

When Mr. Klingenberg asked me some time ago to make a recording of my life for the Historical Society, I was not in favor of it but after I thought of it for some time, I decided I should do it. It was an honor to be asked.

My parents were the August Kleins and we lived on a farm, on the corner of County Line and Ridge Road. It was owned then by George Comstock. We were a large family - nine children - and needed a large farm. My father was born in Posen, Germany on July 30th 1854, and came to America when he was 12 years old, with his father and brother Fred by sail boat, I'm told it took nearly three months and they landed in New York, and later came to Lake Villa, IL I still see some of the relatives of the family where he stayed. He worked on the farm by day and studied at night to learn the English language. My grandfather was a weaver in Germany. Father died in 1936.

My mother was born in Milwaukee, WI on November 3, 1854. She had three sisters and two brothers. One of the brothers had a small cheese factory and when my mother and I visited there, I saw a cheese so large that it took three men to put it on a truck for shipping. That was in Monroe, WI and they had none of the modern equipment that we have today.

I had four brothers and four sisters - our mother died in 1925. Two sisters, Bertha and Emma, have passed on and all the brothers. They were, George, Fred, Willie and Charles(Butch). My sister Esther, the oldest of the family was 101 last December 22, 1980 and has been living at the Crystal Pines Nursing Home for the past 7 years. She takes complete care of herself and can read without glasses - she has never been bed-ridden.

Would you like to hear of my school days. Naturally I went to a one-room country school - it was known as Porter's School. It was quite some distance from home, so we went across fields and through a woods. We had to cross a creek on planks and then jump bogs until we got to flat ground. In the Spring, when the snow melted, the creek rose over the planks and we couldn't cross. So until the water went down, we had to walk around the road and that was more than three miles.

We carried our lunch in small tin pails and it was usually frozen by the time we got to school. I was the shortest one going to school so I had to run to keep up with the rest. Now some of my friends are accusing me of starting the jogging fad. If so it has taken a long time to arrive here.

Now it's really amusing to me when I hear of all the bussing troubles. What's wrong with the pupils rising earlier and walking to school. I did it all the time and we had no sidewalks. It seems the winters started earlier than now and were quite severe. Once it snowed we had it for months and we never saw the grass until Spring. When we had a large snow fall, we were taken to and from school by bob-sled for a few days.

In our school, the same books were used and then handed down to the next one. I don't believe I ever had a new book, only a writing book. I liked school, especially reading, arithmetic and spelling. We had Spelling Bees - one school against another. Not to brag, but I usually did bring my school Honors!

I can remember only five teachers that I had and I remember too, that their salary was \$40.00 a month. In those days, we never heard of a Strike. There were five who went through the 8 grades and they were; George French, Edw. Wolthausen, Alfred Hobein, Alma Heinrich Grebe and myself. Let me say, there were no Proms or speeches marking our big day. My diploma was written on blue lined tablet paper by my teacher - nothing like the ones of today - but I was proud of it. Wish I still had it, but it and the 8th grade diploma I got from Sears School of Music burned when our home burned.

Later on our farm was sold to W. I. Martin. We had a large dairy, usually milked 60 cows or more and that was alot of work for there were no milking machines. We took the milk to Bowman Dairy in Algonquin. The Spring Lake Cheese Factory was within a mile from our home but we never took milk there. Many years later the factory was made into a dance hall. Let me tell you about the music - it was a one-man band. About 60 years old, he played an old accordion and usually sat on the end of a bench so he could stomp his foot for better timing, so he said. Today he would get the gong in a hurry.

I want to tell about our early life on the farm. It was about 6:30 one evening, milking time. We kids were playing near the barn when we missed our little sister, about 5 years old. There was a grand search and brother George found her in the horse barn. She had gone into the stall of one of the horses. When she was found, the horse's foot was still on her head and at first we thought she was dead. We had no phone so my brother Fred jumped on a horse and went to our neighbor Edw. Brandt to phone for Dr. Richardson to come and he had to come by horse and buggy. When he realized he couldn't take care of Dollie alone, he told us of a Dr. Burlingame in Elgin, to call to get help. So back to phone for this Doctor. What anxious moments - Elgin was 10 miles from our home and it was getting dark. Yes he would come but how would they find our house. My Dad thought of that too. He put a ladder beside the house, then went up and hung a lantern on the chimney. When the Doctor arrived, he told us they - the driver and he - saw the light and followed it.

My mother had the kitchen stove covered with kettles of boiling water and by that time the house was full of neighbors, all wanting to help. We had no electric lights, so someone had to hold lamps for the doctors and they worked for hours. Her head was crushed so that we could see her brain and the doctors took many stitches. Dollie was in a coma for weeks and she was watched constantly. When she did awaken, it was many weeks before she could walk again and she had lost so much weight, she was more like a living doll. It could be that is how she got the nick-name of Dollie. Many don't know that her name is really Alma. She came thru it all just great and she has never had any ill effects these many years. I wanted to tell this because I think it was a miracle. It shows what great doctors we had. They had to treat every sickness and not specialize on only one part of the body as they do today. Our life on the farm was different but I wouldn't change one bit of it. We lived well and were quite healthy.

What a day it was when my Dad came home with a bicycle for all the kids. It was fun for those who could ride it but again, I lost out for my legs were too short. It was worn out before my feet could reach the pedals. Baseball was about the only

game we could play - there were several children in most homes so it was easy to pick two teams. I was about 18 when I saw the Cubs play and I'm still a fan. It was about that time that we left the big farm.

My father bought the Stott farm, across the road from the Thunderbird Golf course. The Christ Hartz family lived there then. In later years, Mrs. Kate Miller lived there; she had a small dairy and sold milk in Barrington. My brother, Charles, worked for her then. He peddled the milk driving a pair of mules. After a few years, my parents sold the farm and bought a home in Crystal Lake, where they lived the rest of their days.

I believe my first job was at Marshall Fields, in the dress-making department. I did bead work on dresses, mostly on chiffon over-skirts-like colored flowers. The dresses were expensive and I'll say I did envy the girls that came in for fittings. The pay wasn't much but being a country kid, I did enjoy the train rides, dirty as they were. A monthly ticket cost \$8.00. How different now.

Now there was a changing point in my life. After being sweethearts for quite sometime, George Landwer and I were married on June 25, 1913 and our first home was in Chicago on North Ridgeway. We had a lovely five room apartment only 3 years old. The rent was \$20.00 a month. Today it would be two or three hundred dollars more. Food didn't cost what it does now - milk was delivered for 3¢ a quart and bread was 10¢ a loaf; but the wages weren't what they are today.

When we moved into this house, sixty six years ago, there was one house on each side of the street looking east. This was the last street and it was called Limits Street. The land across the street was owned by a Mr. McIntosh and it was really a hay field and was burned off every Spring. Later on the land was sold as lots and is now built up with new streets added. We were surely glad when our street name was changed to Hillside Avenue.

George's work as a carpenter was mostly in Chicago but in later years, he worked in and around Barrington. His hobbies were hunting and fishing. He had three brothers - Alfred, Irwin and Clarence and one sister Luella; all have passed on.

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George was born in the house at Hillside Ave. and Cook Street, recent owners were the Roy Crumrines. Later George's father built the house which is known as the Hillside Nursery School. His parents lived there many years and after they died, the property was sold to Alva and Grace Wirsing.

We were blessed with two children. Our son George, better known as 'Bud', at an early age showed his talent for music. He was graduated from Barrington High School and Drake University. After teaching music for two years, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps. Eleven days before VJ Day, he and 33 others lost their lives when their plane hit the mountains of China. That was in 1945 and was so hard to take.

After our daughter Eunice graduated from Barrington High School, she too went to Drake University where she met Everett Craft. They married after graduation and settled in Des Moines where Everett is an English Teacher and Eunice works for the Iowa State Tax Department. They have given me two grandsons and David the older is married, so I have a lovely granddaughter by marriage. David has a record shop which does well, being in a college town, Ames, Iowa. He also writes for a sports magazine.

Douglas, the other grandson likes to travel and has been/many foreign countries. He has parachuted from a plane and done scuba diving in the ocean and likes Australia well enough to live there. Presently, he is on a Merchant Marine Ship.

George and I celebrated our Golden Wedding in 1963 - what a day to remember. Friends came from far and near and we had a Happy Anniversary. One of the lovely things that happened was a call from one of the members of the high school graduating class, telling us a group from the class would like to come on Saturday to do things for us around our home. This was something new to us but we said come along; and they did. Three cars of boys and girls came and they brought all the equipment they needed, even a lawn mower. The basement windows have never shown more and when they were ready to leave, George told them I would like to see them. I had baked two kinds of cookies and we had cold drinks. When they came in, there were so many that I didn't know how I could seat them but when I got back in the kitchen, the problem was solved for they were all sitting on the floor and they wanted us to sit with them. We did and the girls served us.

We did appreciate their work, but that wasn't all. Before they left, one of the boys gave George two tickets to a play in which they were performing before the close of school. They wanted us to be their guests and arranged to pick us up at 7:30. They didn't tell us, but they had made a large card with our names in gold, as their honored guests and furthermore they had the floodlights on it. George and I lived on Cloud 9 for a long time. I would like to again thank the Class of 1963.

Some friends have asked me what my hobbies were and I don't know if I had a real hobby. I have always liked to bake and at one time I baked by Clarence Landwer's market. At first it was donuts and different cookies for which I received only 25¢ a dozen. Later I had calls for bread, pies etc. but it became too much work and so I quit. I still like to bake, especially for my grandsons. Their favorites are sugar cookies and chocolate chips.

George was a Mason and in 1929 we became members of the Eastern Star. Later in 1938 we were Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron. That involved a lot of work but was very exciting. During our year in Office, The Great Kitchen Band was formed with about a dozen members. We did a lot of practicing and that we were pretty good. When the Barn Dance of W.L.S. had an Amateur Night in Barrington, we had the nerve to enter and we won. Lulu Belle and Scotty were here and said we were good. We became quite popular and had a lot of fun playing in Elgin, Dundee and Palatine. The big thrill was when we were invited to Chicago to be screened for the Barn Dance.

We took a morning train, with all our instruments and the conductor was Ellroy Thorp. He asked us to play and we did, all the way into the City. We didn't play at the Barn Dance but we did play two numbers on the radio that same afternoon and were heard in Barrington. What fun that was - sorry if you missed it!

In 1972 Lounsbury O.E.S. merged with the Dundee Chapter and I get to the meetings occasionally. I've found great friendship there. The people are warm and friendly. In November of 1979, I received my fifty-year gold pin.

I recall the years when women from Salem Church did the cooking for the Campgrounds dining-room. There was always a crowd for Sunday dinner and we always planned ahead, ordering well in advance. During the War years this was hard and one year there was no meat to buy and we were worried, because tickets were sold to 200 guests. Sam

Landwer, who did most of the buying, went out to a farm and bought the biggest turkey he could find. It weighed at least 25 pounds. I believe no bird had more attention! We used two of the largest roasters in town and by using all kinds of broth and vegetables we produced a good Turkey-ala-king. We couldn't serve family style but put a good serving on each plate and they did enjoy it, for after the meal was over, the cooks were asked to come from the kitchen, so they could tell us how they enjoyed it.

I've been asked if I could remember certain landmarks in the area. Some I did and others I did not. I do remember when I was young, hearing about the Stage Coach Stop. I didn't know what it was but the name stayed with me and recently, I saw it. I didn't realize it was so nearby. It is just another building, well-kept and the upper part is now private living quarters. Aren't we glad that we don't have to wait for mail to come by Stagecoach now!

At one time, four cooperating churches of Barrington, took on the project of visiting one of the cottages at The Elgin State Hospital. The cottage we served was called Hamilton and there were 175 patients - women of all ages; very few bed-ridden but all burdened with heart-aches and reasons why they shouldn't be there. Many times we were asked to take the letters they had written to the Governor of Illinois, but we had to refuse them. However, I sometimes found one stuffed in my coat pocket when I got home.

We always planned a lunch for the women - sandwiches, cookies, cup-cakes, candies - something different each time. The Hospital furnished something to drink, usually in an 8 gallon milk can. They enjoyed it so much and we always provided a short program. We took song books from church and you'd be surprised, as I was, that we always had someone in our group that played the piano, which was brought into the dining-room. The women would sing their hearts out and one time did more than that. We had a pianist with us who played only hymns. She was playing 'Jesus Lover of My Soul', when some started to dance and one of the older women stood on a chair to direct those who were dancing; she said her son taught her how to do that - but she said the music was too slow. So our pianist friend played 'Glory,

Glory Hallelujah'. Well our group held in our laughter until later when we roared all the way home! You had to be there to enjoy it. At Christmas time, women from the four churches; St. Paul's, Barrington Methodist, Community and Salem, met to wrap presents for the patients at Hamilton Cottage. The articles were donated by the church members and the committee met to do the wrapping and make the plans for the Christmas visit. It was work but also fun. I was chairman of the Salem workers for twenty years, when we carried on the project.

It is nearly fifteen years since George passed on and at first, I wondered how I could make it alone. I soon found that I have some very kind neighbors and friends who look after my needs; not only once in awhile but daily. I'm deeply grateful for them, for without them I couldn't live here alone.

Last year (1980) for my 90th Birthday, my daughter Eunice and her family had an Open House on Sunday afternoon, at my church - Salem United Methodist. More than 200 friends and relatives came from seven states and I had greetings from President Carter, Vice-President Mondale and both Senators from Illinois. Walley Phillips also sent greetings and a copy of his book and the Cubs sent cards and an autographed baseball. My pastors, The Rev. Ken Truckenbrod and The Rev. Carol Noren helped to make it such a happy day - Rev. Truckenbrod with his lovely remarks and Rev. Noren with her music. She sang two songs which she had written - one about a trip we took when her car was acting-up and the other was a parody on 'Take Me Out to the Ballgame'. That was because I've been a Cub fan for a long time.

This year when I had my 91st birthday, my friends Carol Noren and Kathy Schwartz took me to the Milk Pail for lunch. I understood there would be only three of us but when we got there, there were two tables of dear friends seated, all shouting 'SURPRISE'. It was such a lovely party.

Salem United Methodist has always been my church and I remember when the Sunday School and Church services were in German. The verses on the Sunday School cards were not easy to learn or say. I can recall seventeen Pastors who served our church. During Rev. Sam Batt's pastorate here, we merged with The Methodists and from Salem Evangelical United Brethern our name was changed to Salem United Methodist.

Changing the name doesn't change our need for going to the services, which I
do when I can.

I've had a long life. As a youngster, I can remember seeing a face in the
moon; now I have lived to actually see a man walk on the moon and what a great
event that was.

I am honored to put my story on tape for the Barrington Historical
Society and I do hope that those who hear it will get something good from it.
Thank you.

IDA A. LANDWER

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