

WINIFRED FARNSWORTH HEVENOR VAN DE HOUTEN

HER LIFE

as Remembered by Her Son

John Van de Houten

PREFACE: I wrote this based on information and memories that I have. A son, of course, has no memories of his mother's early life except that which he may have been told - and he remembers. There is always the chance some may not be accurate or may be slightly of context. However, I have tried to present this as accurately as possible and, I believe, it is accurate and consistent with the facts.

I must also thank my aunt, Ruth Klein, for her help through letters, notes and conversation - she could well be added to the byline. They added a great deal to the early years and helped verify some of my memories. It would not be the same without her help. Any errors, though, are my responsibility.

If this were written by Joan, Caryl or Dick, it would undoubtedly be somewhat different. Their memories would highlight different areas - and they would remember different things. Overall, though, I believe it would be consistent. A son may also be biased in his outlook on a parent. Again, I have tried to be objective, but will not guarantee that the facts presented are without some bias toward the love and high regard that I have for her. This regard is one that has increased as I delve through the data and memories and try to put them down. Hopefully, I am reasonably objective.

Her Life

Winifred's (Winnie's) father, Winfield (Win) Hevenor was born in Rhinebeck, N. Y. in 1875. He was raised in Albany, NY where his father was a toolmaker and Civil War veteran. The second of ten children (seven lived to adulthood), his parents were active in the Lutheran Church - his father serving on the session.

In 1896, when he was 21 years old he decided to go to the Klondike. Much as Jack Thornton in Jack London's "Call of the Wild," he undoubtedly was more interested in developing his independence and maturity than he was in gold. He rode his bike from Albany to Illinois - in days before paved roads. He stayed at a cousin's in DeKalb, IL for about a year. His cousin was the daughter of Win's father's brother. Her married name was Margaret Smith. She often visited us in La Grange with her son, Folger Smith. Folger wrote a brief family history for his nephews which had a great deal of fiction in it. But it sounded good.

After saving some money, he took a train to Washington State. He worked in a logging camp where he developed pneumonia, disrupting his plans for the Klondike. He returned to New York by train - going through Canada. It's hard to imagine the beauty and splendor of these areas before the day of the car and mass emigration to the West. Though many cities were growing fast, it was not until the twentieth century that civilization changed massive portions of the land. For a Sierra Clubber, like me, this would be a magnificent dream come true.

Upon his return, Win worked for the Albany YMCA. He was Secretary of the Boy's Department. He actively pursued physical fitness there. A picture showing his back muscles was used in advertisements for the YMCA. He used Indian clubs and dumbbells to build up his muscles - doing many different tricks with them. He exercised all of his life - contrary to the idea that this is a late 20th century fad.

He went on a trip to New Brunswick, N. J. for a YMCA meeting that was to change the rest of his life - and ours. While there he met Lillian Reineck - a member of the Second Presbyterian Church and a teacher in the city. She was the second of four children. Her father had died when she was ten years old. Her mother raised the family - with the help of her oldest son. That son, Edward, was fourteen at the time, but by the law of the time he was an adult. He dropped out of school and went to work soon after the death of their father. The three remaining children all grew up and went to college. Lillian had two years of schooling to become a teacher. Her sister, Edna, who was a kindergarten teacher in Oak Park, Illinois probably had the same schooling. Her brother, Robert, went to Rutgers University in New Brunswick and received a degree in Civil Engineering. He went to work for the Coast and Geodetic Service out of Washington, D.C. - travelling around the West in many desolate areas. After I went to Washington, D. C. in 1951, I often visited Uncle Rob.

At 6pm on November 12, 1901 Winfield and Lillian were married in her church. After the honeymoon, they lived in Albany.

On May 16, 1903 their first child, Winifred Farnsworth, was born. The middle name being the family name of Lillian's mother and a family that originally came to the Colonies in the early 1600s - One family in that line, the Prescott family, is probably a direct line back to Alfred the Great. Other lines can be traced to 1066 and, possibly, to other European

monarchs. Both Win and Lillian's husband's families are interesting in their English, German and Dutch backgrounds - but that is a different story - except for the religious aspects discussed later.

She may have been the first paternal grandchild, although one of Win's brother Royal's sons, Royal, Jr. could be slightly older. In any case, she was always close to her two aunts there - Margaret, who was seventeen when Winnie was born, and Edna, who was thirteen. These were the only two surviving Hevenor sisters. Margaret never married - she had been engaged but decided she should take care of her father in his later years. This was once normal for a young daughter - but less common in the late twenties. Edna married Ed Wang in the late 20s - she had met him at work. They never had children. Ed was notorious for going around the house all day - singing random notes.

On the maternal side she had two older cousins living in Kansas. Their parents had been to the wedding in New Brunswick, but it was too far to be close to the family as it grew up. Other cousins lived in Wisconsin - to date I have very little knowledge of these - except for a cousin of Lillian's, in Lake Mills, where they took me on visits to the farm of the "Schultzs." Another Wisconsin relative was Rev. Henry A. Miner, a Congregational Minister in Madison. He died at 103 years in 1932. Two of her grandmother's sisters, Ella and Frank, were often visitors through the years as Lillian's children grew. They lived in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

A short time later, Winfield decided to go into sales and they moved to Indianapolis, IN. There he travelled from town to town selling men's underwear for "Munson." He was on the road for about four days a week and then home for three.

A letter that he wrote to Winnie while he was on the road is in the Appendix.

They had several homes in Indianapolis. Ruth was born on Capital Avenue in July 1906. Margaret and Carolyn were born at 31st and Ragner - Margaret in March 1910 and Carolyn in August 1911. Winnie and Ruth played a great deal together being the closest in age. Winnie would climb trees and take advantage of her extra years - Ruth still talks how she couldn't keep up with her. They had six cherry trees, so many interesting opportunities to climb. One had two branches like parallel bars. Winnie would flip back and forth on them and then have Ruth try unsuccessfully. She could climb any tree like a monkey. She loved to read and would take a book up in the tree to read.

Ruth says she was "awful good to me and would include her kid sister in many of her activities - which I loved. Being the oldest, Winnie was the one to help Mother the most in the kitchen - and she was good there. I got the fun jobs of setting the table, dusting, etc."

Ruth remembers the two of them playing in their Indianapolis house and running up and down the front and back stairways.

A story I remember Winnie telling me, was about a visit Uncle Roy and his wife made to Indianapolis. It was the year of the first Indianapolis 500, 1911 - Winnie was eight years old. Roy and his wife decided to go to the race. They took a streetcar and Winnie sneaked on the back of it. She didn't let her Uncle see her until they got to the end. She then came up to them and, rather than send her home, they took her to the race.

The religious upbringing of the family was possibly the strongest individual influence on the children - outside of the family itself. It would be difficult to simply intersperse this throughout the narrative.

As mentioned Win's father was active in the Lutheran Church. He was brought up in the German Reformed Lutheran Church in his birthplace of Rhinebeck New York. The name Hevenor was originally Hübner. The paternal line, the community, and the major influence, was German Palatine. His mother's side was English. His paternal grandmother was half English, from Nantucket Island, Mass., and half Dutch, from the original 1680 Dutch settlers along the Hudson. These ancestors lived in Athens and Coxsackie, New York. There are two homes in Athens on the Historical Building List of NY - built in 1709 and 1720 - by Van Loon g-g-g-g-grandparents. I have a book The Albany Protocol. It contains the written notes of the first Lutheran minister in the colonies - part of his congregation being the Athens, New York Dutch community. Our ancestral names are found throughout his records.

All of this religious background led Win to very deep religious beliefs. He was a deacon and an elder in The Presbyterian Church. In the thirties I remember his serving as a kind of semi - assistant minister during services.

Folger Smith, in the history already mentioned, spoke of Win as "the best Christian I ever encountered (and most of them I mistrust). He never talked religion or proselyted. He was strict, but all his family respected and loved him."

Lillian's paternal grandfather came from Germany in 1834 to be the Pastor in the Shrewsbury, PA Reformed Church. Lillian's father, John Reinecke, was born there in 1841. John's mother died when he was eleven and his father when he was seventeen, but this was his primary, early influence. An older brother of John was also a Pastor in the same area. Olive Farnsworth, Lillian's mother grew up in a small town in Bradford County, Pennsylvania - East Smithfield. Papers I have suggest the depth of her religious background as a young girl. She went one year to Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts, a girl's college, where religion was then the principle emphasis - homekeeping was specifically excluded as the responsibility of the students' mothers.

Lillian was also active in the La Grange Presbyterian Church. Among other activities, she was President of the Women's Association in 1923. They were not very socially inclined except with respect to the church. She was active in the La Grange Women's Club and played bridge with a church group. I don't, however, remember her and Win socializing outside of the church activities.

Lillian and Win never had an alcoholic drink in their lives - until late in life when a doctor told Lillian that a little wine would help the heart. A bottle of wine sat on the shelf for years until Lillian tried some. It stayed open for a while longer. They had been very much for prohibition. After repeal, they would only go to restaurants which did not serve alcohol. During a visit, Carolyn saw the open bottle - and came to me completely astounded, asking what it was. Win's father had been very much against alcohol, but this was not typical of his siblings. Lillian's family appeared to be more this way.

This was the environment in which the four daughters grew up. All four led active Presbyterian Church lives. Winifred was the least active, rarely attending church. There was no question, though, that she retained her deep religious feelings and the ethics that come with that - not radicalism, but an attitude in dealing with people honestly and fairly. She clearly said as much to me in answer to a question I raised in later years. I never heard her swear.

She was, of course, the oldest child with many traits that brings. Dr. Kevin Leman, in his book "Growing Up Firstborn" lists the following as often typical of the first born:

Perfectionist, Driven, Organized, Scholarly, List-maker, Logical, Leader, Compliant and Aggressive.

Leman's ideas are not universally accepted, in spite of his book being a big seller. Differences in heredity and home environments help shape the similarities and differences. It was particularly difficult for a female then to demonstrate being a leader, aggressive, and driven. Nevertheless, Leman's traits were there and Winnie had many of these characteristics. She was a free thinker, organized, scholarly, but outgoing, and logical.

Meanwhile, Win's older brother-in-law, Edward Reineck started, in 1911, a wallpaper business on Ogden Boulevard in Chicago - the Commercial Wallpaper Company. Ed hired his brother-in-law as a salesman. Winfield became Secretary of the company and, after Ed's death in 1930, Vice-President and Treasurer of the company.

In 1914 they moved from Indianapolis to Maywood, IL.

During Winnie's sophomore year in Maywood's Proviso High School, she was in various activities documented in the February and April issues of "Provi" - a Senior class publication. See the Appendix for three poems published in it. In addition, I found a pencilled "W. H." by a short poem that I concluded she wrote:

CHINA FRUIT

Roses and lilies and violets-
Bread and buns and omelets-
Rats and mice and little fat pigs-
Bran and soup and Pompeian figs-
I like them all,
Whatever they be;
And that's what maketh Chopsuey.

Another activity was the "Societas Latina." On April 10, seven members talked about Roman vs. American ways of life. A talk on "Roman Craze for Amusement" by one student preceded one on "American Craze for Amusement" by Winifred Hevenor.

Another sidelight is an article on a PTA meeting at which there was a debate on "Resolved: 'That the Junior High School Is Superior to the Eight-Four Plan'." Three parents argued each side - one of the Negative speakers was Winfield S. Hevenor. A large crowd attended and the three judges were deciding, while a violinist played - but they didn't document which side won.

In the summer of 1918, just before the end of WWI, they moved to LaGrange, IL. At first they rented a house on North Brainard Avenue. A year later they bought the 20 E. Ogden Avenue house - in which they lived until 1950.

In the 1919 LTHS Tabulae, the only mention of Winnie is her participation in the annual "Literary Contest" - where she spoke on the topic "Effect of the Revolution on American Literature." Unfortunately, the judges didn't see fit to give her an award.

In 1920, her senior year, she continued actively in the Literary Contest and the "Philomathean." There is a page in the appendix on this group - which fails to describe what it is. She, again was one of five participating in the annual "Extemporaneous Speech" competition. I can only believe she kept it because she did well in it. These, plus the page with Winnie's picture from the 1920 Tabulae, are in the Appendix. I have her last semester's Report Card that shows she took three subjects - English IV with an average of 91, History IV with 93 and Physics with 86.

Another memory of Ruth's, "Winnie was fearless. When we first lived at 20 E. Ogden, we had an "icebox" on the back porch. One night Winnie went out to the icebox for something and she heard a noise in the bushes. Instead of going in the house like most people, she went into the yard to investigate and got knocked out by a trespasser(?)."

She told me, when I was an adult, the first offcolor story she remembered hearing. A Jewish congregation was trying to think of a present to give to their Rabbi of longstanding. After much thought they presented him with a small tree - eucalyptus.

About this time, Winnie took a trip to visit her two great-aunts in Las Cruces, New Mexico. Ella and Frank had moved there in the 1880s when Ella's employer, the telegraph company, offered her the transfer. They had just opened a new line to the Southwest. Frank had married, but was widowed early and did not have children. Winnie always remembered this trip as a highlight of her early life - and well she should. This was still an unknown West - if less than when the aunts first arrived. The two aunts were very family oriented, even if far away. While there, they made a trip to Mexico and she had momentos from there the rest of her life. I remember a serape and a distinctive painted Mexican water bottle with matching cup upside down over the mouth.

She was admitted to Wooster College - a Presbyterian College in Ohio - for the 1920-21 school year. She was the first of the four sisters to attend college and receive Bachelor's degrees. For the times, and even today, for a family of four girls to graduate from college is excellent. Ruth commented that their parents were the motivation and Uncle Ed helped out financially - otherwise they couldn't have made it.

The motivation for this was very strong. Education was important in Lillian's family and only slightly less in Winfield's. Though he only had a High School education that was still considerably above average. The enclosed charts show the very small percentage of students that graduated from High School early in this century. Also there is a chart showing the percentage of twenty-three year olds that graduate from college with a Bachelor's degree throughout the 1900s. There are several surprising items here. The number of females completing High School is higher than males.

Apparently, education at that level was considered to be more important in raising a family than it was to a man's livelihood and ability to provide for that same family. Men often served an apprenticeship in a trade in lieu of schooling.

However, the opposite is true for women graduating from college. There is a much lower ratio of female graduates. For women, college was apparently considered a luxury by most people. The ratio did not reach equality until the 1980s. In 1924, the year Winnie graduated, only 34.2% of the graduates were women - but the ratio had increased significantly in only a few years. Women did go to college to become teachers - that could be done in one or two years and a large group of women in 1924 would have become teachers - the only common opportunity other than to become a wife. Winnie had a B. S. degree. I wish I had the data on the number of women attaining that.

Ruth graduated from New Jersey State Teachers College (affiliated with Rutgers) in 1927. Margaret graduated from Wooster in 1931. Carolyn also graduated from Wooster in 1932.

Overall, 2.27% of women graduated from college in 1930. The probability of selecting four girls from all twenty-three year old females in the country in 1930, and selecting four that graduated from college is:

$$0.0227^4 = .000,000,265$$

Other than an exercise, this is, of course, ridiculous. It does give an idea of how rare this was. Even today in the most motivated families it is unusual.

Many factors determine when a girl would go to college - intelligence, motivation, money for tuition, marriage, etc. These will be highly correlated for all in a family.

These girls had these assets. All were very intelligent. They were motivated, financially able and they put off marriage. This, in turn, has motivated later generations of the family, which also has a record of exceptionally high college attendance.

Ruth has commented "Winnie had an excellent mind - I think she got it from Dad's side of the family as he had a brother, Robert, that had a photographic mind. He worked for a pharmaceutical company and could recite all medicines, uses, side effects and prices off with speed anytime. Anything he ever read he could relate to you in detail. He was really something.

"Whenever Winnie had a math problem that she couldn't solve, after working on it for a long time, she would go to bed. The next morning she could go right to the problem and solve it. Her mind must have worked on it all night." Of course, all four were exceptionally intelligent people.

Another comment Ruth made to me, which probably explains many of Winnie's activities, was "She was ahead of her time - not so much rebellious as wanting freedom - and to think as she wanted to. I believe this comment explains part of why, in later years, she had as much patience

with me as she did. She probably understood more about me, during my rebellious and difficult years, than I did.

During her first semester at Wooster, she made many friends - of both sexes. I never thought of her as one that would date much, but one doesn't normally think of their parents in those terms. She had more men friends than I ever imagined. Again, Ruth commented that they would go on dates together and at times Winnie would arrange blind dates for her. Several letters that she saved, which I now have, are from men - from both High School and College.

Her second semester, however, started with a suddenness not planned. Ten students went tobogganing on a Wednesday in January. The toboggan overturned and seriously hurt Winnie and one of the fellows. He wrote to Winnie while she was in pain in Wooster and after she returned to La Grange. He was also in the accident, but did not leave the school or even tell his mother all the details.

They had become good friends during the short time they were in school. He would often walk Winnie back from Chapel. They would go to the movies together and he'd "give her his pennies." He signed his letters "Mandy" though his name was Bill. Maybe a way of keeping that space between them while still calling her his best friend.

In one note he wrote, "I worried an awful lot about you last night because they tell me you were hurt but nobody knew how bad until Mitch came back from bringing you up from the hospital. He sure is wild about you and thinks I am more than lucky in knowing you as (allow me to say) my best friend. Personally, I think you are the bravest, pluckiest, dearest girl I have ever known." He was, himself, in bed with a broken leg expecting to "hobble" around on crutches in a week or so.

In another letter he said "I have a T. L. for you. C. Hinman told me over a week ago that what he said about girls with bobbed hair did not apply to you. Instead he claims you look perfectly stunning with yours bobbed."

The next Tuesday night he wrote, "To think you are going home in a baggage car! Whoever would have thought at Christmas time that the next time it would be in that kind of a pullman."

These letters were obviously ones she cherished as she kept them.

The accident damaged her right thigh with a very deep cut. Ruth said "a hole big enough to put your fist in." I remember a very large scar - maybe six inches long and half an inch or more deep on her thigh. She did not return to Wooster for a while, as a month later, letters from girl friends were sent to LaGrange.

In any case she did return, and graduated at the normal time. I remember a scrapbook she had of her days in Wooster, that has disappeared. The only specific item I remember was an empty Camel cigarettes package. She took up smoking while there and continued for the rest of her life.

One of the few stories I remember hearing, was a classic - about her Shakespeare class. The Professor was discussing "Hamlet" and difficulties in interpretation. He mentioned the line, "He's fat and scant of breath" as an example of one that experts had not been able to interpret due to the term "fat.". Winnie raised her hand and said that she remembered once, when

she was in Wisconsin, she passed a farm where a woman that had been working hard and was sweating a great deal, had said she was "fat." Winnie said she had understood her to mean that she was "sweaty."

Later, when her sister, Carolyn, was taking a class from the same professor, he mentioned what Winnie had said to the class. He told the class, that he had pursued this interpretation with experts in the field ever since.

In a letter to Winnie from the professor, Waldo Dunn, in 1926, he stated philologists had been pursuing her suggestion. He asked Winnie for an accounting of where she had heard this and a narrative of the experience.

She never answered the letter, being too embarrassed to admit she had made this up on the spur of the moment. Carolyn was aware of all of this, but was too embarrassed to dare mention the facts.

A few years ago, I purchased a 1975 book by Willard Espy An Almanac of Words At Play. Entries are by date of the year and have a variety of comments, poems, etc. For April 22, which "is probably Shakespeare's birthday," he relates the same line as a puzzle for years - until a "Shakespearean scholar," while walking in England had virtually the same experience related by Winnie. There's no way of knowing for sure, but the story could have easily evolved from hers - particularly with Waldo Dunn using her statement and presenting it to Shakespearean scholars. (See the Appendix).

Throughout the years, Winnie wrote poems and put down thoughts on various subjects as she thought of them. It's hard to tell when they were written - some were undoubtedly from her school days. One on "The Democratic Spirit," was written her senior year at LTHS. Examples of these are in the Appendix. She sent the item, with various quotations from poems, to "Information Please" in the forties. This was the top rated radio program in the early forties. It had well-known experts on it, such as Oscar Levant and Franklin P. Adams. Clifton Fadiman was the MC. One occasional panelist was the organist from our church in LaGrange - who had "perfect pitch" and was used to demonstrate it. Her submission was not selected, but it displays her interests in this type of literature

In spite of this interest and ability in Literature and English, she majored in Mathematics and minored in Chemistry. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree on June 11, 1924 with "Honors." In the graduating class there were 80 who graduated with a B. A., 42 with a B. S. and one from the Conservatory of Music. Of the B. S. graduates, surprisingly, 16 appear to be females.

Her best friend and roommate from Wooster was Ella Jacot, from Apple Creek, Ohio. She became postmistress in a small town in Ohio, possibly Apple Creek, and got both of us started in stamp collecting. She used to send Winnie blocks of U. S. commemorative stamps with the Plate Block number on them. This started in the mid-30s, but they never appreciated the way many stamps did. The idea was sound, though.

How much she dated in college I can't tell. I know she was popular from the various notes and facts I have collected. Her pictures show her as an attractive girl. She was unquestionably an active, outgoing person with many friends of both sexes.

One student she dated was - Arthur Compton. He was the Nobel Prize winner for Physics in 1927. His father had been Dean of Students at Wooster - and he also attended the school. I'm sure a person with such a brilliant mind could be a friend of Winnie's. I met him in the early 40s when she took me to a speech he gave in Chicago - I believe at the Opera House on Michigan Boulevard. After the talk, she went to see him and talk about old times. He gave me his autograph - "to Johnny Van de Houten."

Ruth remembers Winnie wanting to be a missionary in Africa after she graduated. Her parents wouldn't think of it, though. Travel, in general, was not like today and Africa had large areas still very poorly explored, and the thought of Africa could be scary.

She returned to La Grange after graduation and took a job in the laboratory at Cook County Hospital in Chicago. One day while working there, Dillinger's body was brought into the morgue. Winnie went with others for a viewing.

One of the women she met at the hospital was Pat Haughy. Pat was dating Al Van de Houten - marrying Al in 1926. Al was a "journeyman" bootlegger during Prohibition. Later he went into the tavern business.

Pat soon introduced Winnie to Ed Van de Houten. They fell in love immediately - a classic example of love at first sight. Ruth believes they only went out on one date before deciding to get married.

Ed was, by all signs, a very personable, suave and goodlooking man. He was married once before, when he was twenty years old. That lasted only a short time. He already was a heavy drinker, a problem that was to affect the rest of his life - and his wife and children. His family had considerable money for the times - being near millionnaires. Certainly he knew his way around Chicago - its speakeasies and nightlife.

They went to one New Year's Eve party that a gangster also attended. He had been convicted and was to start his jail term shortly after the Holidays. He took a fancy to Winnie and after he went to prison wrote to her at the 20 E. Ogden Ave address. She told me how scared she was that her parents would see one of the letters. She stayed by the door until the mailman arrived to intercept anything that might be delivered.

Their wedding ceremony was in River Forest, Tuesday evening, January 11, 1927, at the home of her uncle, Ed Reineck. The ceremony was performed by Dr. Ira Allen the minister of the La Grange Presbyterian Church. A friend of the family, Virginia Larsen from La Grange played the piano. George Elworth was the best man - Ed's lawyer brother-in-law.

The maid of honor was Winnie's sister Ruth and the attendants were Ella Jacot and Mrs. Al Van de Houten. One of the ushers was Al Van de Houten who, according to what he told me, barely made it to the service. The police were looking for him, at the time, and he took a circuitous route to River Forest to evade the police - but managed to get there.

Ironically, there is no mention of the groom's parents attending the ceremony.

The writeup on the service appeared two days later in the La Grange Citizen, the local weekly. In fact they were married on September 7, 1926. However, Ruth was the only one in her family that Winnie had told. When I mentioned this a short time ago, Ruth was startled, as she thought she was

still the only one aware of this. I have a copy of the marriage certificate filed in Chicago.

In the writeup of the ceremony, it was mentioned - "The young people are starting for Southern states in a day or so where the groom will be employed during the winter, but wherever they ultimately establish their home, certain it is that every good wish for happiness is theirs, and that they are very popular among their friends was shown in the lovely display of remembrances which will some day grace that home."

The implication that he didn't have a permanent job was a sign of the uncertain life they were to lead for the next few years. Ed had only completed two years of High School - another fact in the inconsistency of the lives of these two. Ed was twenty-nine and Winnie 23 when they married. The 20s, in general, was a period of great over optimism - that soon came tumbling down. If they were to take a compatibility test - and there are many books today on this - they would undoubtedly fail. I doubt, though, that they would have given it any credibility over their feelings.

I have a card showing he was a salesman in Chicago. This was probably in the 20s, before they were married.

Nevertheless, they were in love and Winnie was to retain that love for the many difficult years of their lives. She may have had occasional doubts. Under today's divorce and lifestyle philosophies it's not at all sure what would have happened. I don't believe, and Ruth agrees, that she ever seriously considered divorce or separation. She married for life.

They honeymooned in New Orleans. They returned there the next year, as I have a program from the First Presbyterian Church in New Orleans dated January 15, 1928 - a year after their wedding.

Ed became a district sales manager for Pulver Gum Company - a company no longer in existence. I remember their machines on the outside of the "News Agency" on Hillgrove Avenue in La Grange. You put a penny in and a little man turned around and dropped a piece of gum out.

I have a few pictures of them taken in April 1929 in the Ozarks, 3 months before I was born, where they travelled and stayed at a large resort hotel. Al and Pat were in the Ozarks about the same time - he was in hiding. They probably were visiting Al and Pat. Al was always closest to them throughout their lives - and Pat and Winnie were, of course, very close.

They had moved to Kansas City, Missouri at some point after the honeymoon. An apartment was rented until about the middle of 1930. I was born in July 1929 - Winnie went back to La Grange for the birth - in the Berwyn, Illinois Hospital. She returned to Kansas City shortly after that. They told me their apartment had a window through to the next apartment. Through it, a young couple, who were expecting, would watch the baby in the crib. The couple named their son "J R" after me - though I'm sure the poor guy had to make some changes as he grew up.

I can only imagine the subsequent of events and the cause. Ed's drinking was always heavy. The 1929 crash and subsequent depression would particularly hurt a person with limited education - no matter how much native intelligence he had. And he was a very intelligent person.

His parents lost a large portion of their money in the year following the August 1929 crash. His mother lost \$200,000 in one bank that asked her not to take her money out - and then it collapsed. It's very difficult now to fully understand the effect this had on people in 1929 and the 30s. To read about the many who jumped from buildings or otherwise committed suicide gives some measure of the trauma of this period. The depression was to go on for ten years - until World War II started. Unemployment was above 30% for a short period - in 1932 the average for the year was 23.6%. Those with jobs often could barely survive.

Ed was to have a severe breakdown to go with his alcohol problems. In 1930 they returned to Illinois and Winnie's parents took in the three of us. They had moved to Hammond, Indiana from La Grange, as the wallpaper factory was moving to a larger facility that year. Win went to assure that it was done right - during a very difficult period.

To complicate it, Uncle Ed Reineck died December 19, 1930, after a long illness. He would go to Hammond for a half day - driven by a handyman/chauffeur. Later, he tried to run the company and its move from his home - until his death. Winfield became Vice-President and Treasurer of the company. They kept the house in La Grange and after a period, Lillian wanted to move back - so they packed up and returned. Ruth had moved to Hammond in 1928 as a school teacher. When her parents were there, she and her friend and co-teacher, Florence Schaeffer, lived with her parents. When they left, she stayed in Hammond until she married in 1938.

Hammond is on the Indiana State Line, Southeast of Chicago and South of Gary. Winfield commuted from La Grange by train - not learning to drive until 1936. He took the suburban CB&Q to the Union Station in Chicago - walked across town to Michigan Boulevard and caught the Illinois Central train to Hammond - returning at night. In bad weather he could take the "L" across town. There was no car at all in the household, for a few years, as Ed and Winnie couldn't afford to keep one, though both drove.

The house was a good size with adequate accommodations for Win, Lillian, and the family of three to live there - plus their two youngest daughters, Margaret and Carolyn, when home from Wooster. Margaret married in 1931 and Carolyn in 1935. For a couple in their mid-fifties this could be a very trying period. I'm sure they had no doubts as to their decision, as they clearly would support their family. This was a deep religious and personal feeling and belief. There were, of course, some pluses - like finally having a baby boy in the house after raising four girls.

About this time Winnie had the second of the diseases/accidents that would affect her throughout her life - a severe case of trench mouth or Vincent's Angina. It received its name during WWI when troops in the trenches commonly were afflicted with it. Today it would not be a significant problem - but these were the days before antibiotics as we know them. It was a disease typically not discussed, as it was considered a "disease of filth" or "it could be caught by kissing." It was not uncommon in those days and though it went away it would often reappear. In Winnie's case it developed into a very severe case, affecting her teeth and gums and developing into Bell's Palsy. She ended up with dental plates as a result of tooth/gum damage. (Her dentist was an old friend of hers that always tickled her on the upper mouth. Years later she started going to another dentist because she couldn't stand this anymore.)

Bell's Palsy affects the nerves in the face and paralyzes the side of the face. Typically, this is temporary and goes away. In Winnie's case it was a permanent condition that always embarrassed her. She often would hold a handkerchief to cover the cheek to hide the way it looked. Again, it is probably a condition that with today's medical progress and insurance would be quickly cured. It was much more difficult then.

Ed had a few jobs, such as working for a paint and wallpaper contractor. They remained friendly, but Ed's stability was not conducive to long time employment and he remained unemployed for the remainder of the 30s. He had a good variety of tools and did considerable work around the house. He would wallpaper and paint. I remember helping him in the dining room. He showed me how to paint and details on wallpapering. This made me confident in later years to do these tasks on my own. He also became interested in electronics, building an early version of a high fidelity amplifier from components.

In the mid thirties, major changes were made to the house. The partition between the Living Room and Parlor was removed to make one large room. A half bath was built near the kitchen and a shower was added to the tub in the upstairs bath. The coal furnace was modified from a shovel loaded one to an automatic stoker - that only required filling once a day. They bought an automatic washing machine for the basement. AND the icebox was replaced with an electric refrigerator. Ed helped wherever he could.

Though only three people moved in, the family soon grew. The twins were born in 1932 and Dick in 1934. By now the grandparents were sixty years old. But there were two boys and the first twins known in the family, except for two distant cousins that were born in 1822. It's hard to imagine a more fun family than this - even given some small bias on my part. The girls were adorable and a great attraction. The boys were also cute and - here were now two boys to fill the past void.

I clearly remember the twins coming home and being put in a crib in their parent's room. They were, of course, the center of attention when visitors came by. They continued being both cute and popular - I was jealous as well as fascinated by them. I also remember the thrill of Ed taking me to the Hinsdale Hospital when Dick was born. I was too young to go in, but Winnie held the baby up at the second floor window for me to see.

The eight people began to put a slight strain on the facility - but I'm sure it was little noticed. Except, that is, for Dick, who never had a room of his own. He had a single bed in our parent's bedroom. This arrangement had a lot of disadvantages - but the Puritans and many other early settlers had one room homes for larger families than this.

Throughout the 30s they hired maids to help with the chores. In the twenties and early thirties, they often had a live in maid. Then I was put in the back bedroom where they had stayed. A lot of the work was also done by Winnie. She did the shopping at the A&P, at a \$20 per week cost. For this amount we often had prime rib on Sundays and good meals throughout the week. Bread was often homemade - & delicious. We occasionally had squab - which was raised by our A&P butcher. Another "delicacy" was fried lamb kidneys for breakfast - a meat I later cooked for my family until they lost interest - which was very soon. Normal breakfasts consisted of bacon and eggs - at that time no one knew about cholesterol. In fact, it doesn't appear to have affected the health of our family - due to the great genes inherited.

She was a great cook making a variety of memorable foods. Ruth remembers her sweet potatoes as being incomparable. Holiday meals were both delicious and large - with twenty or more family members often being there. I couldn't stand the eggplant casseroles then - but they have since become one of my favorites, that I try to duplicate with some success.

In 1935-6 Winnie began to lose the sight in one eye. She made regular trips to Billings Hospital, part of the University of Chicago, to see specialists. Nevertheless, she gradually lost most of the sight in the eye. They never made a firm diagnosis of the condition, but their belief was it was caused by trichinosis in the optic nerve. She remembered eating "delicious" pork sandwiches near Cook County Hospital, but the meat was pink - not very well done.

She continued to drive and generally live her life as if there was no difference. The major problem with sight in only one eye, is the loss of depth perception. I have at times throughout my life, when thinking about her, tried to drive using only one eye - with a very noticeable and uncomfortable difference. Whether getting used to it would help, I don't know. She was a careful driver and to the best of my memory never had an accident.

The Depression Era was very severe and many stories exist about people and their hardships. Tales of "Okies" going to California - e.g., in John Steinbeck's Grapes of Wrath - and the bread lines all over the country are well known. The unemployed and destitute were not due to the drugs and emotional problems of today's homeless - but to the severity of the economic conditions. It was a time nationally that, hopefully, will never happen again.

Our family was very isolated from these conditions. Winfield's income was more than adequate to handle the expenses - in fact it was probably the peak of the inexpensive wallpaper market they serviced. By 1950, the success of KemTone and other do-it-yourself paints, had a serious impact on the wallpaper business. La Grange was a town of middle class working families. The worst we encountered were a few "hobos" coming to the door for handouts or sleeping in the wooded area behind the property. I remember black baseball players in games "down the hill" in the park - often watching them. But the blacks in La Grange were also in better shape than most throughout the country - hiring out as maids and handymen or laborers, around the town. They were very poor - but they had homes and food.

Winnie and Ed were both readers and were regular customers of the LaGrange Public Library. Winnie particularly liked detective stories and regularly checked the new book shelf - taking two or three books out at a time. New books cost two cents a day because of their popularity. She was a fast reader and never had to keep them long.

Another way she passed time was playing Solitaire. She would sit and play - also smoking, if she was in her room. (The rest of the house was off limits to smoking.) She would also deal out bridge hands, studying and playing them out. She enjoyed this, but playing bridge with others was her real card passion. She could probably have played competitively, if she had the chance to play more. Her social life was limited and kept her from serious competition. There were some bridge clubs that she played with. In the 40's she played regularly with a group. Two of them had Master's points and she more than held her own with them.

Another of her regular recreational outlets was the Chicago Daily News crossword puzzle. She, of course, loved words and this was a daily chance to keep them alive. Her favorite was the Thursday puzzle, one without the squares marked for the words - just one large block of open squares. They had to be blackened in as words were entered. If the wrong word was entered, it might change the whole layout so one could never get out of it. She typically completed all but a very few spaces and often completed it.

She stopped going to church after her marriage - to be with Ed on Sundays. In the early days in La Grange she also had children at home. In La Grange she was active in other church activities. She went to the Woman's Association activities and attended Circle regularly. I always believed, and she said later, she remained a religious person - but in her own way - adapting to the difficulties she experienced. Her life was led as a strong Christian.

Her maternal instincts included calmness and patience. She was seldom angry with her children - even when she had good reason to be. The article in the Appendix, that I've called "Parenting" is a good reflection of how she raised us. I'm not sure when she wrote it. She loved nursery rhymes and similar catchy poetry, and reading to young children. Good manners were expected of us by her and her parents. For example, at the dining table we would all sit together for a formal meal, sitting there as long as they could put up with us. Dinner always started with grace by Winfield. He would then serve everyone. As we grew older we were all expected to help clean up, wash and dry the dishes. As a mother she did get support from Lillian, though it was more as a role model and synergistic, than active participant. Lillian did correct small errors of etiquette and grammar which we made - which helped us grow into acceptable adults. There were clear-cut advantages to living with our grandparents. Where Ed could not be a roll model, Win could and was.

In later years as I, in particular, became a very difficult teenager, it was her patience and obvious, but quiet, love that had the greatest effect on my later stability. As an example, I can clearly remember a day in my Junior year of High School, when I told her I didn't want to go to college and saw no reason to finish High School. At the time, I was a very poor, unmotivated student - to be tactful toward myself. Her response was a very calm "it was important that I finish High School, and then we could decide on college." This one conversation, as simple as it may sound was a major factor on my settling down the next year in High School and never, after that having any real doubts about my going to College. I was undoubtedly testing waters, but I was also a very difficult boy to control. This type of calm response, that few parents are capable of, was her strength. I'm sure she never had a doubt that I would go to College.

Meanwhile, in the winter of 1939-40, Ed reached a point where his coping became much worse. How much pressure he felt from others to straighten up, I don't know. He entered the hospital in Mattoon, Illinois. Records no longer exist that far back (I wrote to them). He unquestionably was there due to his alcoholism, but also, he told me, that he was under treatment for depression. Depression is often a genetic condition. It did occur in his family and would be aggravated by his alcoholism and lifestyle. A low level of depression is often and may have been a reason

for his alcoholism. In any case, it was a hopeful time that didn't last. Today with more sophisticated treatments, success would be much more likely.

Over the next two years he again got worse. In 1940, due to an incident, Winfield told him he must leave the house. He went to Chicago and stayed with his brother, Tues. He helped out in, of all places, "Tues's Tavern." He didn't return to live in La Grange until 1943, after he came back from England.

I once stated my parents were separated and was clearly told by Winnie that they weren't. Although they were living apart, she visited him regularly - staying at Tues's with him.

Ed unquestionably loved her - though his actions were often affected by alcohol. They never were demonstrative or showed these feelings - but then neither did her parents. This feeling came through stronger when he lived in Chicago or wrote to her during the War. It was much clearer in later years as their lives settled down.

In spite of the difficulties, her mind would have perceived it as illness - a belief not general then - but now accepted. Whether it was emphysema, muscular dystrophy or an emotional illness, she would be supportive and understand that life wasn't all wonderful. Divorce may have crossed her mind, and with her Father's actions, divorce might not have been considered catastrophic by them. Divorce was much more serious in those days and there was the religious factor. She was a patient person and she remembered him when they had fun and were happy. Bad as it may have been at times, she always retained that love and stood by him in her quiet way.

The 30s was undoubtedly the worst period of her life. What saved her was the support of her parents - and having her children. Without her parents there would have been little recourse. Ed's parents died in 1935 and never had compassion for their children's partners and families. By then, they had lost most of their assets anyway.

It now was a changing economy. The war was beginning in Europe and Roosevelt's changes were beginning to take effect. The depression was coming to an end - finally. In 1938 a recession, as the economy was beginning to improve, took much of the previous gain away, but it came back quickly with the war economy.

Winnie decided she would go to work. Ruth remembers that her first job was making salads in the Marshall Field's restaurant. This was the major Department Store in Chicago - at the corner of State and Randolph Streets. The big clock on the corner is a landmark often seen in pictures. Winfield and Lillian were very much against any type of credit or borrowing. Of course, they didn't have to - and credit cards were not common, as today. The one concession was a charge card for Field's - and Lillian shopped there regularly. She would go in by train and the "L," which went from the Union Station to the second floor of Fields - very convenient. To make it easier, in those days Fields would deliver anything. So, she never had to lug packages back with her. Some things just don't change for the better.

In any case, it was probably a natural place for Winnie to consider. Though it was a comedown, it was a start. I don't know how long this job lasted. She soon took a position with the Army Signal Corps teaching mathematics to trainees learning electronics. This, of course, was much more "up her alley." I have a card she received "from the boys in the back row" when she left. They obviously thought a lot of her - I remember her talking about them.

Another message she received from one of the young men there was:

Mrs. Van Derskutten,

Dear little pal:

I really think you's one swell Guy, I so much hate to see you gone.

Maybee you's will change your thinking capacity. It vill be somewhat lonesome here mit out you. I also know Mr. Radmacher vill be somewhat lonesome here also,

We and uses wishes you's all zee good luck in zee world; love and smacks, Rad and Blueski, and all of usses to all of you'ns.

Shortly after that a High School friend of hers, a supervisor at Western Electric Company, told her of a position he had for testing a new technology - permalloy cores. She decided to accept it and started in the business from which she would retire. These cores were a development just patented by AT&T. They were to be used in telephone systems. During the war new applications for such developments were very limited. Nevertheless, production kept up and she kept busy - being the testing expert on them.

She would take the streetcar from La Grange- a block from the house - to Cicero Avenue and 22nd Street -where the plant was located.

Meanwhile Ed entered civilian service with the Signal Corps and went to England as an instructor. He was there when his brother Tues was killed by a German "buzz" bomb. In 1943 he returned and left the service - again due to his drinking. He returned to the La Grange house and took a job at Western Electric. However, absenteeism due to drinking interfered, and he soon lost that job - never to be employed again. He tried AA shortly after that, but it didn't work for him.

One trait Winnie was always proud of, was her ability to work very efficiently. She intuitively would handle things in a very productive way with a minimum of hand motions. This ability would make her an excellent employee in whatever endeavour she took up.

After the war, the cores Winnie was testing began to be used in computers - as one bit of memory. An anti-trust suit against AT&T gave rights to other companies for access to the patents and design data and the rights to manufacture them. Arnold Engineering Co., a Division of Alleghany Steel, was one of the winners. A manufacturer of magnetic materials, it fit in perfectly as a new product line. They approached Winnie to see if she would work for them and she accepted. In 1949 they moved to Marengo, Illinois where she was responsible for testing the new product line.

The twins were starting college at the University of Iowa. Dick stayed in La Grange to finish his High School at LTHS - a much superior school to Marengo's.

They packed their belongings and moved the 45 miles to Marengo. A house four miles outside of Marengo - two miles over gravel road - was rented. It was located on what had been the "Curtis Experimental Farm." A farmer bought the four hundred acre farm to raise hogs. Besides the main farm house, there were two small houses, previously used by employees of Curtis. They rented one of these. The hogs, dogs and frogs could often be heard. During winter snows, it was often impossible to get through though regularly plowed. The road was straight except for one short stretch at right angles. This would be quickly closed by the prevailing winds and blowing snow.

They began to have some social life with Arnold people. In particular, her supervisor, Joe Mitch and his wife, Mary, were very friendly. Ed was still drinking but it seemed to be less. At some later point he did quit.

In the spring it was beautiful. For the first time in nearly twenty years the two of them were on their own and able to plan their own lives.

There were wonderful wild asparagus and berries along the roadside that they would pick and cook while fresh. Green Giant had contracts with many farmers in the area to grow green beans for their cannery. The trucks came at harvest time, loading them to overflowing. Some always fell off the truck. We would pick them up right off the gravel. As a fresh vegetable these carefully selected plants, unavailable in any market unless canned, were outstanding.

They decided to move to town and rented a house on old Highway US 20 - then a main highway from Chicago to Rockford and the West Coast. It was an older house but larger, nearer work and very comfortable - and the roads were plowed well. She was more part of the management team if not truly a supervisor. Her personality and intelligence would make her distinct. If a man had her abilities and personality, he would undoubtedly have advanced quickly - at both Arnold's and Western Electric. This was before the days when a woman would be considered for management, however. I don't believe that she felt particularly discriminated against, though.

A short time later they bought the house in Marengo in which they lived the rest of their day's there. Though not large, they had a beautiful corner lot and a garage in back where Ed had his shop. The lot had many trees - mostly elms that many years later would be destroyed by Dutch Elm disease. This was a common problem in the midwest, but theirs lasted very well while they were still there.

In 1953 I enlisted in the Navy to go to OCS in Newport, RI. Before reporting, I had some time to spend in Marengo. While there I bought my first car - a 1950 Pontiac, with many more miles than on the speedometer. When I left, Winnie went with me and as far as Albany - to see her Aunts, Eddie and Marge. I don't believe she had been back to Albany since well before her wedding. Marge had visited us every few years - But I don't remember Eddie visiting. In any case they loved having her there - as she did being there.

One aspect of the large trees on the lot in Marengo, was their popularity with the birds. One variety was the starling - a European immigrant. Typical of such imports, whether bird, ground animal or plant, they have few natural enemies here and multiply fast. Starlings are highly gregarious, large flocks occur on fields and on lawns. They particularly are attracted to areas associated with man's activities.

They also had another problem - their droppings carried a disease - histoplasmosis - picked up from the soil. It is a fungal disease that in its severest form can be fatal - especially to children. Mild cases have symptoms similar to influenza and in more severe cases may have symptoms like tuberculosis. It can get into the body organs - in more moderate cases it can still result in calcification on the lungs. It can cause, occasionally, severe lung conditions requiring removal of calcified lung tissue.

In the late 1950s, Winnie began to have problems with her breathing and went to the doctor. As was typical of her problems, the local doctor couldn't diagnose her properly. It began to get worse and she went to a doctor in La Grange who had experience with the disease. He quickly diagnosed the cause of her problem. There were numerous cases near Chicago, but as yet very few as far away as Marengo. It was typical of her luck, she got it first. While not as severe as some others, the damage affected her permanently.

The product line at Arnold's became one useable in many alternatives. Obviously, cores of even fraction of inches in diameter didn't last long as computer memory. But new applications and the growth of the electronics industry kept it as a high volume market. Even in the 1990s, TRW used many such cores in their electronic assemblies for space communications - about 50% of which Arnold's supplied.

They are made from a powdered magnetic material that is sintered to form a hard doughnut shaped core. When this is wound with wires, it becomes an inductive transformer of great general use in electrical and electronic applications.

Between 1952 until 1957, her four children were married. For several years, the Hannas Family lived in Western Springs and was a stabilizing force in the area. During 1956, Joan was in Western Springs, Caryl in Maine, John in Washington, D.C. and Dick in California. In the sixties, Joan was in New Jersey, John in California, Caryl in Detroit and Dick in Florida - making it very difficult for her to visit her children frequently - and it was always busy when she visited.

In 1959, Dick accepted a job with Arnold's and with their oldest girl and dogs they moved to Marengo - buying a home in Crystal Lake. Vickie, Scotty and Ricky were born in the area. In about 1963, Dick and the family accepted another job in Florida and moved away.

In the sixties, Winnie had another one of her afflictions. This time her good eye had, what she described as a blood clot from one of the veins that, though healing well, left a scar on the focal point of the optic nerve. The treatment for this was limited and left her blind in what was her good eye. She found some peripheral vision in the other eye - but she was "legally" blind. A doctor in 1966 called both conditions "chorioretinitis" - indicating that at least the final condition was

similar in both eyes. Recently, there have been medical advances for similar conditions that might have helped repair at least part of the problem.

Ironically, the day I wrote the above paragraph, the evening newspaper had an article on the front page - "Scientists Predict End To Types Of Blindness." The prediction is that "the layers of rods, cones and other cells inside the rear part of the eye that convert images into nerve impulses sent to the brain" will soon be treated with retina cell transplants.

It is to Arnold's credit that they let her continue to work in spite of this - and she, in turn, would work conscientiously. Her knowledge, as well as the peripheral vision remaining, permitted her to perform her work acceptably. Life in general became restricted.

In about 1966, Arnold placed an ad in the technical journals showing her testing cores. See attached copy. She was blind at this point as can be seen from the way she is looking. Samples of the cores can be seen on the bench in front of her.

She continued to play solitaire and subscribed to a talking library for the blind. She could watch TV by sitting on the floor near the set looking at it out of the corner of her eye.

In 1964, while on a business trip, I stopped in Marengo to see them. Ed said he felt something in the back of his mouth. He tried, unsuccessfully, to show me. He went to a doctor who diagnosed it as cancer. He was placed in the hospital and the cancer operated on - probably successfully. Next came a mild stroke, from which he began to recover. He then came down with a pneumonia - which was treated. As he began to recover from that, another stroke that fatal. He was first diagnosed with diabetes when he tried to enlist in the Navy, in 1941. He had not believed it for many years, but it gradually got worse and ultimately he required insulin. Though this undoubtedly had some part in his death - in the end, it was a death from smoking too much for too many years.

They were married for thirty-eight years.

Winnie remained at Arnold's for a few more years. As she approached sixty-five and could draw on their retirement plan, she decided to retire - moving to Western Springs, with her father.

Win and Lillian sold their house on Ogden Avenue in 1950 and moved to their new home in Western Springs. Lillian had a stroke in 1951 and was in Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago. Her doctor sent her home in an ambulance "to die." While in transit, she came out of her coma and lived until January 1959. Though weak and often having difficulty getting around, she had a very happy respite, dieing the day before her 85th birthday. Her husband took very loving care of her - spending whatever time was necessary to provide her the best.

They had been very close and in love for fifty-eight years of marriage. Years later, during a visit to Western Springs, Win said to me how much he missed her. He was very sad as he told me this - emotions he very seldom showed.

From that time until Winnie moved in, he remained alone in the house. It was an ideal solution for both as he began to age - very slowly. They could keep each other company and help each other out. At times Winnie felt he did treat her as a young daughter, not able to take care of herself, but it was to the advantage of both.

She must have had moments of concern, fear and even anger at the way her life had been unlucky. She did not seem to let this affect her deeply except that in the years that followed, during visits, she would have a couple of drinks more often than in earlier years. She did not, of course, drink at home in Western Springs. There are few people who wouldn't be affected.

Winnie was able to travel more now and visited her family around the country - now near Niagara Falls, New York; Detroit, Michigan; Summit, New Jersey; and Orlando, Florida. The last of her twenty-one grandchildren, Joey Saunders, was born in 1969. This family was a cornucopia of love and feeling for a woman such as her - revelling in such luxury.

Just after New Year's in 1972, while Winnie was on one of her trips, her father had a stroke. Ruth brought him to her house where he would sit in a chair in the back bedroom. A week later he had a second stroke, dying at the age of ninety-six. His father had lived to be ninety-eight, and his grandfather ninety-six. He had been physically active up to the end - alert and able to get around on his own. His family, friends and neighbors were all saddened but proud of him and the way he lived - a highly ethical, religious and loving person. Family members have many of his paintings - all cherished with his memory.

Winnie found herself in a position to decide now what to do with her life. In La Grange was her closest sister, Ruth - but little else to hold her. She did not want to impose on her children - nor did she want to go to a home or in any way restrict her life more than was necessary.

Her decision was to move to St. Petersburg Beach, Florida. She rented an apartment on an inlet - off the Gulf of Mexico. Dick was near enough to see occasionally or in an emergency - 1 1/2 hours drive away. However, she was within a short walking distance of Al Van de Houten's house on the Bay - where he had moved after retiring from his union tractor job in Chicago. With emphasis on the "union."

Al and Pat had divorced in the 30s and in the 1960s he married again - to Gertrude. He had always stayed in touch with the family - the only Van de Houten to emphasize that closeness. He had a strong need to "belong" and his union, college fraternity and family were very important to him. He was the main communication line with his remaining relatives. Winnie and Ed had always stayed in close contact with him and though it was surprising at first, it soon became apparent why she had chosen that location - a feeling of closeness with Al and, through him, her husband.

Her blindness only partly limited her ability to get around and be active. She had adapted much better than most people could. She would walk in the area, in spite of often heavy traffic. She would, of course, visit her children around the East. They had settled down - except for me. I would continue to move around the country in later years.

Nevertheless, there was loneliness and, in spite of her efforts, the blindness was very restrictive and limiting. She could not go far on her own and there always had to be a fear that she could not see or hear all the traffic. When asked, most people will say they would fear blindness more than any other affliction.

On Thursday, April 30, 1974 she felt pain in her lower midsection. The following day she went to the doctor. He immediately put her in the hospital. Monday, they operated for pancreatic cancer. Tuesday, May 5 - eleven days before her 71st birthday - she passed away.

Her manner of death was a blessing - given that she had cancer. Too often cancer results in long suffering, pain, unrequited hope and a final period of misery. She had suffered far more than others from her many afflictions. Her final years had been affected not only by her blindness, but by the sacrifices she had made for her husband and her work.

She had always been a friendly, social person with many friends. The years and life's constraints had left her often lonely and, largely, by herself. Throughout the last twenty years of her life she had few life choices.

Except, that is, for her family. She was proud of her children and grandchildren - and had every right to be. She left a strong heritage for caring, intelligence, love, dedication and quiet but strong support. As the years have passed, she would be extremely gratified by the successes of her grandchildren - the way they've grown, been educated, started their families and adapted to the world and its dynamic environment. She has left a wonderful legacy in her family.

Her grandchildren remember her for the warmth and love she brought on her visits. She would sit and talk with them and tell them the nursery rhymes she loved and, as they grew, later, stories that they will always remember. Visits they looked forward to.

Her feelings may have been best expressed in the poem she wrote in November 1971 - two months before her father passed away. I have titled it:

THOUGHTS FROM A BLIND GRANDMOTHER

As I sit in my chair I am dreaming
Of colors that used to be.
The pink of the rose
The gold of the moon
The changeable blues of the sea
The delicate greens of early spring
The reds and the orange of fall.
I sit and I dream and I'm happy
For I remember them all.
Yes I'm blind
But do not feel sorry.
If you really want something to do
Think of your grandchildren's children
For they are dependent on you.
Rid this earth of smog and pollution!
So clean water, bright colors, fresh air,
Three of God's greatest gifts to mankind
Will still be here for all people to share.

In July of 1975, her children, their wives and husbands and twenty of her twenty-one grandchildren had a reunion in Florida. This was a wonderful time for them. The cousins played and talked with the warmth only families can have. Many still have a picture of the family, all standing on the beach, as I do - in a place easily observed.

It was a fun, happy and memorable reunion. But in the final analysis this memorable reunion was a loving and deserved tribute to Winnie - our mother and grandmother.