


No Tea for the Fever



LUCILLE CHERRY

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No Tea for the Fever

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LUCILLE CHERRY

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Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my family for providing me with pictures and materials to strengthen my text and reminding me of things I have forgotten.

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Clyde and Jennie Brown
for reading the first draft of my manuscript and giving me the words I used in it.

To my husband's cousin, Lorraine Cherry Selby, a special thank for asking me to write of their cousin Samuel Dewitt Proctor's work in education. Reading his work and that of his co-author William D. W. also gave me the inspiration I needed in writing.

Periodical of the third revised edition of "A Pictorial History of the Negro in America", written by Leighton Hughes and Milton Meltzer helped in my knowledge that I was unaware of in respect to black history. Reading the works of William J. Wilson, John P. Sartre, and Albert Camus influenced my philosophical viewpoints—they were among the many great philosophers of our time.

As I pored over the edition of "The Lighter" (a year book of Eastern Hospital Nursing School) my recollections were substantiated. There were photos not only of the students, but those of the Faculty, the Administration of the hospital, Directors of Nurses, Supervisors and Head Nurses. Beneath each picture was their name and title of the position they held.

In preparing my manuscripts I relied on two books of recommended reading for my advanced English course at Columbia University. One was "Writing Guide and Handbook in English", the other "Roger's Thesaurus", which was of great help finding words to express my thoughts in a more succinct manner.

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To my friends Fran Driesbach and Barbara Bauer, my gratitude for reading the first drafts of my manuscript, offering suggestions and correcting mistakes I had made.

To my husband's cousin, Lorraine Cherry Sapp, a special thanks for making me aware of their cousins' Samuel Dewitt Proctor's accomplishments. Reading his books and that of his co-author William D. Watley gave me the inspiration I needed to continue writing.

Perusal of the third revised edition of "A Pictorial History of the Negro in America", written by Lanston Hughes and Milton Meltzer imbued in me knowledge that I was unaware of in respect to black history. Reading the works of William James, Jean Paul Sartre and Albert Camus influenced my philosophical viewpoints – they were among the many great philosophers of our time.

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If I have left out anyone, my sincere apologies, it was not intentional. Blame it on my old age, even though I am young at heart.

Lucille Brown Frederick Cherry
Easton, Pennsylvania

Foreword

We read about growing up in distant lands such as India, Sweden and Argentine of persons who grew up in famous households but seldom do we get to read about a fine normal family in circumstances that we have never encountered. Having known my friend Lucille since the 1950's, I am exultant that she had written an account of the people and events that shaped her life. Her story is special as she was the product of a black/white heritage and then was adopted by an interracial couple. The reader sorts through Mother, Daddy, Mom and Dad plus assorted relatives who all contributed to the upbringing of Lucille and her sister, Josephine.

We are helped to "see" the world with its limitations in the so-called liberal North. How many ordinary Americans knew that only three schools of nursing were open to blacks in the 30's and 40's? Even after graduation, few hospitals were willing to hire black R.N.s during that time. The complexities of keeping a family going, extending help to relatives and friends, the insights into the nursing profession of the times, as well as the wonderful enjoyment of the New York jazz scene before and during WW II is there for us to savor.

Lucille has chosen for her title a portion of a phrase, "I take no tea for the fever" that her Daddy used many times when confronted with injustices and we get close-ups of numerous occasions when she or members of her family come up against prejudice, stereotypes, rejection and then see the spirited, thoughtful ways she addresses these wrongs.

It is a joy to see the courage shown in writing about their lives, sharing this rich embroider of events and the way she has been sustained. This book is a celebration of complex, but regular living that leaves its impress on all.

Frances Dreisbach

Prologue

The focus of my personal odyssey is to demonstrate how I, the progeny of multi-racial lineage, reared by an interracial couple living in an all white community had surmounted the stumbling blocks placed in my path, those pebble stones and boulders, persevered and made a place for myself in this prejudiced competitive society of ours.

It is a legacy that I want to pass on to my daughters and I would like my life to be an inspiration for all young people who aspire to be more than “hangers on”.

There is stratification in the multi-faceted society of ours, a caste system of classes. We have three classes: 1. Upper class. 2. Middle Class. 3. Lower class. However, they are subdivided into: 1a. Upper upper, Middle upper and Lower upper class. 2a. Upper middle, Middle middle and Lower middle class. 3a. Upper lower, Middle lower and Lower lower class.

The Upper class is denoted as being the elite aristocracy, the Rockefellers of our world. They are the WASPs (White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant). Whom do we place in this very cultured class?

The Middle class is the mediocrity, the bourgeoisie of all types of religions and cultures.

Lastly, we have the Lower class, the cavalier servant, “the hangers on”.

It would be a monumental undertaking to rank everyone along the lines of religion, culture, economic status and race then place them in one of these three classes. For example, there are those white people who are descendants of the aristocrats, protestant and cultured, however, they are very poor but consider themselves as being upper class, but are they?

Let us not forget race in this stratification. We have wealthy black athletes, some not very cultured, and talk show hosts. Where do we place them?

Then we have the Asian culture, some are wealthy, others are poor and unfamiliar with the English language; they are not considered cultured by our standards.

It boggles the mind to rank a person along these established lines in a valid accredited manner. The government is struggling with an official census counting of the population, taking into consideration the multiracial aspect and classifying according to race. There are those scientists who state there is no such thing as race.

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness there of God did make of one blood all persons to dwell on the face of the earth.¹

Topography and environment influence the way we look and dress.² The proximity to the Equator or North Pole, mountains or sea, all of this determines color of skin, hair and eyes.

The miscegenation or interbreeding on the plantations in the south for decades was the origin of consanguinity (the mulatto, the octoroons and the quadroons).

The gathering of genes that were passed on refutes claims by bigoted scientists that there is intellectual inferiority of blacks, thus perpetuating prejudice by skewing data.³

If traits are inherited, how do scientists determine which ancestor's traits are the dominant ones; those of the white ancestor, or those of the black one? Are the genes of both inherited or only those of the black ones?

In the passing on of traits, we have to take into consideration the definition of the following: A mulatto has one Caucasian parent and one Negro parent. An Octoroon has one Negro parent and seven Caucasian grand parents; the Octoroon is the child of a Caucasian and

¹ Samuel Dewitt Proctor, *How Shall They Hear* (Judson Press, 1995) 1, 59, 60.

² Samuel Dewitt Proctor, *How Shall They Hear* (Judson Press, 1995) 1, 59, 60.

³ Samuel Dewitt Proctor, *Certain Sounds of the Trumpet* (Judson Press, 1994) 12.

a Quadroon. A Quadroon has one Negro grandparent; a Quadroon is the child of a Mulatto and a Caucasian.

My biological father is a prime example of consanguineous heredity. He was a mulatto. He had red hair, blue eyes and was light skinned, a white per se'. His father was a slave master; his mother was the child of a female slave who worked in the "big house" or main living quarters on the plantation, which was located on the Eastern shore in Maryland. He was born in Maryland in 1883 and in that era slaves used as their surname that of the slave master, so my father was named accordingly.

Granted the Emancipation Proclamation set slaves free in 1863, however, the slaves had no place to go so they remained on the plantations working for room and board.

On my father's marriage certificate to my mother, he named as his father "Master Frederick". I am continuing to research for information about the plantation owners in that era in Maryland. I have endeavored to classify my father on a census-taking chart. What race would be he? Where would he be on the stratification chart?

After a sojourn in the Navy, allegedly in the Spanish American War, he became a butler and chauffeur for a wealthy prominent family absorbing the cultures of both white and colored ancestors, plus those of his employer. Being of the Baptist faith, what class is he in?

My biological or birth mother, if you will, was the daughter of a woman who was half American Indian/half white - her father was Scotch-Irish. My biological mother's father was half American Indian and half-colored. She had Indian features, long black hair that reached to her waist. She was of Lutheran faith and worked as a domestic. Where on these charts would she be placed?

I feel environment had more impact on my life than heredity. My adoptive parents, Clyde and Jennie Brown, reared my sister and me when my biological parents separated, each going their separate ways. I was a month old and my sister Josephine was a year old.

Daddy, as I referred to my adoptive father, was a white Anglo Saxon protestant, not that he attended any church. He was of Dutch ancestry, his family having emigrated from Holland to the United States. He had brown hair and blue eyes. He owned a contracting business, moving buildings from one place to another, using horses and large

logs. After a brief period of farming in West Portal, N.J., he became a huckster peddling fruits and vegetables. He would be classified somewhere in the middle class.

Mother, as I called her, was "Colored"; a term used then and one I still prefer. I do not see myself as a Negro, Black, Afro-American or any other term used to describe people of color.

Mother was a cook much sought after by wealthy families. She was of short stature and big bosomed, a place to lay my head as a child when I was feeling sad or ill. She was the embodiment of goodness, a chef d'œuvre unparalleled. She had little formal education and was of the Presbyterian faith, classify her if you will.

As Samuel DeWitt Proctor notes, "Most White Americans know the African Americans who appear on the 11 o'clock news. The super rich entertainers, car hijackers, sports figures and drug dealers.⁴ The mainstream, the life among blacks or coloreds goes unnoticed; families like mine who attend church, hold down jobs, pay taxes, send their children to college, establish

family values and have the same interests in common with their white neighbors, a 'genuine community'".⁵

My odyssey is to inculcate or justify my contention that prejudice and the stratification of society placed an insuperable burden on a person of color that can only be surmounted by faith in God's divine will. It reminds me of one of the old Negro spirituals mother used to sing about - "Laying My Burden Down". That and other spirituals such as "Take My Hand Precious Lord Lead Me On To The Promised Land" all gave comfort to those poor burdened souls who sang them while laboring under the hot sun in the cotton fields - without pay no less.

The history books that I read as a child did not tell of their trials and tribulations. How apropos' were these spirituals to assuage their pain and suffering.

⁴ Samuel DeWitt Proctor, *The Substance of Things Hoped For* (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1995) xix.

⁵ Samuel DeWitt Proctor, *How Shall They Hear* (Judson Press, 1995) 5, 8.



Great Grandmother Felicia McCabe





Thomas Frederick
"Dad"



Floretta Ayerson Frederick
"mom"



Josephine Lydia



Lucille Margaret

Chapter One

1920-1925, Mountainside, N.J.

"The Genesis"

In the Lowland of Watchung Mountain existed a hamlet called "Mountainside". The population in 1920 was 483. Small acres of land were populated by small businesses. In later years, the area became a branch of old Route 22.

Clyde and Jennie Brown, my adoptive parents, lived in a fourteen-room home on a parcel of land in Mountainside.

Mother, as I called her, planted vegetables in the "back lot" as seen in the picture.

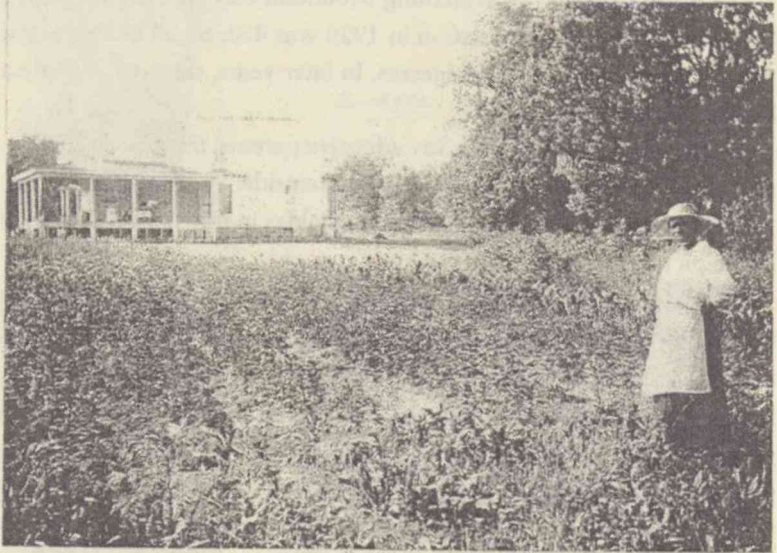
Daddy conducted his business of moving buildings from one place to another using horses and logs to transfer them. He employed men; my biological father was one of them. He gave them a salary and their meals. Mother did the cooking with the help of my biological mother. I called my biological parents Dad and Mom to differentiate the two sets of parents. A boarder who they called "Uncle Dan" was a part of the family.

Daddy would tell us many stories relating to that time as we got older. He told us of how the ceilings of the homes were so high; that in the winter the water in a teakettle sitting on the back of the old cast iron stove in the kitchen would freeze overnight!

My biological parents separated, each going their separate ways, leaving my sister Josephine, who was one year old, and me at age one month with the Browns. We were reared under the name of Brown and became known as the "Brown girls".

Chapter One

Family Homestead
mountainside new jersey
Circa 1926



mother

I had been born at "Muhlenberg Hospital" in Plainfield, N.J. and was named Lucille Marguerite Frederick. Josephine had been born in Camden, N.J. before Mom and Dad had come to live with the Browns.

Mother said I looked like a little papoose and nurses would carry me around from ward to ward. When I learned to crawl, Daddy, who looked upon me as his baby, told me how mother had a hard time keeping me out of Uncle Dan's bright brass spittoon, which attracted me. I would get tobacco juice all over me.

As we grew older, Daddy would set us on his knees and entertain us with tales of bygone days. We were awed by one tale in particular. It seemed that Daddy had a previous marriage with a woman who died of alcoholism. They had two sons who were placed in an orphanage after her death. The older son died there at an early age, and the younger one "Arthur" was permitted to visit Daddy when he married mother; Daddy had become a teetotaler. At any rate, after his wife's death he went on a binge ending up in Tobyhanna, Pa. His horse was tired and he was hung over so he stopped at a farmhouse and asked the farmer if he and his horse could bed down in his barn for the night. The farmer agreed and asked him if he wanted to sell the horse and buggy.

The next morning Daddy awoke to find the horse had died. He immediately went up to the farmer's door and said, "Do you still want to buy my horse?" The farmer said, "yes" and paid him without going to check on the horse. Daddy hopped a freight train back to New Jersey, there he met and married my Mother.

He took over running Uncle Dan's business and Uncle Dan became the boarder. Daddy's mother came to live with them after the death of his father. His parents had come from Holland to the United States, so he was of Dutch ancestry. His mother would sit in the back porch and watch Mother tend her gardens as seen in the picture provided.

Having another son "Frank", Daddy's brother who lived in Phillipsburg, N.J., his mother decided to buy a home there and left to reside in Phillipsburg. It was at this time Mom and Dad had come to live with the Browns. Uncle Dan had died and Daddy's son Arthur also died in the orphanage. Daddy then moved our family to a farm in West Portal, N.J.

Farm life provided many experiences. We would watch Daddy milk the cows and feed the pigs putting slop in the troughs for them. One day Josephine was sent out to sit under a tree and watch so the cows would not get into the cornfields. I stayed with Mother who was preparing our supper. I was pestering her for a piece of the meat she had roasted. She would not give it to me and told me to go out and bring in some wood for the fire. I said, "No meat, no wood." they thought that was hilarious! Daddy went out to get Josephine and found her asleep with a rattlesnake curled up beside her. He killed the snake and she woke up saying "The cows were not in the corn Daddy!" – as though she knew.

One day he decided to go down to Springtown, N.J. to look into the huckstering business possibilities. He admonished Mother not to hook up the old gray mare to the buggy while he was gone because the horse was too "skittish". Of course, Mother having a mind of her own decided we would take a ride since Mother's sister "Aunt Vi" was paying a visit. Mother placed a harness on the horse and hooked her up to the buggy and away we went through the back roads and hillsides enjoying the scenery – Mother, Aunt Vi, Josephine and I.

Evidently, the shaft of the buggy kept hitting the mare's legs and he started running away with us overturning the buggy. I was thrown over the fence into a field where cows were grazing. Mother suffered a dislocated shoulder; Aunt Vi, a bruised hip and Josephine received a small round wound in the middle of her forehead.

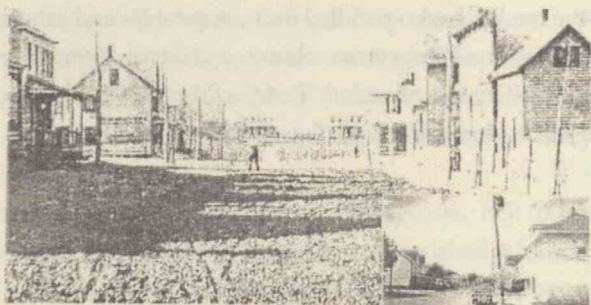
The scar became a permanent reminder of the event. I was the only one not hurt except for my dignity. I had wet my panties from the fright when the cows started toward me. When Daddy was reached and told of the accident and that his family was at the undertakers, he assumed the worse. However, he soon learned that the horse had run up on the funeral director's porch and into the screen door. Neighbors had found the overturned buggy and took us to the home of the mortician. All this convinced Daddy to give up farming and go into the huckstering business.

We moved to Springtown, N.J. and lived in the home of Mother's mother, whom we called Aunt Mary. Aunt Mary's husband, her second one, was Mother's stepfather. He had died. The house was empty since

Aunt Mary had taken a position as a live-in housekeeper for a white elderly widower who owned a farm nearby. She only went home on weekends.

Springtown was a little village with some small farms. There was a store that sold a variety of things. Since there was no butcher shop, a butcher's wagon would come around once or twice a week. Daddy became the huckster who peddled fruits, vegetables and fish on Fridays.

There was one Presbyterian church and a two-room schoolhouse. A woman, who everyone called "Peddler Mary", would come by now and then selling her wares - clothes, buttons, needles etc.



East Boulevard
Alpha, New Jersey
Circa 1925

Street that I traveled to alpha school
1st and 3rd grade



1. BERT Marie (left) with N. Michael (right)

We attended church in Bloomsbury, N.J. Daddy would drive us there and sit outside until church services were over. Other times Mother's friends who lived in Warren Glen, N.J., a mile away, would stop by and we would ride to church with them. Springtown was a quiet community and there were no colored families living there, other than us. Of course, Daddy was white. Finally, Mother decided that she and Daddy should have a home of their own, so the family moved to Alpha, N.J.

1925-1927, Alpha, N.J.

"Pushing My Sorrows"

Alpha, N.J. was a small town divided into two sections by railroad tracks. The white section was on the north side and the colored section of town was on the south side. There were a few grocery stores in town. The other stores were small shops. I called the white section of town "White" and the colored section of town "Colored." There were no schools in Alpha.

My mother, Rebecca, and I were crowded in this one room in the first grade. The kindergarten. The only colored children in the school were the "Sisters," Josephine and L. Sister Brown, and their mother, Aunt Old Jim Brown. All white and the rest of the children were colored.

My first encounter with a "nigger" in my race was at the Alpha school. There was a boy named "Nigger" who was a fully grown one day. He was white and he was in the first grade. He was called "Nigger" at school and he was in the first grade. He was called "Nigger" at school and he was in the first grade. He was called "Nigger" at school and he was in the first grade. He was called "Nigger" at school and he was in the first grade.

There were concrete pads placed at the side of the way to the kitchen. Instead of all the same houses, in light of a porch I pushed my head down and was hanging her head on the concrete yelling, "I'm not a nigger. I'm not a nigger." If rock both her mother and her sister to pull me off her.

When her mother, she was not the saying, "I'm going to tell your father on you as soon as he gets home." I wanted, "I don't care, go ahead and tell him."

We attended church in Blountsburg, N.Y. I think would have in
there and at outside the hotel church and then went to the
friends who lived in *Waverly* N.Y. a nice way, would stay in
we would take to church with them. Spent some time in
and there were no colored families living there, other than the
Daddy was white. Finally, a letter decided that the family should
have a home of their own as the family moved to *Blount*, N.Y.



Quint Lorretta



Uncle Fred
(mother's Brother)



Adele

Chapter Two

1925-1927, Alpha, N.J.

"Putting Iron in My Soul"

Alpha was a small town divided into two sections by railroad tracks that led to Springtown. On one side was the main section of town with the school, post office, grocery and convenience stores. The other side of the tracks was called the vulcanite section. Located there was a cement mill where most of the men in town worked. There were also one or two small farms in Alpha.

My sister Josephine and I were enrolled in school. She in the first grade, I in kindergarten. The only colored children in the school were the "Roses", Josephine and I. Theirs was a bi-racial family like ours. Old Jim Rose was white and his wife "Minnie" was colored.

My first encounter with the difference in races was at the Alpha school. Name calling by some white children was a daily practice. One day Sophie, who lived two doors down from us in a row home, called me a "nigger" as school was letting out. I chased her all the way home not catching her until she reached her doorstep. This disputed the old adage that blacks were more athletically inclined than whites. She sure outran me!

There were concrete pads placed at the entranceway to the kitchen area of all the row homes, in lieu of a porch. I pushed Sophie down and was banging her head on the concrete yelling, "I'm not a nigger, I'm not a nigger." It took both her mother and her sister to pull me off her.

Mary, her mother, threatened me saying, "I'm going to tell your father on you as soon as he gets home." I retorted, "I don't care, go ahead and tell him."

Sure enough when Daddy's truck pulled up into the easement area located in back of the homes, Mary hurried up to tell him what I had done to Sophie. He asked, "What did Sophie do to Lucille?" Mary said, "She only called her a nigger." Daddy said, "Alright Mary, the next time Sophie calls Lucille a name, come tell me and I'll hold all of you "sons of bitches" and let Lucille finish the job she started."

I'm sure Mary thought since Daddy was white like them, he would side with them. That is probably why she had not immediately told Mother who was home at the time because Mother was colored. Well, she learned differently.

Daddy went inside cussing as usual. Mother said, "Now Clyde settle down." He said, "Jabby", his pet name for her, "You know, I take no tea for the fever." This phrase I would hear him repeat many times over the years whenever he was confronted with an injustice. He refused to compromise his principles. He was a staunch, indomitable person who believed in retributive justice. Perhaps that was one of the reasons for his refusal to attend church every Sunday. He felt that some of those who called themselves Christians were a bunch of hypocrites, who attended church on Sunday and for the rest of the week committed unseemingly, vicious, corrupt acts.

I believe my philosophy of life in later years was rooted in this type of upbringing. I was taught one does not back down but confronts trouble head on. One has a "Jonah problem" if you allow what someone has done to you to reduce you to their level.⁶ This was the beginning of "Putting Iron in my Soul".⁷

In those times, families helped one another providing a home for anyone who came upon hard times. All older people were referred to as "Aunt" or "Uncle", whether they were relatives or not.

Daddy's mother came to live with us instead of staying near her older son. We called her "Granny Brown" and my sister and I attended church with her. It was a Presbyterian church in Phillipsburg. She had

⁶ Wm D Watley, *Face It To Fix It* (Judson Press Valley Forge, 1977) 2. Bible *Jonah* 1:1-3.

⁷ Bible *Daniel* 2:40.

become ill and gave up her home in Phillipsburg to live with us. She died later on.

Mother's sister, Aunt Vi, came to live with us when her husband Uncle Josh died. Josephine and I had spent vacations with them in Elizabeth, N.J. where they lived. Uncle Josh had been a distinguished looking man who always smoked a pipe. After a time Aunt Vi started going out on dates. One of her suitors was Irvin Ellsby, who lived with his parents Asher and Martha Ellsby. The Ellsbys lived a few doors away in our row of homes.

One night about midnight, there came a knock at the door. Daddy, who cursed a lot, said, "Now, who in the hell is coming this time of night?" We however, had better not use curse words. Anyway, he got up and opened the door to the town constable who said he had come to tell Mother that her sister was in Warren Hospital in Phillipsburg. She had been shot in the chest by Irvin Ellsby, and he had been arrested for attempted murder. Later we found out that Aunt Vi told him she had met someone else and was moving to Somerville, N.J. They notified Mother and Aunt Vi's sister Margaret in New York.

After recuperating, Aunt Vi moved to Somerville where she married again. Recuperating took some time for the bullet had just missed her heart. She was a beautiful woman with a captivating smile; her teeth were white and absolutely perfect. The Ellsby's moved when their son was placed in jail. No one ever heard from them again.

Chapter Three

1929-1930, Somerville, N.J. – Alpha, N.J.

“Joint Tenancy”

Business was not so good in the area so Daddy decided to move to Somerville for a while, but continue renting the home in Alpha.

He rented many large rooms in a home on Fairview Avenue in Somerville so that Mother’s brother, his wife Loretta and their boarder “Uncle Jake” could also live with us. The home was in an all white neighborhood, so Daddy, being white, made the arrangements for they knew no one would have rented the home to a colored person.

Josephine and I attended fourth grade. One day as I was sitting at my desk looking out the window, I saw a worker fall from the scaffolding to his death. They had been repairing the roof on the school building. I was so shook up that I was sent home.

Josephine and I were in the same class even though she was older than I was. I had skipped second grade, having been promoted from first to third grade in Alpha, N.J. School, not because I was bright, but because Daddy had an altercation with the school principal. A teacher had smacked Josephine’s knuckles with a ruler for talking. Josephine told them that it was the girl sitting at the desk next to hers who was doing the talking.

Daddy told the principal if a teacher ever hit one of his children again they would answer to him. Naturally, the second grade teacher did not relish the thought of having me in her class. Therefore, she evidently conspired with the first grade teacher for a reason to promote me to third grade. This was no help to me for I really had to apply myself in order not fail in my studies.

Everyone in the household on Fairview Avenue worked. Daddy huckstering, Uncle Fred in a junk yard dismantling cars, Uncle Jake in a chemical plant in Bound Brook, N.J. Mother was a chef at Somerset Hotel and Aunt Loretta was the maid at the hotel.

One evening a dinner guest at the hotel asked to speak with the chef since he had enjoyed the meal so much. He was Mr. Duke, the founder of the tobacco company that produced Duke's mixture, which was a popular tobacco at the time. He asked Mother if she would consider catering their large dinner parties on weekends. They employed a regular cook and her husband as the gardener, but she only did the day-to-day cooking of meals. The Johnsons, with their two children, a boy and a girl, lived in a cottage on the estate that was located in Belle Meade, N.J.

Mother accepted the position with the Dukes and Aunt Loretta was hired as the downstairs' maid.

In those days there were no babysitters per se, so Josephine and I accompanied Mother to work on weekends. We played with the Johnson children and the Duke's Great Dane dogs. I did not enjoy being knocked down by the playful dogs so I spent most of the time in the kitchen with Mother, polishing silver or watching Aunt Loretta set the tables for dinner parties.

I learned a lot about proper etiquette and manners. Food was served to the guest from the left and the plate taken away on the right. This practice proved to be an embarrassment to the nouveau riche who behaved in a snobbish manner, treating the servants in an uncivil way. When the word spread among the help about the rudeness of such a guest, the maid would serve them from the right, causing the person much difficulty in placing the food on their plate. Imagine trying to serve yourself peas! This was an indication that a servant had been snubbed. Most likely, that guest would not be invited again.

Listening to these tales, I learned you could not sit in judgment of others and feel you are so superior to them.

Daddy decided to return home to Alpha, so Uncle Fred and Aunt Loretta found a place to rent in the colored section of town. The Duke's estate became a Botanical Garden. Upon returning to Alpha, we found the home had been vandalized. Lye had been spilled all over the house.

One day Josephine, Beatrice, the girl next door and I decided to take a walk. Mother told us not to go near the Delaware River. However, we disobeyed and went to the river and put our feet in the water while sitting on the bank.

Unknown to us, Beatrice's brother "Eddie" had followed us and had ran home to tell Mother and his mother "Aunt Stella" what we had done. When we arrived home, Mother had taken a switch from the tree in the yard; she took us over her knee and proceeded to give both of us spankings. Those switches really stung. We could hear Beatrice crying next door for she was also being spanked.

Ironically, we all were sent out to the backyard for wood at the same time and we started to giggle about hearing each other crying. Again, Eddie, who was sitting on a fence, heard us and went back into the house. He went to tell Aunt Stella who in turn told Mother that we were laughing about the spanking we had received. The results were we all got another spanking. Mother said, "You want to laugh, here's something to laugh about." Mother was always the disciplinarian. Daddy merely raised his voice now and then to correct us. One of my memories of this was when he would yell at me in German, "Machen die tur tu" – shut the door. I was always running outside and leaving the door open, that was the only German I could speak.

The lesson I learned was one should be punished for any wrongdoing. The old saying was "Spare the rod and spoil the child". It worked then and I think it would work today. Unlike today, children either obeyed their parents or were punished if they did not.

Huckstering was not an easy job. Daddy would arise at 3 a.m. and take his truck, a covered van, either to the New York dock or to the Philadelphia dock to pick up a load of fruits and vegetables. On Fridays, it was fish and other seafood. Then he would load his truck himself and return home to prepare for his rounds to various nearby towns.

One neighborhood consisted of Hungarians, Italians and two or three colored families who all got along together.

Ours was the only family with a radio, an old "At Water Kent". In the evenings, after supper, the kids in the neighborhood would gather at our home sit on the floor in front of the radio and listen to "The Shadow Knows" and also "Amos and Andy".

It was on one of those evenings an Italian boy named "Tony" asked Daddy if he could go along with us when he heard that my sister and I would be going to the docks with Daddy in the morning, which was Saturday.

Mother placed a thick comforter in the bed of the truck for us to lie on. At 3 a.m., we started out, sleeping all the way down. Tony's parents had given him permission to go with us.

We awoke when we reached the New York docks; it was very exciting. Floodlights covered the area and we could see vendors hawking their produce and Daddy haggling for the best price he could get. He tested watermelons by taking a plug out of one with his penknife, looking for taste and bright red color. After buying baskets of apples, potatoes, and other fruits and corn, he loaded them in the back of the truck. Tony, who was only nine or ten years old, did his best to help him while my sister and I looked on. In later years, Tony became the owner of a fruit and vegetable market in Easton, P.A. I guess he had been influenced by Daddy's work.

When we arrived home, we would take a cloth and polish the first two rows of apples in a basket so they would shine and tempt people to buy them.

On Friday's, Daddy would bring back fish and other seafood such as clams, crawfish, crabs and lobsters. He would place the crabs and lobsters in a galvanized tub of water in the cellar. At these times, I stayed out of the cellar for the lobsters and crabs would manage to crawl out over the rim of the tub and crawl about on the floor. I treasure the scale that I was able to save, which he had used to weigh his produce and fish.

Daddy had a large leather purse with a clasp that you twisted to open it. He would pour the contents, bills and coins from the day's sales onto the kitchen table. The pennies were given to Josephine and me to be divided between us. I suppose you could say this was our allowance, for children were not given allowances in those days.

Summer was over and soon school days would begin in September. It was decided that we would start school in Springtown so we would have to move back there.

Mother had communicated with Aunt Mary by writing notes that

Josephine and I would deliver. We would walk the railroad tracks from Alpha to Springtown. It was the quickest way to get to the farm where Aunt Mary was the housekeeper. We would have lunch with her and the widowed farmer. He insisted that we sit at the table with him to eat our lunch.

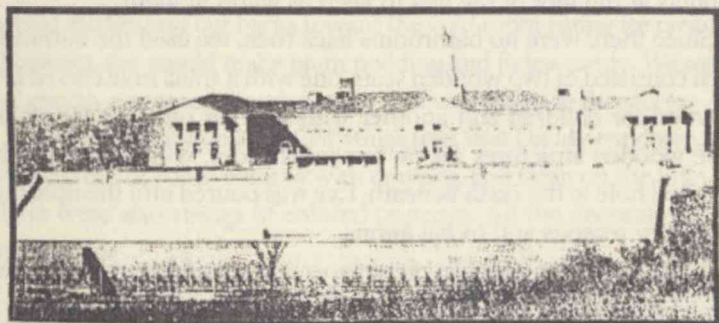
Aunt Mary made sure we kept our left hand in our lap while eating, and when eating soup to fill the soup spoon by pushing it from you toward the opposite rim of the soup bowl.

By delivery of these notes back and forth, arrangements were made to relocate.



The Springtown School Building was erected in Springtown, Pohatcong Township, NJ. This building was later enlarged to become the municipal building.
picture circa 1913

*Attended this two room school house
5th through 8th grade*



The fourth Phillipsburg High School erected in 1927 on Hillcrest Boulevard, Phillipsburg, NJ, also Maloney Stadium
picture circa 1931

*Attended this High school
9th through 12th grade
Graduated 1938*

Chapter Four

1930-1938, Springtown, N.J. "Revelations"

So, back to our former home in Springtown we moved. The large, black, cast iron kitchen stove heated the home. The stove had an immense oven and four lids inset into the surface that covered the fire beneath.

Large walk-in fireplaces heated the dining room and parlor. The upstairs bedrooms had no heating devices. Mother would heat flat irons on the kitchen stove, wrap them in flannel cloths and place them under the quilts at the foot of the bed to keep us warm at night.

Since there were no bathrooms back then, we used the outhouse, which consisted of two wooden seats, one with a small hole carved into the wood for children and another with a larger opening for adults. These wooden structures sat on a wooden floor, which covered the excavated hole in the earth beneath. Lye was poured into the openings for sanitary reasons and to kill germs.

Toilet tissue was crumbled newspaper and colorful magazine covers papered the walls! Quite a difference from the bathrooms of today. If we had to use the bathroom at night, a commode, a large, porcelain pot with a lid on it was placed in our bedroom.

We were given our Saturday night baths in the galvanized tub that was also used for washing clothes.

Across the lane from our house was Ernest Brown's, no relation to Daddy, farm. Each morning Josephine and I would take a milk pail to the kitchen door of the farmhouse to be filled by Mrs. Brown. I remember sometimes that the milk tasted of the garlic and grass that the cows had grazed upon. The milk was still warm, for the cows had just been milked.

When the pigs were slaughtered, in addition to pork roasts, pork chops, we had souse and pig's feet that mother just loved, right from the farmer. They also made blood pudding and I could never understand how the people who ate it could find it appetizing, yuk!

There was not too much social life for us in the evenings; we would play pinochle after supper. Mother, Daddy, Josephine and I would change partners every night. I liked to be Daddy's partner, he usually won. He seemed to know what each person held in their hand, probably remembering what cards they had played.

There was a lesson to be learned from playing cards with him. He never just let us win. We were required to think and remember that life would not be handed to us on a silver platter, with handouts and favors bestowed upon us. The work ethic was ingrained into our thinking.

On winter nights when it had snowed, Mother would use the butter churn, a wooden receptacle to make ice cream, using salt and snow for coldness surrounding the outside of the churn while she churned the cream.

We would sit in front of the fireplace cuddled up in blankets, our feet toward the fire and our backs toward the cold room eating ice cream! At Christmas, she would make plum pudding and fudge candy. We seldom had candy, sometimes licorice sticks that we bought at the store.

The decorations on our Christmas tree, that Daddy cut down, were rings cut out of paper colored with crayons, and hung on the branches. There were also strings of colored popcorn. All the decorations were homemade.

Daddy always made Sunday morning breakfast, which usually consisted of fried mackerel, hash brown potatoes and fried green tomatoes, when in season. He also loved Limburger cheese, which I could not get past my nose to eat!

Mother would prepare dough for Parker house rolls to be baked in the morning, on the night before placing the pan of rolls on the back of the warm kitchen stove to raise overnight.

In the summer time, there were trips to Atlantic City, Coney Island, Wildwood N.J. and Belmar. In the truck were picnic baskets of food, fried chicken, potato salad, baked beans, deviled eggs and fruit that we would eat under the boardwalk.

Mother loved to walk on the boardwalk. She would stop at vendors who sold raw clams and oysters, for she loved to eat them raw with lemon juice on them. I liked mine steamed.

On other Sundays, visitors would stop by. It was one of these Sundays a car drove up to the house and a tall woman got out with four children, all boys.

Mother called to Daddy, "Here comes Floretta and George with their kids." Evidently, they had been keeping in touch with each other through letters.

Mother introduced Josephine and me by saying, "This is your Mom and these are your brothers." Thus, showing the relationship with them. In the following years, we were blessed with two more brothers and three sisters, making nine half brothers and sisters, although I think of them just as brothers and sisters.

I was nonplussed to say the least having to grapple with this revelation. I am not sure at the time that I knew what this new development in my life would mean to me. I was more concerned with whether or not there would be enough of mother's lemon meringue pie to go around. I had planned to have a second piece of pie at dinnertime.

About a month later, another visitor arrived. Upon seeing him, Daddy said, "Now, what the hell brings him here?" The tone of his voice suggested some animosity. By listening to Daddy's tirade, at a later time we realized we were not legally adopted, but Daddy vowed that no one was going to take us away from them ever!

Mother told us, "This is your Dad." So that established whom the visitor was. He had brought a woman with him who we were told to call "Miss Mary". She had two sons, Tom and Bill Howard by a former husband; they came along with them. After the introductions, they were invited to stay for dinner.

Dad had brought gifts for Josephine and me, which I shall never forget. They were dresses with the same color shoes to match. The dresses were plaid, one red and the other blue. The shoes had high heels that mother refused to let us wear, except to play in. I so wanted the red dress and shoes but Josephine being the oldest was given preference and I had to contend myself with the blue one.

Here we had the dilemma of having three sets of parents, “Mother and Daddy”, “Mom and George” and “Dad and Miss Mary”, with the addition of brothers and sisters on one side and brothers on another.

Daddy had sided with Mom on the break-up of her and Dad’s marriage, while Mother remained neutral. Her attitude had an influence on my thinking as I grew older; to always weigh the pros and cons of a problem using cogitative reasoning.

I have never felt any bitterness toward my birth parents for abandoning us; they had inadvertently provided us with the most loving parents one could ask for. There is a certain bonding between an adoptive parent and a child that is stronger than that of an umbilical cord. I can sympathize with adoptive parents who are involved in a court battle with a birth mother who wants her child back. There are many things to consider when one wants to find their birth parents, how the adoptive parents feel is one of them.

Mother and Daddy displayed no jealousy toward Mom and Dad, nor did they discourage our visiting them. After Mom’s visit, Mother would take us to visit her in Easton, Pa. We would catch the Mertz Line Bus at the foot of our driveway; the bus made stops in Phillipsburg and Alpha.

On one of our visits, Mother asked Mom to take us to see Mom’s aunt who was a fortune teller in Easton, for she wanted to consult her about my nightmares. She told her I would have these nightmares and the only thing that would give me rest was putting a Bible under my head. Usually after the nightmares Mother said that she would receive word that a family member or friend had been very ill or dead.

There would come a time when one of these phenomena would bring desolation in my life. Aunt Liz, as Mom called her, told them that I was born with a veil over my eyes and that I would be going around looking through people. Listening to them scared me half to death. I thought I would be going around looking through people; I could not fall asleep that night.

Of course, I now know the scientific reason for this – that they had no knowledge of the veil which was the amniotic sac surrounding the fetus, thus a veil over my eyes. As far as seeing through people was another way of saying I would be able to see through the phony acts of

those who tried to deceive me. Mother's moving my head to place the Bible under it caused me to partially awaken. That ended the nightmare, allowing me to sleep peacefully.

Even today, I have had recurring nightmares whereby I am unable to move any part of my body. I'm only partially awake at the time and pray that some one would just touch me or call my name to wake me up.

On these visits to Mom, we were introduced to Southern cooking. George was from the South. There were collard greens and chitlins that we had never tasted. I could never eat the chitlins or chitterlings when I was told they were the intestines of the pig. I could never eat pickled tongue either for I would think about the cow chewing his cud.

Finally, it was time to enter ninth grade which began at Phillipsburg High School. The school bus would stop at the foot of our driveway each morning to pick us up and let us off at the end of the school day.

I had taken the "Normal Course" as it was called, I always wanted to be a nurse; Josephine took a business course. The only school activity that we were a part of was the "Glee Club".

The subject I hated the most was history, the teacher seemed to dwell too much on slavery as far as I was concerned, because it drew snickers from some students in the class. There were only four colored students in the entire school. My sister and I, one girl and another boy at that time.

When Josephine was filling out her forms for entering Howard University, she was told she would have to use the name on her birth certificate, which was "Frederick". We had been using the name of "Brown" all through grade school.

Therefore, from then on we went by the name of Frederick. Daddy and Mother did not object because of the legality of the situation.

Chapter Five

1938-1939, Reading, P.A. – Washington, D.C.

"Reality"

Since Josephine was the oldest, she entered Howard University. I was not old enough to go into training. Lincoln School for Nurses required that a student must be eighteen and I was only seventeen.

I went to Reading, Pa to work in Dr. Goodwin's office. Dr. Goodwin, the only colored doctor in Reading and Bethlehem, Pa, had started a scholarship club to which we belonged. He endeavored to help young colored students further their education by arranging scholarships for them at participating colleges.

A girl who had wanted to work in his office was jealous and spread gossip that I had gone to live with him. He had arranged for me to live with the Robinson Family, who were friends of his. My duties were to take messages and be the receptionist, taking calls and make appointments.

Dr. Goodwin commuted daily between Reading and Bethlehem. He held office hours in the morning in Bethlehem and in the evening in Reading. He had privileges at the Reading hospital but not at Bethlehem hospital, which had not yet accepted colored physicians.

The Robinson family consisted of Mrs. Robinson and her son and daughter, whose name was Lucille like mine. The son lost his job, which necessitated their going on welfare; he was the main support of the family. The authorities were very strict at that time regarding the number of occupants in the home. Since I was not a family member, I had to leave and take a live-in babysitting job position with a Jewish family.

Thursdays were the day off for domestics. Colored organizations and churches held events that day. Lucille and I attended a dance one Thursday evening. A good-looking, light-skinned guy with green eyes asked me to dance. Later in the evening while sitting on chairs lining the dance hall, he asked if he could take me to a movie sometime. I told him yes but I had a live-in position and my employer expected me to be home right after the movie was over.

He arrived driving a big Cadillac car and was a perfect gentleman all evening, not even trying to kiss me good night. When I told Lucille about my date she told me not to see him anymore because her brother said he was a driver for the Mafia!

I had been writing to my sister at Howard regularly, sending her a dollar or two now and then. She said since the college semester would soon be ending, I should come to Washington, D.C. and find work there. Dr. Goodwin was planning a visit to Howard University, as his brother was a chemistry professor there. He agreed to take me along with him, so I quit my babysitting job.

Josephine and other scholarship members, who were attending Howard University on work scholarships arranged by Dr. Goodwin, found a place for me to stay. A woman on T Street, who occasionally rented a room in her home to a college student who needed to live off campus, provided me with a room while I was looking for a job. My money was running out so I had to cut back on meals.

When Josephine and other club members found out I was existing on puffed rice with condensed milk, morning, noon and night, they came up with a plan.

My sister, who waited on tables in the college dining room as part of her tuition scholarship award, and I posing as a student with borrowed books, would sit at one of her tables for my breakfast. At noon I would sit at her roommate's table whose name was also Josephine. For supper "Whit" Watson, who worked in the kitchen, packed sandwiches for me to take back to my room. On occasion, I would share Russell Harris's peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. He lived in a room off campus and worked part time in the post office.

Finally, I landed a job at an old soldiers home in Chevy Chase as a cook for a colonel and his wife who lived in a cottage on the grounds of

the home. I was very confident that I knew how to cook having watched mother all those years, then came the rude awakening!

For breakfast, the Colonel wanted coffee, toast and a soft-boiled egg. I turned the timer on first while the egg was boiling, then I made the coffee and toast. As a result, the Colonel ended up with a hard boiled egg, weak coffee and cold toast. Annoyed no doubt, he went off to play golf.

Lunch for his wife was a cinch; all that she wanted was an avocado salad. I peeled the avocado, halved it and put it on a bed of lettuce with a dab of mayonnaise in the center. She probably made her own tea or had juice, I do not remember.

Dinner was a disaster for me. They wanted fresh beets from the garden, pork chops and baked potatoes. Also, cookies that the former cook had already prepared and was ready to be baked. I will never forget that dinner!

I remember mother saying you always place fresh vegetables in cold water to begin boiling, which I did, the water boiled off the beets and they were still hard as rocks. I poured in more cold water. The potatoes and cookies I had put in the oven and they were already baked. The pork chops were frying. By the time I had everything cooked it was eight p.m. Dinner was supposed to be served by five p.m. When I was ready to leave, after cleaning up the kitchen, I was given an extra dollar for my efforts. However, they told me that they did not think I would be able to handle cooking for their dinner parties and they would have to let me go.

There was a lesson for me in this fiasco; one should never underestimate the work of others, thinking their jobs were easy and non-demanding. I had observed mother never realizing how inept I would be trying to emulate her.

My job had lasted only one day so back to plan one, being a fake student at Howard in order to eat. Hearing about my problem Dr. Goodwin's brother Bill, the chemistry professor, volunteered to take me out to dinner and a show afterwards.

Performing at the theatre was the comedian Moms Mabley. She was an older woman, who came on stage looking like one thing or another. As mother would say, dressed in unkempt baggy dress, men's

high top laced up shoes and a big felt hat. She told jokes about her supposedly dead husband, as the jokes became more risqué, the further down in my seat I would slide, I was very embarrassed listening to these jokes. Bill was laughing at me asking where I was going, under the seats!

One evening my landlady invited me to dinner. I had been hoping for such an invite for a long time, having to smell her Creole cooking while I was practically starving in my room. After dinner we sat on the front porch watching people walk by on the sidewalk. I commented on the beautifully dressed women in evening gowns going by. The landlady started laughing saying, "They are not women, they are men wearing women's clothing. They are going to what is called the 'faggot's ball.'"

I was flabbergasted, that was my first perception of homosexuality. I was naïve in matters of sexuality.

Finally, the day came when the semester was over at the university and the college closed for the summer. Josephine and I decided to return home to Springtown, N.J. instead of trying to find work in Washington, D.C. When the bus arrived in Easton, P.A., we had a dime between us and had to use the dime to call Daddy to come get our sorry little asses.

Chapter Six

1939-1943, Somerville, Bronx, N.Y., Paoli, P.A.

"A Jonah Problem"

Returning home after the fiasco in Washington, D.C., Josephine and I set out to look for jobs. She found a position at the Lafayette College library, I took another babysitting position for a family in Belvidere, N.J. Again, I had to live-in.

Returning to my employer's home after a weekend off, I found someone had been using my room. The family cook told me that they had hired another girl as their babysitter but they were unhappy with her performance so they came to pick me up as usual. I was furious with them for their deception. Not wanting to betray the cook, I said to them, "Whoever was using my room and the clean towel I put in the bathroom can keep on using them. I quit and I'm going back home." Therefore, I went out and caught a bus home.

Aunt Loretta and Uncle Fred had come up for a visit and upon hearing about my problem. Aunt Loretta suggested I go back with them to Somerville where she was sure I could find work. She said I could stay with her daughter Adele who was divorced and lived on Brown St. with her three children.

Daddy, when he was huckstering sometimes in Somerville would give Adele fruits and vegetables that he had left over at the end of his workday. So, I went home with them and I found another babysitting job, but not a live-in one.

I made friends and started going to basketball games with them. My two buddies on the basketball team, "Fats" and "Gene" as I called

them, use to come by Adele's and teach me the latest dance steps. Their team would play against teams from Plainfield and Newark.

They introduced me to another team member who I started dating. We became devoted to each other but not to the extent of having a sexual relationship. We planned to get married after I graduated from nursing school. I had taken an entrance exam at Muhlenberg Hospital in Plainfield for entrance into "Lincoln School for Nurses" in Bronx, N.Y. and was accepted.

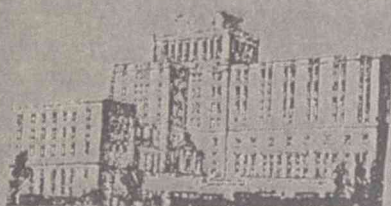
We refrained from having sex for fear I would get pregnant and not be able to enter training. We were always chaperoned anyway, either by his mother or by Adele. The only time we were alone was when he walked me home after dinner at his home or after a movie. He didn't have a car. He always came in to talk with Adele afterwards.

On his birthday, his mother and stepfather took us to New York's Apollo Theatre to see Ella Fitzgerald. The popular song at that time was "A Tisket a Tasket".

Soon it was time to enter training and he had one of his friends, who had a car, drive Aunt Loretta, Adele and me to the school. Daddy's doctor forbade him from driving; he had an accident after one of his "dizzy spells". So he and mother asked Aunt Loretta to go with me my first day at Lincoln.

The boys carried my trunk and suitcases for me. Aunt Loretta checked out the room, it was an end room located on the fourth floor overlooking the walkway to the entrance doors. As you entered the room, to the right was a toilet, a sink with a medicine cabinet over it enclosed by a wall that separated the area from the rest of the room, to the left was a clothes closet. The only furniture was a cot, dresser and a desk with a lamp on it, plus a bookcase.

This was to be my home for three years. On weekends my friend would help me study for tests. Then at the beginning of my second year there, the bomb fell for me. Adele had found out that he had been seeing another girl; she was pregnant with his child. He vehemently denied the child was his, but I felt he had betrayed me and I hated him for this. That ended our relationship. I vowed never to trust another



The Lincoln School For Nurses



Probies
3rd yr from L.
2nd row



My first
year
School
Uniform

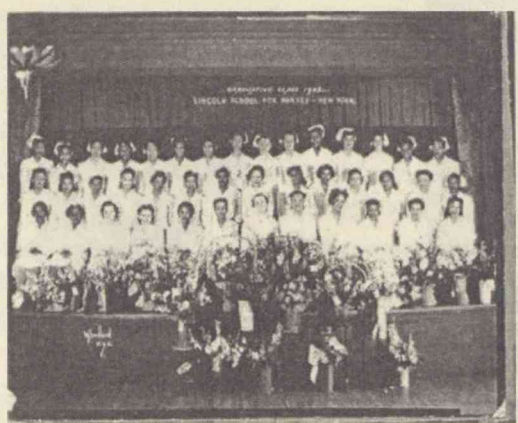


I'm sitting on rocks
behind student's residence
building



2nd year
 2 chevrons
 on
 Sleeve of uniform

School Pin



Graduation Day
 1943
 3rd lot on the left
 Top Row
 Mrs Benhardt
 center
 6th from (R)

guy, giving no thought to the saying that God will never close a window, without opening a door; when God says "No" look for his "Instead".⁸

The following August I decided not to spend a week of my two-week vacation with Adele as usual. Instead, I wrote to Mother that I would be spending both weeks with her and Daddy. I know my reason for not returning to Somerville was I did not want to face those who knew of my humiliation regarding the relationship I had with my former boyfriend. Evidently, I had a "Jonah Problem", putting distance between God and me.⁹ I was running from a problem.

Daddy had given up his huckstering due to recurring "blackouts" and his physician had warned him about driving. He and Mother had taken positions with Dr. Pillmore and his wife Lucille. Mother as the cook and Daddy as the gardener. They closed the house in Springtown for the time being and moved to Paoli, P.A. to live on the estate, so I joined them there.

The Pillmores decided to take a vacation for two weeks in Florida so that Mother and Daddy could spend time with me. They knew I was studying to be a nurse so Dr. Pillmore gave me permission to use his medical books in the library to study.

Mother made every effort to make my vacation as enjoyable as possible for there was no one to spend time with around my age. She grilled steaks and baked potatoes on the patio barbecue pit; she even made me "Bloody Marys" that she had become adept at making. Daddy remained a teetotaler. Of course, there were my favorite lemon meringue pies. Some days we would take a taxi into town to visit Mother's hairdresser, have tea and cookies. The estate was way out in the boon docks so visits into town were few.

I think that the time spent with Mother and Daddy proved to be my healing time for I returned to school ready to go on with my life.

⁸ William D. Watley, *You have to face it to fix it* (Judson Press, Valley Forge, 1997) 9.

⁹ William D. Watley, *You have to face it to fix it* (Judson Press, Valley Forge, 1997) 2.

I had many experiences that I would never have had if I had been accepted at Easton Hospital's School of Nursing. Easton at the time would not accept "colored" students in their nursing program. Their refusal was a blessing in disguise for me, as the Bible states, "Ye meant evil against me but God meant if for good."¹⁰

We had affiliations at various institutions, three months at Seaview Hospital in Staten Island for Tuberculosis, Bellevue Hospital for Psychiatry, Henry Street Nurses Association for visiting nurses experience, also a week with our own Social Service department.

To reach Seaview Hospital we had to take a ferryboat. Those months at Seaview were disconcerting to many of us because of the preponderance of cockroaches due to the nearness of the water, the New York Bay and the Atlantic Ocean.

When we went for meals in the dining room after caring for patients we were taught how to fold our aprons with the underside over the side that had been exposed to patients, so as not to contaminate ourselves while eating and inadvertently placing our hands in our lap on the exposed side.

The thing I disliked the most was watching an autopsy on a patient with Tuberculosis of the lung. The exposure of the lung was gruesome as far as I was concerned. Traveling on the subway each morning at seven a.m. to Bellevue was an experience in itself. You are packed like sardines and there is no need to hold on to straps from the ceiling for the people so close to you held you up. They were on their way to work, the busiest time of day.

One morning a man came dashing out of the men's room at the 42nd Street stop through the turnstile and onto the train. At the 34th street stop a woman prepared to get off; it was her stop. The man had to get off with her because he had caught her skirt on the zipper of his pants. Evidently, in his hustle to catch the train after coming out of the men's room, he realized his fly was open on his pants. While standing close to her, he tried to remedy the situation. Was he ever embarrassed standing out there on the platform getting untangled!

¹⁰ Bible *Genesis* 20-50.

The New York Times

Once Upon a Time, a Plague Was Vanquished



BY HARRON W. CLARKE

A young resident of New Haven, Conn., is the only person in New York City in the early 1980s who can be traced to Staten Island.

The display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, "The Plague in New York City, 1892," is a pair of painted maps from an 1892 publication that died from the disease.

New York was prepared a general trial to the introduction of quarantine practices for tuberculosis. Some of the most important and which, leading for the elderly may constitute the greatest reduction of the old hospital buildings.

When the tuberculosis hospital opened in 1913, the need in New York was critical. The disease was the city's leading killer. It was the most common cause of death in the city.

The cover contains stories of the disease, often the largest, where bacteria formed large masses. The disease, which is in the old New York general residence and the Staten Island, where several had died, prepared a great controversy for over 20 years.

Why did it take so long to get rid of it? As many as 10,000 died from tuberculosis in the city in 1892, but it was not until the middle of the day, which was the first, had been and good results.

The museum, Park Avenue, in the first building was in addition to the large, the staff has prepared exhibits, including a 10-foot-long map of New York, showing the disease's spread. A 10-foot-long map of New York, showing the disease's spread. A 10-foot-long map of New York, showing the disease's spread.

Today, in a comprehensive operation, 100,000 people are being screened for tuberculosis in the city. The health of the city, and the health of the city, and the health of the city.



Old hospital equipment and a disinfected lung, created in glass for use in the Staten Island Tuberculosis Hospital on Staten Island, N.Y., opened in 1913, when tuberculosis was the city's leading killer.

and the unoccupied ground. Yet the people, like many other buildings on the old site, is increasingly vacant and not for renovation.

The most famous event at New York occurred in 1862. At San-Matthias, a church that operated as a hospital, was with excellent results. "This is the place that tuberculosis was cured."

A month, doctors had been curing the disease for years, but only in some patients, the those who happened to breathe air. Most patients were discharged, but some were cured once it became unobtainable.

But it was the introduction of another drug, instead, that put New York in the lead. In 1913, Dr. Edward W. Robinson had begun to give the first pills to patients while both had disinfected shops at other hospitals. "They were ordered to die," Dr. Robinson later said. "If we had we would it give them another, they would have been cured."

In the very month, patients' improvement was striking. Tuberculosis had been cured. Instead was dramatic. Dr. Robinson continued.

When inspectors returned to the New York in February 1913, they observed a patient in the city, who was told "The New York Times that the considered it drug the most wonderful thing in the world."

Even if the tuberculosis was a big problem, there was no denying that the drug was effective. The disease had been cured. Instead was dramatic. Dr. Robinson continued.

An New York City's commissioner of health, Dr. Thomas E. Francis, formerly said, "Staten Island played a pivotal role in the global control of tuberculosis."

Dr. Francis's report, which was published in 1913, was the first to show that the disease was being cured. The first tuberculosis patient ever cured. The first tuberculosis patient ever cured.



Old hospital equipment and a disinfected lung, created in glass for use in the Staten Island Tuberculosis Hospital on Staten Island, N.Y., opened in 1913, when tuberculosis was the city's leading killer.

its threat, later a nursing home, opened in 1913, followed by the Light House for the Blind, a dental clinic and a brain injury center.

Some of the most interesting buildings, for example, mental rooms in the former hospital, but other tenants considered that was building, having not hospital services to decay.

New York City's health, in government of 1913 was known for the elderly, "throughout the city," Mr. Francis said. "The city has expanded to the medical study of the country, first with a tuberculosis hospital, then a nursing home and other services building."

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg credits

A window into a world defined by the scourge of tuberculosis.

Staten Island, including the major residence, which only in the first building, converted into affordable housing. The city has expanded to the medical study of the country, first with a tuberculosis hospital, then a nursing home and other services building.

The construction would require the structure to be moved from a new building, but the New York officials are not as it is opportunity to help it to the public, federal and state agencies with the resources of government. A general hospital has been established to cover roughly \$2 million for the first building.

For his part, Mr. Francis continued the New York in 1913, a hospital of only 100 beds, and some of the most interesting buildings, for example, mental rooms in the former hospital, but other tenants considered that was building, having not hospital services to decay.

Today, in a comprehensive operation, 100,000 people are being screened for tuberculosis in the city. The health of the city, and the health of the city, and the health of the city.

At Bellevue, we had hands on experience with shock therapy and hydrotherapy. They used insulin shock therapy. The patient was given an overdose of insulin, which caused convulsions. We students would sit beside the patient's cot with a glass of juice heavily saturated with sugar for the patient to drink.

Today they use electric current to the brain. One of the types of hydrotherapy used was placing a patient on a hammock suspended in a tub of warm water; a canvas covered the tub with a hole cut out at the top for the patient's head to be exposed. The warm water was for soothing purposes.

One day my patient decided he was going to drown himself by pulling his head down into the water under the canvas covering. I reached down into the opening, grabbed his hair and tried to pull his head back out, meanwhile putting my foot on the device in the floor that would summon help. I was shaking when help arrived. I took him out of the tub with him cursing everyone.

The second type of hydrotherapy was standing patients against a wall in the basement area, and with the use of a hose spray cold water over their bodies. I thought that rather cruel treatment. In the classroom, more like an auditorium, we watched patients being hypnotized on the stage. I found that rather fascinating.

However, I did not like playing ball with a "catatonic" patient who was sitting in a chair. When I threw the ball to her, she made no attempt to catch it, just let it roll away. After many attempts, I told the instructor, "She doesn't want to play." The instructor said, "No you are the one who doesn't want to play." I thought to myself, you are the one who is crazy. You can understand why my grade in psychiatry was not one of the best.

Henry St. affiliation took us to the "Hunt's Point" section of the Bronx. We administered to the needs of some Jewish families, giving enemas or injections of medications. They would offer us gefile fish, matzo bread and sour cream on bananas, which I developed a liking for.

The superintendent Ms. Lorraine Denhardt, whom I named my oldest daughter after, taught our nursing ethics course. As a class project we were required to spend a day with people on the Bowery. There

were people from all walks of life who had become destitute, having suffered some misfortune or failure in their lives. There were Priests, teachers, lawyers, laborers and other professionals, you name it.

We sat at a table with them and ate lunch, which consisted of bean soup and crusty loaves of bread. It proved to be quite tasty. Another time we visited one of Father Divine's "shops" where you could buy food at a very inexpensive price. He sought to help the poor. Ms. Denhardt instilled in us the importance of treating others in such a manner that would allow them to maintain their dignity. For we would never know when "There but for the grace of God go I".

We were taught to address all of our patients as Mr. or Mrs., even if an ambulance crew picked them up out of the gutters and brought them to the hospital. In the emergency room they were showered, deloused and given clean clothing. I've tried to adhere to those principles throughout my nursing career.

There was one episode at Lincoln that was very traumatic for me. One of my classmates committed suicide by jumping out of the fourth floor window of her room. I rearranged the furniture in my room, leaving it the way it was reminded me of her sitting on the foot of my bed when she came down from her room to study with me. She had flunked her test in obstetrics and was afraid she would not be able to graduate.

For recreation we formed a basketball team. I played the guard position on the team. Our greatest rival was the Harlem Hospital Team. From time to time soldiers from Fort Dix would come to visit their girlfriends and bring other soldiers with them. We danced to the tunes played on the phonograph in the auditorium, abiding by the rules and strict curfew when they had to leave.

One weekend I decided to go back to Somerville for a visit and to see my two buddies Fats and Gene. They had been drafted, Fats in the Army and Gene into the Navy. We decided to go to the "Shady Rest Country Club" in Plainfield, N.J. It was the only country club for the colored that had a band playing there. We danced to Jimmy Robinson's band and caught up on the news during intermissions. I would later hear that Fats had been killed in the "Battle of the Bulge" in Germany. My brother Fred's regiment had been stationed near his and they ran

into each other unexpectedly one day, neither one knowing the other was there in Germany. Fred referred to their commander as "Blood and Guts Patton". Fred too had been in the "Battle of the Bulge" but fortunately survived.

In the meantime, I spent other weekends with classmates visiting their homes, going to Rye beach or Coney Island with them. I sometimes visited Mother's other sister "Aunt Margaret" who lived on 135th St. near Seventh Avenue. Her husband was a "Red Cap". Uncle Clarence worked at the Pennsylvania Station on 34th St.

One of the students, who wasn't in my class, was from Chicago and we became friends. One of her friends from her old neighborhood in Chicago was a saxophone player with Erskin Hawkins band, they were playing at the Savoy Ballroom in New York. The Savoy was a dancehall featuring two bands in the same evening. When one had intermission time the other was playing. I went along with her to hear them play; she introduced me to Julian Dash who played Tenor sax in the band and was her childhood friend.

During his intermission time, we would sit at a table and talk. I remember one of the topics was "what gender would a new born child be if the father were an alcoholic or if the mother were an alcoholic". They cited people they knew trying to determine who had girls and who had boys. I don't think we ever reached a conclusion although we thought if the father was an alcoholic, the child would be a girl, if the mother was - it would be a boy.

Nineteen forty-three and "Hallelujah" graduation day. No more black stockings, blue dresses with aprons, bibs and black shoes. We could put on white uniforms with long cuffed sleeves, white stockings and shoes. No more making do with two or three dollars a month from out twenty-dollar monthly compensation for our work on the wards. They had garnished the remainder of the twenty for books, uniforms, shoes and tuition. It was not until the last two months or so that we received the entire twenty dollars. It is amazing what you can do with a few dollars if you budget your money wisely.

Of course, Mother would send money when she could along with a care package. She would pack a box with cake, fruits and even fried

chicken and send it through the mail. It didn't take a long time at all to arrive and still be good enough to eat.

Now we were destined to go out into the real world, cutting the apron strings. We were not employed by Lincoln Hospital; Ms Denhardt felt we should gain experience at other hospitals. Due to Adam Clayton Powell's efforts, some all white hospitals were hiring colored nurses. Along with four of my classmates, I applied for a position at Willard Parker Hospital. It was a communicable disease hospital on the lower eastside. All communicable diseases detected in the city were sent there. These diseases included measles, chicken pox, scarlet fever, diphtheria, pertusis, malaria, anthrax and poliomyelitis.

Chapter Seven

1943-1944, Manhattan, N.Y. C. —

“Willard Parker Hospital”

Before we could begin work at Willard Parker Hospital however, we had to take and pass our state board examinations. In those days, the exam took three days to complete. Ours was given at St. Luke's Hospital and covered three phases, verbal, written and practical.

The practical exam for me was horrendous. I was required to prepare a medication for injection. We did not have bottles of sterile water or packages of sterile needles and syringes as they do today and medications in vials.

We put water in a metal spoon that was attached to what was called an alcohol lamp by a metal stem. The wick in the lamp was lighted with a match to produce a flame under the spoon to boil the water. After the water boiled, you draw the prescribed amount, usually one or two C.C.s into a syringe that had been boiled or sterilized.

I had to give a morphine injection using a tablet similar to that of morphine. I placed the tablet on the now empty spoon and pushed the water out of the syringe onto the tablet dissolving it, then drew the mixture back into the syringe. I had prepared a medication for injection! My hands were trembling so I could hardly hold the syringe and needle that had been sterilized. I do not know how I managed to survive the ordeal.

Finally, the long awaited results arrived by letter at my classmate's home at 208 West 119th Street. I had passed! After graduation, my classmate had invited me to stay with her family while I looked for a place to live. Her family had migrated to the United States from Brazil

and spoke Portuguese. I think my liking for hot, spicy food evolved from my stay with them. When they attended dances, a picnic basket was packed with food and taken along to the dance. You went from table to table eating between dances. It was a wonderful experience for me.

I finally found a room at 515 West 148th St. in Harlem. It was one of those townhouses where all the rooms were rented out. A super lived on the first floor and placed the mail on a table in the entrance hall.

My room was rather small, only big enough to hold a cot and dresser. There was a communal bathroom and of course no facility for cooking. So, I had to eat out or bring takeout food to my room. I traveled by subway to Willard Parker Hospital each day.

As a condition for employment, we rotated from one department to another thus gaining experience in the treatment of all communicable diseases. During my free hours, I matriculated at Columbia University taken an advanced English course.

My first day at Willard was spent learning how to get in and out of an open back gown that is worn while taking care of a patient. We were taught how to do this without contaminating others or ourselves. Basins containing antiseptic solutions were placed outside the door of each patient's cubicle. After taking care of the patient you hung the gown on a hook inside the cubicle with the outside of the gown facing outward folded over, keeping the inside of the gown protected from exposure to the room. Then you washed your hands in the basin of solution before going to the next patient's cubicle.

The measles ward was my first assignment and contained at least eighty children. All nurses when hired received all the necessary shots so that we could care for all the patients regardless of their diagnosis. After a month on the measles ward, I rotated to other departments for a month on each of them.

The children on the pertusis or whooping cough ward were taken outside each day to play, weather permitting. This made me apprehensive at times for sometimes children would cough out their tracheal tubes and we would have to rush them into the treatment room to replace them before the incision on their throat closed.

Treatments on the polio wards varied. Some patients had to be placed in "Iron Lungs", quite a difference from the respirators of today. If for some reason electricity failed or the plug was pulled out inadvertently, you had to pump air into the lung by using the foot paddle on the floor. There were armholes on the sides of the "Iron Lung" so that you could administer to the needs of the patient by putting your hands and arms through them.

Another treatment for poliomyelitis was placing pieces of felt into a tub of boiling hot water, then using tongs run them through an old fashioned wringer attached to the tub extracting all the water from the felt. Then place this felt piece on the affected areas such as arms, legs, or backs of patients and cover it with plastic. It always amazed me that the patient was never burned with this procedure.

The nurse who was working the 11-7 shift, as we were all required to do at times, had to make the coffee and cinnamon toast, or hot chocolate and tea for break time when nurses on duty would come down to the lounge area for a break. Can you believe there was no ancillary staff to do this! Meanwhile, I continued attending Columbia University from noon to 2 p.m. After a year of this postgraduate work and having had experience with all the communicable diseases, I took a position at Post Graduate Hospital.

Chapter Eight

1944-1945, Post Graduate Hospital "The Moneyed Class"

Post Graduate Hospital was located on Second Ave. It was an all white private hospital catering to the wealthy. Today it is called New York University Hospital. Of course there were no colored professionals working there, I was probably the first one. I was assigned to the Women's Surgical Department.

After weeks of orientation, I was to take care of patients on a six bed male unit at the other end of the women's ward. It was reached by going up a small ramp. There were two patient rooms, one with two beds, and the other with four beds. There was a treatment room and the nurses' desk was in a corner on the landing area with a medicine cabinet. Across from the desk was an opening in the wall where a chute to the pharmacy was located.

One placed an order sheet for medication into a metal cylinder and put the cylinder in the chute, pressed a button on the wall to alert the pharmacy clerk that an order was on the way via the conveyer belt. They used the same procedure to send the medication to the unit so it wasn't necessary for the nurse to leave the unit to obtain medications.

It was here at Post Graduate that for the first time I had a patient of mine die while I was on duty. I can't imagine how I had avoided this for all of my three years of training. Of course, I had helped others to do post mortem care on a patient; this was a different experience all together. It was my patient!

My patient was a middle-aged lawyer from Connecticut. When the family arrived and were crying, I cried along with them, so much so

that you would have thought I was a member of the family. An intern filled out the forms for me because I was too upset to do them.

There was a Dr. Heyd, a prominent surgeon who was the author of a book on rectal surgery that was used by interns and residents as a reference book. He was so exacting and hard to please that nurses were reluctant to assist him. One day the head nurse came to the unit to supervise me in assisting him to change a dressing on a patient. She inadvertently spilled codeine on the sterile area, a towel for the dressings, for he was finding fault with one thing or another making her nervous.

I happened to look up at him and he was grinning; he winked at me, so I knew that he deliberately antagonized the nurses to upset them. He told the head nurse that he would show me what to do, so she left. From that time on the nurses were happy to have me assisting him. I learned a lot from him, how to cleanse a wound and to apply sterile dressings, among other things.

When there was a shortage of staff and I had completed the morning care for my patients, I would go over to women's surgical to help. There was an elderly woman, who I bathed, combed her hair and changed the bed linen, thereafter she always asked for me to give her morning care. She was the mother of Nanette Fabray, a well-known Hollywood actress. I gave my youngest daughter Darlene the middle name of Nanette after her.

Nurses were never permitted to accept tips from patients. However, patients would get around this rule by leaving money in an envelope with the nurse's name on it at the desk when

they were discharged. I received a number of those envelopes and rarely had to dip into my salary, so I was able to save for my tuition at Columbia where I had continued to matriculate.

Since my goal was to be a public health nurse, I decided to apply for a position at the Meinhardt Clinic which was affiliated with Flower Fifth Avenue Hospital on the lower west side. After my experience at Willard Parker, I felt I would expand that by administering to a variety of patients in a clinic setting.

In the meantime, my sister Josephine had accepted a position with the Veteran's Administration on Canal Street in the C.I.D. department. I came home to my room to find her there bag and baggage. My

landlady had let her in, so we had to find a larger room to accommodate both of us. We moved to a suite in the Grampion Hotel on 119th St. It consisted of a bedroom and a living room with a sofa bed. There was a hot plate on the dresser that we used to make coffee and heat a can of soup. Eating out every day proved to be rather expensive so we started looking for a room with kitchenette.

My former landlady, an enterprising person, had an apartment on St. Nicholas Avenue. She rented apartments, and then rented out the rooms in her apartments to others. Fortunately for us, she had an empty room in that apartment. It consisted of four bedrooms, dining room, living room, kitchen and two bathrooms, one of which had an adjoining bedroom. My sister and I were assigned the dining room as our bedroom. Other occupants of the apartment had a variety of occupations. Our room had a double bed, dresser, portable closet, table and two chairs.

A cantankerous little old lady had the bedroom across from us. She never abided by the rules that were established and posted in the kitchen. There was a young man by the name of Jimmy who sang with a group called the "Mariners" who sang on Arthur Godfrey's show. He had the room with the adjoining bathroom. A couple rented the living room. The husband was a chef and the wife a clerk. It was from them I learned how to make my own barbecue sauce. Another occupant was a "Lady of the Evening", a euphemistic term for prostitute. She was a very nice person and never brought her Johns to the apartment. She owned a car and one day when I was off, she invited me to drive with her to the Bronx Zoo. We packed a picnic lunch and spent the afternoon at the Zoo. She proved to be a very intelligent person. The last occupant was a retired Lieutenant from the army. We rarely saw him.

Each person had a shelf assigned to him or her in the refrigerator, also a shelf on one of the closets. A time schedule was allotted each one for the use of the stove, to which the little old lady paid no attention. We just let her use the stove to cook whenever she wanted.

One day I ran into "Whit", the one who had supplied me with sandwiches at Howard, on campus at Columbia University. He was working on his Masters degree in French and planning to study at the Sorbonne in Paris.

Some evenings we would play pinochle with his friends. The couple lived in an apartment nearby. After we had been dating for some time he suggested that we get married. He proposed that he would go to Paris while I continued working in New York. Since I didn't speak French, it would be difficult for me to work in a hospital in France.

When I told my sister about this she laughed saying that she heard he was still seeing his former girlfriend from Howard, and that I would just be helping him finance his studies at the Sorbonne!

I decided I would table any thoughts of marriage and eventually stop seeing him altogether, never telling him why. Years later I was to find the rumor was a lie. This was a Jonah lesson. Never let gossip and innuendo be a determining factor in your relationship with others. I went on with my plans and accepted the position offered to me at Meinhardt Clinic.

Chapter Nine

1945-1946, Meinhardt Clinic

"The UnMoneyed Class"

The Meinhardt Clinic is located on the lower west side and services provided by the clinic extended as far as 116th St. The clinics were comprised of the well-baby, the diabetic, the V.D. (Venereal disease) and the tuberculosis clinics. Also included in the services provided, nurses were assigned to schoolroom classes and visited the homes of students who were having problems in school.

Morning hours were for the well-baby clinic where you would weigh the child, take their vital signs (temperature, pulse and respiration), check their skin color and make sure their immunization shots were up to date. The mother was advised in matters pertaining to the health of the baby.

The diabetic clinic was also held in the morning hours. Patients were monitored and taught how to give themselves insulin. Physicians would give them prescriptions for any changes in doses. The nurses would go over diets with them.

The venereal disease clinic was held in the afternoon. To protect the patients' privacy, a tag with a number on it was placed on the patients' chart and the corresponding, numbered tag was given to the patient on their arrival. So when the patients' time came to receive their shot of penicillin or mepharsasn, that was given by intravenous injection for syphilis, their number was called out and not their name. It was no one's business who was receiving treatment for a venereal disease.



Co-workers at Meinhardt Clinic



February 1946

There were evening hours for interviews with patients who had contracted gonorrhea or syphilis. An effort was made to obtain the name of their sexual partner. Some would blame their husband or wife or give bizarre stories of how they got it, such as eating an apple that someone had take a bite out of, or they had contracted it from a toilet seat.

Their contacts were notified and given appointments to come in and be examined. Information was given as to the danger if the disease was left untreated and the possibility of infecting others. Follow-ups were instituted.

The clinic for tuberculosis was located at 116th St., there were afternoon hours here. X-rays were taken and appointments made for follow-ups. We nurses gave classes on the type of diets they should follow being mindful of the cost of food. We recommended the most inexpensive, such as greens like spinach and collard greens, and red beans for iron and plenty of milk. We found that the people in the neighborhood ate a lot of red beans and rice, which was good.

The more advanced cases of T.B. were sent to Seaview Hospital or Goldwater hospital. One of the most interesting aspects of working at Meinhardt for me was being assigned to school classrooms to ascertain any health problems of the pupil.

We were told to sit at the back of the classroom and observe. We checked to see if a pupil had difficulty seeing the blackboard, or hearing the teacher. Their squinting or leaning forward were indications. We would also observe any behavior problems. One day after observation of a class in session in my assigned schoolroom, I was prompted to write the following report, which I handed in to my Columbia University professor who taught "Educational Psychology". We were to describe our thoughts on motivation as it related to some experience we might have had. The following was the content of my report.

"When you were discussing motivation and its connection with learning it brought to mind an incident in a grade school classroom that I was observing. I was in the nurses' station of the health room and a class was in session across the hall. The teacher was reprimanding a boy at the top of her voice for walking around the room. He told her he was doing something and would sit down in a minute, after he

finished what he was doing. It seemed to me that he ignored the teacher's yelling at him because that was the type of reprimanding he received at home and it did not faze him one way or another. I find that using the unexpected approach is better, talking to the boy in a lower tone of voice, asking him to do something for you, completely ignoring what he was doing and, putting off until a later time a conference about his disobedience."

"I expect the child wanted attention, whether good or bad and received it in just the way he expected. The teacher in that situation had a difficult time supplying an incentive to induce the boy to sit down and learn his lesson. Punishment in his case would not have been a good method of his compliance."

"I don't know if I'm confusing learning with something else by my interpretation of what was happening in that classroom. However, I don't see that trying to give the boy an incentive to sit down and do his work is too different from one of the opinions expressed of offering rewards for something well done or punishment for not doing the right thing."

I don't remember the grade I received on that report; but, I have saved the report all these years.

Visiting the apartments of these troubled children was very enlightening. Some lived in those walk up "cold water flats". To make sure someone was home we would ring the bell in the entrance hallway before going up the dark stairwells.

Each nurse was issued a black bag with outside pockets containing sheets of newspaper. These sheets of paper were used to place on a chair or other surface in the apartment so that cockroaches would not get into the bag. There were rat holes in the baseboards, stained ceilings where an over flowed toilet or tub from the flat above leaked water down into the ceiling. Things were deplorable and you could see food seemed to be at a shortage. With little food in their stomachs, there was no wonder that a child would be sluggish and inattentive in class, let alone restless and belligerent.

Today we label children who are disruptive as having Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). But, how many of these homes were cited by social workers to determine cause other than (ADD) for restless impulsive

behavior. We cannot label children capriciously or arbitrarily without thoroughly investigating all aspects of the child's life. They are going to school inadequately clothed. Holes in their shoes, stuffed with newspaper, sweaters in the winter instead of winter coats and most of all hungry!

We nurses at Meinhardt did the best we could to visit as many homes as possible and to refer the mothers to agencies for the help they needed. Due to the fact I was working full time and attending classes at Columbia at the same time, my social life was rather limited.

Occasionally on Saturdays, a cousin of mine and I would catch a show at the Apollo Theater in Harlem or the Paramount when Erskin Hawkin's band was in town. My old acquaintance Julian Dash, from the Old Savoy Ballroom days, was playing tenor saxophone with Erskine Hawkins as before. We would go back stage to talk with him usually some white girls were there hanging out with some of the musicians. Julian would excuse himself by telling them that my cousin and I were his little sisters that he was taking us out for the evening. After the show he would take us downtown to 52nd St. On 52nd St. between 5th Avenue and 6th Avenue, there was nothing but nightclubs. There were "Leon and Eddies", "Mamma Leonie's", "Tondalayas", "The Onyx Club", "Three Deuces", "Zanzibar" and the "White Rose" on the corner of 6th Avenue.

We would go from one club to the other where Julian's friends were playing "gigs" staying about one half hour in each. However, my cousin and I were only drinking orange soda, so there was no danger of becoming inebriated. After making the rounds of the clubs, we headed toward Broadway to a Chinese restaurant. For some reason the restaurant was located on the second floor of the building. After eating, Julian would get a morning paper and flag down a taxi, he would drop us off at my building and continue on to his apartment around the corner on 157th St.

We lived in a section of Harlem called "Sugar Hill". Many entertainers lived in the area. Duke Ellington lived across the street from me on St. Nicholas Ave. My building fronted a hill overlooking Edgecomb Avenue below. Bill Kenny of the famed "Ink Spots" lived in an apartment on Edgecomb, as did Ella Fitzgerald.

One evening coming from backstage at the Paramount Theater on to the street, we found the streets teeming with people. Soldiers and

sailors were drinking champagne from their girlfriends' slippers, hugging and kissing complete strangers. Confetti was showering down from office windows of the skyscraper buildings. V.J. Day, the war was over. It was August 1945. No more rationing of sugar, meat, gas or butter and using ration books of stamps. It was an end to using margarine, which was prepared by combining a package of orange powder with a lard-like substance. We would not have to go down to the butcher shop on the corner and buy black market meat.

We had been caught up in the world of jazz; the bright lights of Broadway, the sophistication and all the glamour. We sang all the songs of the time. "Do nothing till you hear from me", "Don't get around much anymore", "I let a song go out of my heart" and many more.

We knew the sounds of various instruments like Julian's sax, Paul Bascomb's alto sax, Dud Bascomb's clarinet and Kelly Martin's vibraharp. They were all members of Erskin's band.

Soon all this would come to an end; I had truly enjoyed my work at Meinhardt and was devastated when I was told that I could not continue working. Upon checking my x-rays, which were mandatory, a doctor found on the chest x-ray a small lesion the size of a dime on my left lung. He ordered a battery of tests, sputum, skin tests, and gastric analysis. They injected my bronchial tubes with some substance that tasted like castor oil to me. All of the tests proved to be negative. However, obtaining my x-rays from Lincoln, taken before and after my affiliation with Seaview Hospital for T.B. (tuberculosis), the physician found my skin test had been negative as well as the x-ray before my affiliation. Three months after, the chest x-ray showed the lesion. He felt that I should never had been sent to Seaview and exposed to T.B.; he diagnosed me with an arrested T.B. to be sure that I would not come down with an active case. He made arrangements for me to be admitted to Raybrook Sanatorium in Raybrook, N.Y. at the expense of the city. "Why me?" I asked myself. "What have I done to deserve this?" I've taken care of people who were ill, never complaining. I had another "Jonah Problem", distancing myself from God as I had done before.

What to do until it was time for me to travel to Raybrook? What else but to go home to Mother and Daddy, my refuge to draw on

Daddy's strength and Mother's comforting presence. I spent the week with them while my sister continued to maintain the room on St. Nicholas Ave and commuting home on weekends.

I decided to go by myself. So, on the first of February I boarded a train from Grand Central station in New York to Raybrook.

Chapter Ten

1946-1947, February Raybrook, N.Y.

"The Healing"

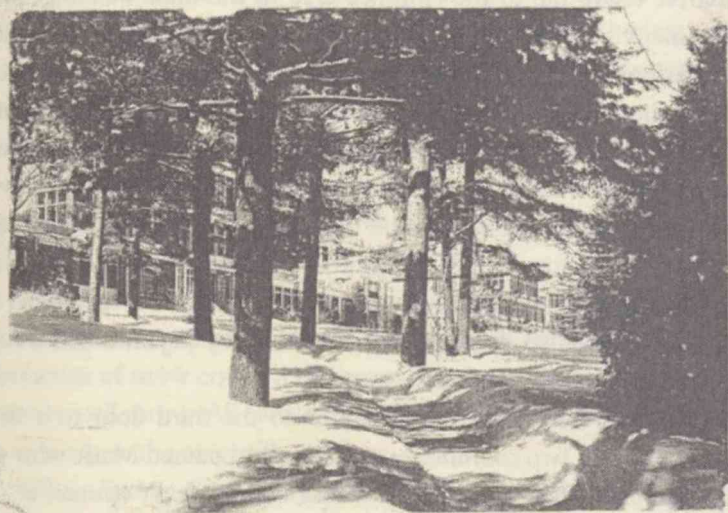
The Raybrook sanatorium was one of the largest semi-charitable institutions in New York State. It was located in the vicinity of Saranac Lake, a small resort village on Flower Lake with a population of about 6,900. Trudeau sanatorium was also in the vicinity.

Saranac Lake pioneered the open-air treatment for Tuberculosis. At a later date, Trudeau, where Robert Louis Stevenson was a patient from 1887-1888, was to become an academy where management personnel pursued advanced training.¹¹ Raybrook was also just a few miles from Lake Placid, a popular resort area located on both Mirror Lake and Lake Placid. It lies at the foot of White Face Mountain.

Adjacent to this village, that had a population of 3,000 residents in the late 20th century, were golf courses, bob sled runs, ski centers and miles of bridle paths and hiking trails. The Olympics have been held here.

I thought that I would be at Raybrook for a short time only. However, it turned out to be nine months before I would see New York City again. I was there from February 1946 until October 1946, which included all the seasons: winter, spring, summer and fall.

¹¹ *Encyclopedia Britannica* Vol. 19.



Winter at Raybrook Sanatorium



I'm on the rail - My roommate 1st from (R)
on the ground.

I arrived at the Raybrook train station around 9 p.m. I was met by an employee from the sanatorium who was driving their station wagon, the name displayed on it to allay any fears that I might have had, I'm sure. He drove me to the entrance area of the main building, there were many attached wings to the building. A nurse greeted me and escorted me to a room on the second floor. Later she brought me some sandwiches and a cup of hot chocolate along with some magazines. She explained that I would be on complete bed rest for a few days with the exception of using the bathroom.

There were more tests to be done which included another skin test, another gastric analysis and more blood work. After the tests were completed, about the fourth day I was allowed to go downstairs to the first floor to a small dining room dressed in my pajamas and a robe, where my meals were served.

The following week I was moved to the third floor to a three bedroom. I had two roommates, an Italian girl named Marie who was from Brooklyn, and another girl whose name I don't remember. We were roommates for my entire stay there. Patients like me, who had rooms on the third floor, were permitted to go to the main dining room for all our meals - casually dressed. We each were assigned to tables that were set for six people. My tablemates dubbed our table the international table because of our different nationalities.

There were four guys and I, since the other girl that had been assigned to our table was discharged a few days after my arrival. There was Jack Walsh who was Irish, John Birmingham - English, John Cappelano - Italian, Morris Phillips - Jewish, we called him Phillip Morris, and I, colored.

In the spring they took turns teaching me how to play golf. There was a standard nine-hole golf course on the grounds. Going around the course twice made it an eighteen-hole course. Each person was allotted two irons, one of them being a putter. I had a number five iron and a putter. One time I shot an eighty, through dumb luck! I shot over the trees on one tee instead of through them and landed on the green. Of course, my score was usually much higher than that.

Following eight a.m. breakfast, everyone was required to rest on lounge chairs in the screened in porches. Since it was February when I

arrived and it was extremely cold, I had the experience of donning a hooded sheepskin lined coat that reached to my feet. I was so cold I felt like the hairs in my nostrils were frozen! We were compelled to stay out there on that porch for at least an hour or even longer at times. Then we could go to the craft shop or to the library for the rest of the morning. At twelve noon, lunch was served. All meals were served on time. Breakfast at eight, lunch at twelve and supper at five.

A pitcher of milk was placed on each table and at least one glass was to be consumed at each meal. We were monitored. Meals were served country style. Plates and bowls of food were placed on the table and you helped yourself.

In the winter, Raybrook looked like a winter wonderland. It is no wonder that it was called "Raybrook Country Club" with all its attractions. Mountains of snow covered the ground and you never saw the earth beneath until spring. All cars had chains on their tires for people could never navigate the area without them.

When Spring arrived, my two roommates and I would walk the nature trails or along the highway to Saranac. We would stop at a tearoom to have tea and scones that were absolutely delicious. However, before spring came we would pool our money and take a taxi to Lake Placid to watch the ski jumps and the Tobogganists. It seemed they were traveling about one hundred miles an hour down the chutes of the bobsled runs. I suppose centrifugal force kept the bobsled anchored to the sides of the chute.

The people in Saranac Lake were well aware that we were from the Sanatorium when we went into the village to shop. They knew also that passes were only given to those who were not in the contagious phase. They probably felt as I did, germs would not be able to survive in the freezing cold weather.

Occasionally some of the girls in my wing along with my roommates and me would call a taxi to pick us up behind our building after supper so we could sneak out. We would take the taxi to a "roadhouse", as they were called, where we would order cocktails. My roommate, who was Italian, always ordered red wine. I ordered scotch with milk, thinking the milk would be good for me! Others ordered martinis or sauterne. We had the driver return for us in an hour so that

we could sneak back into our building by eight p.m., at which time we were to have our temperatures taken. Temperatures were taken four times a day.

On other evenings we would go to the auditorium to see a movie or find a book in the library to read. Bedtime was at nine p.m. and a nurse would make rounds at that time to check on us.

Finally, it was October and I had a birthday. The guys at my table had gone into Saranac and bought a birthday cake for me. When I entered the dining room at dinnertime, they all stood up and sang happy birthday to me. They also presented me with the gift of cologne called "Blue Grass". For a long time afterwards, I bought "Blue Grass" cologne.

At the end of October when I was to be discharged, I was informed that I would ride in the ambulance with a patient who was being transferred to a hospital in Syracuse, N.Y. for a spinal operation. It was quite a distance from Raybrook and she would need someone to administer to her needs on the way, so I was happy to do it.

After seeing to her admission to the hospital and giving them her charts, the driver drove me to the train station. People waiting for the train were amazed to see me get out of the ambulance, go to the ticket window and buy a ticket to New York.

I was homeward bound at last after nine long months.

Chapter Eleven

1947-1948, St. Nicholas Avenue and Lincoln Hospital

I arrived at Grand Central Station and took the subway to my old apartment building at 938 St. Nicholas Avenue. My sister Josephine had continued renting our room in the apartment and commuted to Alpha on weeks to care for her children, who were taken care of by Mother during the week.

The physicians at the Meinhardt clinic had conferred and recommended that I only work part-time for a few months then assume a full-time position at Lincoln Hospital where they had arranged for me to work.

Since Lincoln was a city hospital and was more or less responsible for my condition, the city compensated me for last wages for the nine months. This I was able to manage with my part-time pay.

Harold who was one of the soldiers from Fort Dix, who had attended our small dances at Lincoln School for nurses, looked me up when he heard from one of my classmates that I was recuperating. He offered financial help if I needed it, but I told him I was managing very well. He would come by and take me out to dinner and to the theater. Both of us worked the 3-11 shift at our respective jobs, he as a clerk at the post office in Manhattan and I at Lincoln Hospital. One evening when we were free, we decided to meet after work at my apartment about 11:30 p.m. and go down to Greenwich village to one of those all night theaters, after the theatre to a Chinese restaurant. After getting off the trolley at its turn around area on 155th St, two blocks from my apartment, I started walking up St. Nicholas Avenue. There were tall arborvitaes on either side of



9hr
Leaving
Lincoln Hospital
after
8 hr. shift
1947



Daddy
Emma St
Alpha, N. J.
1947

Dolores my Companion
on the Jazz Circuit
and
Theaters



the gateway to the courtyard. A brick path way through the courtyard led to the entrance of the building. As I was walking, from a distance I saw a shadow that seemed to me to be a man hiding behind a tree. By the time I reached the gateway I was practically running. A voice called out "Hey!" I ran up the steps to the entrance. The elevator door was closed; but, having been cautioned about getting into any empty elevator at night with a strange man, I took to the steps without ringing for the elevator.

I ran up six flights, we lived on the sixth floor. Meanwhile I heard the elevator start. I was shaking so, I couldn't get my key into the door so I rang the bell six times, which was the code for our room. My sister answered the door and when she saw me, asked, "What's wrong?" I said, "A man is chasing me!"

I went back to our room and collapsed on the bed. Soon our bell rang again, Josephine went to answer the door and let Harold in. He said, "What happened to you? You took off like greased lighting when I called you." I said, "You mean to tell me that it was you that said 'hey'. Why didn't you call my name? I didn't know who you were, you scared me half to death, for two cents I wouldn't go out with you now!"

However, we proceeded to go out on the town. I did not feel like seeing a scary movie in the village. Nothing ever happens in New York City until after midnight and I could sleep-in late the next day since I was on the 3-11 shift.

When I was on the day shift, some mornings instead of taking the trolley across town in the Bronx and transferring to the Southern Blvd trolley to the hospital, I would take the subway down to 135th St. where there was a trolley turn around area - then take the cross-town trolley to Southern Blvd.

After leaving the subway this one morning, I was walking down the street to the turnaround area staying close to the curb for it was safer than walking near the buildings where someone could pull you into the doorways.

A man was walking toward me and just as he was about to pass me, he suddenly grabbed me and started pushing me toward the steps of a building that led to the basement area. He said, "If you scream, I'll cut your throat." Whatever possessed me I do not know, but looking

down at his hands on my shoulders, I realized he didn't have a knife in them so I started to scream. Windows in the building started opening and people were looking out. He let go of me and went up the street toward the subway. Turning he said, "I told you to stop following me around." Evidently trying to impress people that he knew me and this was a family altercation. In fact, a man who was waiting for the trolley said, "Lady, I thought you were with him." People hesitate to interfere in what seems to be a domestic problem. So many times crimes are committed because of this cautious behavior on their part.

In fact, there were incidents where someone went to the aid of a person and ended up being the only one hurt. People just do not want to be involved.

I always wonder how people are able to describe their attackers. The only thing I could describe about the man was that he had on a gray suit. I was too petrified to notice anything else about him. After that incident, I went back to taking the trolley at 155th St.

There was an incident there also. One morning a car stopped at the curb where I was standing waiting for the trolley. A woman in the passengers seat called out "Going across town?" She was in a white uniform but I did not know her, I almost made the mistake of thinking she was a nurse going my way. Then it dawned on me, nurses at Lincoln were not allowed to wear their uniform in public, the hospital provided clean uniforms, which were placed in a locker room where we changed each day from our street clothes. There were tales of couples where the female was the shield in luring an unsuspecting woman into cars. The male partner robs and rapes them. I said, "No thanks" and stepped back to where I stood before going toward the car.

After three months, I started working full time at Lincoln Hospital on 4C, a male surgical unit that consisted of general surgical cases. Across the hall on 4B was the unit for surgical, orthopedic and urological cases, 4C had forty-eight patients. To accommodate the high census, cots were placed up the middle aisle of the ward and out the doorway, sometimes reaching the elevators in the middle of the corridor. Screens were placed around the cots to give patients a little privacy. The regular

beds lining the walls on each side of the ward had curtains on rods that could be pulled around the patients' bed for privacy.

It was backbreaking work changing linen on these cots since they were so low to the floor. Usually with a nurse on one side and the orderly on the other side, they quickly changed all forty-eight beds.

There were rarely more than two R.N.s on with the head nurse and an orderly to work the 7-3 shifts. One nurse gave all the medications and the other made the beds with the orderly and helped with the treatments. The 11-7 nurse, with the help of an orderly, started the baths of the patients. There were only those two working the 11-7 shift.

When students were assigned to patients, it was a little easier for the staff because they completed the baths of their patients and gave them their medications and did their treatments. After morning care had been completed and treatments and medications given, the beds were placed in a straight line exactly so that everything was in order for rounds by the physicians on a daily basis.

Grand rounds once a month consisted of the Chief attending physician and his entourage of residents and interns, nurses, social worker and dieticians. The resident would have the chart of a patient he was presenting who had a particularly interesting history. The Chief would make recommendations to be carried out. Sometimes there would be a need for the expertise of the social worker or dietician.

The attendings were in private practice but gave of their time to the hospital on a month at a time schedule, teaching the residents and interns. The attending would take off the dressing and check the incision, leaving the nurse to cleanse the wound and re-dress it. I had learned to do this at Post Graduate Hospital, so it was not new to me.

After rounds, it seemed the attendings never carried pens. They just dictated orders to the nurse in charge who transcribed them on an order sheet, he signed his name and initialed it. It was not only a learning experience for the residents and interns, but of the nurses as well. There was a variety of cases, one of which was debridement of a wound.

There was a twelve-year-old Puerto Rican boy who had developed a huge bedsore at home that needed treatment. One of treatments was

placing sugar in the wound, letting the maggots that formed slough away the dead tissue. Imagine that compared to the scientific treatments of today. Of course, we did administer penicillin and streptomycin, which were the antibiotics of choice in those days.

All the staff spoiled him buying clothes and toys. We also arranged for a tutor to come in so that he could keep up with his studies.

One of the attendings was a Dr. Wesson of the Wesson Oil Clan. He would invite residents and interns for a day on his yacht. Everyone was on their best behavior when the Chief of Surgery for the entire hospital made rounds. Dr. Amindola was always impeccably dressed in suits that you knew were custom made, the Brooks Brother type.

I shall never forget an incident that occurred on the evening shift when I was the only nurse on the unit, with the help of an orderly. The afternoon supervisors made arrangements for dinner relief. There were always two on floor for the entire hospital. We always placed the bed of the most seriously ill patient at the front of the ward adjacent to the nurses' desk. In this instance, the patient had cancer of the neck.

One evening, I was sitting at the desk charting and looked over at the patient, he suddenly started hemorrhaging from the mouth and blood was saturating the dressing on his neck. The orderly hurriedly went across the hall to get help from the nurse there. I started taking off the blood soaked thick dressings, called combines, and applying new ones. Blood kept spurting from the artery in the neck, which the cancer had evidently penetrated at that point in time.

We kept applying pressure to stem the flow of blood until the interns arrived to take over. We knew the patient was dying. The other nurse and I were covered with blood, our uniforms, stockings and shoes, in addition to our hands. We had to go over to the school where we had lockers to change into clean uniforms and stockings and wash off our shoes.

Recalling the horror of seeing blood spurting from the artery in the patient's throat I cannot help but think of the O.J. Simpson trial. The news media stated that a sock with a bloodstain on it was evidence relating to the murder. I am ambivalent about whether he did or did not commit the murder, but I cannot understand why the sock was not saturated with blood as my stockings were, if the killer wore it.

I had many more experiences at Lincoln, such as the time when a premature infant was kidnapped. The nursery for the premature babies was located on the second floor near the blood banks, some distance from the obstetrical floor. There was a back entrance so mothers could visit without traveling through the main hallways. When the baby was discovered missing, the F.B.I. was called in; practically everyone was fingerprinted who had knowledge of this back entrance.

Finally, the baby was found in excellent condition and well cared for even to putting on more weight. A former patient, a bereaved mother who had lost her premature baby was the kidnapper. Everyone breathed a sigh of relief – especially the mother of the kidnapped baby. Being questioned by an agent of the F.B.I. is not a pleasant experience.

Chapter Twelve

1948-1952, Marriage Then the "Sting of Death"

On my visits home, one of my brothers would come from Easton Pa. to visit our family in Alpha. He would bring his friend along whose name was Charles Cherry. I began to see him more often on my subsequent visits home. On April 3, 1948 we were married. Daddy was my escort and gave me away as the saying goes.

It was the only time he had ever set foot inside a church to my knowledge, given his viewpoints on hypocrites that attend church. Daddy was not the demonstrative type, but this act of going against his principles of attending church showed me just how much he loved me.

After graduation from nursing school, I had not kept in touch with Dad and his wife. I was not close to my birth parents as I was to Daddy and Mother. He and his wife did not attend my wedding but Mom with all my brothers and sisters were there.

After our marriage, my husband gave up his job in Easton and moved to New York where he became a courier. We rented a room with a kitchenette from my former landlady. It was located in one of the townhouses on 158th St. near the Hudson River parkway. When I described the décor of our room, everyone laughed; but when they visited, they admitted it was very nice.

The linoleum was black with a white marble pattern. I had a chartreuse sleep sofa and two lavender upholstered chairs, which had been part of a sectional group. My drapes were black designed with orange and white horses on the fabric. We had a problem disposing of the old broken down bed and wooden chairs that the room had been furnished with. My landlady had given us permission to dispose of the



Wedding Photo
April 3rd 1948



(L) Darlene Benise (R)



(L) Benise Darlene (R)

old furniture and furnish the room ourselves. She had eventually sold the apartment building to a West Indian man, who took us to court charging us with mischievous conduct for setting the furniture out to be picked up by the sanitation crew.

He had a lawyer but we were unable to afford one. However, the judge threw the case out of court due to the fact we had proof from the landlady that we had rented the room with that provision and for twelve dollars a week. The new owner probably wanted to evict us so he could rent the room at a higher rate. There was a housing law in effect at the time, which would prevent him from raising our rent at a future time.

After four years of marriage, I became pregnant. Unfortunately, I had a severe case of excessive salivation, a condition that affects a small number of pregnant women. I was still working at Lincoln while my husband continued as a courier. I would carry around an empty coffee can to expectorate in. The cooks at the hospital, knowing of my condition, would send up jars of large olives with the pits in. The brine in the liquid they were immersed in helped to dry up the saliva to some extent, so there was no need for me to seek medication from a physician.

One weekend my husband and I decided to take in a movie at the local theatre on Amsterdam Avenue. When we were seated, a tap came on my shoulder, I looked up and there stood my sister. "What are you doing here?" I asked. She told me she had driven Mother and Daddy over to New York to visit me. Daddy had expressed a desire to see me and my birthday was a few weeks away. He also wanted to see where we lived. It was his first trip to the city in a long time. Josephine explained that the two sisters who rented the room next door to us had told her what theater we were attending.

She had persuaded the box office attendant to let her enter and try to find us, which thankfully she did. With my sister, her husband and three children and Mother, Daddy, me and my husband, our room was quite crowded. Instead of going for dinner, we decided to have my husband go out for some Chinese food. I had noticed that Daddy's breathing was a little labored, so I didn't want him to climb the three flights of stairs a second time.

After seeing me with my coffee tin, Mother laughed saying she

didn't think she would be buying "Chase and Sanborn" coffee again, for that was the name on my coffee can. I hated to see them leave for we had a wonderful time visiting with each other. The following month, Skeeter, my husband's nickname, and I went home to Alpha for Thanksgiving. How was I to know that would be the last time I would see Daddy alive. Did he have some premonition when he insisted upon coming to New York to see me at that particular time?

One afternoon after arriving home from work, the phone rang in the downstairs hallway; no one had phones in their rooms. Someone answered the phone and called up the stairwell that the call was for me. I rushed down to answer and it was Mother. She said Daddy was taken ill and the ambulance took him to the hospital. I said, "I'll come right home." I raced back upstairs to pack and waited for Skeeter to come home from work.

I told him about Daddy and that I was packed and ready to go. I had bought a Buick special, a maroon convertible. I got into the car, took off down the Hudson River Parkway south to the Holland Tunnel, through the tunnel to the Pulaski Skyway leading to Route 22, and headed home. I was speeding when I reached Clinton, N.J., where a state trooper was usually parked behind a tree to catch speeders. Fortunately, he was not there, so what was usually a two-hour drive or more to Alpha took me only an hour and a half.

I arrived home, rushed into the house to find Mother crying, "Your Daddy is gone." She said, "They just called from the hospital, he passed away." I was too late; I was devastated. Gone was my tower of strength, my refuge in times of strife and uncertainty. How was I going to weather the storms without him there to guide me?

Daddy had worked up to age 77. He would catch a bus to Phillipsburg daily where he worked in a factory where they made chemical dyes. He was on the evening shift. Mother said he had been having more frequent headaches and shortness of breath, when the attendants of the emergency squad brought in a stretcher to take him out to the ambulance, he refused to get on it and walked out and climbed into the back of the ambulance. Mother said he told them he was not going to be taken out of his home feet first. As usual, he was taking "No Tea for the Fever" at the end!

An autopsy showed he had "aortic stenosis", which accounted for those headaches he was having. Mother notified his workplace and was told to have someone come into the office and pick up pay that was owed him. Josephine and I went to the pay clerk's window when we arrived at the factory for that was where we were told to go. She gave us a contemptuous look and practically slammed the money down on the counter in front of us. She probably didn't like the idea of two colored women picking up a white man's pay. I smiled to myself thinking about what Daddy's reaction would have been at this blatant display of racism.

Mother made arrangements with Rush's Funeral Home in Bloomsbury, N.J. Rushes' buried all of the family members who had died and all of the other colored people in the Springtown and Warren Glen area that had passed on.

Daddy had said when he died he did not want to be buried from a funeral home or a church. He wanted to be buried from his home and that was the way it was going to be, according to Mother. They embalmed him and brought his body in the coffin to the house. We had removed the old pot-bellied cast iron stove out of the parlor so that the room would be cold. The stove had been the only source of heat, along with the kitchen stove. They placed the coffin in the parlor for viewing.

Relatives of Mother, Daddy's brother "Frank", friends and neighbors came to the house for the viewing and offered their condolences. After everyone left, I sat in Mother's rocking chair at the head of the casket and held Daddy's cold unresponsive hand for a long time. Finally, I went to bed. I awakened in the early morning hours and it seemed as though his comforting presence was there with me like a supernatural spirit.

Daddy was laid to rest in his family plot where there was a place for him next to his mother. The plot was in Fairview Cemetery in Phillipsburg, N.J. After the funeral, an old family friend, who had been one of the pallbearers, came up to me saying, "Jack, he is at peace now and I'm sure he will be watching over you from up there." Uncle Ike, as I called him, his name was Issac Freeman; he always called me "Jack". He nicknamed me "Jack" after the fighter Jack Johnson, who was the first Negro to hold the world's heavy weight title in 1908.¹² I was always fighting with the neighborhood kids so that is why he called me "Jack". I doubt if he ever remembered my given name.

Issac Freeman had fought in World War I in the 369th infantry of the U.S. Army. The story was that he crawled behind German Lines in one of the maneuvers and was later gassed. I did not know what that meant but probably he was one of the bonus marchers who were veterans of World War I and were routed from the Capital by tanks and tear gas in 1931 under the orders of Hebert Hoover.¹³

Can you imagine soldiers returning home from fighting for their country in Germany only to receive such treatment and being lynched in 1919. Negro veterans in uniform were even burned alive!¹⁴ I remember seeing a book that Uncle Ike had with a picture of him in it with other members of the 369th regiment. Unfortunately, it burned up with him when his home was destroyed by fire. He evidently had fallen asleep with a cigarette in his hand while sitting in a chair beside a kerosene stove. This occurred years later when I had moved to Easton.

I have found that same picture in a book written by Langston Hughes.¹⁵ Reading the papers today, you see white soldiers being commemorated for their services in World War I and World War II. However, it is rarely mentioned how there were black heroes in those same wars. There were many black unsung heroes like Ike Freeman and Fred Pippenger in World War II.

The young people of today hear nothing of other black soldiers in our area who fought for their country, like my brother Fred, who was in the Battle of the Bulge. Or his friend by the name of "Pierce" who was in the "Red Ball's Express" – both now deceased.

Fred Pippenger was wounded in Ansio in Italy where they had crossed the Arno River to aid soldiers who were pinned down in a tank, being fired upon by the Germans. He related this to us, giving his version of who is a hero.¹⁶ He had received the Purple Heart along with other

¹² *Britannica Encyclopedia* (Vol. 4) 42.

¹³ Langston Hughes's, *A Pictorial History of the Negro in America* (3rd Revision) 284.

¹⁴ Langston Hughes's, *A Pictorial History of the Negro in America* (3rd Revision) 267.

¹⁵ Langston Hughes's, *A Pictorial History of the Negro in America* (3rd Revision) 264.

¹⁶ Lerone Bennett Jr's Book, *Ebony Magazine: A Pictorial History of Black Americans* Vol. ii.

Family Well represented in world war II



(L) Brother Fred
Battle of The Bulge
Germany army

Mom

(R) Brother Bill
South Pacific
NAVY



My Buddy Rufus (fats) manigault
killed in the Battle of the Bulge
in Germany



Brother George
South Pacific
NAVY



Charles C. Cherr
 Air Force
 World War II
 and
 Korean War

Below
 Frederick Pippenger
 (Friend)
 World War II
 Army Staff



Black History Month is a time to honor accomplished men and women of the past. And a time to look ahead to many accomplishments in the future.

Black History Month is a month from Frederick Pippenger

It is time to honor the men and women of the past who were not the creators of the nation, who were also able to create the nation.

from

Black History Month is a month from Frederick Pippenger

CROSSING THE RHINE RIVER. Company L, 888 Central Postal Directory Regiment, 1945.

COURTESY OF FREDERICK P. PIPPENGER, JR.

In Italy black troops of the 888 Central Postal Directory Regiment advance across the Arno River against German resistance.

The Government, U.S. Army Support Activity, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 19101, has been authorized to forward to you the following:

CITATIONS

PURPLE HEART MEDAL
BRONZE STAR MEDAL
AMERICAN CAMPAIGN MEDAL
NORTH AFRICAN CAMPAIGN MEDAL
WITH BRONZE STARS.
NORTH APENNINES PO VALLEY CAMPAIGN MEDAL
ROME ARNO CAMPAIGN MEDAL
COMBAT INFANTRY BADGE WITH STAR
ARMY OF OCCUPATION MEDAL
E A N E CAMPAIGN MEDAL
WORLD WAR II VICTORY MEDAL
WITH GERMAN CLASP
GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL
VEHICLE MAINTENANCE CROSS OF MERIT
LIAISON PILOTS WINGS

From the the book
A FRAGMENT OF VICTORY
by
MAJOR PAUL GOODMAN
59th Field Artillery

RESTRICTED



NINE AND SNIPER FIRE MADE THE CHIEF —
→ source of resistance. By dark, the attacking troops had advanced two to three miles north of the river; and by 0300, 2 September, the combat team's engineers had thrown a trestle bridge across the Arno and, in cooperation with engineers of the 1st Armored Division, they prepared the way for tanks to make the crossing.

At 2000 on 2 September, the 3d Battalion was motorized after crossing the Arno River at Cascina and skirting the west side of Mount Pisano. By 2200, some of its elements reached the Serchio River at Pappiana, five miles north of Pisa. Company K penetrated to the outskirts of Ripafratta under artillery fire. Enemy resistance in the area resulted in 24 casualties. German artillery fell on the town, and on 4 September, Major A. R. Biggs, the Executive Officer of the Combat Team, was killed while seeking protection from a heavy concentration.

In the center, the 2d Battalion moved toward the mountain mass. Enemy resistance was almost negligible here. Although its moves were marked by indecision and hesitation at first, the troops gradually began to move rapidly.

On the right, the 1st Battalion, moved around the east side of Mount PISANO

RESTRICTED

Black History is a must. 27
To - Charley + Lucille
from -
J. W. Pippenger Jr. 2-27-46

Regiment of family friend
Issac freeman
World war I



Returning soldiers of the 369th Infantry Regiment wearing the Croix de Guerre, aboard the SS Steeplechase, February, 1919. This regiment was the first of the returning American troops to march under the Arch on Fifth Avenue at Washington Square.

Uncle Ike 1st from (R) front Row

medals. He showed us these and gave us a copy of the picture of his regiment crossing the Arno River.

He was disheartened by the treatment he received after returning home to the U.S. He told us that he was returning to his home in Somerville from where he had a job in Newark, N.J. It was late at night and he saw he was running low on gas. In Union, N.J., he saw a gas station that was open, all the lights were on and a tractor-trailer was getting gas. When he pulled up and they saw the color of his skin, he was told they were closed. They refused to answer when he pointed out that they were servicing the driver of the truck. He jotted down the name of the owner, which was on the plaque over the office door, got in his car and left.

The next day he filed a complaint in Trenton, N.J. Of course, when the authorities viewed his documents of service in the army in Italy and in Africa, the owner of the gas station was cited. I'm sure there are many more black veterans who can tell of similar treatments after returning to the U.S.

After the funeral, I stayed a few days with Mother then returned to New York and continued working at Lincoln through my seventh month of pregnancy.

My husband Skeeter had rejoined the Air Force during the Korean War and was stationed at Mitchell Field on Long Island. While there, he had to be operated on for appendicitis. My sister drove with me to the base to see him. She could take over driving if I were unable to continue; I was really big from my pregnancy.

One afternoon I started having labor pains; since my husband was on the base I was alone. Since I was not able to go out and flag down a cab, in New York you couldn't call for a cab, I called my friend Bertha to come pick me up. She too was pregnant, but still able to drive her convertible. When we arrived at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital on 168th St., ten blocks away, the nurses asked which one of us was being admitted. We were both the same size!

My daughter Denise Lorraine was born on July 1, 1952. After a month, I decided to take a private duty case at Montefiore Hospital in the Bronx. It would not be strenuous and we could use the extra money.

My younger sister Marion came to baby-sit for me since school wouldn't be starting until September.

Private duty consisted of 12-hour shifts. I worked from 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. Arriving home after duty, I would prepare dinner for my sister and Denise's formula. I admonished my sister not to accept any gifts from the super of the Synagogue next door. He wanted to loan her his portable radio to listen to while she sat on the steps of the town house holding Denise. I took my responsibility seriously of seeing that no harm would come to her while she was in my care.

My patient was an elderly woman, the wife of a physician, who had an operation. All patients at Montefiore must spend twenty-four hours in the recovery room post operatively then transfer to a surgical floor. Consequently, she was in stable condition when she arrived in her room. So I found there was little for me to do, as far as post operative care is concerned.

After the first post-op day, my patient said, "My dear, why don't you go out and help the nurses, so that I can rest!" I could understand why, I was forever asking, "Do you need your back rubbed, your pillow changed?" "Can I get you tea?" I could not bring myself to quietly sit there reading a book. I felt I should be doing something for her at all times. She evidently felt otherwise. Even when she wanted something for pain there was little for me to do in preparing the injection.

Narcotics were closely monitored at the hospital. The head nurse was the only one with the keys to the narcotic cabinet. She would get the proper dose out of it and give it to me to check before I administered it. After helping the nurses for a while, I sat with them during break time. There were pastries, juice, coffee and tea sent up from the kitchen to the conference room where we gathered to eat and smoke. Nurses were not permitted to leave the department for a break.

After my case was over, I was convinced private duty was not my cup of tea! Marion returned home to Easton to get ready for the coming school year. Our room was quite crowded with the addition of the crib and a bassinet on wheels, which I would roll out to the little kitchen. It had an attached firm, hooded cover that when lowered provided a place for Denise to lay while I gave her a bath.

We started looking for an apartment. Apartments in the city were very expensive and on my husband's base pay, it was practically impossible to rent one in a nice neighborhood. So we decided to put the furniture, my utensils and my books in storage, then I would go home to Mother. We sold my car, packed our belongings and were ready when my sister came with her car to drive us home to Alpha, N.J.

My husband had been discharged from the Air Force and was working at a Post Office on 34th St. He was to join us at a later date.

I helped Mother prepare the meals for the family, Josephine and her family also lived there with Mother. The children were happy about that, they didn't have to wait to eat a late dinner, after my sister and her husband arrived home. My sister and her husband Leon were commuting to work daily by car; she to BelleMeade, N.J. and he to New Hope, Pa. Josephine worked for the Department of Veteran's Affairs in the CIA division there in BelleMeade.

Aunt Vi and her third husband rented the half double home that Daddy had bought thinking that I could occupy one half, and my sister the other when he and Mother had passed on.

My husband finally obtained a position with the Housing Authority in Easton Pa. He had applied for a postal clerk's position at Easton Post Office since he had experience in the 34th St. Postal Office in New York City. There were no Negroes working in that capacity in the Easton Post Office at that point in time. My husband's brother, a veteran, also applied there and had been turned down.

Very few Negroes held white-collar positions in Easton at that time, there were no colored lawyers, doctors and morticians. There were only one or two nurses and teachers. Negro men worked in foundries and the woman did domestic work.

After the birth of my second daughter, Darlene, who was born in Warren Hospital in Phillipsburg, N.J., we moved to Easton, Pa. While I was a patient in the obstetrical ward at Warren Hospital, I was surprised to see and attending physician making rounds who had been an intern at Lincoln Hospital in the Bronx when I was on the staff there.

What a small world! He was amazed also that we both ended up in the same area. When my daughters were three and four years old respectively, my husband suffered a nervous break down and was

hospitalized at a local hospital while waiting for a bed in the Veteran's hospital in Perry Point, Maryland.

We were living in the projects, where my husband had been working and to make ends meet, I worked at the Easton Express newspaper's office a few nights a week cleaning the offices. One night one of the reporters who was working late engaged me in a conversation and when he found out I was a licensed nurse in New York, he suggested that Pennsylvania probably had a reciprocal arrangement with New York state whereby I could obtain a Pennsylvania license without having to take another exam. Therefore, I sent to New York for reciprocity papers to submit to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Chapter Thirteen

1953-1959, Easton, Pa and "The Nightmare"

Mother bought me a new watch for I had lost mine; otherwise, I had everything I needed to begin working. I had my uniform, cap and shoes. All I needed was white stockings. I was amused when I went to a store to buy them; a clerk said, "Oh, you must be a nurses' aide." She probably had no conception that a Negro could be anything other than an aide.

I was interviewed at Easton Hospital but I was told they could not hire me until I had received my reciprocity papers. I finally received them and started duties at the hospital on the 7-3 p.m. shift. It was in May 1956.

Since my husband was hospitalized, I had to get up at 5 a.m., dress my daughters, pack a bag of food for their breakfast and lunch, then carrying Darlene and holding Denise by the hand, walked the few blocks to my sister-in-laws home. She would care for them for the day. Then I would rush to catch the bus to the hospital. I was glad when I was able to afford a car.

Mother had taken a live-in position taking care of an elderly man in Pen Argyl, Pa; on some weekends, she would stay with me if I had to work and take care of my daughters. She had grown tired of being home alone with nothing to do. My sister was at work and her children were in school all day.

On one of those weekends while she was home with me, her employer's home caught fire, so she was without a job. Mother became ill with pneumonia but did not want to go to the hospital, so my sister turned the dining room into a bedroom so she would be near the

bathroom downstairs. My sister had remodeled the home into a single-family dwelling so it was no longer a double.

Finally, mother had become so ill we had to admit her to Warren Hospital. I drove down from Easton to help take her to the hospital. I helped the nurses put her into an oxygen tent. She had slipped into a coma. Since there was nothing we could do for her, the nurse suggested we go home and if there was any change she would call my sister and let her know.

I drove home to Easton and my sister would call me if she heard from the hospital nurse. I went to sleep and during the night I had a nightmare; I couldn't remember my name in this nightmare. I kept saying, "What is my name, what is my name?" Then I heard Mother call, "Lucille", and I said, "Oh, my name is Lucille." Then I woke up and I knew in my heart that my Mother had just died.

Sure enough, the phone rang and it was my sister telling me the hospital nurse called and that Mother had passed away. Again, "The Sting of Death". There was that bonding between me and my adoptive parents that was greater than that with my biological parents.

We buried Mother in the old Greenwich cemetery in Bloomsbury, N.J. near her own mother. There was not a place for her in Daddy's family plot. That would be the only time they would be separated.

My sister-in-law could no longer take care of my two, so the wife of one of my husband's friends volunteered to watch them for me. Denise was in first grade for the full day, while Darlene went only for a half day in kindergarten. Darlene would not stay in the home of the babysitter, but would run down the bank to sit on the steps leading to the kitchen of our house where she could be seen by the babysitter. Darlene would wait for Denise to come home from school, sitting there on the steps. Betty, who lived next door to us said she would take care of Denise and Darlene along with her own three children, which was a God-send since they knew Betty and would play with her children. This arrangement continued until my husband was discharged from the hospital and could take over their care.

Darlene did not care for school and it was a chore for him to get her to go. She would walk down the to the end of the block and decide

she had a "tummy ache", then my husband would go and pick her up and take her home. The neighborhood women would make bets as to whether she would go to school or not on any given day. Denise on the other hand liked school and would always bring home A's on her report card on all the subjects she was taking. Meanwhile I was having my trials and tribulations at work.

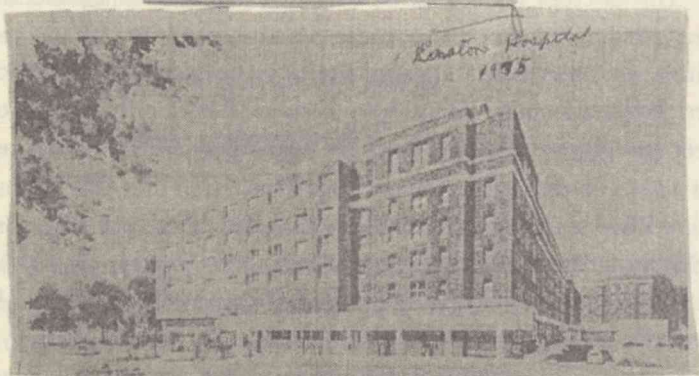
I had started duties on a department that was called 4 South. There was a nurse employed there who was from Texas. Her husband was attending Lafayette College in the town and she was just working until he graduated. During our conversations, I found that she didn't have reciprocity papers and had not been told that she would not be hired until she got them as I had been told.

Definitely there was a double standard here. To add insult to injury, unlike her I was not permitted to dispense drugs until I had been passed by someone from the Education Department who taught their students. I remember her name was Josephine because that was my sister's name. After observing me dispense the morning medications to all the patients on the department, she said, "I don't know why I have to supervise you, you certainly know your drugs and their actions." So at the end of the day she told the head nurse she saw no reason why she had to supervise me any further.

That was not the end of my problems; the fifth floor head nurse had transferred one of her patients to 4 South; the reason being the patient did not like Negroes! She refused to have a nurse aide, who was a Negro, make her bed. When this patient called for pain medication, I went back to her room to give her the injection. She refused to even let me touch her!

The head nurse informed her I was the only one on duty at the time qualified to give her the medication, so she would have to wait until the next shift's nurse to give her the medication! Evidently, the pain became unbearable so she consented to let me give her the injection. I rubbed the area on her buttocks, pressing down firmly with the alcohol swipe and gave the injection. She heatedly asked, "When the hell are you going to give me the needle?" I said, "I've already given it." She could not believe that it had not hurt her!

EASTON, PA., THURSDAY, AUGUST 28, 1975



1974

Cherry
Head Nurse
4 West
(center)

Attending
Physicians

Other
Head Nurses



SOUTH

Mrs. Cherry

Head Nurse
1959

One day I was doing a treatment for one of my patients and the LPN and nurse's aid were busy in other rooms. The LPN came to tell me that as soon as I had her that a patient was wanting who was in the 4th floor or on the west to talk to her. The attending physician

From then on I had a convert. She always asked for me to give her pain medication. The head nurse decided to resign and taken another position elsewhere, she recommended me for replacement in her position. I had been taking charge on her days off and was the senior nurse on the department.

The doctors were pleased with my ability to make decisions, especially Dr. Zulick. One time after I had recopied the orders he had written on a sheet called "Doctors' notes" in the operating room because there had not been an order sheet. I copied them on the proper order sheet and placed it on the chart. He asked why should he not report this action on my part to the nursing office. I told him that at Lincoln where I had worked, the attendings expected us to write their orders and initial it. He laughed and from then on I had his support. However, the administrative personnel felt otherwise and called a former head nurse of 4 South, who had retired, to return.

As before, I took charge when the new head nurse took days off. She decided to retire again and also remembered me to take her place. This time with Dr. Zulick and Dr. Kramer's support, I was offered the position. It was now 1959, three years later.

Chapter Fourteen

1960-1970, Easton Hospital

"Trials and Tribulations"

My troubles were just beginning. Administration at the behest of a new Nursing Director decided to make 4 South into a maximum care unit with sixteen beds and a solarium. There was a hallway between 4 South and 4 North. 4 South had four two bedrooms on one side of the hall as did 4 North. The 4 South eight beds were added to 4 North's census, giving them a census of 40 patients instead of the original thirty-two.

Consequently, I found myself not only taking charge of this sixteen bed unit, but also giving the medication, doing the treatments and helping the LPN and nurse aide with the care of the patients, that was the extent of my staff; with the exception of the ward clerk Alice Graham, who became my very good friend.

I made out medication cards with the patient's name on each card with the name of the medication, the dose and the times the dose was to be given. The clerk would take these cards and transcribe them onto the patient's chart. After I had dispensed the medication, all I had to do was cross out the times on the medication sheet when I was doing my charting, instead of writing out the medications etc. that was a great help.

One day I was doing a treatment for one of my patients and the LPN and nurse's aid were busy in other rooms. The LPN came to tell me that an intern told her that a patient was vomiting, who was in the 4th bedroom, so she went to take care of her. "The attending physician

was very angry." she said, and was going to the nursing office to complain about the care being given on my floor.

The next thing I knew the Director of Nurses was in my small office asking why no one was taking care of the patient who was vomiting when the attending physician had walked into the room. Can you imagine that? There were five different rooms, four patients in one room, six in another and two in the remaining three rooms. There were three people to care for these sixteen patients; each was assigned to different rooms.

I asked her how could there be someone in all of the rooms with only three of us on staff. The next day I was ready for that doctor with complaints of my own. When he arrived I said, "The Director of Nurses said you were complaining about the care on my unit. Because I'm black, am I supposed to do twice as much as a white nurse? On my days off my replacement charge nurse is sent a float nurse to help her, who gives the medications. I have had to do everything myself, including treatments and taking charge! Was I supposed to see through the walls and know your patient was vomiting?"

I was really fuming. He left the room and evidently went back to the Nursing office. I received another visit from the Director. She asked what I had said to the attending physician. I told her, "I have a right to defend myself against unfair complaints." Thereafter, I was sent a float RN to help me, the same was sent to my relief nurse. The attending physician had probably seen the injustice that I had suffered.

In the meantime, there had been two new Director of Nurses in the following years. Again, administration came up with another idea. 4 South was to become a medical intensive care unit, with all the technical equipment, monitors, ventilators and also trained personnel to care for the patients. Therefore, I was without the position as Head nurse for that position, since I had no training for it. I was given the position of floating Head Nurse! When the Head Nurses on other floors had days off, I was sent to their respective units to take charge.

During the period of 1965, Easton Hospital was expanding. There was a new addition to the building that consisted of 4 East on the added 4th floor, 3 East and 3 Northeast on the third floor, and a rehabilitation and a psychiatric unit on the 2nd floor.

I applied for the position of head nurse on the new 4 East department. However, the Head Nurse on 4 West was given the position, since she had also applied for it and had seniority over me. I became Head Nurse on her old unit 4 West.

The new Director of Nurses, Mrs. Stuebe, became my nemesis.¹⁷ Mother always said, "Never speak ill of the dead, forgive and forget". I've long past forgiven, but I'm working on the forgetting part.

Perhaps my writing this book is sort of a catharsis in part to reach that stage of forgetting. An Aristotelian concept, a relieving of the complex emotions and giving them expression.¹⁸

My first encounter with her and her racist acts was when she decided to combine the 16-bed unit – 4 North, with my unit 4 West that had 32 beds. Then of course there would be only one Head Nurse and that would be the white Head Nurse on 4 North, who incidentally was a good friend of mine who didn't want the position anyway.

I objected giving up the salary of a Head nurse and becoming a Staff nurse. She said, "You know you like to go out and help the nurses on the floor as you often do." I said, "I like giving nurses care, but not to the extent of giving up a Head nurse salary. I intend to see Mr. Hamilton about this!" He was then Hospital Administrator. I was taking "No Tea For the Fever". I went home and decided to take it a step further rather than talking to the Administrator.

I was the Treasurer of the Easton Branch of the Human Relations Commission. I called the President, Peter Sabey, who was also the Chaplain at Lafayette College. He called the Harrisburg Division of the Commission and arranged for someone from there to come to Easton to confer with Mr. Hamilton.

I had saved many hospital newsletters that by naming those who were promoted and their qualifications brought to the fore front how many times white nurses had been promoted to Supervisor positions

¹⁷ Wm. P. Watley, *You have to face it to fix it* (Judson Press, Valley Forge, 1997) 19.

¹⁸ Webster Dictionary, *Aristotle*

over me without the experience, education or even seniority compared to my qualifications.

In fact, Mrs. Stuebe had promoted a student of the 1960 class who had become a Head nurse and was taking a Penn State extension course along with me; then she was again promoted to Supervisor over me. This nurse, who was single, never completed the course; while I was caring for a family, not only completed it but also passed the course! In addition to these credits, I had seven credits from Columbia University, which indeed showed I was qualified for a Supervisor's position.

Nurses on another floor would come to tell me how two Supervisors would go into the kitchen on their department and study for tests in between making rounds. With my Head nurse duties, I had no such opportunities. I never felt any animosity toward those nurses who were promoted over me. I certainly would not expect them to turn down opportunities offered to them for advancement in their careers just because I had been treated unfairly.

At any rate when all the documented evidence was presented to Mr. Hamilton by the representatives from the State Human Relations commission, he decided to scratch the project combining the two departments and demoting me to a staff nurse as a result.

Mrs. Stuebe of course was furious. She called me to her office and said, "Well, you got your way." I said, "I had no doubt in my mind that I wouldn't." I also added, "You know you are one of the most prejudiced persons that I have ever met in all my years of nursing." She said, "How can you say that, I have a mammy down home in Alabama that I love dearly and whenever I go home, I make sure to visit with her." I thought to myself, if "mammy" had aspired to being more than a "mammy", she wouldn't have been so dearly loved by you.

Other small incidents demonstrated there were those who went along with her attitudes that were racist.

One time one of her Supervisors had a small gathering of Head nurses in the nursing office where she distributed small bottles of wine to all the Head Nurses except me! She had been on vacation and had brought back the wine as gifts for them. Later when one of the Head nurses and I were discussing the over-site, I laughed, "I would have

been very hurt if it had been Scotch instead of wine, I get a headache when I drink wine.”

However, she wasn't through with me yet. I had other tribulations to contend with. My biological father, James, had been admitted to Overlook Hospital in Summit, N.J. One of the supervisors, at my request, visited him there when she was attending a seminar at the hospital. She laughed about how when she was told what room he was in; she had asked the nurse where he had been since she didn't see him. The nurse pointed him out and she was surprised to see he looked like a white man with his blue eyes.

Later Dad was discharged, but soon after he died at home, this was in 1969. I attended the funeral where for the first time I met his nieces. They were all that was left of his family.

Chapter Fifteen

1970-1980, Graduation Time and Confrontations

I applied for the coordinator position in the hospital clinic. I had quite a lot of experience in clinic procedures while at the Meinhardt Clinic in New York and felt I could present to the Easton Hospital clinic some new ideas.

Knowing it would not be in her best interest to refuse to consider me for the position, Mrs. Stuebe scheduled an interview with me. She told me as a recommendation for the position, I would have to take an eight-week sabbatical in Texas! It was a seminar in clinic procedures.

In view of the fact that my husband had just been discharged from the hospital and my daughters would need a mother's guidance, I could not go to Texas for eight weeks. I am sure she knew about my family situation.

She said, "Well you can't say I didn't offer you the position." I later found out that the nurse she hired for the position was given the option to attend the seminar scheduled in New York City. An option she had denied me.

I could not believe she would be that evil! I had a classmate living in New York; I would have been able to commute daily, staying with them in inclement weather if necessary. I decided not to take this latest discriminatory act to the Commission and concentrated on my studies at Cedar Crest College. I had completed my courses at Penn State and applied at Cedar Crest to continue working for a B.S. degree. I found that the biology and chemistry courses were rather difficult and I would really have to apply myself, especially since all of my classmates were much younger than I. There were two elective courses I particularly enjoyed, Political Science

Easton Express newspaper articles

Cedar Crest College 1973



CONGRATULATIONS, Mrs. Lucille Cherry of 218 Palmer St., Easton, receives a special award from her daughter for graduating from Cedar Crest College. (far left, is a recent college graduate and Denise, right, will be a senior in the fall.) — Express News by Mike Gorman

Easton Nurse Succeeds In Reaching 20-Year Goal



MARK OF DISTINCTION — Mrs. Lucille Cherry, an assistant director of nurses at Easton Hospital, has earned a place for herself in the 1979-80 edition of "Who's Who of American Women." Mrs. Cherry is a graduate of Lincoln School of Nursing in the Bronx and Cedar Crest College. She also studied at Columbia University and the Pennsylvania State Univer-

sity, Altoona campus. Mrs. Cherry joined the staff at Easton Hospital in 1954 and has served in various capacities, including head nurse and coordinator of nurses. She became a member of the Easton Human Relations Committee in 1968. Mrs. Cherry, a native of Fairfield, N.J., lives in Easton with her husband, Charles. The couple have two daughters. — Express News by Mike Gorman

and Drama. I became familiar with the works of great philosophers such as DesCartres, William James, Albert Camus and Jean-Paul Sartre. Reading books written by them influenced my philosophy of life to some extent.

Things were going along smoothly at work. Mrs. Stuebe had resigned and moved to Majorca with her husband.

Finally, graduation day, I had obtained my Bachelor of Science degree from Cedar Crest College in 1973. My youngest daughter, Darlene, had also graduated from Bennett College in Westchester, N.Y. with a two-year liberal arts degree. Denise, the older of the two, continued with her studies at Briarcliff College also in Westchester County. She had opted for the four years.

The Head Nurses and the new Director of Nurses gave me a graduation party. Who should attend but Mrs. Stuebe. She had evidently kept in touch with Mrs. Krisukus. I must say I graciously accepted her congratulations. Let bygones be bygones. Having expected compensation for obtaining my degree as other nurses before me had received; I was concerned when none was forth coming to me. I questioned Mr. Hamilton about this oversight.

Following are copies of his letter of explanation and my letter of response to his. I met with Mr. Hamilton and Mrs. Krisukus after the negotiations were completed, taking with me all the documented evidence I had accumulated over the years.

After the meeting, I was called to Mrs. Krisukus's office. I was offered the position of the 3-11 p.m. Coordinator. This entailed working with the 3-11 p.m. House Supervisor and learning her duties.

A nurse from the Nursing Education department and I attended a seminar at Reading Hospital in Reading, P.A. There we observed how they had established a patient education program with the use of videos and a cable system.

We returned to Easton and with the help of the Chief engineer, Chuck Price, who connected a videocassette, housed in the auditorium, to a cable system that led to the bed side T.V. sets of patients. One channel was designated as the Patient Education channel. We dubbed it

Lucille Cherry

No Tea For The Fever

I met with Mr. Hamilton and Mrs. Krisukus after the negotiations were completed, taking with me all the documented evidence I had accumulated over the years.

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Easton Hospital

710 and Leigh Streets - Easton, Pennsylvania 18042

Telephone 237-2300 (3)

June 14, 1974

June 21, 1974

Mr. Hamilton

Director, Easton Hospital

Mrs. Lucille Cherry
318 Palmer Street
Easton, Pennsylvania

Dear Mrs. Cherry:

It has been sometime since you came to see about your salary and especially your desire to receive an increase in your salary. While it is true that our contract with the P.A. requires setting a set amount for a salary increase, this policy is not followed in the case of those out in the hospital who perform with our supervisory personnel as follows: that performance is at least as important as qualifications in the length of service in determining the total value to the organization of the services of a particular individual.

It was for this reason that the policy of paying a dollar raise on the college degree was discontinued. You were one of the first to be affected by this policy but you were not the only one. Had you salary affected. Accordingly I do not believe you were unfairly treated in this regard.

However, you and all the other nursing managers were victimized by the Employee Stabilization Program by virtue of the fact that when it began we had a higher range between the minimum and maximum salary of general staff nurses than between the beginning and largest amount paid to any of our nursing managers.

Now that Congress has removed these restrictions we can correct this. While I cannot tell you the actual amount until we have current negotiations with the P.A. are concluded, we have established tentative scales which will enable us to give you an increase which will bring your salary to a figure 100% greater than that of the most recently appointed nursing coordinator.

I hope this may convince you that we are doing as fair as we know how to be in evaluating the value of all our supervisory personnel in the nursing department. Mrs. Krisukus and I will be happy to review with you any aspect of the situation. If you wish us to do so, it would probably be better to do it after the negotiations are concluded and these recommendations have been finalized.

Sincerely yours,
[Signature]
Director

ENCLOSURE

Dear Mr. Hamilton

In answer to your letter of June 14, 1974, I would like to tell you and Mrs. Hamilton that your suggestion of 100% is not possible.

As you know, the P.A. negotiations, that I have been involved in since 1965, and I am sure you know the change of policy regarding the P.A. contract. The P.A. contract is a contract of 10 years and it is not possible to have a 100% increase in salary until the end of the contract. The P.A. contract is for 10 years and it is not possible to have a 100% increase in salary until the end of the contract.

I believe that your suggestion of 100% increase, if a 100% increase would have been an increase in salary of 100% in 10 years, or 10% per year.

If I hope if you, there are many other nurses who have been promoted to positions higher in rank and salary. However, it is not possible to have a 100% increase in salary until the end of the contract. The P.A. contract is for 10 years and it is not possible to have a 100% increase in salary until the end of the contract.

This is hard to swallow of an equal to what I would suggest. Accordingly, an increase of 10% per year of the P.A. contract is not possible.

In the future of 100% - the contract is for 10 years and it is not possible to have a 100% increase in salary until the end of the contract. The P.A. contract is for 10 years and it is not possible to have a 100% increase in salary until the end of the contract.

Therefore, I am sure that your suggestion of 100% increase in salary until the end of the contract is not possible.

I am sure that your suggestion of 100% increase in salary until the end of the contract is not possible.

I will be glad to discuss any of the points I have made and give specific details.

Sincerely,
[Signature]
Director

the "Peep Show". Each evening I would go to the auditorium at the scheduled hour, as advertised in the brochure handed out to patients, and insert a tape into the videocassette. The tape related to a particular diagnosis and the care involved. A patient, by looking at the T.V. program in his brochure, would know when the tape about his particular diagnosis would be shown. In addition to playing the tapes, I also held classes with the 3-11 staff and those nurses from the 11-7 shift that were willing to come in early.

I reviewed the anatomy and physiology of various organs of the body that would help them with their nursing care of patients. I also supervised new nurses in dispensing medications on their department.

In the years prior to my taking this position, my birth mother had been diagnosed with cancer and died. She had been buried in the family plot beside Mother in the Old Greenwich cemetery in Bloomsbury, N.J.

Chapter Sixteen

1980-1990, The Realization of a "Genuine Community"

Because of health reasons, Mrs. Krisukus resigned from her position as Director of Nurses. Mrs. Burkle became our new Director and it was decided that the Nursing Education Department would take over the Patient Education program.

My duties were changed to assisting the evening Supervisor. One evening this Supervisor, who lived in Bethlehem, Pa., allegedly came to the hospital on one of her evenings off to observe how I handled the day-to-day work related programs. At the end of the evening, she gave me her evaluation that as far as I was concerned was questionable.

I asked her how she could possibly have observed me when she spent most of the evening in the emergency room drinking coffee and talking with the nurses and doctors. "No Tea for the Fever" was my motto.

At any rate, she had opted to give up her Supervisor's position to work in one of the intensive care units. I became the evening Supervisor and at a later date, the title was changed to "Assistant Director of Nurses".

One evening my sister Josephine called me from Warren Hospital, where she had admitted herself earlier in the day. She was a diabetic and had become ill just before boarding a bus for a planned trip to a show in Atlantic City. They had taken blood tests with abnormal white counts and red blood counts. She was given intravenous medications.

I had gone to see her the next morning after her call. She was very weak and her temperature was elevated. I told her to call me at work that evening to let me know how she was doing. At the end of the

evening, I received a hurried call from her physician, whom I knew, that she was placed on a ventilator and was in a coma. I rushed to the hospital and was at her bedside when the monitor showed a flat line. Death was inevitable.

It is still a mystery to me just what had happened. An autopsy had been performed. Two brothers had died at an earlier date in the 70s. Autopsies showed idiosyncrasies to the phenothiazides, but no definitive diagnosis.

Josephine was also buried in the family plot next to Mother.

Being the 3-11 Assistant Director was a challenging position for me. It seemed to me all of the disaster drills were scheduled to take place on the 3-11 shift. This meant pulling staff from various departments and sending them to the simulated triage, treatments and discharge areas. It also entailed coordinating other departments, such as linen, housekeeping, dietary, special equipment and maintenance departments. I had to confer with the attending physician on call to determine the effectiveness of the drill. The secretary in the nursing office would place calls to nurses at home to see if they were able to come in if this were a real disaster. The victims were roles played by high school students, who I supplied with cookies and sodas after the drill. My relief nurses always prayed that they would not be on duty when these drills occurred.

Unusual events also seemed to occur on this shift. You were alone and had to make decisions without the help of someone else. Although in an emergency situation, the Administration or the Assistant would be called. They were on an "on call" status and numbers where they could be reached were supplied.

One evening a young girl, who was a Jehovah's Witness, attempted suicide by jumping out of a second story window of the library. Fortunately, she landed on a roof-like abutment of the room below and was taken to the surgical intensive care unit. Of course, I had to deal with the media and call the Administration on call.

Evidently, the girl had a problem dealing with her faith and reconciling it with dating a boy of a different faith.

Another situation occurred. I had arrived on duty and was told to meet the Director of Nurses on the psychiatric unit immediately. She was standing at the Nurses' desk with two police officers, waiting for a

call from the hospital's attorney. She told me that a patient has admitted himself to the psychiatric unit and it was found that he was to be arrested in connection with the murder of a shop owner in Brooklyn, N.Y.

I said, "They can't take him until the patient's psychiatrist has been notified." The officers were there to remove him from the hospital. Mrs. Burkle said, "I'm waiting to see what our hospital attorney advises." As I suspected, the attorney called and said they would have to get a warrant and extradition papers. Meanwhile, an officer was dispatched to sit outside the door of the patient's room to guard him.

Later Mrs. Burkle asked me why the officers had said, "Look who's coming" when they saw me coming up the hall. I told her that in the past, on various occasions, they had come to the hospital to question a patient and I would not let them go to the patient's room to do so without the permission of the patient's doctor. They knew I was a stickler for abiding by the rules and regulations that was what probably prompted their remark.

During Mrs. Burkle's tenure, the nurses had gone on strike for a few days. This necessitated my staying over night while other Supervisors manned the floors giving care to the patients. An agreement was reached between the nurses and Administration within a short time. By this time, I had established good relationships with the employees on the 3-11 shift.

A "genuine community" had evolved throughout that affected staff on my shift.¹⁹ I used to agonize over mandating anyone to stay overtime or work a second shift when someone in their department had called in ill. I kept a record for each unit of the names of who had been mandated and the date. Thus, no one was mandated capriciously or arbitrarily.

I empathized with them knowing how it might inconvenience them, having been no stranger to adversity myself!

Mrs. Burkle resigned and a Mrs. Delisi came on board as the new Director of Nursing. Mr. Hamilton had resigned and was replaced by a

¹⁹ Samuel D. Proctor, *How Shall they Hear?* (Judson Press, Valley Forge, 1992) 58.

Mr. Keim. Then Mr. Keim resigned and we had our first female C.E.O. New ideas in the nursing field were adopted; computers were installed to facilitate letter scheduling and printing of notices.

Donna Mulholland on occasion would make rounds with me on my first round to the units when I came on duty. On these rounds, I would receive reports from the off going shift about the status of the patients on the unit. Before going off duty, I would make second rounds in order to give a report to the Assistant Director of Nurses on the 11-7 shift.

Twelve-hour shifts were established, thus giving nurses more time with their families; from 7am-7pm and 7pm-7am with four days on and three days off. Students from St. Francis de Sales school affiliated at Easton Hospital with their instructors. This was a help to the nurses on the departments where they had been scheduled. Each evening one of the students would be assigned to make rounds with me to observe and get an overall aspect of how the hospital operated.

At the end of the evening, some of them would express amazement of how tired they were after making rounds twice covering the entire hospital, in addition to many trips to various departments when problems arose - to the pharmacy, central supply, linen room, dietary and maintenance. Of course, I was use to it.

In retrospect, I find I really did a lot of walking; especially when the new building housing the special procedure unit, laboratory admitting and emergency room was erected. It kept my weight down compared to my new sedentary life.

In addition to those students, the Easton Hospital educators would also be assigned to the 3-11 shift to give lectures and show videos of the latest innovations and techniques. One evening one of my favorite educators was to show a videotape in the auditorium adjacent to my office.

She came to me and asked for my keys to open the closet in the auditorium where the monitor was kept. I carried a bunch of keys around all evening in my pocket. I gave them to her and told her to bring them right back, not to misplace them. A few minutes later she had not returned them, so I went to the auditorium and she wasn't there. My keys lay on the table next to the monitor. I took them and

hurriedly left the room then immediately returned and she had come back from where ever she had gone. I asked, "Where are my keys?" "I need to go to the kitchen for graham crackers for a diabetic's evening snack"

She looked for them and found they were missing. "I put them right there." she said, pointing to the table. "I just left for a few minutes for a drink of water. I don't know where they are." Her eyes filled with tears so I gave in and told her I had them. I said, "Never leave keys lying around, you must carry them on you at all times." I taught her a lesson she will never forget. I have found that a person never learns when they are berated in a loud and unkind manner. They always remember the words used and the manner in which they are given and not the mistake itself.

Another favorite educator who was assigned to make rounds with me always called me "mom". I suppose because of my motherly attitude toward them.

We were in the office and I told her that an enucleating had been scheduled in the morgue. A patient had expired and he had willed his eyes to the "Wills Eye Bank" in Philadelphia. I would have to go to the morgue to set up for the procedure, which would be done by the ophthalmologist on call.

She went with me and we pulled the slab holding the deceased patient from the refrigerated vault. I said, "Stay here, I'll be right back. I have to go to the central supply for sterile saline to put into the container for the eyes." These containers are used to transport the eyes. I left her with the body. When I returned she said, "You left me alone with this dead person!" I said, "Don't worry about the dead they can't hurt you, worry about the living." By and large, I got along with the various physicians.

There was one episode with a surgeon. He had a habit of cursing at nurses when he became dissatisfied with their carrying out of his orders or the giving of care to his patients. They would come to me and complain.

One evening he called me to tell me to move another physician's patient out of the medical intensive care unit and replace him with his patient instead. He had determined after reading the chart of the patient

that he was ready to be moved to the regular floor! I told him I could not do that without the permission of the patient's attending physician. He started cursing at me and I said, "If you think because I'm black you can swear at me, you have another thing coming." He said, "You are wrong thinking that." Never the less, I banged down the phone.

I knew very well that was not the case; I just wanted to shake him up a little. I knew he swore at nurses not just me. I wanted to teach him a lesson about cursing at nurses by intimating that he was prejudicial. I had also read of his spending time in Africa taking care of people there, so I knew he was not prejudiced.

His resident found me in the intermediate care unit to give me the name of the patient to be moved. I told him to call the other physician to get his permission to move his patient, and then have him call me to verify that it was all right. The resident did as I asked.

The phone rang and the doctor said, "I hear you have a problem about moving my patient." I said, "Yes, I do." He laughed and said, "Move him down to a floor that has monitors if possible." After that, I got along well with my errant surgeon. I felt he came to respect my decision and I thought of him as an excellent surgeon whose patients swore by his skills. He really showed concern for their well-being.

Contending with the stress of working full time and taking care of a family too, I was glad when vacation time rolled around.

Chapter Seventeen

1990-1999 Devastating News on the Horizon

It is always a wise idea to budget time and money. I had established both a holiday and vacation club accounts at my bank making weekly payments into them. This enabled me to buy Christmas presents and take week long vacation trips in the summer without having to worry about debts piling up. I always liked to be organized both at work and at home.

In an effort to make up to my daughters for a lack of spending quality time with them, starting when they were in grade school, I would take them on vacation to various places here and abroad. They would also accompany me when I attended Lincoln School of Nurses Annual luncheons held at various hotels in New York City.

It was a time with my classmates, usually 400 or more people would attend – class members and their family and friends. No one minded paying \$40-\$50 for lunch since it was for a good cause. One thousand dollar scholarships were given to five high school students who had achieved academic status, and were entering a nursing school. This was done each year.

After lunch and listening to a lecture by some prominent person, we looked forward to the roll call that started with the class of 1961. This was when the school closed. At this time, white nursing schools were accepting colored students and there was no longer a need for a colored school of nursing run by the city.

Each class's attendees stood up when their year was called. Usually six to eight from my class of 1943 were present. We waited breathlessly to see who would be present from a class prior to 1920. One year a

nurse from the class of 1918 was present. We marveled about how good she looked and how alert she was. Of course, she received a standing ovation.

Talking with my classmates in my room at the hotel afterwards, I found that many of them had retired and were enjoying their leisure time. This gave me thought, Should I think about retirement also?

Easton, Pa was not like New York City, Connecticut or Philadelphia, where a number of my classmates lived. What would I do? New York had Broadway shows; concerts at Lincoln Center, museums, art galleries, my classmates found plenty of things to do.

Friends of mine who had been supervisors at Easton Hospital had retired so I finally decided it was time for me to do the same. So in June 1991, at an age well over the retirement age of sixty-five, I retired.

A reception was given for me in the dining hall of the hospital and Harry Lutz, a male nurse, presented me with a fan made of money he had collected from doctors, nurses, LPNs, nurses' aides and other ancillary staff of the hospital. I was overwhelmed that they thought that much of me.

The nursing manager, Mary Ann of the Oncology unit, presented me with a gift basket in which the oncology physician placed a \$100 bill. How could I foretell that I would end up on that floor as a patient one day!

I told them that the security guard would have to guard me when I went off duty with all that loot! The nursing office staff also surprised me with a party at a restaurant and presented me with a gold locket that I treasure. I used the money from the fan for a cruise to Bermuda.

After all those years of nursing on a full time basis, I was very restless. I just had to find something to occupy myself with beside reading books and looking at T.V.

So, I volunteered some time at the local Historical and Genealogical Society. I set up the Indian exhibit there, using the Indian artifacts that had been donated. I was fascinated with the Indian Lore in the area such as the walking purchase, the tree of life and the Indian treaty that took place in Centre Square in Easton.

3-11 assistant Director of Nurses



I'm delivering welcome address
on "nurses Day"





FIN MADE FROM BILLS & MONEY
50's, 20's, 10's, 5's + 1's



AT RETIREMENT DINNER
Presented with Gold Locket

Then came the dropping of the bomb in my life! I was experiencing excruciating pains in my abdomen, after eating my dinner, for about an hour. This went on for a week or so. I decided finally to see my family doctor, Dr. Joseph. After examining me, he made some arrangements for Dr. D'Agostino to do a colonoscopy instead of waiting for results from a sigmoidoscopy.

Dr. D'Agostino had been one of my favorite interns when I was the Head nurse on 4 South. He had become a skilled Gastroenterologist and I had great faith in him.

The colonoscopy showed that I had a tumor that had formed in my intestines about as large as a potato. Dr. D'Agostino asked, "Who do you want as a surgeon?" I told him to call Dr. Espinosa for he had been my favorite resident when I was a Head nurse on 4 West. He would tease me by switching the telephone receiver with the receiver for the patient intercom system when I wasn't looking. Then he would stand there at my desk pretending to look at a chart and wait for the phone to ring, knowing when I answered I would be talking into the wrong receiver and no one would answer.

I had followed his career knowing he had trained also at Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York. I had complete confidence in him. The tumor was malignant, my worst fear. "Why me, what had I done to deserve this?"

Here was another Jonah problem for me. I could not place a distance between God and me as I had done once before by running away from my problem. I had to "Face it to Fix it"²⁰ by putting iron in my soul once again.²¹

My operation was just the beginning. Dr. Espinosa recommended chemotherapy and radiation therapy to reduce re-occurrence from 30% to 10%. I was thankful for a caring family and the friends who had visited me. Their visits gave me the courage I needed to go on. The nurses on the oncology unit gave me the red carpet treatment.

²⁰ William D. Watley, *You have to face it to fix it* (Judson Press, Valley Forge, 1997) 29.

²¹ Bible *Daniel* 2:40-44.



Lucille M. Cherry

Lucille M. Cherry Named to Board

Lucille M. Cherry, nursing administrator at Easton Hospital until her retirement in 1991, has been named to the Society's board.

Mrs. Cherry, who served in increasingly responsible administrative positions at Easton Hospital, including head nurse, nursing coordinator, and assistant director of nurses, has also been active with the Easton Human Relations Committee and is a member of the International Platform Association. As great-granddaughter of a Blackfoot Indian who was married to a Dutch settler, she is especially interested in researching native American tribes that migrated to the Lehigh Valley. Mrs. Cherry is currently assisting in the Library and in a project to catalog the Society's native American collection.

1993
 Princeton County Historical and Genealogical Society



showing way I wore after chemotherapy
 1994

During my treatments scheduled by Dr. Austin the oncologist and Dr. Torpie the radiologist, I met people in their waiting rooms who had gone through what I was now experiencing. Loss of hair, bouts of diarrhea, nausea, vomiting – the whole nine yards. I wore a wig and watched what I ate.

My treatments started Dec. 5, 1994 and ended April 14, 1995. I kept notes in my daily planning diary of my appointments.

Friends and relatives drove me back and forth during these trying times so that I could keep my appointments, I am forever grateful to them. I had to renew my faith in God, for he knew me best. Mother used to say, "God will never put on your shoulders more than you can bear."

Soon I was able to return to my volunteer work at the historical society.

In retrospect, I feel that when I was experiencing excruciating pain after eating dinner, it was due to the peristalsis in the intestines after consuming a meal causing the tumor to penetrate the wall of the intestine and enter into the abdomen cavity. There the omentum of the peritoneal cavity adhered to the tumor and had to be peeled off by my surgeon, this took time and skill.

There had been no other untoward symptoms to cause me to think there was something drastically wrong health wise, at least that's my version of what caused the pain.

Chapter Eighteen

1999-2000 "My Viewpoints on Current Issues"

During my recuperation, I developed more of an interest in current events, for I had more time to read the newspapers and watch T.V. I was particularly interested in the coverage of the O.J. Simpson trial. In my mind, there were so many unanswered questions; I did not have an informed opinion on his guilt or innocence. I did however take issue with a statement made by a reporter. It was in a column in the local newspaper. He stated that O.J.'s acquittal widened the gap between the white and black races.

Would this journalist have people believe that for decades the divisions between the two races were so exiguous that only now with this acquittal had that division or gap expanded and become greater?

Between the years 1889-1921, 3,436 Negroes were lynched, twenty-two of them burned at the stake. In the first part of the 20th century 1,197 were lynched.²² In 1950, Emmitt Till, a 14 year old boy was sent south to visit a great uncle; he was lynched for allegedly whistling at a white woman and tossed into the Talahatchi river.²³ I am reminded of this when I hear the song about the Talahatchi Bridge sung by a country western singer.

During the early 1950's, there was a lot of mob violence in

²² Langston Hughes and Milton Meltzer, *A Pictorial History of the Negro in America* (1963) 266.

²³ Langston Hughes and Milton Meltzer, *A Pictorial History of the Negro in America* (1963) 306.

Mississippi, there were murders committed and the mobsters got away with it.²⁴

I was living in New York at the time with my sister. She had been invited to attend a CORE (Congress on Racial Equality) meeting and decided to attend. She told me afterwards about how upsetting it was to hear the stories of this violence in the South. A young girl, who had managed to escape North with the help of others, told the members that mobs were going through the neighborhood. Her pregnant sister with whom she was living told her to hide under a bed. The mob entered the home and took her sister and brother-in-law outside.

A long time later when she could no longer hear anyone, she crawled from under the bed and went outside to see her sister and brother-in-law hanging from a tree. She said her sister's belly had been slashed open and her insides and the unborn baby were hanging out of her.

Do these columnists believe that at that point in time that the differences in viewpoints between races were rudimentary? "Lord help us"!

They fuel these fires by irresponsible reporting, by constantly displaying pictures of the black criminals in big black bold print on the front pages and relegating the white criminal to the back pages in smaller print.

To those who have acquired knowledge, but who are not really educated get the impression that most blacks are to be avoided. "Look how often you see on the front page the crimes they are committing!" they say.

I once attended a seminar and was the only black in the class and to demonstrate how the news media affects peoples thinking, the following is an example.

The professor showed a film of people on a subway train, there was only one black man on the subway car along with a group of white people. The professor asked, "Which person has a knife in his pocket?"

²⁴ Langston Hughes and Milton Meltzer, *A Pictorial History of the Negro in America* (1963) 312.

Everyone in the class, except me of course, chose the black man. The professor then told them it was the white man standing behind the black man who had the knife in his pocket!

How many times do you see displayed in big black bold print blacks who have like whites contributed to this country.²⁵ Blacks like Earl Shaw, professor of Physics at Rutgers University. He is the Director of the free Electron Laser Laboratory on the Newark campus, not too far away from my hometown – Easton, Pa.²⁶

We have been inundated with opinions by columnists on the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal. It takes two to commit adultery; but, when viewing them on TV one gets the impression that Clinton is being condemned while his partner in the illicit affair is being treated like a celebrity, advertising the purses she has made!

When the woman was brought before Jesus for indulging in an act of adultery, Jesus told her to go and sin no more. To those who were going to stone her, he said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her".²⁷ It is ironic that one who was the most verbal in his condemnation of Clinton was shown to have had an affair himself. There were probably many others committing sins but their lives were not scrutinized so intently.

Family values were introduced during all the hub bub. It was intimated that those who pardoned Clinton and voted not to impeach him had a lack of family values. Does Jesus have a lack of family values when he forgives us our sins?

Values, according to Jean Paul Sartre are not "transcendental givens, independent of human subjectivity." Value is what one recognizes as value.²⁸ Family values differ geographically. The Chinese recognize one type of family value, the Japanese another, likewise the French, German,

²⁵ Langston Hughes and Milton Meltzer, *A Pictorial History of the Negro in America* 32.

²⁶ Samuel DeWitt Proctor, *The Substance of Things Hoped For* (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1995) 225.

²⁷ Bible *John* 8:6-9.

²⁸ Jean Paul Sartre, *To Freedom Condemned* (The Polygot Press N.Y., 1960) 88.

Russian and other countries. People have migrated from many countries to the United States bringing along with them their own cultures and family values.

Cultures and family values differ in the regions of the United States: South, North, East and West. Between rich and poor, the rich might value money – the poor value a roof over their heads!

So how can one determine that there is a standard value for everyone, and hence a breakdown in family values or lack thereof.

Another columnist stated there is a legitimate reason for Clinton-hating and that is the “simple truth”, that he abused power and female persons and in his “true self” is a fraud. This columnist took pride in his analysis of Clinton’s character, but “Individual minds are the measures of all things. There is no one objective truth but a multitude of subjective opinions. True ideas are those we can assimilate, validate, coordinate and verify, those that are false we cannot.”²⁹ In other words, truth is what works for you. What is the cash value of truth?

During elections one votes for the person that they think is telling the truth. Daddy was a Republican; my sister and I were Democrats. Mother did not care who won; she voted for the one that impressed her the most when he was giving a speech on T.V. She never went to the polls.

If life were made easier after the election, then one who won was telling the truth. If things were worse, the one who won the election was not telling the truth – “Cash value of truth. Ignoring others’ ideals and attitudes about good, evil, and indulging ones own prejudices leads to a ‘mutilation of the truth.’”³⁰

The introduction of “vouchers” in the school system, in my opinion, means a return to the old status quo of separate but unequal.

“In the move toward private schools, and the ideas of vouchers, the public schools will become holding pens for hopeless children,

²⁹ Wm. James, *Essays in Pragmatism* (Hafner Publishing Co. N.Y. & London, 1966) 71, 160.

³⁰ Wm. James, *Essays in Pragmatism* (Hafner Publishing Co. N.Y. & London, 1966) 79.

while children from higher income families and better educated parents will be distanced from the masses in far better schools.”³¹ “How easy it is for those looking for a quick fix to social neglect to violate the democratic ideal and the most noble aspirations of the human spirit.”³²

I feel that as a result of private schools, the young hopeless children in public schools will drop out and turn to drugs and crime. We see fourteen and fifteen year olds walking around with thousands of dollars in their jeans. Gangs endangering bystanders in shoot outs over drug dealings. What is the world coming to? We can put man on the moon, travel in outer space, but these great minds can not come up with a viable solution to combat the human misery of the poor and homeless of our country.

Affirmative action is an issue in the courts today, some for and others against. I am amazed when I read about those who cry “reverse discrimination” when a black, qualified or not, has been promoted over them. Or, when a black student has been admitted to a prominent university where they had applied and been rejected. Actually, it should be called “reverse affirmative action”.

For decades, whites have been enjoying affirmative actions. Take my case of nursing supervisors being promoted over me for years even though my qualifications surpassed theirs. Then it was affirmative action for whites only. Affirmative action for blacks was introduced, leveling the playing field so to speak. Although those unfair advantages were not labeled affirmative action, which is indeed what they were. No doubt, there have been blacks promoted over qualified whites, but the cases are few and far between in comparison. This reversal has caused a lot of resentment. It is only fact that qualified blacks be admitted to universities or be promoted to better paying positions through affirmative action in order to correct past abuse.

³¹ Samuel DeWitt Proctor, *The Substance of Things Hoped For* (G.P. Putnam's Sons, N.Y., 1995) 213.

³² Samuel DeWitt Proctor, *The Substance of Things Hoped For* (G.P. Putnam's Sons, N.Y., 1995) 214.

"How long will it take or how many cases are matters of legal judgment. It should not be permanent practice – we never asked for that!"³⁴

There is probably the fear among some whites given the same education and opportunities as whites have, blacks might excel and in this stratified society they would be propelled from the lower class into various stages of the middle class or lower upper class status. The whites that could not compete with them might find themselves relegated to the lower class status on the stratification scale.

The experience of my oldest daughter Denise is an example of this resentment and fear. In college, she had associated with wealthy white classmates, attending their weddings and staying overnight in their homes. These classmates secure in their own worth because of knowledge and wealth, were not afraid my daughter would excel and surpass them, so there was no resentment on their part.

However, after she graduated and returned to Easton, she had difficulty finding a teaching position and became a nursing aide supervisor at a local nursing home. There were those who resented this college educated black girl being promoted to a supervisor's position and sought to undermine her with their sadistic, covert acts. This caused her great anxiety and she finally resigned.

They were jealous of the fact she had attended Briarcliff College, a school of prestige, thinking as some do that the standards were lowered to admit blacks. Denise had received a scholarship there based on her S.A.T. score. One of her classmates told her that on the S.A.T. scores, Denise's was higher than hers was.

My youngest daughter, Darlene, who like me takes "No Tea for the fever", left Easton after a short internship at the local Social Security office, where my sister was the Administrative clerk. She obtained a position with the Social Security office in New York City. She found that opportunities for blacks there were far greater than those at home

³⁴ Samuel DeWitt Proctor, *The Substance of Things Hoped For* (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1995) 94.

in Easton. With her college degree from Bennett College in Westchester, N.Y., she obtained a better paying position.

So that is why there is so much objection to affirmative action, making it possible for those young blacks to get an education and obtain higher salaries in their field of endeavor.

So dear readers, let us return to the beginning of my journey and ponder my contention that prejudice, and the stratification of society, placed an insuperable burden on a person of color that can only be surmounted by faith in God's divine will.

Epilogue

If or when my daughters read this book, I hope they will think of me not only as a mother who loves them unconditionally, but will know and understand the substance and essence of me, the innate nature of the "Iron in My Soul" that gave me the strength to surmount those pebbles, stones, rocks and boulders placed in my path.

I played the cards dealt to me by taking "No Tea for the Fever" as Daddy would say. I also want them to remember "God never closes a window without opening a door" and when he says "No" look for his "Instead".

A long time ago, he closed a window and opened up a door to success for me.

Lucille Brown Frederick Cherry

Bibliography

As listed in the Who's Who of American Women, Eleventh Edition,
1979-1980

Born Lucille Margaret Frederick, October 20, 1920, in Plainfield, New
Jersey

Graduate of Phillipsburg High School in Phillipsburg, New Jersey, 1938

R.N. Diploma from Lincoln School for Nurses, Bronx, New York, 1943

Matriculated at Columbia University, New York, New York, 1944-1945

Attended Pennsylvania State University at Allentown, 1969

Received Bachelors' degree form Cedar Crest College, Allentown,
Pennsylvania, 1973

Staff Nurse, Willard Parker Hospital in New York, 1943-1944

Staff Nurse, Post Graduate Hospital (now New York University Medical
Center) 1944-1945

Staff Nurse, Meinhardt Clinic (associated with Flower Fifth Avenue
Hospital) New York, 1945-1946

Patient, Raybrook Sanatorium, Adirondack Mountains, 1946-1947

Married Charles Cherry, 1948

Two daughters, Denise and Darlene

Member of Northampton County Genealogical Society

Member of Human Relations Commission, 1973

Member of Lincoln School for Nurses - Alumnae

Member of Air Products Community Action Panel

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