

February 2017

From the editor:

Visiting Lebanon last summer, I stumbled on this book at Grammy's house, and was instantly enamored with the document.

Grammy wrote this “autobiography” as an assignment for her 10th grade English II course. She chronicles her earliest memories, her first pet & first friend, anecdotes from school, and stories of her travels with father Theodore and mother Edith. In this early writing of Grammy, the worldly, funny, and driven woman we know today is abundantly evident.

I hope you enjoy reading and reflecting on Grammy's childhood autobiography!

With love,

Davis

Song for Youth

Gather all the sweet of May,
Lock it tenderly away,
Precious night and perfect day.

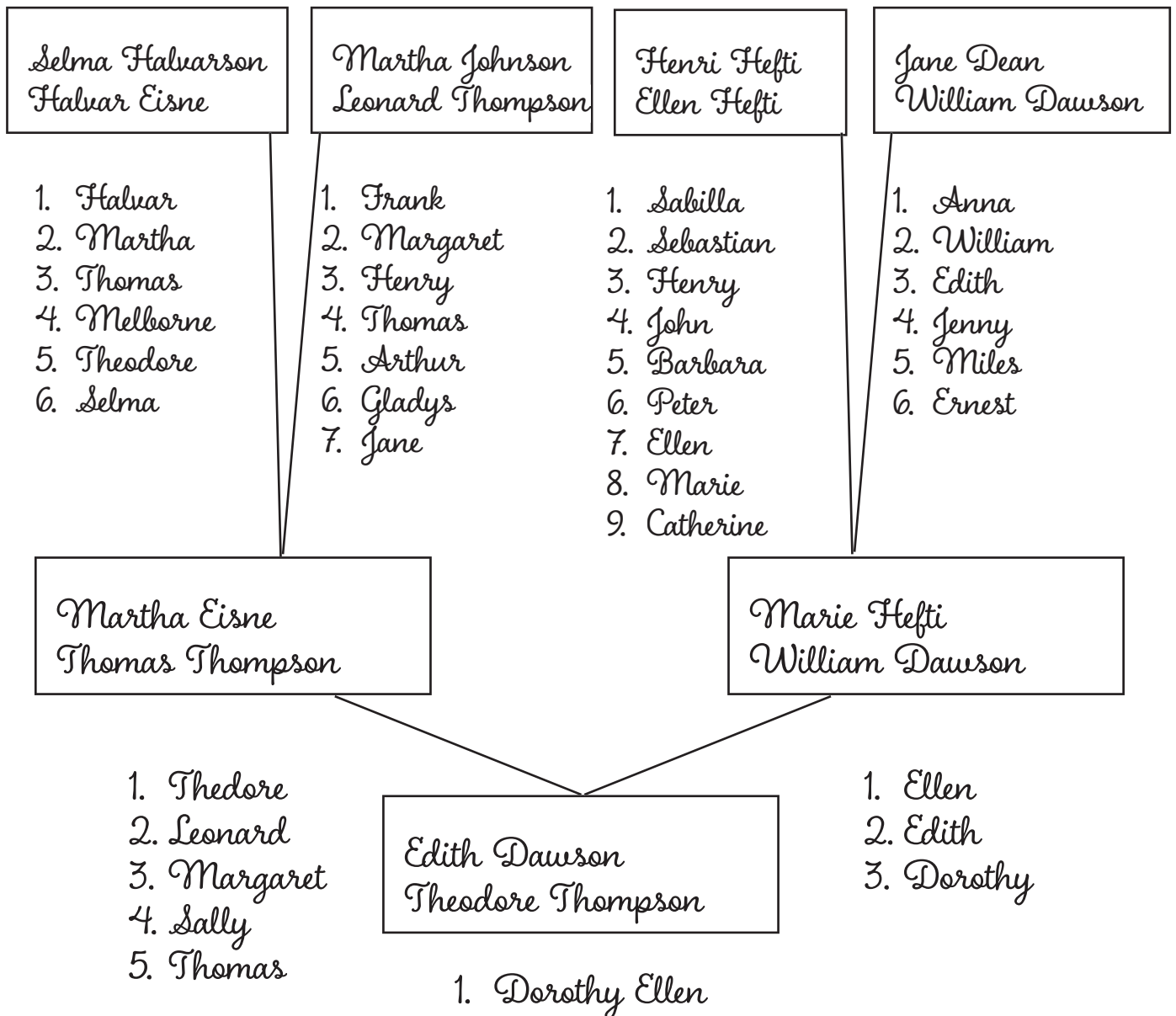
Make a trove of shining things
Roses, raindrops, dreams, and wings;
Catch a skylark while he sings!

Gather all the summer sweet,
Hush of heaven, song of street,
Stars that dance on silver feet!

Then grow old with gallant ease,
For I am told such wealths as these
Make the fairest memories!

Dano Burnett

Family Tree



My ancestry on my father's side was Norwegian. On my mother's, Swiss and English.

All four of my grandparents came from the old country.

Infancy

On a Sunday morning, February 10th, 1935 at 3:45 in Greater Community Hospital, a seven pound little baby entered this world. It was I.

Dr. Watts was my doctor, Mynnie McKlintock was my nurse.

I was named Dorothy Ellen after my aunts, Dorothy and Ellen, and because Mom and Dad liked it.

Like most babies, I loved my baths and I especially delighted in soaking my mother.

I liked everything given me to eat with the exception of spinach and so my mom says, never got full.

Everyone thought I looked like my dad but had my mother's coloring, brown hair and eyes.

I guess I was the picture of health and I had my first cold when I was nine months old.

My first outing was to dad's judge, Judge Johnston.

I first raised myself at two months, smiled at one month, crawled from mom to dad at 5 1/2 months, (I always crawled backwards), walked alone from living room to bathroom at one year and attempted to eat alone at one year, two months.

While learning to walk when I fell, instead of using a sitting down position, I stiffened and fell flat on my back and head. Yes, I did get some bumps.

I had all twenty baby teeth before my second birthday.



Here I am at five months with my dad.



At nine months in my carriage.

My first fear was dad's sneezing, anger if my bottle didn't arrive on time or if mother didn't get my arm through sleeves soon enough to please me.

The first words I spoke were milkman, mama, daddy, and "Bud", (the neighbor's dog.)

At two years, I surprised my parents by shouting "Billy, that toy is dangerous!"

At three years with, "My, I'm active!", "Gladys is a gorgeous blonde", and "Daddy, mamma is provoked at you!"



This is the first house I remember living in. It is located on Spruce Street in Creston. We moved here when I was 1 1/2 yrs. old and moved to where we now live when I was four.



This was one of my first little friends and was taken one afternoon while we were sitting in the yard at Judge Johnston's. Her name was Nancy Ann Ness. I was about 5 months old here.

Childhood

Like all 'kids', had the usual number of childhood experiences recalling laughs and tears.

One afternoon when I was three, I got my tricycle.

We brought it home from town and mother warned me to wait until after she took the groceries in the house to ride it because she wanted to help me the first few times. But I had other ideas!

No one had to teach me to ride one of those things, and down the drive way I went! And I kept on going until the unguided wheel turned into the curb and wrecked, knocking me off.

My mother, of course, scolded me, but it only hurt my pride and after a few days of practicing, indeed no one did need to help me.



Here I am on my tricycle with one of my little friends, Ruth Osmond.

One morning a friend of mine and I were playing outdoors. Later we paused from our play to eat a few marshmallows, and then we returned to our play.

About half an hour later, I solemnly asked Junior if he would like another marshmallow.

Too shy to say "yes" or "no", he said he didn't care. I told him if he wanted another he would have to ask for it. Finally he did, only to hear me say, "you can't have one, it's too near dinner!"



My mom and dad tease me about this picture, taken when I was three, because when I first saw it, I exclaimed, "Look, mom, I'm twins!"

Incidentally it was a double exposure as I later understood.

Two of my first friends are shown below.



The dog belonged to Junior Osmond but we both loved it and both claimed it. I was around three when this picture was taken. The dog's name was spotty but I couldn't say this and I called it "potty". Junior would shout, "Don't call my dog 'potty'!"



Another of my first playmates was Kay Vetterich who lived near us when we lived on Spruce Street.

We were both around four when this picture was taken.

One day when I was around two, my mom and dad decided to go to Des Moines.

We got all ready and when it was time to leave, they couldn't find me any where.

They looked in my sandbox, called the neighbors and they looked up and down the street. They couldn't find me anywhere.

Finally dad decided to get the car out and to hunt for me. When he opened the garage doors, there I was in the car, looking out of the back seat window with a tear streaked face.

"Didn't you hear me 'punking' the horn, daddy?" I tearfully demanded.

My folks still tease me about this and the funny thing is, they don't know how I got in the garage.

Like most kids, I also had my first running away experience.

When I was going on three, my dad took me downtown one afternoon, while mom was at a party.

While we were down town, our neighbor, Mrs. Miller asked dad if she might take me shopping with her for a little while since I wanted to go.

Dad said "yes" and for her to bring me back to Swansons' clothing store when she was ready to go home.

After she was through shopping, she took me to door of Swansons' and I ran in.

In there, they told me dad was at Larens' Shoe Store down the street and for me to go there.

But this was my chance!

I took off up to Adams Street and on down it. It was a hot summer day and I had on a little sun suit. I ran on to the highway at Sumner Ave. and crossed and then I went on out to where some of my mother's friends and their children lived.

I went to three or four houses, only to find them all not home. Finally, tired, hot, and discouraged, I sat down on the steps at Willa and Marshall Camp's and waited.

Pretty soon dad and a friend of his came by in our car. Upon seeing me, dad jumped out of the car and ran up to me, asking where on earth had I been, and how he had just been ready to have the police look for me.

I only solemnly asked, "Daddy, were you lost?"

The reason for this was that everyone I saw said, "Where's your daddy?"

The summer when I was four, we moved from our home on Spruce Street to where we are now living, at 504 West Adams.

The summer of this year, I went to spend a month with my Grandma Thompson in Eagle Grove, Iowa because my mom and dad were going on a trip East with my dad's judge, Judge and Mrs. Johnston.

For spending money while they were gone, mom gave me 30 pennies, one for each day until they came up to take me home.

But much to my puzzlement, everyone gave me extra pennies to spend but I only spent one a day.

After a few weeks, I had as many pennies left as I started out with, and I began to wonder if my mom and dad ever were coming home!

It was on this same visit that I went bare foot against strictest orders and stepped on some bits of a broken milk bottle, resulting in the necessity of a tetanus shot, an unpleasantness which I shall always remember!

School Days

I imagine my first day of school was very similar to that of other boys and girls at least in the one respect that I was scared.

Mom took me to school the first afternoon and I came home firmly declaring the recess was the best of all. My kindergarten teacher was Miss Agnew.



My only tardy in grade school happened in first grade. My teacher was Miss Collar. I remember we churned butter one day in school, and ate it on crackers.

When I was six, during the summer between kindergarten and first grade, we went to California. I don't remember much about that trip except going through the hot desert, falling in my boots all the time, and visiting various points of interest.



This picture was taken the afternoon we visited Forest Lawn in Los Angeles, while we were watching the swans.

While I was in California, friends of ours were taking care of my first pet, a toy rat terrier, named "Buttons."



When I was in second grade, Mrs. Jones was my teacher. I learned to write in this grade and we visited Bayers' White Way Dairy.

In third grade, my teacher was Miss Welch, a wonderful woman whom I still think a great deal of. In this grade, Janet Kay Kelly moved here to go to school from Afton and Sue Donelson from Michigan. Since first grade Cheryl Bayler and I had gone to school together.

In fourth grade my teacher was Miss Gripp, and in this room I remember writing "I will not whisper in class any more" a hundred times.

While in fifth grade with Miss Lee as my teacher I was quite a tomboy. All I cared about were softball and baseball. I also had the lead in the school play this year.

Sixth grade was a memorable year for me. I imagine it is a little similar to the senior in high school feeling, greatly modified, no doubt. (I still loved softball.)

This summer was not a very pleasant one though. I went with my mother to stay with her sisters who died that same summer, leaving her husband and a fourteen year old son.

Grade School Pictures



Taken at girl scout camp at Lake Aquabi near Indianola, Iowa. Mom, back row R., was our leader. We were in 5th grade.



Lincoln grade school picture of teachers.



Planting the willow tree in sixth grade. Teacher is Miss McEniry.



Cheryl Bayles and Sue Donelson in front of Lincoln 5th grade.

Junior High School Days

My first day in Jr. High was also a bit perplexing but I soon found I liked it very much, especially the changing classes and social dancing.

This summer we visited Washington Island, Wisconsin where a great uncle of mine lived, Halvan Eiane (??).

He was a retired machinist mate in the U.S. Navy and our stay with him, along with the beautiful island were most enjoyable.



In front of Jr. High -
I was in seventh grade.

This same summer we took a trip East. Stayed in Chicago at the La Salle Hotel, saw the stage show "Oklahoma" and ate at "Little Bit of Sweden."

Then we went on to New Jersey to visit my Aunt Dot, Uncle Wally and their three children.

While here we took the Staten Island ferry past the Statue of Liberty into New York where we spent a few days.

We visited Radio City, Saks on Fifth Ave, Marshall Fields, saw the Empire State building, and stayed at the Hotel Taft.

I liked eighth grade even better than seventh.

In seventh my three teachers were Miss Moore, Mrs. Derry, and Miss Donnelly.

In eighth, Mrs. Derry, Miss Reed, and Miss Cagley. Mr. Hobbs was principal both years.

In eighth grade I was in one of the Jr. High plays given at the High School. I was a twirler with the high school band, I received a math award at the end of the year, and we also learned to square dance and social dance.

We read *Treasure Island* in English.

I had my first date on Eighth grade graduation night.

I was with Dick Kelly.

After the graduation exercise we went to the show with Sue Donelson, David Mitchell, Janet K. Kelly, and Doug Brotherton.

The summer of this year we went to Colorado for a few weeks vacation to our cabin in Ward.

I learned to ride horseback and to hike, and we went on many hikes to gather flowers or to pick berries growing wild.

After this pleasant summer, I began to get ready to begin high school.

High School

From the first day on, I have loved high school.

It is so different from any of the other two schools.

I like the changing classes, dances, athletics, subjects, kids and teachers.

I twirled with the high school band again this year and loved it, I joined the G.A.A. was in Student Council.

I was in an assembly program given by Miss Alsen's English class in which I was an absent-minded professor (I wonder why?)

I got to go to my first out of town athletic events and began having my first dates.

Again this summer went to Colorado and had a wonderful time.

We again rode horseback, swam in a beautiful swimming pool near Boulder, went on hikes and went berrying. I learned to drive the car, and had the excitement of a runaway horse in Estes Park.

I also got my belated birthday present, a riding habit, boots, and all. Green, too.

This year, my sophomore year, I still like high school very much.

My teachers are Miss Hixenbaugh, Mrs. Simmerman, Mr. Lundbergh, Mr. Williams, and Miss Napier.

The subjects I am taking are Physical Training, World History, English, Biology, and Latin I.

I am in Girls Glee Club, G.A.A., I work in the office, I am in Student Council, Red Pepper, and the Ping Pong Club.

Right now I am working on my part in one of the one-act plays, "Three's a Crowd."

School is nearly over for another year and yet I am not particularly anxious for it to be out but when it is, I imagine I will love summer and will hate to see it over so soon when school resumes next fall.

My favorite hobby - is twirling

Below are two pictures taken when I twirled with the band.

Other hobbies include playing the piano, drawing, reading, driving the car, swimming, horseback riding, and embroidering. Sometimes I like to cook, too, and tap dance.



Taken in eighth grade when I first started twirling with the high school band.



Taken early in my sophomore year - my third year of twirling with the high school band.

Pets

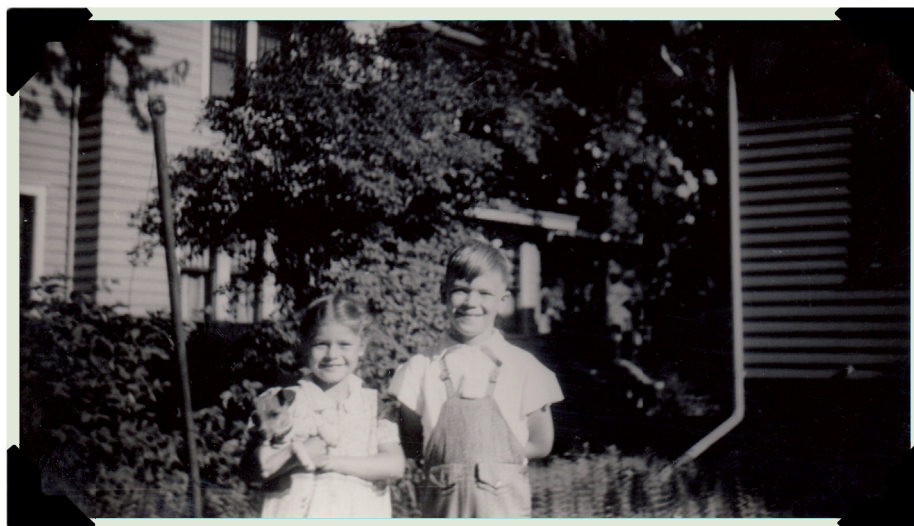
My first pet was a dog, a toy rat terrier named "Buttons." I think it was stolen one night after we had it about a year.

Next I had a turtle named "Oscar" but I saw the last of him when I dumped him in the neighbor fish pond for the summer.

Next, I had a goldfish quite a few times but they either died or I dumped them in the pond.

Last summer a stray kitten lived at our house a while before it moved on, so now, I have no pet - but some day I would like a red cocker puppy.

Below is a picture of my cousin Fred and me. I am holding "Buttons."



Plans for the Future

I do plan on going to college but where, I haven't decided.

I also think for the first year, and maybe two, I will go to a small school.

I have considered Grinnell, Drake, Morningside, and a girl's school. As of yet, I have made no decision.

For a career, I plan on entering into social work of some type as I do like to work with people.

A nursing course or teacher's training might go in with this.

I don't think marriage will interfere with these plans, because I have no intention of getting married until I am through college, supporting myself, and paying back my parents as much as possible for the cost of my education.

