occupation. The Illinois Death Index lists his occupation as a farm tools salesman.

Arthur and Jane had seven children: Bernadine, born in 1911; Pauline, born in 1914; Carl, born in 1916; Harold, born in 1913; Arthur Jr., born in 1919; Josephine, born in 1922; and Charles, born in 1924.

Arthur died 11 September 1937, and Jane, also known as Jennie, died 30 years later, on 1 January 1967.



George Franklin Ruddell, left, John (surname unknown), and Arthur George Ruddell



Jane Moomau Ruddell was 46 when her husband died in 1937. The 1940 census shows no employment for her and her 16-year-old son Charles is the only family member living with her. (She only completed 4 years of schooling.)

By the 1950 census she is living alone in Oblong and working as a domestic in a private home, having worked 74 hours in the prior week when the census was recorded.

Jane Moomau Ruddell embroidered two pieces for granddaughter Jane Lowther about 1965. She liked an ecru background for embroidery rather than white. She put the frames on layaway so she could pay them off a little at a time



This article from the Oblong, Illinois, Oracle, written by Becky Carey, granddaughter of Arthur and Jane Ruddell. It was published in October 1965

RUBBER TIREING DONE ACCORDING TO HOYLE

One of the earliest records to be found of the Ruddell Blacksmith Shop dates approximately around 1905, when it was owned and operated by John C. Meyers. It was purchased for fourteen hundred dollars on October 25, 1912, by George F. Ruddell and his son Emery DeCamp Ruddell. As the business increased, Perry, another son, went to work in the shop. An early ad in the November, 1913, issue of the Oblong Oracle read: "Men at work in the Ruddell shop. Keep 'em busy. Bring in your work of all kinds. Shoeing a specialty. Rubber Tireing done according to Hoyle."

In 1916, Emery and Perry, his younger brother, were called to serve their country in the armed forces. This left Mr. Ruddell to operate a thriving business by himself. His business consisted of the shoeing of horses, sharpening plowshares, repairing horse drawn equipment, and repairing wagons and buggies.

One of the services rendered the children was the sharpening of ice skates used on the "Old Mill Pond." Finally the work became too burdensome for Mr. Ruddell so the eldest son, Arthur, was asked to take over some of the duties until his brothers returned from service. Their father died in 1918, just before Emery and Perry were discharged from the service. The three brothers continued to operate the shop until the death of Perry in 1929.

After automobiles became more numerous and powered machinery began to take the place of horse drawn vehicles, Arthur and Emery became dealers in powered farm machinery and continued until Arthur's death in 1931. Emery, in the latter part of his life, specialized in saddle horseshoeing more than other work with the exception of tractor plowshare sharpening.

Karl, the son of Arthur, and the nephew of Emery, had spent the major part of his early years in the shop and at the death of his father took over the welding operation. When World War II came, Karl went to fulfill his country's duty. This left Emery to operate the

shop alone and at this time Arthur Jr., Emery's nephew and Karl's younger brother, entered the shop to take over some of the duties. Sometime, after Karl's return and the death of Emery in 1949, Arthur Jr. left the shop for other employment and Karl continued to operate the shop alone and finally purchased the shop from the heirs.

At the present time of my story, Karl operates the shop alone, specializing in welding general repair, steel, machine work, some blacksmithing, mowers and grinding. The original historical landmark is located on South Range Street and has been in the Ruddell family for fifty years and is a symbol of the past and the present of Oblong, Illinois.

Becky Carey says the above item would have been impossible without the help of the following:

1 - Personal interview, Mrs. Lois Mouser, (owner of personal Ledger of John C. Meyers, 1905 October 29, 1965.

2 Ira Wilkin (Recorder) Book 87, October 29, 1912, p.17.

3 Personal Interview. Miss Nora Ruddell, 202 N. Taylor Street, Oblong, Illinois, October 13, 1965.

4 Personal Interview, Mr. E Carl Ruddell, October 13, 1965



Ruddell Blacksmith Shop in Oblong - From left: George Franklin Ruddell (Great Grandfather of Lowther siblings); unknown individual; George's sons Perry and Emery

Bill and Josephine Lowther

Wilson Reid Lowther was born 26 September 1921 in Oliver, Illinois, son of Homer Wilson Lowther and Ada Laura Lowther. Homer was a section foreman for the Big Four Railroad. Homer was one of six children born to the Lowthers and the youngest son. The family moved to Robinson, Illinois, in the 1920s and are listed in the 1930 federal census living on north Jefferson Street in Robinson.

Josephine Norma Ruddell was born 4 January 1921 in Oblong, Illinois, the daughter of Arthur George Ruddell and Jane Lee (Jennie) Moomau. The 1930 census shows 9-year-old Josephine living with her parents and five siblings on Jefferson Street in Oblong, Illinois. Father Arthur is a welder in the family's blacksmith shop. He died in 1937 at the age of 48. Only youngest son Charles, 16, remains at home with his mother in the 1940 census.

Bill does not appear in the 1940 census - only his younger sister Kathryn is shown living with Homer and Laura Lowther in Robinson and a records search did not locate Bill. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps in January 1941 at Chanute Field in Rantoul, Illinois.. His enlistment record shows that he had completed one year of college and his listed his civilian occupation as "actor." He was 20 years old, 5' 8" tall, and weighed 142 pounds.

Josephine graduated from Oblong High School in 1939 and later attended Lake College of Commerce in Waukegan, Illinois. She appears in the 1940 census as a stenographer working at the U. S. Naval Training Station and living in a residence for young government office workers in nearby Waukegan, one of 33 women listed there in the census.

Bill and Josephine were married on 24 January 1942 in Wichita Falls, Texas. At that time Josephine was employed at the National Youth Administration Resident Work Center in Oblong. (The National Youth Administration was a New Deal program providing vocational education and employment for young persons.)

Bill was stationed at Sheppard Field in Wichita Falls, Texas, where Bill had been transferred in November 1941. He was an instructor in carburization there, according to the couple's wedding news article.



Bill's photo album from his war years - Bill (left) in front of a C-47 Dakota, a swan dive (above) at the Heliopolis Club in Egypt, a pyramid view there, and news for the folks back home...



FLEW OVER VESUVIUS
 Mr. and Mrs. H. W. Lowther are in receipt of a letter from their son, Lt. W. K. Lowther who is attached to an engineering section stationed in Northern Africa. An interesting paragraph from the letter reads:: Was up in Italy a few days ago. Flew over Mt. Vesuvius and it sure was a sight. As you've probably read the volcano is erupting again. We were up at 10,000 ft. and still couldn't get over the smoke and had to go around it. Quite interesting to see. Sure wouldn't want to be around it on the ground.

During World War II Bill was deployed to North Africa where he served in ground maintenance. While there he was promoted to lieutenant. He was overseas when their first child, Laura Jane, was born 1 September 1943 in Robinson, Illinois. Jane was 2-years-old when Bill first returned home following the war. Their second daughter, Mary Elizabeth, was born in December 1946 in Robinson.

Bill reenlisted in the U.S. Air Force (now a separate branch of the service) and a news story in the San Angelo, Texas, Evening Standard reported that he had been appointed as a Warrant Officer Junior Grade at Goodfellow Air Force Base there. Master Sergeant Lowther had completed screening there in July 1948 and was among 2200 warrant officers selected from 27,000 applicants in the Air Force. (A warrant officer was an intermediate position between non-commissioned officers and lieutenants.)

Bill, Josephine, and their two daughters are listed in the 1950 census for San Angelo, Texas, and son Stephen Randall was born there 2 August 1950.

With their father in the Air Force, the Lowther family moved often. Jane recalls that her school days were a geography lesson: 1st grade, San Angelo, Texas; 2nd grade, Panama City, Florida; 3rd grade, Robinson, Illinois, (while father Bill was deployed overseas during the Korean War); 4th and 5th grade, Columbus, Ohio; 6th through 8th grade, Tucson, Arizona; and 4 years of high school in Newfoundland.

Robert Daniel, the fourth child in the family, was born 14 April 1955 while the family was living in Tucson, Arizona.

In 1956 Bill, now an Air Force major, was transferred to Ernest Harmon Air Force Base in Stephenville, Newfoundland, Canada. Jane's graduation from high school in 1961 there coincided with father Bill's retirement from the service. (Without a college degree, Bill was deemed ineligible for future promotions.) The family returned to Robinson, a journey by car of just over 2,000 miles.

Mary, Steve, and Dan all graduated from Robinson High School. Bill became sports editor for the Robinson Daily News and, later, worked as an exterminator for a pest control company. Josephine was an executive secretary for the Second National Bank

in Robinson.

Bill and Josephine were divorced in 1970. Bill subsequently married Frances Smith. Following their divorce, Bill was married briefly to a wife named Carol. He then married Delores Ordnoff in 1977 and gained two step-children. (Delores remarried and died in 2025.)

Josephine died 29 June 1977 at the age of 56, and Bill died 6 September 1980 at the age of 59 .



Josephine Ruddell and Wilson Lowther wedding portrait
Wichita Falls, Texas

LOWTHER—RUDELL

On Saturday afternoon, January 24, at 4:30, Miss Jo Ruddell, daughter of Mrs. Jane Ruddell, of this city, became the bride of Private Wilson Reir Lowther of Sheppard Field, Wichita Falls, Texas, son of Mr. and Mrs. Homer W. Lowther of Robinson. The impressive single ring ceremony was performed in the First Methodist Church of Wichita Falls by the pastor, Dr. Paul E. Martin. Softly throughout the ceremony the organist played, "I Love You Truly."

The bride was lovely in a street length dress of beige and brown with brown accessories, and her corsage was of white carnation petals and gardenias. Mrs. M. R. Swartz of Robinson sister of the groom, matron of honor, wore aqua blue silk with brown accessories. Her flowers were pink carnation petals and gardenias.

Both the groom and his best man, F. C. Pete Urevic, also of Sheppard Field, wore the uniform of the United States Air Corps.

Immediately following the ceremony Mr. and Mrs. Lowther, their attendants and the groom's mother, were guests in the home of the groom's cousin, Dr. and Mrs. R. D. McConchie of Wichita Falls.

Mrs. Lowther is a graduate of O. T. H. S. with the class of 1939 and later attended Lake College of Commerce at Waukegan, Ill. She is now employed in the N. Y. A. Resident Work Center in Oblong.

Mr. Lowther was graduated from the Robinson Township High School in 1938, and attended Lockyear Business College in Evansville, Ind. He enlisted in the U. S. Air Corps in January 1941, receiving his training at Chanute Field. In November he was transferred to Sheppard Field as an instructor in carburization.

Wedding News Story
Oblong, Illinois, Oracle

Ancestors Serving in the Revolutionary War

Nathaniel Meeker

4th Great grandfather of Lowther siblings

Spouse: Esther Littell 1760-1834

GF - Homer Lowther

GGM - Margaret Hall

2GGM - Esther Meeker

3GGF - Michael Meeker

4thGGF - Nathaniel Meeker

b. 10 Oct 1753 Essex Co, NJ

D. 1836 Butler Co., OH

Nathaniel Meeker served as a private in Capt. Aaron Aorson's Company, 3rd New York Regiment, commanded by Col Peter Ganesvoort

Daniel Cole

3rd Great grandfather of Lowther siblings

Spouse: Elizabeth Whitehead 1765-1800

GM - Ada Laura McConchie

GGF - Robert D McConchie

2GGM - Catherine Cole

3GGF - Daniel Cole

b. 20 Feb 1763 Prince William Co., VA

D 17 Jul 1851 Culpeper Co., VA

Daniel Cole enlisted in 1790 and served about nine months in Captain John Britt or Bret's Company of Virginia Troops. After the expiration of this service he aided in building a road for the army from Fredericksburg to Alexandria, Virginia for a period of 15 to 20 days. He was granted a pension for his service, based on a 1832

application.

Col. William B. Lowther

5th Great grandfather of Lowther siblings

Spouse: Sudna Hughes 1745-1829

GF - Homer Lowther

GGF - Wilson Reid Lowther

2GGF - Lemuel Lowther

3GGF - William B. Lowther

4GGF - Robert Lowther

b. 22 Dec 1742 Albemarle VA

D 28 Oct 1814 Harrison Co., VA

William B. Lowther figured prominently in the erection of Simpson's Fort near Clarksburg VA. He was recognized as one of the most capable defenders of the settlement during the war and led many successful expeditions against the British forces. He was commissioned a major by Gen. George Rogers Clark in 1781, later promoted to Colonel.

John Reed

4th Great grandfather of Lowther siblings

Spouse: Abigail Chamberlin 1762-1824

GF - Homer Lowther

GGF - Wilson Reid Lowther

2GGM - Abigail Reed

3GGF - Joshua Reed

4GGF - John Reed

B 3 Feb 1759 Vermont

D. 3 Feb 1828 Canandaigua NY

John Reed (1759-1828) served as sergeant in Capt. Nathan Smith's

company, Col. John Jacobs' regiment, Massachusetts troops. He was born in Vermont; died in Canandaigua, N .I

Daniel Rhoads

4th Great grandfather of Lowther siblings

Spouse: Eva Faust 1761-1792

GM - Ada Laura McConchie

GGM - Sarah Rhoads

2GGF - B. T. Rhoads

3GGF - Jacob Rhoads

4GGF - Daniel Rhoads

B 5 Oct 1755 Bedford PA

D 26 Apr 1839 Edgar Co, IL

Daniel enlisted in the First Pennsylvania Rifle Regiment in June 1775, serving as a private, and was discharged in June 1778, according to his pension papers.

Michael Ripple

4th Great grandfather of Lowther siblings

Spouse: Sarah Elizabeth Robinson 1755-1788

GM - Ada Laura McConchie

GGM - Sarah Rhoads

2GGF - B. T. Rhoads

3GGM - Elizabeth Ripple

4GGF - Michael Ripple

B 15 Oct 1751 Northampton Co., PA

D April 1834 Edgar Co., IL

In February 1776 he volunteered as a private in Col Peters Kirkland's Regiment in the Pennsylvania line, attached to General Benedict Arnold's Brigade. He was marched to New York and was

in the Battle of Long Island on 27 Aug 1776. He served his six months tour and was discharged. He subsequently enlisted as a private as a light horseman for two years as a life guard under General George Washington including the battles of Brandywine and Germantown. After his two years' service, he returned to Pennsylvania and enlisted again for two years as a light horseman with service in Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. He completed his two years' service and returned to Pennsylvania.

William Perrine

6th Great grandfather of Lowther siblings

Spouse: Hannah Mount 1749-1824

GF - Arthur George Ruddell

GGM- Annie Elizabeth Jennings

2GGM - Elizabeth Jane Bloom

3GGM - Maria Perrine

4GGF - William Perrine

5GGF - Daniel Perrine

6th GGF - William Perrine

B. 28 Nov 1743 Middlesex Co., NJ

D. 28 Sept 1820 Middlesex Co., NY

He enlisted in the Continental line of the Army of the Revolution some time in the spring of 1775 in Col. Gansevoort's regiment; marched to St. Johns and was transferred to Col. Warner's regiment, which acted as advance guard to the Northern army; continued in service until the defeat and surrender of Burgoyne, on the 17th of October, 1777. Soon after, he was released and went home to his father in New Jersey, Was drafted in the Militia and served during the winter and part of the spring of 1778, and in May of the same year enlisted in the Virginia line for and during the war, and continued in service until its termination, at which period he was a private in the 4th regiment of Light Dragoons commanded by Col. White. He was at the Battle of Yorktown.

George W. Whetstone

6th Great grandfather of Lowther siblings

Spouse: Sarah Susanna Stucky. 1740-1776

GF - Arthur George Ruddell

GGM- Annie Elizabeth Jennings

2GGM - Elizabeth Jane Bloom

3GGM - Maria Perrine

4GGF - William Perrine

5GGF - Daniel Perrine

6th GGF - William Perrine

b. 1744 Pennsylvania

d. 1776 Bedford Co., VA

He is listed in Capt. John Harniss's roll of rangers in Dunmore's War in 1774 when the militia of southwest Virginia responded to Indian attacks. He is also listed in the "Historical Register of Virginians in the Revolution.

John Leonard Mumma

5th Great grandfather of Lowther siblings

Spouse: Maria Catherine Longenecker 1740-1814

GM - Janie Moomau

GGF - John Henry Moomau

2GGF Henry Moomau

3GGF - Christian Mumaw

4GGF David Mumaw

5GGF - John Leonard Mumma

B 1742 New Holland PA

D 1817 Somerset PA

Private in Lancaster County militia 1778-1779 and 1781-1782 and, in addition, furnished grain and forage for the Army (SAR application)

Johann Philip Beck

5th Great grandfather of Lowther siblings

Spouse: Maria Barbara Born 1731-1775

GM - Janie Moomau

GGF - John Henry Moomau

2GGF Henry Moomau

3GGF - Christian Mumaw

4GGM Rosina Beck

5GGF - Johann Philip Beck

b 1727 - Pfalz, Germany

d 1792 Lebanon County PA

Sgt Pennsylvania Militia. Listed in index of PA militia as sgt;
abstract of graves of Rev War patriots; grave has rev war patriot
medallion

Henry Feaster

4th Great grandfather of Lowther siblings

Spouse: Susanna Bachman

GM - Janie Moomau

GGF John Henry Moomau

2GGM Leann Feaster

3GGF Abraham Feaster

4GGF Henry Feaster

b 2759 Somerset PA

d 1817 Rockingham VA

Private in 1st battalion of Bucks County militia, served in battles of
Germantown and Princeton in 1777.

Jonathan Coburn

4th Great Grandfather of Lowther siblings

Spouse: Mary Margaret Radcliff

GF - Homer Lowther

GGF - Wilson Reid Lowther

2nd GGF - Lemuel Lowther

3rd GGM - Margaret Coburn

4th GGF - Jonathan Coburn Jr

Entered service in 1777 in Monongalia County, Virginia, as a captain in the 13th Virginia Regulars under Col. Thomas Gibson. He continued in service from 2 Aug 1777 to 26 Sep 1778 when he was discharged at Pittsburgh. A He was in several skirmishes and engagements with the Indians. Capt. Coburn later served in 1780 under Col. William B. Lowther against the Indians in Virginia and then joined General Clarke and proceeded by boat down the Ohio River the following year. He was 67 years old and blind at the time he asked for a pension.

David Cory

5th GGF of Lowther siblings

Spouse: Eunice Allen 1738-1776

B 29 June 1734 Suffolk County, NY

D 29 November 1809 Addison County, VT

GM - Janie Moomau

GGF - George Franklin Ruddell

2nd GGM - Charlotte Jane DeCamp

3rd GGF - Israel DeCamp

4th GGM - Rheuhamaya Horahuma Cory

5th GGF David Cory

Private in Capt. Isaac Halsey's company from Parsippany NJ in the Morris County militia

James Ruddell

4th Great Grandfather of Lowther siblings

Spouse: Jane Mullerin

GF - Arthur George Ruddell

GGF - George Franklin Ruddell

2GGF - George Perry Ruddell

3GGF - Charles Mulherin Ruddell

4GGF - James Ruddell

B 20 Aug 1758 Shenandoah County VA

D Jan 1840 Rabbit Hash, Doone County, KY

Served in Virginia militia and was taken prisoner at the attack on Ruddle's Station in Kentucky. He was released by the British from Quebec to come home by sea to Philadelphia on 2 Nov 1782.

Abram Hoffman

Spouse: Mary Roderick 1765-

5th great grandfather of Lowther Siblings

GM - Jane Lee Moomau

GGM - Sarah Ann "Sadie" Whetstone

2GGF - George Washington Whetstone

3 GGM - Mary Polly Huffman

4 GGF - John Hoffman

5 GGF - Abram Hoffman

Col Johan Snyder's Regiment of NY Militia - 1780

Charles Mulherin Jr.

5th Great-grandfather of Lowther siblings

Spouse: Margaret Elizabeth Heard

GF - Arthur George Ruddell

GGF - George Franklin Ruddell

2GGF - George Perry Ruddell
3GGF - Charles Mulherin Ruddell
4GGM - Jane Mulherin
5GGF - Charles Mulherin Jr

B 7 Mar 1730 Derry, Ireland
D 17 Mar 1789 Abbeville, SC

Enlisted 3rd South Carolina Regiment on 13 August 1777 and re-enlisted 1 October 1777. Became a sergeant on 1 August 1778 and served as a sergeant on horseback during 1780 under Capt. Freeman.

Conversations with Thelma Lowther Otey

November 25, 2004, and November 25, 2005
Robinson, Illinois
Jane and Jan Strasma



Grandpa Tip was the oldest civil war veteran in Edgar county and the DAR women came down and they wanted him to ride in the parade and so he went and the parade slowed up and it just happened to slow up in front of his favorite tavern he got out of the parade and went in and was sitting there drinking beer. They couldn't find him in the place and didn't know where he went. There wasn't anything wrong with his mind. He wanted a beer, and he just went in there and got it. Alberta finally found him in the tavern. She knew where to look for him. Alberta was his granddaughter that did the driving for him all the time.

Jane: And then Aunt Eulala took him out drinking beer one night?

Mom took care of Kent, and Eulala would take Grandpa out to drink beer. He said I'm going to drink you under the table tonight. She said I don't think you are. She said he was just drinking a beer, drinking a beer, and drinking a beer. Pretty soon she patted her foot under the table for some reason and moved her foot and the beer splashed up on her leg and so she knew that he was pouring the beer under the table. He hadn't been drinking his but she had been drinking hers. He was something else.

Jan: So how did he get into the army on the civil war in the first place?

He wanted to fight for his nanny and he ran off and went into the civil war to fight for his nanny. He wanted to free her, and his dad and brother went into the South army and so there was Grandpa Tip fighting for the North. They were fighting in the South. I've always heard those gray and blue stories, but I didn't know that Granddad did that until later in life I found that out.

[Note: Grandpa Tip's father died in 1849, long before the Civil War. His mother remarried and there is no record of his stepfather, Joseph Garner, serving in the Civil War. The family moved to Illinois before 1860 and Joseph registered for the Union army draft there in 1863. Tip had two brothers, Douglas who died in 1855 and James who would have been 11 years old and living in Illinois when the war started.]

Jan: He was involved in Sherman's "March to the Sea?"

He rode in the back of an ambulance in Sherman's march to the sea. He'd always tell us kids about Sherman's march to the sea like he had walked all that way and he was sick and he had scurvy and his feet were bad it was from eating too much fat meat they



Civil war era ambulance like that which carried "Tip" on Sherman's March to the Sea

told him. He rode in that ambulance all the way to Atlanta. He went on Sherman's March to the Sea but he rode in the ambulance.

[Note: Tip's Union Army records verify that he rode in an ambulance during Sherman's "March."]

Jane: This book on slavery said that slavery was really hard on the women, especially the white women, because their husbands would go down and visit the slave houses at night. You had a story about Grandpa Tip on that one too?

There was a colored man who came up to Grandpa Tip's house, begging, after they lived up by Paris there and he said, "Oh, Sarah, I always knew they'd find me. That's my son out there on the porch. It wasn't his son; he'd just made that story up to irritate Grandma.

Jan: He liked to aggravate Grandma?

Oh. That's all he ever did, was aggravate her. He was always saying something awful to her.

Jane: And then Uncle BT was born?

Oh, when Uncle BT was born she thought she had to go out to pee and she went out and squatted down behind the smokehouse and she had that baby out there. She picked it up and put it in her apron and took it in the house. She was something else. Grandma was a tough woman. I mean she's a big German woman, I mean she always had an apron on because she's always in the kitchen cooking, I mean, my land, all those kids coming home and bringing all their kids. Someone had to cook. And in later years Mother always took food and so did the rest of them. She didn't have to cook all the time. She always had a five gallon jar of sugar cookies, and we kids all knew where those sugar cookies were. You'd ask Grandma for something to eat and she'd get it for you right then. Her oldest daughter, Maud, died after when she was cooking for Threshers on day and she came in and said she was so hungry she

wanted something to eat. Grandma told her to wait until she got the threshers fed and she died before she got her any food. So we kids all knew that story and we didn't go to our parents for something to eat. We'd go to Grandma.

Jane: And why was it that Maud died?

Worms. There was worms. It was too bad.

Well Grandma told her Dad that she was going to marry the first man that asked her. She was going with three different men, and she said the the first one that asks me I'm going to marry. And Grandpa Tip said, "Yes, and by God, it had to be me." He just never could say the right thing, I guess.

Grandpa Rhoads, Grandma's Dad, had a section of land that he had from surveying work that he had done for the government had given him a section of land. He didn't like Grandpa Tip. They lived on one corner of the land, and he put put Grandma and Grandpa diagonally across from them on the other corner of the land because he wanted them as far away from him as he could get him. He didn't like him.

Jan: So Tip was a farmer?

Yeah. Grandpa was. I always thought that Grandpa was rich. He had a civil war pension. That civil war pension was 38 dollars a month and I still thought that Grandpa was rich because he had that pension.

Jane: So he got that land for doing survey work instead of taking pay?

I hope to get the papers on that. I don't have the papers but I know that's what happened.

Jane: So he was down by Hutsonville for a while?

He was down by Hutsonville and (Cousin) Jan wants me to get

the location of where they lived because she's hunted...of what is it that's out in the gravel...those beads. Can't think of what they call them. But she's hunted them up there in the gravel and she wants to know exactly where they lived and I hope, I don't know if this paper will tell it all or not. I hope it will. Then they moved up there.

They gave them that section of land up there and he built a two story house and when I was a kids I used to take mother by that two story house and it was a beautiful home and I don't know who has it now but they told me - Jan told me - when I took her by it that it wasn't so nice any more. That all it needed was a few junk cars out there and you'd think someone was starting a junk yard. So I don't know because I can't see it.

Jane: Is that where Granny grew up? In that two story house?

No. She grew up over diagonally across from it and they had a log cabin there and the day that Mom and Dad were married they moved into the house that now stands there on that corner but Mother never did get to live in that house. Because she got married that day. She had typhoid fever there in the log house and Dad set up with her one night and he said after all I sat up with her in her bedroom I ought to marry her. He sat up in her bedroom...

But really when Mom and Dad met each other they were at a spelling bee and Dad spelled her down like they used to. I don't know the word. I wish I did. But Mom said she just flipped her dress tail and went over and sat down and Dad said I'm going to marry her. And he did.

Jane: And why was it that Homer and Laura had to get married? That doesn't sound right but they really did have to.

Dad called Mom up, they were going to get married in just a few weeks, and Dad called Mom up and said that his mother had died and they have Bernice and Donny there to take care of so they needed help and they needed someone to take care of those kids. Mom married him and took care of the kids. She always said I was married one day and had a nine-month old baby the next. So I don't

think that would be a very good proposal to say we need help, come and work but that's what he did.

Jane: And there was an interesting story about the day they got married and....

The day they got married they came back to Grandpa Lowther's house and they found out they were going to shivaree them. They used to do that a lot. And Dad didn't want to be shivareed and neither did Mom so they took a bunch of back bones out to the smokehouse and hid out there in the smokehouse until... And ate backbones for their wedding supper. I don't know Mother was such a devil and did so many little things to Dad, I guess she wanted to pay him back for wanting her to come and work...marry him and come and work.

Jane: And how was it that they needed help. It was sad, very sad.

Why Dad and Granddad needed help? Grandma was making kraut and she was eating all the cabbage hearts to the kraut you know that stalk that comes up in the cabbage and she got some gas pains and she went in and thought she was getting a box of soda and she got a box of rat poisoning and she took a dose of that and she died pretty quick. I mean it wasn't very long before she was dead.

That's the reason Mom went on down and took care of the kids. She had two of them then. Uncle Donny and Aunt Ruth but Uncle Donny later went to Aunt Florence's and stayed. And Uncle Bernice always stayed with Mother. He called her his foster mother.

Jane: He probably didn't remember his mother at all?

Oh no. he was only nine months old when she died. They were talking about the kraut. Mother always told the story about her going in and she couldn't see. I don't know what was the matter with her eyes but her eyelids wouldn't open wide and dad always



Homer worked for the Big Four Railroad - Nickname of the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis Railroad.

The line passing through Robinson ran from Cairo, Illinois, to Chicago.

said my eyes were just like his mother's. I don't know whether they are or not. I've only seen a picture of Grandma and her eyelids are drooped.

Jan: So When did Homer go to work for the railroad.

Oh, I wish I had that book.... He wrote down every time he got a raise. And he had it all written down and I don't know. He went to work for the railroad when mother lived in Oliver when Eulala was a baby. He was working for the railroad then. And he wrote down every raise that he had and everything was written down in that book. I gave it to Bill and we never did get it back. I wish I had that book. His salary would be interesting to see. Dad could lay the rails on the railroad track by eye He didn't have to have any instruments but he could just look down and lay that rail right there.

That's one reason why I think he had the stroke after all those years of being on the railroad is that they sent a bunch of engineers out. These engineers let him lay the track at the present CIPS plant and they wanted to do it with their instruments and he said Ive done it all my life but they wouldn't let him and he had a stroke at home that night. But it was just too much for him. They wouldn't take his word for laying that track.

Jan: So he was a section foreman?



Big 4 Railroad
 (Cleveland,
 Cincinnati,
 Chicago and St.
 Louis Railroad)

Route Map for
 Illinois with
 Robinson stop
 on Chicago to
 Cairo route

Section foreman and in the summertime he had what they called the extra gang. If you're ever around a railroad track you've seen these cars of railroad cars that the men slept in. There was a lot of men in your gang and they'd go out and work on the track. Then come in. Dad hired a cook and the cook fed them and they slept in these cars and one time when dad come home he brought home some bed bugs and Mom just had a fit. They had a bed down the basement and dad threw his clothes down the bed and there were bed bugs in those clothes. Boy she burned the clothes and burned the mattress and used coal oil on the springs and I can remember that. that whole house smelled like kerosene because she just put it all over everything. It's a wonder it didn't burn it down.

He brought home bed bugs, and so she told him that when he brought his clothes from the gang put them out in the garage. She'd take care of them and she did. Boy she just pounded on that bed. I remember when that happened. She was so mad. She 'd never had bed bugs in her life.

Jane: But she paid him back one time when she made raspberry jam....

Oh, that was back when they were living up where Route 1 is now, south of Oliver. She was making raspberry jam and Aunt Ollie was living with them at the time. Aunt Ollie's husband had died and Buss was a baby. She had put the berries up and put them in the bag and drained them. Got all the juice out of them they could get. What does she do but make a pie for Dad out of the seeds. Dad came home and ate a piece of pie.

Aunt Ollie said, Homer, how was that pie? And he said, "Pretty damn seedy." He was really something.

But she was always doing something to him. When they lived up there where Route 1 is now. Their barn was on one side and they had some cows and she was over there and milking and come out to the pavement and back then there were tribes of gypsies. A lot of gypsies going through and they stopped and told her they had to

have that milk.

She said maybe you have to have it, but I have to have it too. I've got kids in the house now; you get yourself on down the road or I'll give you the milk. I'll throw it at you. Pail and and all. And they went on down the road and left her alone. And she had her milk to take into her kids. But she was spunky.

Jane: And she gave Homer orders for a new outhouse one time.

Oh that was when we lived in Oliver. We lived in Oliver right along the railroad track and she said now I 'm telling you my kids are not going to use a toilet that is used by all those bums that come along that railroad track. She said I've seen them coming out of there and I 'm not going to have it.

She said I want a new toilet built, and so Dad built a toilet inside a barn we had out there. We didn't have any animals in it, but he built that toilet so those bums couldn't see it. He went up to Paris one night to take Ionia back to work and Mom put me in a bedroom and shut the door and told me she would just literally kill me if I come out of there. I was probably in the second grade of school but I knew I should probably stay in that bedroom.

She and Buss went out and they used kerosene and set that toilet on fire. I could hear what people were saying out there. It was right along the room where I was in. They'd say, oh where is Eulala going to do her courting now. What's Ionia going to do for a place to court. And they burned that toilet. They hid in a smokehouse and let the toilet burn.

My Dad came home and he was mad and he said now You and Buss go out there tomorrow and you bury the remains of that out there. I hope this will be your last experience with fire. She burned the toilet down.

Buss when he went to the East coast. When I got home he had my camera and he been back up in the White mountains there and all I had on that film was outhouses. There wasn't a thing on there but people's toilets.

He took that song we had these moments to remember. The night we burned the shithouse down. We were really the talk of the

town. We'll have these moments to remember. They always talked about the night they burned the toilet down.

And of course Eulala was gone and Ionia. They were at work and there was just Buss and I at home. It was a mess. Bill had to be there some place, but I just don't know where.

When Dad started working on the railroad he had a bunch of section hands because there was a lot of work to be done on the railroad and Mom ran a restaurant in Oliver. And they had like a little general store where they had candy and things like that.

Eulala was just a little girl and Mom told her to stay there and watch the restaurant. Watch the door and if someone came in there to go and get her. She had to do a washing. So Mom would see people come in and go back out and come in and go back out and Eulala didn't come a get her.

So she went in there and Eulala was under the candy counter with a box of chocolate candy. I don't know what they call them but they were haystacks I think it was and she was sticking a red hot on top of that whole box of candy. Mom said she ought to have made her eat them all. but was was under the counter sticking those red hots in there.

Mom cooked for all of those men and they would come in there and have their lunch and take their lunches on the railroad cause Dad had seen to it, because Mom was wanting to make the money anyway. Mother always found a job that she could do at home and be with us kids. and still make money.

Jan: What else did she do besides the restaurant?

Well she did ironings for people and when we moved to Robinson she rented rooms. Part of the rooms there at 402 N. Jefferson she rented. And when Dad would come in to go to the store Mother never went to the store.

She never paid a bill. She didn't know anything about it and it would make her mad if they would get a bill for the gas or lights or anything like that. She said we pay our bills and we don't have to be dunned. but finally she got used to it.

When Dad would go to the store she 'd tell him what she was out of and say Whatever else you want to get. He bought all of the groceries and I still see him when he would be ready to go out the door he would say have you got any money and she'd go get him memory to get the groceries. She always kept her pocketbook in the cedar chest in the bedroom. She'd go in there and get the money for the groceries. He wore bib overalls and he'd pull a roll of bills out of those bib overalls the top of them and say I've got money, too. I'd have grabbed that roll of bills, too, if I 'd been her. But she didn't. She just paid the bills. And let it go.

Jane: What amazed me is I always pictured Homer as being not tall but like my Dad, maybe be 5-6 or 5-7. But you said he wasn't very tall at all.

I don't remember him as being tall. I expect 5-4 or 5-5. He wasn't very tall. But he was a working fool. He went out to work every morning and Mother never did get up to get his breakfast. She never did pack his lunch pail. He said if she had to get up with the kids at night then he could take care of himself in the morning. And she never did fix his lunch, but she always had things in the fridge for him, ready to fix.

Jan: He was still working for the railroad then.

Oh yes he worked for the railroad until he had a stroke. And he went back to work the next morning and Mom called Eulala. Eulala was not at home then, she was married and Mom called her and told her to go get her Dad that I know he had a stroke last night and he's out working. She said go get him. They brought him in and they called the doctor and doctor said, yes, it was a stroke.

But he sat on the front porch for years and years. Seems to me it was a long time. I think it was five years after he retired. And he was 65 when he died. He hadn't got his railroad retirement pension yet, but they lived some way, I don't know how.

Jan: When they were first married they lived in Oliver

Well they lived right in Oliver where they ran that little restaurant. When they first got married he was transferred down to Birds, Illinois, which is south of Robinson yet and for her to go that far from her Mother when she was going to have a baby was just terrible. But Mother got along all right. She had Eulala in Birds, and Eulala would never admit she was born in Birds but she was.

Then they moved back up to Oliver and then later they moved out there along the pavement south of Oliver and I was born north of Oliver on they called it the Joe Gregg place.

I was born there and Mother called Buss in and said Oh look what we've got. What will be do with her? And Buss said, Feed her to the old sow. Mother always said that was pretty definite - just feed her to the old sow.

When Eulala and Ionia were growing up Ionia dared Eulala to do everything. I dare you to do this and dare you to do that. Mother told Eulala I 'm tired of hearing this and if the next time she dares you to do something and you don't do it you're going to get a whipping. So Ionia put a butcher knife in her hand with the blade toward her fingers with the sharp blade toward her fingers. Mother was in the kitchen and that happened on the Joe Gregg place.

Mother was in the kitchen and Ionia said I dare you Eulala to pull that knife through my hand and Mother said Eulala grabbed that knife and pulled it through her hand and just cut her fingers to the bones and they had to take her to the doctor and get them fixed. But she just pulled them right through. Mom didn't know what she was doing or that was how it was. I don't know how Mom raised all of us.

Jane: Wasn't there a problem with you when you were a baby you couldn't take breast milk?

I couldn't have any kind of milk. Her breast milk wasn't good for me, and cow's milk wasn't good for me. She fed me mashed potatoes and gravy. They said you 're going to kill her, and she said, That 's all right, she'll die with something in her stomach. If I kill her, I kill her. And she fed me that. I still like mashed potatoes and

gravy.

Jan: Going back to the civil war, the cradle story.

Oh, the cradle story. Uncle Robert told me this from my Grandpa Lowther (Jane: that 's Wilson Reid?) Wilson Reid Lowther. The story that he told was when they wanted to get food, they had to go up and just get food. They went up to people 's houses and steal food or get food there right off their table. He went in to get food one day from this house. There was a woman sitting there, rocking a cradle and she just sit there rocking the cradle.

Grandpa said, Oh I want to see your baby, I just love babies. I've got some at home, and I just want to see your baby. And she said, Oh no, don't pull that cover off. He 's asleep, just let him sleep.

He just reached down and pulled that cover up, and that cradle was filled with ham and bacon. He said they really ate when they found that ham and bacon. But wasn't any baby in there. That was one of Uncle Robert 's favorite stories about Grandpa Lowther.

Jane: And also about Grandpa Tip and you and the bootlegger

Oh. Across a field from where Grandma and Grandpa lived there was a bootlegger, and he had people come to his house to drink beer. He made home brew all the time, and Grandpa and I went over there. Well, I took him over there; I was driving a car by then. I took him over there one time, and next time we walked over there and in the back yard was all these malt cans, shiny, turned upside down on a picket fence. They went out there and got a malt can and drew it full of home brew. Grandpa and I sat there and drank home brew that day. Then he went over there by himself one day, and when he come home a sheep knocked him down and broke his collar bone. He was pretty easy to knock down because he'd been drinking beer all afternoon.

But Grandpa's drinking was...Grandma caused a lot of it because she wouldn't let him have a bottle of beer in his house. She wouldn't let him drink beer at all, and Mom would say, Mom, if you 'd just let him have beer here he wouldn't try to get it when he gets

away from you. But he sure did it. He was something else.

Jan: So you got some beer for him on his 92nd birthday.

92nd birthday.... Grandpa wasn't able to raise up his head off the bed and I took a cream pitcher and poured that beer in there and poured it down him. But he felt good for a little while. That beer was all right with him, but he loved his beer. But I didn't know of him to drink anything else besides a beer. It 's always been beer or home brew that he drank. I never did know of him to drink whiskey.

Jane: And you said that he was never sent to school or educated.

No, Granddad could not read or right, and if you took him if you were out and saw a bunch of cows out in a field he'd say how many cows are out there? I don't know how he could play cards and not count, but he could play cards but he couldn't count how many cows were out in a field. He always signed his name. Someone else would sign his name, and he'd put his x on there. That was what he always did.

Jan: That was Tip?

Yes, Grandpa Tip.

Jan: Which is the one who was in the spelling bee?

That's Homer. He spelled Mother down. Didn't I tell you about that?

Jan: Yes.

Dad lived north of Oliver, Illinois, and Mom lived south of Oliver, Illinois, and they used to get the schools together to have those spelling bees. They don't do things like that any more.



Commemorative cup Thelma got for taking care of Bill while the family went to the World's Fair in Chicago

Jane: Didn't they continue to meet at church on Sunday nights. It wasn't exactly a date but....

Dad got there every time he could, and when Mom had typhoid fever, and Dad sat up with her and he said, I've got to marry her because I stayed in her bedroom that night when she was so sick. I've got to marry her. But he found all kinds of excuses to marry Mom. But he was a...they made a good pair. I don't know how he ever stood Mom. I would have killed her a long time ago, if I were him. She was always doing something to him.

I can remember when Dad was on the extra gang, he 'd bring us a big box of cookies. Store bought cookies. And we didn't have to eat those cookies that Mom made. Because she always made homemade cookies, but we didn't have to eat them. I remember some of them had coconut in them, and they were real good cookies. But he'd always bring us a big box of them.

When they told the story that the world was going to come to an end. I must have been in the fourth grade, but they told that story that the world was going to come to an end at midnight.

My dad got in on the 12:15 train, and I just had a fit. I couldn't stop from crying. They couldn't do anything with me, because Dad wouldn't be home before the world was going to end. But we had an awful time with some of those stories that they used to tell.

Jane: You just recently gave me a cup that Granny bought for you and there was a reason that....

Well that cup was my reward for taking care of Bill. Bill had malaria and it must have been in 32 or 33. I'm not sure. Well, it would have to be in 33. or the latter part of 32. I graduated from high school in 32 and it was shortly after graduation I think and he had malaria and every other day he was very, very sick. He had a real high fever and Mother wasn't going to go with a bunch of her sisters and a bunch of kids were going to all go up to Chicago to the World 's Fair and I took care of Bill.

We just got along fine. When she came home she brought me the cup. Janie didn't know anything about when her Dad had malaria but that was when it was and I gave Janie that cup the other night but I always thought it was from Chicago but it 's not it's from Detroit, Michigan. I suppose they brought stuff up so they could have something to sell wherever they could buy it cheap and then they sold it at the World Fair.

But Bill got along fine while she was gone. Of course I was old enough so I could take care of him. but he had malaria of every year it seemed like he 'd be sick. His temperature would go real high and then the next day he 'd be all right and then his temperature would go real high again.

Jane: I remember that picture. It was framed.

Yes. We're all going to get that picture. Rita has the names of everybody that 's on it. But she didn't have the names of all of...she has the one that I gave Marcella and Kent's going to make us all a picture of that.

That's kind of a big, because it was long.

The studio came down and made it for us and we passed the food out the dining room window. Everyone brought chicken because there were a lot of farmers. Every time I'd get a plate of chicken that had liver on it, I ate it. By the time dinner was ready I was so sick I couldn't keep going hardly but I passed the chicken and the food out to Flossy and she 'd put it on the table.

Jane: I remember that because I would sit there and stare at

Grandpa's picture because Homer was in it in his bib overalls. Yeah, Dad was there and Granny had on a nice house dress. Her hair is dark. I used to sit and stare at that picture for hours.

When Mom went to Oklahoma, she wanted to see Aunt Sarah, Dad's sister, and Dad wouldn't let her go unless she dyed her hair because he wasn't going to let Sarah know that he'd put all those gray hairs in her head. She had to dye her hair before she could go.

Jane; You know there was black hairs on her head. Aunt Thelma's hair was prettier than Grannies. But the favorite story about Uncle Paul was when Granny gave you advice when you said you were going to marry him.

She said you can't live with the kidding all your life. She said, He'll torment the daylights out of you, and if you can't live with that you'd better go find yourself another boyfriend. And I said, I'll take it, and boy I did. He was always pulling something on me.

Jane: Well he tormented her, too

He tormented her, too. The thing I got the biggest kick out of was we were on vacation one time and we always took Mom with us whenever we went on vacation and she opened her pocketbook at a restaurant and Paul went over where she was opening her pocketbook. She paid for her own meals. She wouldn't let us pay for them but she opened her pocketbook to pay for her meal and Paul went over there and clapped his hand above her pocketbook and she said, Well, what are you doing.

He said, Well, you've been on this trip for several days, and you've had a twenty dollar bill and a pair of pants and I don't think you've changed either one of them. That clerk just raised cane about it. Oh my but he just teased the life out of mother, and I was the outlaw. They were right against me all the time just buddy buddies.

Jane: He used to steal cards out of her solitaire deck.

Always. We went out to Stoy, and he bought her a case of Gallo's wine. She just loved Gallo's wine and she never ... just before she went to bed she had a glass and she drank it and she got in bed that night and a bottle of wine rolled down on her. He had put that whole case of wine in her bed. Laid it around all over her bed. And she said, Oh he got me some wine. She pulled that bottle out, got back in bed, she said it was coming from all directions the second time she got in bed. And she had to get up. She never turned the light on in her bedroom at night. She had to get up, turn the light on, and found all that wine scattered all over her bed.

But he did just tease the life out of her. I only had trouble with one bunch of company that I had, and that was with Kitty Tucker and every time Kitty came Mom would be down in the dumps.

I couldn't figure out what was happening and finally Mom said, Well Kitty says that I shouldn't say 'Our car.' I shouldn't say 'our house.' That it was yours and Paul's house and car, and I should not say 'Ours' that I didn't own any part of it. And it would make Mom get down in the dumps.

And finally I told Kitty the next time she came, Now this is 'our house' and it is 'our car.' And she got straightened out about it. When I went to make a will so that Mom would get the house at 403 West Main, because I didn't want her to go find another place to live right away and when I went to make that will the lawyer said you can't will anything you don't own and you don't own that house. Well that lawyer doesn't know what he 's talking about. Paul and I did own that house, and but he thought that because Mom had the house on Jefferson Street that she had bought that house for us. But she hadn't because we owned that house.

Jane: I can remember when I was little her talking about getting the railroad pension that Homer never knew he got.

Oh she always wished that Dad knew that she got that railroad pension. She got it every month and she had enough money that she could live but she couldn't have lived by herself and lived like we did. But she could live and I paid her \$15 a week for



Granny
Laura
Lowther
playing
cards with
Jane and
Steve in
Newfoundla
nd in about
1960

overseeing the house and I had a woman who came and cleaned the house, too, and she cooked our noonday meal. We always had a nice meal, and I paid her \$15 a week to take care of it.

Jane: She used to take Uncle Paul 's piece of chicken out early because he didn't like hot chicken.

He didn't like hot chicken

Jane: She would chop up an onion for his beans because that 's the way he liked them.

She would bake him a pie every day and I 'd say he don't need a pie every day but she baked him a pie every day. She just spoiled him rotten. She ironed his underwear!

Of course he didn't have them ironed after she died but I never did iron it. She just one Christmas she'd been on the go and on the go and it was sleeting and snowing and it was awful outside and she was going down to Lawrenceville to play bingo and I said oh Mom I don't want you to go out tonight. This weather is terrible.

Well, I want to go. And I let her go, and when come home I was up in

the front windows putting up some Christmas decorations and she told the girls that were with her and they later told me she said oh look Mommy's up decorating the window.

And the doctor told me that I shouldn't let her go out so much she was wearing herself out and I said now Mom you make up your mind if you 're going to go out of an evening then you rest in the afternoon and if you 're going out in the afternoon they you can go to bed at night and she told the women “My Mommy says I can't go out both afternoon and night anymore so we 're going to have to make up our minds when we 're going to play. She played cards every day someplace. But my Mommy wouldn't let me do that. But she loved to play cards.

I was working on books one night. I had a lot of bookkeeping to do at home and I was working on the books and she 'd walk through the office around through my office it had a door through the living room and another door that went out into the dining room and she was shuffling a deck of cards. She went through there about three times and I pulled out the leaf there on my table and I said come on let 's play a game and I just beat the socks off her that first game, and she said you don't know a damn thing about this game. I 'm never going to play with you again. Paul was sitting in the front room and he was just dying laughing but she's never going to play cards with me again But the next day it was the same thing. Come and play cards with me.

But she had a nice life and I realize now that I live by myself what I did for my mother to give her a good home even though she worked like a dog.

Jane: Made her Daddy proud, I 'm sure of it.

She had a good time. She'd go out every night if I 'd let her.

Jane: She had the best bedroom in the house, too.

Yes, it went clear across the front of the house and she had a



Restored 1929
Willys Knight

sewing machine in the little alcove over there the bedroom went clear across the front of the house. Took her to the doctor one day. She couldn't hear very well, and Dr. Salesman would get on one side of her head and I'd get on the other and I could tell him anything that had happened to her. When she got her hearing aid I said Dr. Salesman do you see her hearing aid. He said 'Oh' and he knew that we couldn't talk about her.

She hit me in the stomach one day with her pocketbook and Dr. Salesman probably remembers it today. He said she didn't ... he thought that I'd get mad and I just stood there and laughed at her but she hauled off that pocketbook and hit me right in the stomach.

Jane: I just loved the way that you all teased each other so I kept saying Granny what can I do to Aunt Thelma. She said, 'Well, you could call her Thelma Esther or you could run your knuckles down her back because she hates both of them. So I did both of them to you.

Yeah. But you called me Pester. Somebody said, Well where did you get that, and I said, Esther...Pester.

Jane: And "Jew", Auntie Ine's first husband?

Yeah, and when we were first married we were going to Terre Haute and I 'd never been to Terre Haute, I mean I couldn't remember it, "'Jew" said, I was standing up in the front seat between Ionia and "'Jew" and he said, Pester we're to cross the state line up here and it will be a big thump and you be ready for it. I grabbed him around the neck and held on to him. I was scared to death.

But the one year I was at Ionia 's when she was working in Paris and he took me in and bought me \$25 worth of fireworks. Now that don't sound like much today, but that was a lot of fireworks and we really had a lot and Grandma Hocket came down and I said "'Jew" got me all those fireworks and she said, yes, and I had to go in and pay for them too. Because he didn't have the money to pay for them and he charged them to his mother. But we always had fireworks. Always. We used to shoot them out over the garden. I've got a lot of nice memories of everything that happened.

Jane: Now when Homer worked for the railroad, it seems to me like, you told me once that it a big fun thing when a car got derailed.

Oh, yes, if they had a wreck on the railroad then Eulala would take us kids. She could drive a car. She 'd take us kids and Mom and Dad would be up there in charge of that wreck. Getting the track back in shape. They used to have more wrecks then.... Well they don't have a train now in Robinson. But Mom would fix a lunch and we'd take it up there and Dad would have time out long enough to come to eat with us. It was a big occasion when they 'd have a wreck on the railroad.

Jane: What kind of a car would that have been? Wasn't it a big old...

We used to have a Willys Knight. It was a big car. And then we had a Redbird. That Redbird was a car I liked the best. And then we had a Dodge and we had that Dodge for a long time and Mom didn't like it. And one day Dad pushed it out of the garage and we had that garden that was a lot lower than the driveway and that

Dodge we down over that embankment there and lit in the garden so Mom went out and got a bunch of tin cans and piled them around that car and said that she was starting a junk yard. She had it all ready.

Jane: And Homer didn't think too much of that?

Oh no he didn't think too much of it. And Ionia pushed the Redbird out one time and then tried to hold it. She ruined her shoes and oh she had an awful time. She thought he could push that car out and it would just go down the driveway. Well it didn't do it. It went partway over the....we had ties along the driveway there. That driveway there.

Today they've got it fixed nice but it was terrible there when we lived there. We put all of our cinders from the furnace out there. It was a mess. When I was in business college Bill tackled me out on the driveway and I've got the scar yet on my knee. I had ground ash in it and it was a mess. Couldn't get it well and I was staying down in Evansville going to business college when that happened.

Jane: I think that was the first story you ever told me about when I asked you what Dad was like when he was a little boy.

He'd just do anything. He could do anything and get by with it cause he was Mom's pet. He always was Mom's pet. But I can't kick because I was my Dad 's pet.

Jane: What was the story about Mom cooking a meal and Dad didn't like it....

If Dad came home and Bill hadn't eaten that day. Mom had cooked something he didn't like. She'd say, Homer, he hasn't eaten anything all day today, Now take him up get him a hamburger. Well, man, I wanted a hamburger just as bad as Bill wanted a hamburger, but I didn't get one. He'd take Bill up there and get him a hamburger. But if I didn't eat, they didn't care. I was always fat so it didn't make any difference.

Paul run a Texaco station on North Cross Street. This is probably a new story to you. He run a Texaco station on North Cross Street. Just a little old dinky place when he was just first out of high school and my Dad took a bottle of homemade wine up there and put it in Paul's safe and Paul and Dad would have a drink each night.

Paul was surprised when he met Mother when we started going together that Mother was the kind of woman she was because Dad had left the impression that he couldn't have a drink at home.... And Mom had helped him make that wine. But he'd left the impression that he couldn't drink at home. He had to come up there to drink that wine with Paul. I wish that my Dad knew that I had married Paul because Dad really liked him when he was younger and I wish Dad could have known it. I imagine he does.

Jane: So you weren't married when your Dad was alive?

No. Mother and I moved upstairs in the house and she rented the downstairs and I started going with Paul after Dad died. Paul would come up that stairway every night and I'd say do you want a drink. And he 'd say, ooohh I don't care. I don't know. I don't need one. Heavenly days, he wanted a drink and I knew he did. And Mom said, Thelma, you 're going to make a drunkard out of him. That 's all there is to it. You're just going to make a drunkard of him. But I don't think I did.

I called Paul up one night and told him, well, Billy Wilson had come to our house that afternoon and he had asked for Dad and Dad had been dead for a year or so. And I was afraid of him and I thought how can he be a cousin of mine if he doesn't know Dad's dead. I called Paul up and I said Paul I'm afraid. I don't like the looks of that kid that come here that day. And he said....I think everything will be all right and he wouldn't come down. He left me there to worry about that kid. But he was a cousin of mine, second cousin. But that 's the way that Paul and I went through our dating years. Telling each other to go to hell every once in a while. That was just the way it was.

Jane: And how long did you date before you married him?

Oh I started dating him, I dated him almost a year. A little over a year. But it was a rough year. Anything else you want to know?

Jan: Wasn't there a cabin on a lake?

We had a cabin out at West Lake. Paul was slipping in to Dr. Gus Smith's lake to fish and he got home one night and he was just so scratched up and he said well Dr. Gus came out there and I had to hide in the blackberry bushes because he wasn't supposed to be out there fishing.

Mom said now that does it, you're going to buy that place out a West Lake and fix it for him to fish. Well, she was just looking out for herself because she wanted to go fishing when he slipped off to go to Dr. Gus's.

So we bought that cabin at West Lake and there was more fun out at that cabin. Everybody would have a good time when they come out. We just. It was just a little cabin but it was nice. I had dishes with pine cones on all of them. My silverware was all pine cones. Paul was in the station and he could get things free with coupons from oil and I just fixed out that cabin and when I left I left it all. I wish I 'd brought some of it with me.

Jane: I wish you had brought the wagon wheel

Well, the wagon wheel was given to Uncle Robert to Mom 's brother and he put it up in his cabin and it's still over there in his cabin.

Jan: Where is West Lake?

West Lake is about 3 miles west of Robinson.

Jane: We drive by the entrance every time we go...

Oh it looks terrible. The wagon wheel, we had it wired and put it up in the center of the cabin. (Jane 's timer goes off.) I always want to answer the telephone when that rings.

Jane: But the wagon wheel was whose?

It was Grandpa Tip 's. He was driving a pair of I don't know what you call them they were kinda mean horses and he couldn't hardly control them and a car passed him one time and that wagon wheel came off the wagon. They had a wreck because those horses wouldn't calm down. It was Grandpa Tip's.

And Aunt Ruth buried one of them and made a flower bed so that she had different flowers in each spoke of the wagon. And I just about had a fit because she buried that wagon wheel. I just said, No, somebody else is going to have that wagon wheel. But Mom gave that to Uncle Robert.

Jane: I don't know if you remember it, but you gave me a leg off of somebody 's table and I had it made into a flower stand and I've still got it to this day.

That was a leg off of Ernie's aunt 's table. Just a.... I wish I had a leg off of... he had an old piano down there that they just left in the house when they sold that house. Oh, I wish I had the works of that piano, because boy that was pretty. We used to have stands for flowers around our house.

Jane: I remember a lot of the furniture. Now where did the cherry cabinet come from that we have.

Great minds run in the same channel. I was thinking about that. That cherry cabinet was Grandma McConchie 's and it used to be in the dining room until they painted it gray and put it out in they called it the summer kitchen. And Pop Otey went up there one day and he took his knife and found out it was cherry and he said get that cabinet Thelma and so I told Mom that 'they wouldn't give

anything to a grandchild of Grandma's' and I told Mom that I wanted that cabinet. And she got it. And Eulala took it down to James Banks and he could refinished furniture and he took all that old gray paint off and finished it. And I think i 's a beautiful cabinet. Janie's got it now.

Jan: So after it was refinished, you had it?

Oh, I had it for years and I had the top of it full of mother's Fostoria and the bottom of it full of mother's fostoria. And it was pretty when it was just inside the dining room and when I was going to move out of there I told Bill to come and get it and I wanted Janie to have it. I said I can't give it to her, but you can. Because I had a lot of nieces and nephews and I couldn't give to one and just kept after him until he took it up there to Wheaton to you guys. But I just kept hounding him because I thought that's got to get. I didn't it want it left down there. I 'm glad I didn't.

It's a big piece. You 'd have to have the house to put it in. When we had an antique dealer come and appraise it, I can't...you know when something means something to you you can't remember how much the appraisal was.... But she said now what isn't right on this is that bottom doors used to be solid wood and you said that they used to be, but because of the Fostoria you wanted to show it off.

No, I think Grandma put those glass doors in there. But Grandma had pretty dishes but every so often she had all those kids and each one of them would buy her a plate or cup and saucer and she had pretty dishes. Aunt Ruth got most of those things. Cause she moved in there after...

Oh, I might tell something else there, when Grandma died Mother and I went up there and I had quite a lot of experience in settling estates because I worked in the insurance office and I went up there to help them get that estate settled. Uncle Foster would not sign the papers and Mom said let's go down there this afternoon and you talk him into signing those papers. And I said, OK, and we went down there and he was out plowing, working in the farm

thing, and I went up there and walked up and down the rows talking to him. And he finally said, I won't sign them unless I get the davenport.

And I said, I tell you what Uncle Foster, as far as I 'm concerned you can have that davenport and I hope a spring breaks in it and sticks you or Aunt Delsie right in the rear. Well, I thought I've done it now and popped off and he won't sign the papers and he signed the papers and they got the davenport and Marcella told me, that's Aunt Delsie 's daughter, that Aunt Delsie sat down on that davenport shortly after they got it and a spring broke, stuck her in the rear. It was one of those things. And I said I'm glad and Marcella said I got a big kick out of it. That was her mother! She was a rough customer, but boy if you saw her out anyplace you wouldn't know it.

Jane: Every inch a lady?

Oh she was just as dignified as anybody could ever be.

Jane: remember now the story that Dad liked to tell about Grandpa Tip was you 're peeling the potato peelings and they weren't good enough for him. You know he 'd say who's going to peel those peelings? When anybody was peeling potatoes he'd look to see how much potato was left on those peelings.

Jan: Did he ever peel them himself?

Oh, why, no. He wouldn't have,,,,

Jane: But he was a skinny little guy.

Oh, Grandpa was little, yeah...

Jan: But you said that your grandmother was a....

She was big.

Jane: She would have made two of him any day.

Yeah, she was big. She was German and she carried herself with, I thought, dignity. But everybody said you didn't tease Grandma, but I would tease... One time when I was separated from Pete Schwartz, I went up there and lived for a while. Made them vegetable soup and lived up there with them. Just for a few days. And Grandma and I had been, had always been awful close. Grandpa, course I loved him dearly, I liked to go anyplace with him. But I never did know my Grandpa Lowther. I was just a baby when he died. But mother used to say that she 'd put me in the high chair he 'd have some kind of spells toward the last there and he 'd push over anything that he could push over and she 'd put me in my high chair but she'd always watch to see that he didn't shove me over. Grandpa Lowther was a dignified man and he was... I think my Dad was a lot like Grandpa Lowther. I don't know what mother was like because mother wasn't big.

Jane: No she was like Tip

Jan: Slight?

Oh, yes, but you know she cooked a meal for us every day for us at noon ever day when we 'd come home at noon and then we 'd go out or have something at night but she would eat a bowl of breakfast food, but that 's the way she kept her...

Jane: Oh, her corn bread and milk

Jan: For supper?

Yes, for supper. That was her supper

Jane: And she wouldn't eat chicken because she scalded so many chickens when she was working in the hotel because I asked her once

I worked next door, I worked in the Woodworth Hotel building when it was there and Mrs. Dougherty, the manager of the Woodworth Hotel was a good friend of mine and Mother called or she called mother to get the address of somebody, she needed somebody to work, and Mother, Dad has just died, said How about me? Can I come up and work there? Mrs. Dougherty said I'd be glad to have you Laura. Glad to have you. And she went up there and worked and when they were dressing chickens. They didn't clean them like we clean a chicken and she never did eat chicken again.

Jane: She didn't tell be exactly why but it must have been just awful.

It was there at the Woodworth Hotel and they put her to washing dishes and I just raised hell. I said she cannot become a dishwasher, so she put her upstairs making up beds and I didn't like that in fact I didn't want her working, but she worked for a while up there. But Mrs. Dougherty never did turn it into Social Security which was wrong and when Mom applied for some Social Security Mom found out that there never had been anything paid for her. But she had worked quite a while at the hotel.

Jane: I don't know where or when but I was just dumbfounded that she wouldn't eat chicken because she was not a picky eater. She just told the story very simply. And I 'm thinking it must have been really awful because she was not going to tell me why.

That was what it was; it was when she worked at the hotel. She didn't work there too long, but she worked there long enough. But as I said when we first started off, she always wanted to make some money someplace. She didn't want to be dependent on anybody and I can understand it.

I think you better shut it off for a while, don't you?

Jan: OK we 're ready to tell stories again with Aunt Thelma and it's November 25, 2005. And we 're sitting in Aunt Thelma 's breakfast area in her apartment. Jane has the list of stories, I guess, what 's

the first one on the list.

Jane: When the home brew exploded and how Uncle Buss used to water down the wine.

Dad made home brew and he made wine and home brew. My Sunday School teacher came to see me one day and Dad's beer was exploding in the basement and he didn't get it capped right or mixed right and it was exploding in the basement and my Sunday School teacher was sitting up in the front room and it was right under the front room and I guess the basement door was open, too, and she said 'Sniff, sniff. Hot rolls?' And I said my mother makes the best hot rolls you ever saw. And Mom appeared in the door and she let me know that she heard me and when that Sunday School teacher left she really got on me because I popped off about her making hot rolls, I just said she made good hot rolls And she said I lied about it. And I said, What did you want me to say, ~Dad's home brew is blowing up in the basement? '

She didn't like me lying about it, and finally she said I guess you would have to say that. And Buss used to go down in the basement and they had windows down there and he'd unlock a window and would get a bottle of Dad's wine, but he 'd fill it back up with water so that Dad wouldn't know he was taking it and he'd take that wine out on a date or where ever he was going. He'd have a bottle of wine with him and then he'd try to or he did slip back in that basement window and they didn't know he was even out because we had a bed in the basement and they thought he was sleeping down there.

Mom decided something was wrong and she went down and locked the window so he couldn't climb back in and he had to come in the front door and come right by her bedroom so they found out and Dad knew something was happening to his wine because Buss had watered it down so much that he could tell it wasn't right. So Buss got into trouble over stealing the wine and we could always get into trouble. But that stopped. Dad told him he could not take the wine out.

Jan: Was this in Robinson?

In Robinson on North Jefferson Street. The basement had those basement windows and I don't know why Buss decided. See, Mother didn't know why he wanted to sleep in the basement but he did and it was so he could sneak in and sneak out.

Jan: So your Dad was making both beer and wine?

Oh, yes. And when he'd make the wine, he'd go to a doctor 's office, it wasn't the main Dr. Allen, but it was Dr. Allen 's brother that would sell him alcohol and he 'd get that wine just to where he wanted it and then he'd put alcohol in it, why it'd knock your hat off.

One time I had Sunday School class there and I gave them some wine and, land, they got out there and rolled down the hill in front of the house. But he knew just exactly when that wine was at the right stage and he'd put the alcohol in it and that would stop it from working any longer.

Jan: So, was this grape wine? Or did he make fruit wine?

Oh, dandelion wine and grape wine and elderberry wine. He'd go out in the country and get the elderberries. And he took,



Cousins Janice Eglin (left) and Jane Lowther with their rabbit fur coats, hats, and muffs

when Paul had a filling station, he took a bottle of wine up there when Paul was. Well that was a long time before I ever knew Paul and he took a bottle of wine up there and Paul thought Mom wouldn't let him drink that wine at home but he just wanted to have somebody to have a drink with. Paul would have drink of wine with him, and Paul would keep that wine in his safe when he had a a little Texaco station up there on North Cross street.

And after Paul got to know Mother, he said, Why did your Dad do that? And I said, Well, Mom helped him make the wine. But Paul thought that Mom wouldn't let him drink it. That was Paul 's story about Mom and Dad before we were ever married.

Jan: So how about making beer. How did he go about making that?

Oh, he had home brew....

Jan: Was this during prohibition?

Oh, yeah. Part of the time was during prohibition, but part of the time it wasn't. I mean he always had home brew. He had a bottle capper and he'd cap the bottles. He had regular beer bottles and he 'd cap them. I'd helped him do that.

Jan: Was it good beer?

Oh, yes. I think that home brew was a little stronger than the beer that we get now. But one time Bonnie and Dean were there and Dean was so particular about everything, about his two boys and I gave Jack a drink of beer and Dean grabbed him up and they went home. It made him so mad because his son had had a drink of beer. That's not unusual because Jack will drink beer anytime he wants to now. Dad was always very generous with his wine. Whenever we had company, we had home brew and I think some of them came just to get a drink of good home brew. I thinks that's enough about that deal, don't you?

Jan: I think so.

Jane: The story that I just learned about was about the rabbit coats. But even the fact that Granddad raised rabbits and everything and I think that you had a couple of stories about that, especially when we were little and they killed a favorite rabbit of yours.

That was a mixed breed rabbit and Dad traded rabbits with another man there in town so that they would get different breeds and this was a mixed breed rabbit and nobody wanted it. And we went to a May Day festival and when I came home from that festival he had rabbit cooked and he had killed that rabbit and I thought that it was the prettiest rabbit because it was a light tan and white and I don't know how I guess he just got it in the wrong cages sometime when he was putting them up. I wouldn't touch that rabbit. None of them would touch that rabbit. Dad said that 's good home tamed rabbit. You're going to eat it for your supper. We just didn't eat.

And the white fur coats. Dad raised white rabbits and Janie and Jan had white fur coats and they had muffs and they had hats. Oh, they just strutted around. They even wore them in the house they was so proud of them. Dad had those coats made for them. And I can't remember the woman 's name that made them but it was a friend of Ionia 's and she made those fur coats. That 's the story of the....

Jan: Did your Dad raise any other animals, keep any other animals besides the rabbits?

No. Bill had a dog but cats were not allowed. That was the only rabbits, only animals he raised. And their pens were behind our garage was an old chicken house and their pens were. He made pens and they were in the old chicken house.

Jan: When you lived up at Oliver did you have any livestock?

No, Dad worked away from home a lot of the time when we lived at

Oliver and a lot of times he was only there on weekends. And I remember, some of you might remember when they told the world was going to come to an end at midnight and my Dad was coming home on the midnight train and of course I was always crazy about Dad and he was coming home on the midnight train and when it didn't get in at midnight I absolutely threw a fit because he wasn't going to be home when the world came to an end. Or course, I was pretty good at throwing those fits.

Jane: Didn't Uncle Buss make a comment about when you were born?

Oh, yes, when I was born, they brought Buss in to see me and Mom said, Oh, look what we've got. What will we do with her? And he said, Feed her to the old sow.

Jane: You must have raised pigs.

Oh, Mom always talked about slopping pigs and putting Eulala through business college. She'd always talk about slopping the pigs.

Jan: Well that was before you moved into Oliver?

Yes, that was when we lived on the Joe Drake place. That was where I was born out there in the country.

Jan: Was that when the gypsies came...

No, the gypsies came before that. Buss was little there, and just before you get to Edgar County going north they lived in Clark County and the house was on one side of the road and the barn and where the cows were was on the other side of the road. Mother had been over milking the cows and a bunch of gypsies came along, we had a lot of gypsies in Oliver all the time and some gypsies come along and Mom, they said they'd take that milk, they wanted that milk. They would steal anything that they could steal, if they could

pick up anything around they'd steal it. They told Mom they wanted that milk, and Mom said I've got kids in the house that need that milk, and you go on your way. And they did. I don't know, she was braver than I've ever been.

Jan: So, talking about gypsies now is now something that most of us are familiar with, how did they live and....

They came in in like a van and most of them were pulled by horses and more like a covered wagon and Mom scared me to death with them, told me that they'd steal me and anytime that I saw them come into town I needed to get home and that was a common story but I never heard about them stealing anybody but they just were wanderers. They'd steal anything they could pick up but Mom just scared me to pieces about them was I was afraid when they 'd come through town and I don't know, we don't have anything like that now but we used to have a lot of them. Now would have been when I was in first and second grade of school. So that was about 1920, 21 I expect.

Jan: So did your Mom use that as a threat against you?

Oh that was a threat. She was going to give me to the gypsies once when I was popping off. She said when the gypsies come in I'll just give you to them. And I couldn't image anything worse that riding around in that covered wagon and a bunch of people.

Jan: So you behaved all the time after that?

Oh, I'm afraid not. I don't know why they didn't kill me and get it over with back then. I was always into something. There was a house there in Oliver that they had boys there and they were probably the same age as Buss and they had a bad reputation and that house was off limits for Thelma and one day I decided I was going over there to see that house and I went over there and stayed all day and I didn't know that Mrs. Highbarber had called mother



Big Four
Depot in
Robinson

and told her where I was. She said should I send her home, and Mother said no, you know she's there, you take care of her. And I knew Eulala was coming in on the 5 o'clock train and I always wanted to be home when Eulala was coming in but that night I was afraid to go home because I was not supposed to be over there. But Mom knew where I was all the time so she didn't, she wasn't, she said well did you have a nice visit? And I said, yes, I liked that place over there, and she said, just don't go back again. Cause I was just a little kid.

Jan: You didn't go back?

No. No. I never did go back. She said those boys over there are not right for you to play with. So I didn't go back. And one of them later was sent to prison. One of those boys.

Jan: And your Dad used to put you on the train?

When Eulala was working in Robinson, I always wanted to go see her and Dad would put me on the train and the train didn't stop long in Oliver, just stopped long enough to let anybody off and on, and they had to flag it down to get it to stop because sometimes there wasn't anybody to get on or get off. And Dad would tell that conductor, now you watch her, take care of her, her sister is going to meet the train, and you be sure she gets off in Robinson. Don't let

her go on any place else. I was just a little kid, and Eulala took me up to her office. He kept the train longer there than it should have stopped. He really wanted to be sure I was going to be all right.

Eulala worked at an office, Mahutska Oil Company office, and there was a table in the corner of her room and I had color books and I went to work with her and one of the men that come in the office all the time usually brought me candy while I was up there and I would sit there and look out the window. I was always short. I would say, Here comes George and I 'll get some candy. I don't know how Eulala worked and kept me around.

For breakfast I went in this restaurant, Eulala wasn't making that much money then, but it was something, and I went in and ordered a rack of bacon. That 's a lot of bacon. She said, You don't want that much. And I said, But I do. And I ate every slice of that bacon. Now it was fried. Now Mom didn't fry bacon like that. We didn't have it sliced thin like that was. That was good bacon. I don't know how Eulala put up with me

Jane: There 's a story about Eulala and the red hots....

When Eulala was just a little girl Mother had a restaurant, a store and the men would come from the railroad and eat. Mother wanted to do a washing and she said I 'm going to be just outside here and anytime anyone comes in you be sure that you come and get me. Well, somebody come in and out, and then then next come in and went out. Eulala didn't go get her. Mother went in there and they used to call them hay stacks, chocolate candy. Hay stacks is white center and chocolate on the outside. (Jane: They were telling me that they were called chocolate drops and, no, they're called hay stacks.) Chocolate drops. (Jan: The authority has spoken). And Mom went in there and Eulala had the box of hay stacks down under the counter and had red hots and she was sticking a red hot in each of those haystacks. Course that meant Mom couldn't see them. She was decorating the hay stacks. She was just a little girl then. Mom was running the restaurant. Ionia wasn't even here then.

Jane: That meant you heard it a long time....

Yes, a long time ago. that was one Mom 's favorite stories about Mom sticking red hots in the hay stacks.

Jane: When you moved into Robinson, Granny and Granddad and you kids would go out and visit Grandma and Granddad Tip.

Mother went to see Grandma and Grandpa every Sunday. If the roads were bad, the lane back if any of you have been up there their home is off the road and that road got so bad you couldn't drive there and Dad would park. There's place off the highway you could pull off and park, and Dad would pull off and park there. Then we had to walk. Kate was here and Mom carried Kathryn, Dad carried Bill, and poor little old me had to walk all the way. And I guess you 'd say I bitched all the way to Grandma 's. All the time. And Buss was at home but he never did have to go, but I 'd have to go because Mom wouldn't leave me. I don't know why, but she never would.

Jane: And what did you say to them?

Well, who 's going to carry me? I just thought somebody ought to be carrying me. Sometimes we would have big snows and sometimes that snow would just be piled up out there and I didn't like to walk through it. Mother would always take a beef roast and a loaf of bread up there and when we 'd get there Grandma would like the beef roast and when we got there the beef roast would go on and we 'd eat when the beef roast got done. I had pork Grandma and Granddad butchered and they had pork but they didn't ever have beef so Mom saw that her Mother had beef.

Jan: So did you spend the whole day up there?

Usually around 4 o 'clock Dad would say we had to get home. I don't know how Grandmother McConchie put up with us. There

was Wendell and Alberta that was over there on the corner. Uncle Des lived on one corner of that acreage and Grandma and Grandpa lived on the other. Carlisle and Robert always came over. Now Grandma made them work. She had one of these washing machines that you pulled the handle on and Grandma made them work. But she didn't ever make me work. Or she didn't ever make Buss work. And Wendell told the story about his wagon and what a time they used to have. Carlisle and Robert would put me and Wendell would put me in the wagon because then they could see my panties. And he told that story to the women that was taking care of him when he had his last illness and I guess he told it more than once. When I went to his visitation, his daughter came over and said that maybe I shouldn't tell you that but I want you to know that my Dad sure did enjoy seeing your panties. Isn't that something.

Jane: There 's another story about when Granddad brought the extra gang members to Oliver

There was some of them...they didn't have a cook shack with the bunch of men, they was just straightening up the track. Dad didn't have to use instruments to lay the track so he was always the boss. He could just do it by his eye instead of having everything that they needed later to lay it. My job was to they were laying ties and there was creosote on their hands. Mom cooked for them and we had two wash pans out there for them and my job was to keep those wash pans cleaned. I never cleaned so many wash pans in my life as we did that day. That creosote 's hard to get off.

Jane: What did she cook for them?

Oh, she 'd have beef and noodles and potatoes and anything that was in the garden and she always baked things for them. And they liked to come there to eat. But some of them used to come when she had the restaurant because she had a little restaurant in back of the grocery store. Mother always has worked. She always had some income. Even though she didn't work away from home. She always had income.

Jan: How long did you live in Oliver?

We lived in Oliver....well, I went to first grade there and when we moved to Robinson I had just started in the fifth grade so we must have lived there four years.

Jan: Did you start school in Robinson before you went up there?

Yes. Buss got to go to school, I wasn't old enough to go. Mother was pregnant with Bill and she just couldn't be bothered. She dressed me and let me go to school. And she thought they'd send me home and they didn't. I was only five years old. They didn't send me home, and then we moved to Oliver. That's the first time we lived in Robinson. We moved to Oliver and Mother thought we'll just let her go to school up here and they'll send her home. I took a test, and they didn't send me home. So I started when I was five years old. My Dad ran for the school board and if the teacher tried to correct me, I'd say, I'll tell my Dad and he's on the school board. Well, Dad found out about it, and he said, Don't you ever tell any teacher that I'm on the school board. Because if you do, you'll get paid for it. Next time I got in trouble in school, I said, Do you know who my Dad is? I didn't tell them he was on the school board, I just said, Do you know who my Dad is? Oh, I was the devil.

Jan: Was that a one room school?

No, it was two rooms. The first to the fourth was in one room and the first through the eighth was in the other room. Well, see Buss got to be in the that was the big room the fifth to the eighth ... and I thought I was going to get to go to the fifth grade in the big room and they moved to Robinson and I never did get to go up to that big room. I was a good school, and they had good teachers. I can still remember Mrs. Kline that taught and she was going to take me home with her. She drove a buggy with a horse, and I raised cane, I wanted to go home and spend the weekend with her and she was going to take me. And when it came time to go, I didn't want to

go, and I wouldn't go. She was a good teacher. I think she liked me, but I don't know why? I was so mean.

Jane: And then things started to change when Granddad got a car. And one of the things you liked to do was go to a derailment.

Oh, a derailment on the railroad. As I said Dad could lay track and anytime there was anything wrong. Back then they all....even after we were in Robinson he was called out every time there was a wreck. Mother would always fix a nice picnic lunch and take it up, we would go to wherever Dad was working. And we didn't feed everybody but we kids got to go up there and be with Dad. He was just a master of that laying that track and I don't think I've told Jan and Janie but when they were laying the track into the CIPS plant at Hutsonville was when my Dad had his stroke. And they sent engineers in and the engineers had instruments to lay that track and Dad couldn't stand it because he still had good eyes and he wanted to lay that track out himself and he had a stroke out on the railroad. He went back to work the next morning. And mother sent Eulala out after him, she said he's not able to be out there. And she sent her out there, and Dad was always glad that she came out because he could not get along with those engineers or surveyors or whatever they were that laid that track. They weren't laying that track right. But he was still boss. But they took his authority away from him and that did kill him eventually.

Jan: What was the first car you remember having?

Well, the first car and I had pictures made of it and I've got them someplace. The first car we had was a Ford, and we had our pictures taken in it. And Ionia's sitting at the steering wheel and she's all reared back and Buss is sitting in the front seat with her, and Mother and Eulala are sitting in the back seat. Dad's standing at the side of the car. It didn't have any top on it. I'm there just barely looking over the door in the back seat. I'm standing up, but I'm just barely tall enough to see over the door. And that car must have been 1916 or 17 model car. [Jan: A Model T?] Model T with no top. I

don't ever remember a top being on that car. And Ionia drove that car or a car up to Paris to business college. Eulala went to business college in Terre Haute at the same time Uncle Robert went.

Jane: Did Granny ever drive?

She learned how to drive and she ran into the garage. She never drove again. Now when I learned how to drive, I got me some contact lenses, I hit a tree on Main Street that was out there at the side of the house. I hit that tree and finally Paul said you 're either going to have to give up the contacts or we 're going to have to cut that tree down because you're knocking chunks out of the bark. But I had just gave up the contacts.

Jan: So Granny hit the garage and never drove again.

Never drove again. I don't know what Dad said to her, but he must have said something. Because she never drove again.

Jane: We've got to have at least one Grandpa Tip story and I like the one about him being the last of the war veterans.

He was the oldest civil war veteran in a parade up there. It was some DARs that come and picked him up and they put him in the back seat of a car and he was really strutting his stuff, I guess. Grandpa was a dresser. He liked nice suits and he liked to dress up. The parade slowed up right in front of a saloon and that was a bad deal. He jumped out of that car and they didn't know it, because they were watching the traffic in the parade. He jumped out of that car, went in the saloon, and drank his beer. And they couldn't find him. There that car was empty going down the street, and it had a sign on it 'Oldest Civil War Veteran' but Granddad wasn't there. Alberta was up there, she was supposed to pick him up. She said she knew she 'd just have to make every saloon until she found him.

We used to take him to Paris, and he was supposed to be at one saloon but he was never there. I don't know if they shut him off

and he went to another saloon, but he was never where he was supposed to be.

Jane: Granny said, what was it, if his mother would have let him have a beer...

Mom said to her mother, Sarah, she said if you would let him keep beer at home and let him bring it in the house there would be no problems. He wouldn't want to be going to town to get beer. But g\Grandma never would do it, now she had whiskey there for medicine but she wouldn't let him have his beer.

Oh yeah, and when he was 92 years old he was bed fast and I took a 92 ale when they used to have an old time 92 ale and I took it up there and I poured it down him from a cream pitcher and grandmother just had a fit. She didn't like that beer in her house. Now that 's one you didn't know. But he was 92 years old and so sick.

Jan: Was your grandmother...What was she like? Was she a quiet, petite little woman?

Oh, my grandmother was a big woman and she was a German and she let you know she was boss of everything and when she was married her Dad gave her land and she never let Grandpa forget it. That was her land they were living on. No she bossed Granddad around, but he didn't pay any attention to it, he'd just go off and leave her alone.

Jan: So they were farmers, then....

Farmers, yes

Jan: Farmed all his life?

Yeah, she said he never worked, but he did. He kept... Women came out from town one day and they were wanting to get some eggs and they said is there a rooster that runs with these hens, and Granddad put his arms in his armpits and said yes I am. A big old

buck sheep, that was what caused him to get sick. It butted him down and broke his shoulder. He was out there running with those sheep, he was 90 years old then, and that butt got him down. He was a great guy.

Jan: So they lived in that house for a long time?

They lived back on in an old house up on a hill, and I've heard Mom say that the day they got married they moved into the new house. She always told about, they had a fireplace, and when the kids would get up, Granddad would get some coals out on the hearth so they 'd had to step on them. He was kind of mean; not mean, but he teased them.

Jane: That first house they lived in, wasn't that a log house?

A log house and they moved into the house that 's there now, the day that Mom and Dad were married.

Jane: Wasn't there a problem after your grandparents died?

When Grandpa Tip died, Sarah stayed in the house until her death a year later. The family started to divide up the estate.

My uncle, Uncle Foster said Pap told me that he would build me a barn. My barn burned and Pap told me he would build me a barn and he never did do it. And mother said no he 's just had an idea that he would build you a barn and he didn't do it.

Well, he said, I want that davenport out of the house. I have to have that davenport. Mom said, No, everything is going to be left in this house just like it is, because I want to be able to come home. I had been working in an insurance office and had quite a bit of dealings with estates.

So Mom said, we've got to get this davenport settled and I want you to go with me to get this paper signed. Because we've got to get this estate settled. And I went out there. Uncle Foster was out plowing and he wouldn't come it, and I went out there and walked

with him up and down the rows, trying to get him to sign that paper, and he said I'll sign it when I get the davenport. You could not convince him that he couldn't take that davenport, so when they took the davenport out of that house, I said I hope a spring breaks in that davenport and sticks you right in the rear. And Marcella, that 's his daughter, told me later that Aunt Delsie sat down on that davenport just shortly after they got it and a spring broke and stuck her in the rear. I was just tickled to death.

Jane: So Uncle Buster was going to take the davenport out of the house and it didn't matter that Sarah didn't have anything to sit on?

No, that was after Grandma died. Aunt Ruth was going to be there. And Mom stuck up for Aunt Ruth all the time. When she settled the estate Mom signed her part of the estate over to Aunt Ruth and she could pay it back to her in payments so she 'd have enough money to make a down payment on that house so she and Uncle Charley could live there. Dad slipped around and told Aunt Ruth not to pay it back but Aunt Ruth did. She paid every cent of it. So Mom got her part of the money that was left.

Jan: So how much longer did they live in the house?

They lived there, Aunt Ruth lived there until they took her to the nursing home and Carlisle and Charlotte did just like mother used to do. They went every Sunday. They lived and worked in Terre Haute and they went every Sunday to see that Aunt Ruth had groceries and every thing in. Carlisle 's brother had died and he had willed his part of Aunt Ruth's estate to his family and they made Carlisle buy it back from his family. It was quite a mess. But it stayed in the McConchie's for about 10 years after Grandma died. And then Carlisle kept it but he eventually sold it.

Jane: Well, I think that's all I have notes on. Is there anything else you remember?

No, I think I've blabbed enough.

Crawford County Illinois

