

CHAPTER SIX

We had a big wedding on July 29, 1931. Where there is a will, there is a way. I had Messie for Maid of Honor, and brides maids were Marguerite Teinert and Audrey Sterling Trotter. Otto Ludeke was Best Man, one of the jewelers who watched at the Star Engraving Company's romance of two young people. My brother A.G. and cousin Walter Teinert were groomsmen, also Tony Puccio, all worked at Star Engraving company. Inez Krenek Brandon was my youngest brides maid. Eunice Haynie was flower girl and George Lawson Jr. was ring bearer. His father was also a jeweler.

My brother Roy was going to sing "I Love You Truly", but the night before the wedding he lost his voice. I phoned Ruth Fuchs, who was gifted in singing, and could play on the piano any piece of music she heard.

The reception was in my parents home. Ruth played the piano, and nearly everyone danced. Fortunately we had an extra large dining room.

There was no money for a honeymoon. Walter went to work the next day, but I took off from my job. We immediately moved into our apartment in the Gould's home. We could not have found nicer people then they and their son Billy.

Mr. Gould was a private detective. He had to attend all the wrestling matches, and occasionally he invited Walter to go with him. Besides his work as a detective, Mr. Gould had a shop in his back yard where he could work on radios. He would buy a new cabinet radio each year. Therefore for thirty-five dollars we bought a beautiful cabinet radio from him. It was a year old. Besides radios, he told Walter all about a new invention that was being worked on. Mr. Gould was spending time too on this astonishing devise. It was called television quite a number of years later.

My brother Roy was alarmed when he was told Walter and I were getting married at an earlier date then first planned. He said, "Elsie can't get married, she does not know how to cook, and Walter likes to eat."

I did know a little bit about cooking as I fried some steak, but when I wanted to prepare some gravy, I did not know what to do. I stood by the stove and stared at the frying pan hoping an inspiration would come. Otto noticed me just standing looking at the frying pan. He asked me if something was wrong. So I told him that I would like to make some gravy, but I just did not know what to do. Otto prepared the rest of the supper. During this time your father was in the bath-room shaving as we planned to go to the movies after the meal.

After this Bessie and Otto both came to supper each Friday. We specialized in foreign dishes. Fortunately Bessie and Otto were good cooks. Each Friday we prepared a foreign dish. Otto mentioned Ravioli was a good Italian dish. Otto wrote is mother in San Antonio to send her Ravioli recipe. There was chop suey one evening, chili another time etc.

We only lived with the Gould's six months. Since we were renting a furnished apartment, we realized we could pay monthly on a nice bed-room set, pay Jane and Mack our share of the rent and have a few dollars more then we had been spending on rent.

Jane and Mack had rented a large old house, but as most people did during the depression, they were willing to let us share the house with them. Their young son Kenneth, who was over a year and half, was a delight to us. Nearly every evening he came into our room. The best thing we had in our room was the large radio set we had. Kenneth would roll the button so that one station after the other came on.

Life was pleasant with Jane and Mack.. We must have stayed with them over a year. Aunt Emma, who was Jane's mother, and Uncle Carl lived across the street from us. Aunt Emma often baked the best cookies which she sent over to us.

There was one thing wrong with our living in this house, I began to see mice. If we stayed out late, Walter would have to go and check the house before I would come in. I could not sleep in that house, so we left our furniture, the bed-room, and moved in with my parents.

Walter sold his insurance policy so we had enough money to pay cash for a lot in Lindale Addition. The man we bought the lot from owned a lumber company, so for ten dollars a month we paid for enough lumber to build a small house. It consisted of a nice size bed-room and living room which was our large room. We had a bath-room without fixtures, a kitchen and eating area. The eating area had a built in table that Mr. Reglein, Bessie's father, built. One could lift the table and be hooked against the wall. It gave us more walking space. On each side of the walls were built in benches with lids that could be lifted so food could be stored or clothes. Mr. Reglein and Walter built this home during their spare time.



Walter Erick Penk

We loved that house. It was ours. Candles were used for light. We bought a second hand oil stove for cooking for twelve dollars which we paid one dollar weekly. Within two months we had enough money to have electricity. We had been hauling water from a faucet about fifty or more feet from the house. Floyd and Walter put in the pipes for water by the time we lived eight months in the house. Walter asked Otis Haynie if he would paper our bed-room; he

wanted to surprise me. Otis did a beautiful job. He charged fifty cents for labor, which gave him enough money to buy a roast for Sunday dinner.

The economy was very bad in 1933. We knew we were to have a baby in August, and that my pay checks would not be coming in when I would quite. I did piece work, and since I worked very fast I made more money then most women.

We made plans on how we would manage when we knew the Star would close the whole month of June, about the time I would quit working. So we decided to once a week buy our groceries, but whatever canned goods we would have left, we would put under the seats of the benches. Then buy again as if we needed it. We also saved some money, and paid the ten dollars a month we owed Mr. Reid through June.

By April we had enough money to pay the hospital bill when the baby gets here. We never had a baby before so we did not know how to go about our responsibilities. We gave Dr. Collette the hospital money and told him to pay the hospital when the baby came.

We were prepared for the June lay off. My mother became very ill and had to be hospitalized. Roy and I went to the admittance office where we were told how much to pay for entrance. Roy did not have the money, neither did my parents. Roy looked at me. I opened my purse and gave all of our money to the lady.

Now all of our canned goods were taken to my parents home, and we shared our groceries with their milk, bread and meat money. When Uncle Charlie learned of my mothers illness he sent a chicken coop full of alive hens. There were no deep freezers then.

My mother was very ill. Since Walter was not working in June, he always went in with my mother for treatments. He fed her in the hospital, and when she felt she could not eat another piece of liver, he would say "If you eat one more piece, then I will eat a piece."

Now I have written about tragedies in our lives, but that does not mean we were without laughter. Laughter does not cost money, friends can be found whether rich or poor. Walter and I had our share of LOVE, LAUGHTER AND FRIENDS, the three greatest ingredients to a good life.

Throughout the years we played auction bridge and forty-two with the Lawsons, On many Saturdays nights we had two tables for forty-two. The players were the Driennbiers, Alfred Bremser, Alma Teinert, Minnie, Gussie, Walther and I. Minnie and Paula were at times hilarious. We also made trips to Galveston or to the bay or San Jacinto Battleground.

Our son, Walter Erick Penk Jr. Was born August 22, 1933. There were complications and another doctor was called in to help Dr. Collette.

Our baby was a healthy baby boy. My intentions were to keep it that way. My guide in taking care of a baby was the book Dr. Spock had written. A young baby was to be fed at 6am, 9am, 12 noon, 3pm, 6pm, 10pm and at 2am. The baby cooperated all of the hours except at 2am. He ignored Dr. Spock completely by refusing to wake up. I cried because I was afraid something terrible might happen if he were neglected. Finally Walter called Dr. Collette for advise. He said "My God that baby has more sense then you have. Most people would be happy if there baby slept all night, but you try to wake yours up."

The months passed, it was almost Christmas time. We visited my parents often as my mother really did not recover very well from her hospital stay in June. When we would go home after supper, mother usually carried the baby to the car and saying "Sonny doesn't want to go home." The baby knew her. In her home she always sang, "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf". This made the baby laugh.

On the twenty-first of December, Walter Jr. and I spent the day with my parents. My mother was not feeling well, but as usual she carried the baby to our car. About 10:15pm my mother was very ill, she cried, "My God help me," then went into a coma.. Dr. Wright was called and I asked him if my mother would get well and he answered "You do not want your mother to get well because she would never know you."

My mother died December 23, 1933. She had a stroke one day before our son was four months old. Mother was buried on Christmas day at Trinity Lutheran Church.

In those days the casket was placed at home until time to go to church. We had the casket placed in the living room. I showed the baby his grandmother for the last time.

A month later I tore most of the ligaments in my back. The doctor said that I must lay flat on my back for at least three weeks, or I may never walk again. We stayed at my fathers house. Hazel took care of the baby and me.

When we finally were allowed to go home again, I still was not allowed to pick up my baby. He was raised on the floor. He slept on the floor, he ate with me having him on my lap as I sat on the floor. I even bathed him on the floor by carrying a glass full of water until there was enough water to bathe the baby in his tub.

I was always happy on Wednesday as Walter's mother would spend the day. She washed our clothes and bathed the baby.

In July she stayed about three weeks with us, she was very depressed. John was her third husband, an American; they really did not understand each other. She told me "I am not like you are. If you want something, but can't have it, you accept it. If I want something and can't have it then it is not worth living."

The next day on August 12, 1934 she took poison. Walter and Roy rushed her to the hospital to have her stomach pumped. She was then taken to my father's house. She died soon after Pastor Behnken rushed into the house. She is buried next to my parents.

In September 1934 we sold the little house we loved so dearly. It was too hard for my father to live with just my brothers. He was sick very often and was partially paralyzed.

In August 1936 we moved on one of the lots that Walter's mother left us. My father and my brother Roy lived with us. I did not like Kinsington, but it was better for Walter and me to take over all responsibilities. It was easier done in our own home.

I was not well at this time. I was on the verge of TB [tuberculosis]. This disturbed me and the doctor's recommended several months in the country. I stayed with our son three weeks with Aunt Elsie and Uncle Henry. I was home sick and Walther came after me. We then hired a black woman for half day, five days a week.

Adrienne was born January 17, 1937. The doctor feared pneumonia if he would give an anesthetic, and I did not want to be asleep again. So Walter was with me giving me comfort by holding my hand. Adrienne Sydelle was born. It was on a Sunday morning. That afternoon my father, Walter and Dorothy came to see me.



A.G. and Thelma Teinert

Adrienne was born January 17, 1937. Since I was on the verge of pneumonia when she was born, I had to wear a mask each time I saw the baby. We brought her home within three days, but she became ill. Several times throughout the night I would have to move her arms up and down to get her to breathe. There were times I had to make a tent from a sheet and put it over an oil stove which had a can of benzene. This helped her to breathe easier. I had to sit with her for hours, and when I did have to leave, someone needed to take my place. Fortunately my father lived with us.

By the time Adrienne was three months old, I took her to a specialist, I asked him "Just what is wrong with my baby". He said "Just about everything there is."

Adrienne had several severe illnesses until she was three years old. She did become healthy. By the time she was thirteen, a friend asked me if I did not think that Adrienne was too young to use so much rouge. I asked her to see if she could take it off. She rubbed and found Adrienne had very naturally rosy cheeks as her father had when I met him.

Jeannine was born November 26, 1943. This was during Word War II. Walter and I left for the hospital about eleven PM on Thanksgiving day. Our baby was born a few hours later at 2:02AM. No one could have been more excited and happy as we were.

Walter had been working until mid-night five nights a week, until 9pm Saturday and 5pm Sunday. The jewelry business was good. Soldiers were buying sweethearts and mothers all kinds of jewelry. Walter had been home all day on Thanksgiving, he was rested. Now we had the most beautiful baby girl in the world.

I think I stayed six days in the hospital and Walter came after mid-night to see me. The sisters of St. Joseph Hospital did not approve, but they were told that no one is going to stop me from seeing my wife.

The hospital was crowded. I believe we were three or four women in a room. Food was scarce. I even ate the disliked beats that were on my plate.

At this time gasoline was scarce. We were allowed not quite five gallons a week. I asked my friends not to visit me as everyone had the same trouble. Only those that worked for military

occupations were allowed more. When our car needed a minor parts so that the car could start there was no one that would sell us what we needed.

In a few days we were home again. Jeannine enjoyed stretching herself as far as she could. I told her if she kept stretching so far she would reach Germany and Hitler would get her.

When she was six months old, her father got a call to go into the army. Six other men in our neighborhood were called. Some of the women cried, some were shocked, and in time some men left even if they had three children. Walter was accepted and was expected to leave within two or three weeks. He did not want to leave me with three children and an invalid father without our home being paid for. The rent house was sold to the Schrams, and with the money we received from them, we paid off the loan on the house we were living in.

About the time he was due to leave, it was decided that men over thirty-one were not needed.

Otto Ludeke and George Lawson, who were a little older had started their own business and were very successful. We had enough money to go into business too, but changing jobs automatically put you into the army if under a certain age. This incident in a way was costly. It was not long before prices went up. My husband had enough money to go into business, but could not use his money because he would at once have gone into the service.

H.B. entered the service. Roy was rejected because of a perforated ear drum. This was a great surprise, Wilma cried.

When H.B. received limited service because of an accident that happened when he was in school that made him blind on one eye. He was sent to buy food for a hospital in New Orleans. Aunt Elsie and Adrienne, a first grade student, took a train in January to visit H.B., and Dorothy, his wife. Both missed family and friends. Just as the train was arriving in New Orleans there was a black out.

Much food was rationed during the war. One was issued stamps for certain foods, and whenever they were used, then one waited until the next ones were given. Coffee was rationed. An adult was allowed a half a pound a week. Since Walter and my father loved coffee, I never drank any throughout the war, so they had my share. It also helped to have the extra if we wished to serve it to company.

There was not much entertainment. Occasionally when Jeannine was just out of her babyhood, she and I would take a city bus and ride to town and back. One time as we were riding through town Jeannine suddenly started screaming. I could not imagine why. I looked out of the window and saw a man dressed as Santa Claus. It was this time of year, but I did not realize my little girl would be that scared. She and I were home so much that she was frightened to see something so unusual.

My Father lived with us, and Jeannine loved him. My father often watched Jeannine while I went to the grocery store. There were times when all my children went with me. We had a large red wagon where Jeannine sat while Walter and Adrienne and I took turns pulling it.

Jeannine as a baby was on condensed milk. No longer did it matter which one was given to a baby. We bought whichever we could find. Sometime it was Pet or Carnation, even Eagle Brand if no other could be bought. Jacobson's did try to keep in stock as often as possible condensed milk for regular customers.

One time Walter Jr. And Donald Hollingsworth were playing at the ---- bayou when they discovered a whole case of condensed milk. They ran home to tell me. I am sure someone must

have stolen it from a truck, hid it, then planned when night came to get it. Mrs. Hollingsworth and I got into our car with the boys along. The boys, when we came to the bayou, picked up the milk and brought it to our house. Since the boys both found the cans I felt Mrs. Hollingsworth was entitled to half of them. Finally I persuaded her at least to take one can.

During the war a young couple lived with us for awhile. Rex was a soldier and stationed at Ellington Field. He did get to come home often, and one time while he was home, a call came on the radio that all soldiers stationed at Ellington Field was to report there at once. Rex and Mary had no car so I drove Rex to Ellington Field. This was to be keep secret, but Rex told me that a German sub-marine was spotted in Houston Ship Channel.

When Rex and Mary moved from our home, my cousin Helmuth Teinert was sent to Ellington Field, also his close friend Don Selke. Soldiers had to be in early on Saturday, so we invited them each week end at our house. They did not have a car, so they welcomed the Saturday night dances we attended at Saengerbrind. Inez, Dorothy and sometimes Irene went with us. We were very jolly young people.



Inez and Elsie

The war was over Walter finally could have a business of his own. He and Mr. Thorpe were partners. The shop was called Southern Jewelry Company. When Walter Schram and Donald Creel came home from the service they went to work for them. They wanted to learn the jewelry trade. Whenever there was a large enameling job I would do it. Jeannine enjoyed coming in after school. Benny, the polisher, had a "junk box" filled with jewelry to play with.

Jeannine started school when she was not quite six, it was difficult for her to make friends with her classmates. It was expected that Jeannine would stay an hour after class was dismissed so that she could come home with her sister. I took both girls the first day, but found that Jeannine expected me to stay at school. After three weeks, I talked to her teacher and

told her that probably Jeannine should stay home another year. Mrs. Cobb said to please let her stay as she really is the smartest child in the class. I also talked to DR Ohlhausen whether it would be wiser to stay in school each day or keep my daughter home another year. Dr. Ohlhausen said it was better for me to stay at school until she was ready to stay without me.

One day as I looked out of the school's kitchen window I saw Jeannine talking to a little girl who was in her class. I went outside and asked, "Jeannine, you do not need me, do you". She said "no". This was the last day I needed to go to school. Our baby had grown up.

Adrienne was in the eighth grade when Jeannine was in the first grade. It did not take long before Jeannine got tired of waiting the extra hour for Adrienne. As her brother and sister before her did, she came home alone, taking a bus to town, transferring to the one going to Kensington.

One day she fell asleep on the bus, and before she woke up she was almost half way back to town. She got off the bus and walked home. She was late coming home from school. Where does one start to look for a little girl that is very late getting home? What a wonderful feeling when our baby girl was home again.

Then we moved to Milart Street. In town a different bus had to be ridden. When Jeannine got to town, she had forgotten the name of the bus to her new home. She cried to herself. A kind black woman came to her to see what was causing the little girl grief. This woman called the police who came to pick up Jeannine. The police called me at our house. Adrienne answered the phone, then her father was called. We walked over to the police station to get Jeannine. The police gave her soda water and some other refreshment.

Walter and I always were very proud of our children. We knew no one who had more handsome and gifted children then we had. They were well mannered and walked in the path that leads to God.

The years pass swiftly. There was the time when Walter was attending Concordia Junior College while Adrienne was attending Lutheran High School, and Jeannine was at Trinity Lutheran school.

Walter was a genius in school work, but it did not help him in deciding what God wanted of him. To be a minister or not to be is a very serious question, and Walter spent many hours that went into years when he finally knew to be a minister was not what God had planned for him. There are not all psychologist that are Christian. Is it not great we one can find one that is? I thank God that Walter has made the right decision.

Adrienne attended Lutheran High school. She was the most social member of the family. Her greatest gift from God was her voice. Mrs. Mann her voice teacher was sorry she attended T.S.U., because she had plans for her to work in her studio as she considered her ready to teach voice to children. Mrs. Mann also felt Adrienne could have been a Metropolitan opera singer. Once more God so graciously blessed us with a very talented child.

Jeannine, our youngest, also provided with gifts from God. She made high school in three years, and at T.W.U., made her bachelors degree in three years. She was nineteen years old. She taught third grade in Houston for a year. After marriage, she worked for Lutheran Welfare in Springfield Illinois for three years. Eleven years after receiving her Bachelors degree she went to University of Houston to get her Masters degree. God, How Great Thou Art.



Walter and Elsie Penk and Family

The year Walter and I celebrated our twenty-fifth anniversary was the year Adrienne was married to Charles Rathgeber. On February 4, 1956, our son gave the marriage sermon, his first and his last sermon that he made. Rev. Rathgeber united them in marriage. A marriage that lasted until Charles died May 27, 1981.

On July 29, 1956, Walter and I were married twenty-five years. We could not afford a honeymoon when we got married, so it was decided we would have one on our twenty-fifth anniversary. When the time came for the special trip we thought, Jeannine, now thirteen years old would enjoy a trip that was different from all others. How could we just leave her with aunts and uncles? It ended that we decided to take her along.

We decided, we would drive to Hot Springs, Arkansas and stay in a motel. Hot Springs was much closer to St. Louis than Houston was, so why not ask Walter to join us in Hot Springs. Four wonderful days were spent there. How could we leave Adrienne out?. All we had to do was drive the car toward Alexandria, Louisiana where Adrienne and Charles lived and could visit with them.

Walter Jr. had to go back to St. Louis, but Jeannine was happy to continue our honeymoon with us. We arrived in Vicksburg after traveling in the day time. It was dark, we had difficulty in locating a motel. We finally took a room that was not what we wanted, but we needed the rest so very much. I am going to have to ask Jeannine if the bed Walter and I slept on did it not break down.

The next morning we drove to Alexandria. Charles had bought a new home, just before they got married.

The honeymoon was a success. Again I say "God How Great Thou Art".

CHAPTER SEVEN

Now back in time.

I met Paula Duennbier at Scott's overall factory [we sat next to each other] we were paid according to the amount we produced. It worried me how Paula handled her work. I could show her she could get her work done much faster and she would have more money. After some time debating whether to talk to her or not I did speak. Her accent was German, so I told her about the young man from Berlin. She asked me to visit her husband and bring my young man friend. Our friendship lasted even now to this day. Her husband has died. The memory of their friendship will always be remembered as our true friends. They were not afraid of us during Adrienne's lengthy illness. They offered to lend us money, and said they could not understand how we can make all of our expenses. I said "Leave us alone, we are too poor to borrow. If we once start borrowing, we are lost."

In the late thirties, the Hawkins built a nice little home on our street. They found out Walter was a naturalized citizen. I am proud to boast when Walter received his citizen papers among about a hundred people, he was among the ten that was classed as going to be the best citizen.

The Hawkins introduced us to their friends, the Killners. Mr. Killner, from wealthy parents in Germany, offered to help Walter work to be a citizen of the United States. We became very good friends. Through them we met the Mauzy's and their two daughters, later Marian Kellner's brother Eddie Eumscheid and his wife Eva.

Once we were visiting them to play a game of bridge, Frank bought a special bottle that he said was very mild. Usually I would not drink alcohol. He poured me a whole water glass of this drink and with the first swallow I thought to myself, if this is mild, I wonder what a strong drink would be like. I decided to drink very slowly and make it last. When the evening was over, my glass was empty. I barely talked. I was afraid of my voice might be slurred. When we got up to leave, it always took about fifteen minutes to say good-by, carefully I would take a step or two holding on to a chair or whatever.

Finally we got to the car, I then told Walter about the drink being strong. The next day Frank phoned Walter to ask how I am doing. Walter said "fine". Frank said, "Don't you ever tell me your wife doesn't drink. After you left I went into the kitchen and saw I had opened the wrong bottle. I drank a whole water glass of the strong drink. By keeping quiet they never noticed my predicament.

Elton and Hermine Schulze were close friends. They had three children. To Hermine I am very grateful too because much of my life I was not very well. Once when Adrienne and Walter were away from home, and I was ill, she had Jeannine come each day after school to her home. At supper she brought my meal because it was "rush season" for Walter. We are still friends.



Elton and Hermine Schulze

There are many changes in life. After all our children were away from home much of my time was devoted to the Republican Women Club. Benice Frank was president when I joined. At the time Barry Goldwater was running for the Republicans. Throughout the years I often was president of the Republican club I belonged too. Anna Rice and Jarvis Jenkins became great friends and are still working very much in politics. Earlier I too worked very hard at headquarters, and was sent to San Antonio, to Dallas and in Houston as delegates. Walter and many of the men enjoyed the Republican Women's Club, attending our meetings, usually congregating in the den to converse while we were having a business meeting in the living room. The large home we had on Tallow Lane was ideal to have a games party to raise funds for our club. There were a time where three men running for various state and city offices were invited to our home so that they could be introduced to as many people that came to our home.



Birthday card to Elsie from George and Barbara Bush

When George Bush, Bill Archer, Ron Paul, John Tower were beginning to be known at various functions, we were there.

We appreciated the home on Rockwood street near the University of Houston. We enjoyed meeting new people from the university and women that belonged to the club.

Early in 1970 it was visible Walter's health was declining. Our son noticed it in March when we were in Dallas. At Jeannette's confirmation a few weeks later in Baton Rouge, Esther Rathgeber saw it in his face, that was a warning. In July he had a slight stroke. Jeannette, Elaine and I went to the shop, he ignored us, never had that happened.

It was September before he consented to see the doctor. It was September when Adrienne and Charles with the children moved to Houston. Charles had accepted the call to St. Andrew. God sent me someone who could understand my fears, someone that comforted me in the days to follow.

This was a quiet Christmas. In early January we went by bus to Springfield, Illinois to see our new grand-daughter, Michelle Renee. Walter would not take a plane. He appeared to take a great deal of pleasure in getting acquainted with the new baby, and to talk with John our grandson.

He was proud of all of his grand-children. He would play games or cards with Charles Walter Jr. He enjoyed the four young ones that now lived in Houston.

The twenty-fifth of January 1971 I was worried. It was difficult to get any response from Walter. In desperation I asked "Walter, Don't you love me anymore?" To which he replied "Oh, god do I love You"

The next morning we both went to work, I left him off in town, then drove on to the Star Engraving. When I got there I phoned Adrienne to call Dr. Ohlhausen to do something to get Walter in a hospital. She did, so he was prepared for an emergency that occurred that afternoon.

Walter finally realized he was sick, and told Adrienne he would go home as soon as he was through with a customer he was expecting. Adrienne and Ruth were waiting for him. He looked awful. Adrienne asked if he wanted coffee. She was making it while he went upstairs to change into a jumper.

She heard him gasp, she rushed upstairs with George Nahlor, a student who lived with us. The doctor called the ambulance. He died.

Roy picked me up from the Star and took me to the hospital. Dr. Olhausen talked to me.

A few months later a dream or vision appeared. The sky was so white, the whitest white I had ever seen. The Voice of God spoke to me saying "Come to the right hand side of me. Your husband, who loved you dearly, is standing beside Me waiting to embrace you."

Some day we will meet again.

REFLECTIONS AND MEMORIES

As I was working on this presentation, certain things come to mind both for me and Jeannine. So I decided to use this space to put down some of those memories, and add to wonderful story.

At the start of Chapter Five, Elsie says that after graduating from High School, she got a job at Foleys. Jeannine said she had never heard this. Actually the two books give different accounts. One gives the account of Foleys, and the other says that she worked in a candy factory. Probably both are true. Since she stayed at Foleys only that one day, and yet there were months before she started at the Star, she probably obtained the candy factory job in between these two events.

Elsie only mentioned the Cabin at Giddings once, and that was quite early on when she was talking about her family background. Yet the Cabin was a favorite place for her to go, both before Walter's death, but especially so after his death. The cabin probably represented a connection to her family roots.



Elsie and Walter and the Cabin at Giddings.

Elsie and Walter purchased 8 1/2 acres of land that was originally part of the old original Teinert Homestead. They purchased the land from Otto Teinert. They had this cabin built on the land as well as a pond toward the back of the property. The pond was really meant as a fishing pond for grandchildren. The house originally had a cistern for water supply but later, when city water was available, it was connected to city water. (and you know how Giddiness city water tastes.)

Elsie (especially after Walter's death) would go to the cabin for weeks at a time, often taking one or more of the grandchildren. John seemed to be the one who enjoyed the cabin the most, and spent a lot of time with his grandmother, at the cabin, going to town, and visiting friends and family. I know the cabin also had special meaning to Elaine Rathegeber.



This is a picture of the old original Teinert homestead. I took the picture this year, 1999. Maybe some day a better picture can be taken. The house is apparently in a fair amount of disrepair at this time. It would be a shame to have the house deteriorate and be lost since it is a part of family history and Wendish history.

Of all the events that Elsie talks about, one stood out to me that she did not mention, that being the death of her father. She talked a lot about his illness and the need to have him live with them so they could take care of him. However, Jeannine reports that he was very involved in taking care of her as a young infant and child. He apparently died when Jeannine was about 3 yr. of age and was a very significant loss to Jeannine, since he took care of her so much. There seems to be a connection between this loss and Jeannine's early difficulty with separation in school. Elsie probably did not mention his death just because it probably was too painful to remember.

Elsie did not report how Walter came to come by the nickname Goggie. Walter was known by all, family, friends and business associates as Goggie. This name came about when Jeannine was an infant and in her first words had difficulty saying "da-da" for daddy.

Instead it came out "ga-ga." This translated to goggie as she attempted to say daddy. This name remained a part of Walter the rest of his life. Walter always seemed to be proud of his name.

How could we forget Walter and his love for bowling? Actually from what Jeannine tells me he also loved other types of games. Elsie in her stories tells of times in her early relationship with Walter that they had difficulty finding common themes to talk about. Jeannine states that her mother at times would get so upset with Walter because he would spend so much time playing solitaire. This seems to be a habit and interest that carried over to Jeannine. There is probably not a day that goes by that she doesn't play solitaire. In the past there was always several decks of card around the house, now it is playing on the computer.

But Walter certainly loved to bowl, and that is one of the memories I remember of him most. I remember him even bringing his bowling ball with him up to Illinois one time and we went bowling.



Walter and his Bowling League

In Chapter One, Elsie states that Walter came to the U.S. in December of 1924. When we were organizing all the pictures and letters that Elsie kept, we found the guest book of the NORDDEUTSCHER LLOYD BREMEN, December 8, 1924. Jeannine does not have any memory of the existence of this guest book. It is not labeled. However, the dates coincide with the date given for Walter's immigration to the States. She also did not know about the picture of Walter on the ship.



I will close with a picture of Jeannine and her mother, (Jeannine was 11 months old.) In searching through the pictures left by Elsie, I do not find any pictures of Adrienne or Walter Jr. as a baby. Jeannine says that her mother gave those pictures to Adrienne and Walter. The same holds true for wedding pictures, so these have not been included.

Certainly this story does not have to end, as others are willing to share their memories and or pictures. God's blessings to all.

Compiled and Completed by
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