

Freeland Buckwalter's Memoirs

Written at the encouragement of his daughter Evelyn about 1986 when Freeland was 84.

My parents were Freeland N. Buckwalter and Hennrietta Zimmerman. They lived on a farm where they were married in March, 1896 near the village of East Earl, close to the Welsh Mountain, near a ridge of the mountain called Sheep Hill.

I was born June 20, 1902. I had one brother, Issac, nearly four years older than I. The farm was about seventy acres where we had cows, chickens, sheep, and horses, which were used on the farm as well as for transportation. The roads were almost all dirt which made traveling in winter very difficult. We had many visitors for my mother and father had several brothers and sisters.

I did not go to school until I was seven years old. The school was Cedar Grove about one mile east of Blue Ball along what is now Route 322.

I went to that school for four terms and had three different teachers. We had neighbors near us by the name of Sensenig. They had five sons and two daughters and we were with them quite often. We went to Weaverland Church every two weeks. When we had cows we took the milk to East Earl creamery. In 1913 my father sold the farm and we moved to 350 Jackson Street, New Holland. My father did some odd jobs but did not work all the time. I went to New Holland school which had only four rooms at that time. Sometime later they added two rooms. My mother had a heart condition while we lived in New Holland and at times she was very sick. That was when I did the housework and learned to cook.

I did not go to school after I was fifteen. At that time we did not have to go if you were fourteen or over. My brother started to work in the N.H. Post Office when he was fifteen. There was not as many laws at that time in regard to working.

In the fall of 1916 my father bought a farm about two miles south of New Holland which we farmed in 1917-1918. That was during the first World War. We lived in New Holland six

years.

In the fall of 1918 my parents bought a house with 5 acres of land near Heller's Church and sold the house in New Holland. We moved in March 1919. Then I worked on farms, mostly for a neighbor across the road from our home. I also worked in Lancaster in the winters at different jobs.

We went to Mellinger's Church and S. School. My parents transferred their membership to Mellinger's in the spring of 1919 and in the fall of the same year I was baptized and received into membership by Christian Brackbill, bishop. We attended Mellinger's Church regularly. It was a large congregation and the large building was full Sunday mornings and Sunday evenings. The young people came there for young people's meetings every other Sunday evening. When we did not have services at Mellinger's many young people went to Lancaster to East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church.

Your mother and her parents were also members at Mellinger's Church. In October 1920 your mother and I had our first date. I took her home from Mellinger's Church by horse and buggy. We dated once a week for about six months; mostly Sunday evenings and then to Saturday and Sunday and often there was something during the week that we went to. I drove a horse until about March 1921 when I got a car called Overland. I think it cost around \$600.00

Mother's parents lived on a farm in the village of Witmer and they went to the Fulton Market in Lancaster with butter and eggs, etc. Anna Groff, who later was Mrs. Miles Landis, lived also in Witmer and her and your mother were good friends. Mother was also good friends with Elizabeth Rohrer, later Mrs. Caleb Wimer. We were all good friends and were together often Saturday and Sunday evenings. We went on short trips together to Valley Forge, Hershey, Mount Gretna, etc.

My brother was dating your Aunt Mabel who lived at Hartman Station. They were married in December, 1921 at Rev. Hillegas' home in Leola.

After their honeymoon they lived a short time with our parents near Heller's Church. He bought a house at 939 North Lime Street, Lancaster, where they started housekeeping. A few years later he built a house on Watson Avenue and moved there the winter of 1923. Florence and I planned to get married in June, 1923. But Miles and Anna planned to get married in the later part of March, 1923, and they asked us to be married at the same time and go on a honeymoon together. After thinking about it a short time we decided we would be married with them.

We were married on March 28, 1923 by Bishop Christian Brackbill at his home in Kinzer, Pa. After the ceremony we had dinner at a restaurant in Quarryville. We then left for Washington, D.C. in Miles Landis' car which was a Liberty touring car with curtains. The weather turned cold and stormy that day and it was a rather cool ride to D.C. We stayed at the St. James Hotel on Pa. Avenue. We only stayed in D.C. a few days. Miles Landis was farming and had a herd of cows. He felt he should not be away very long.

Our parents each had a reception for us at each home. We lived at each of our homes that year after our marriage but mostly at Florence's in Wimer. I worked on a farm that year until sometime in July when I got a job at Denlinger's machine shop on N. Prince Street in Lancaster. I first worked in the shop a short time and then I drove truck until about March 1924. We started housekeeping and started farming Grandpa Huber's farm. Leon was born Dec. 21, 1923, at Lancaster General Hospital. I think the room cost \$5.50 a day. Florence was there nine days. When we began farming we had 8 cows, 3 horses, some chickens, and a few pigs. We had a cream separator to separate the cream from the milk and made butter out of the cream. We went to Fulton Market to sell the butter and eggs, etc. We made butter for some time. Then we sold the milk to a creamery at Ronks, Pa. Also, we sold milk to some of the neighbors in Witmer. They bought kettles to put the milk in. Florence raised chickens by sitting a hen with thirteen eggs. After the chickens were hatched we put them in a coop in the orchard. At that time she thought that was the way to raise chickens but some time later changed her mind. We had a brooder house with a coal fired brooder stove.

Ellen was born Sept. 8, 1925 at home in Witmer. Dr. Ressler was our doctor and we had a nurse. Her name was Edna Weaver. She stayed about two weeks. We lived on Grandfather's farm for 3 years. In 1927 we moved to a farm we bought along Center Square road, north of Leola where we lived for 22 years until 1949. The first 8 years we lived there we did not have electric lights or running water. Our neighbors were mostly Amish. There was no electric line past our farm.

December 5, 1928, Marian was born. We again had a nurse. Her name was Mrs. Sauder from Lancaster. Sometimes, we had a hired boy but not all the time. We still had Dr. Ressler for our doctor. In the early years of 1930 was the Great Depression. We had quite a struggle to keep going. The price of farm products was very low. We had very little money. The wheat price was about 40 cents a bushel and milk was as low as 70 cents per hundred lbs. Many people had no work. There was no welfare or Social Security. On Jan. 19, 1932, Kathryn was born. We again had a nurse, Mrs. Landis, from Lancaster and Dr. Ressler was the doctor.

My brother at this time was with the Lancaster Newspapers. He had a very good job and he helped over those years of the early thirties.

Here abruptly ends the memoirs of Freeland N. Buckwalter. Why they ended here I do not know.