

Whence We Came

My Early Life

By

Della Swan McCall
1891 – 1984

Introduced and Edited by
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1984

Our todays and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.

Build today, then, strong and sure,
With a firm and ample base,
And ascending and secure
Shall tomorrow find its place.

“The Builders”

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Della Lee Swan McCall writes a straightforward autobiography, and shining through is her pride of family: proud of whence she came, and particularly proud because these, her people, were good people.

They had deep religious faith; they had a great interest in politics; and they were dedicated to peace. They were not rich in goods, but they were endowed with the sure strength of determined freemen. They were humble in the sight of God, but they yielded to no man in their right to proceed as their individual conscience urged.

Let us recall, the way of life of her family in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as written by her in 1959.



Della Swan - 4 years

I was born on December 5, 1891, on the Swan Homestead, one mile north of Boden, in Knox Township, Guernsey County, Ohio. Boden had an elementary school, post office, general store, the Northfield United Presbyterian Church, and about ten houses.

In the 1800's southern Ohio farms were self-sustaining units. Hand power and horse power made the wheels go round. Children were an economic asset rather than a financial liability. The boys helped with the farm work, and girls helped with the house work. Father and Mother reared three sons and one daughter on their farm, where they lived and worked for nearly 50 years.

When I was born, Mother sent for her sister, Harriet, to come and help for a few days. When she and Uncle Frank McAllister arrived, Aunt "Hat" hurried into the kitchen. Father's desk was in the room, and Will Lawer, a Civil War veteran, who came regularly to have his pension papers acknowledged, was standing, talking to my father. Aunt Hat mistook him to be the Doctor Chatman, and she said, "How do you do, Doctor?" and hurried on to see Mother. That was something to reminiscence about each year on my birthday.

My parents, Thomas Kidd and Sarah Frances (Forney) Swan, bought the McDonald Duff farm in 1891. It was the highest point in Guernsey County, according to a geographic survey.

A man in Cambridge said, "Well, Tom, you are out of the world in Knox Township," (which was 11 miles north of Cambridge) and father said, "No, there are people living beyond us."

My brothers were George Forney Swan (1889-1957), who received his doctor's degree from Ohio State University; Reo Miskimen (1902-1957), who received his degree from Rush Medical School; and John Raymond (1906-1977), who received his medical degree from Ohio State University, also.

When George graduated, he volunteered for service in World War I, and was appointed as Surgeon in the U.S. Navy. He did not have to go overseas. After the war George received his honorable discharge, upon his request, and he chose to have his private office in Cambridge. Reo joined him and they owned and operated the Swan Hospital. They were highly respected by all who knew them.

John practiced otolaryngology in Indianapolis, Indiana, his wife's hometown.

My brothers and I have pleasant memories of our country home, school and church, and of our many kind friends.

The old house in which I was born was a log cabin, built by a pioneer, that had been covered with clapboards and painted white to look like a frame house. It was placed very near the edge of the road with the hill close up behind it. The coalshed was away across the road.

The 16 foot square kitchen was a high step above the living room. This required a lot of extra steps for mother. My parents had a bedroom off the living room, and a stairway from the living room went to the upper floor where we children slept. The fireplaces in the kitchen and living room were back-to-back.

All the family activities took place in the kitchen. Father's tall walnut desk was at one end of the room and my organ

was at the other. The table and chairs were in the middle. Mother's cookstove was across from the fireplace and a large corner cupboard held the dishes. This house burned in 1905.

The year on a farm begins with the Spring. There had been the winter butchering, and the mending of fences. Now there was the planting of corn, oats, clover and timothy, and the shearing of the sheep. Spring brought the songs of native birds in the Swan orchards, chattering and singing, as they pursued the eternal duty of nest building.

I remember the joyous sound of the fresh water of the melted snows and the spring rains, as it rushed over the stones of the brook, filling the moss-covered water trough, and then flowing on to Will's Creek.

We laughed about the time Uncle Issac and Aunt Rachel McAllister, and their daughter, Clara, were driving to Grandfather Forney's, and Clara saw the creek. She asked, "What is the name of this creek?"

Uncle Issac replied, "Will's Creek."

Then the wagon road left the creek for a ways and when it came back to the North Bend of the creek, she asked, "What is the name of this creek?"

Uncle Isaac answered, "Will's Creek."

Then Clara asked, "Does Will have two creeks?"

I remember the bleating of the spring lambs, at even' time, in search of their mothers, mingled with the low pitched answering calls of the ewes, as they grazed in the plum orchard, on the hill. On one occasion my mother took my hand and walked up to the orchard to show me that each lamb had found its mother.

And I remember the steady buzz of bees, industriously

pollinating the fruit trees which were our family's principal earthly resource.

Father served as Notary Public for 40 years in Knox Township. As a young man, he had worked in a law office in Cambridge, the six months of the year that he was not teaching school. When he married and bought the farm, he continued this law service from his home. He acknowledged the pension checks each month for the Civil War veterans. Many an hour they sat by his desk to talk, and many an extra plate mother added to the family dinner table when their visit over-lapped the supper hour. He copied deeds for farms when they were changing hands, and he had several weddings in the house. On Father's tall desk sat an official seal of Ohio, with its heavy wooden handle.

Another source of our family income was the blacksmith shop. Father had learned this trade from his father, John Swan.

My grandfather, John Swan was born in Elie, Scotland in 1826. He and one or two brothers came to America in 1852. We know that one brother, James went on to Kansas. John Swan, after settling near Indian Camp in Guernsey County, sent for his father, George, and two of his sisters, Nancy Swan Rose of Cambridge, and Ann Swan Lemon of Indiana.

On January 1, 1856, he married Martha Neilly of Ireland. To this union were born five children: Thomas Kidd, Nancy Neilly (Koci), Anna Bella, Helen Broom (known as Ella) (Giffen), and Margaret Jane (Clark).

Though Grandfather had not attended school for long, he read and studied a great deal. He could read his Bible in Greek and Latin. He was willing to have a discussion with

anybody on a religious topic. Rev. Dr. McFarland and he carried on a controversy in the Cambridge "Republican Press" for a long period of time. The complete set of arguments was sold to the Cleveland City Library for \$200. He died in 1897.

The ring of father's anvil let mother know, in the house, that a neighbor had come by to have new shoes put on their horse. Sometimes, it was tools to repair.

Later, in the 1920's, when I returned with my small daughters, from the same blacksmith shop came the hum of the Delco batteries. They produced electricity for the cream separator, the Maytag washer, and the electric lights in every barn and shed and in the house. Gone were the many horses, but in their place stood the new Model T Ford truck.

Father was interested in raising purebred Poland China pigs and Jersey milk cows. This breeding took a lot of time.

One neighbor complained at the one dollar charge for the breeding papers of his sow, saying, "Why, that much paper will cover her!"

The farm was at a suitable altitude to make it a good fruit farm, which Father did. He set out 500 peach trees and 500 apples trees. At a later date, they added 80 acres to the original 100 acres, and he set out a new peach orchard of 750 trees. It took a lot of time and labor to care for and to market the fruit.

Father enjoyed the care of the orchards. Of apples there were Winesap, Pippin, Rambo, Northern Spy, Russet and the Ben Davis.

The Ben Davis variety was a late apple and had acquired the reputation of being tough. Father decided to call them

“York Imperial”, and by holding them back and selling them when they had become mellow, they became very popular with his customers. There were the Delicious, Rome Beauty, Early Harvest, and Maiden Blush varieties, as well as the Yellow Transparent and the Grimes Golden.

Some apples were juicy and tart enough to be preferred for cider. The cider press had its own shed. The cider was kept in kegs in the cellar. Sweet cider was enjoyed by everyone, in an era before carbonated beverages. You could be a strait-laced temperance man and still appreciate sweet cider.

Among the peach varieties were Elberta, J.H. Hale, Redhaven, Hiley, Haleshaven, July Elberta, White Cling and the Yellow Cling. There were 100 plum trees of Yellow Gage, Green Gage and Damson varieties. Cherry trees were planted in a line by the fence of the kitchen garden.

When Luther Burbank improved the strawberries, Father planted ten rows the length of the garden.

Mother contributed to the family's income by raising a flock of 400 brown Leghorn chickens. Eggs and young roosters were sold. The contented cackle around the chicken house and up the hillside through the apple orchard was an ever-present sound. A sadly remembered morning came with the discovery that a ferret had gotten into the chicken house and killed 100 of the flock.

A neighbor said to Father, “I don't like the brown Leghorn chickens, 'cause they fly over the garden fence and scratch too much.” Father replied, “If everyone raised brown Leghorns, then their brown eggs would be a low price.”

The fruit and eggs were hauled over the eleven miles of unimproved roads to the market of Cambridge, on the National Old Trail Road (U.S. 40). Oat straw was used to pack the fruit to prevent bruising. Besides selling the fruit and eggs to the grocers, Father and George sold many bushels from door to door.

I learned a love of flowers from Mother, and remember her climbing roses across the top of the white picket fence and the wild roses sprawling on the rocks that had been piled up from clearing the land. Geraniums grew and flourished under Mother's watchful eye. The veranda was ringed with large pots of red geraniums that were moved to catch the summer sun, watered, and then brought inside at the first sign of frost. In the late fall, the plants were hung in the cool cellar.

When I was five years old, I stayed at Aunt Hat's for a few days. I can still remember the beauty and fragrance of the petunia bed beside the house. There was a rope swing in the orchard, and they warned me to stay away from the cross, old turkey gobbler that strutted there.

Summer days brought the noise of the iron-cleated tires of the tractor pulling the threshing machine coming down the road when it was our turn to have the threshing ring. Mother asked her sisters, Hat and Rachel, to help us prepare for all the menfolk who shared the work along the threshing ring. Along with the fried chicken went a full table of vegetables, gravy, pies, cakes, and fruit.

After the big dinner and before returning to the fields, there was an hour of rest on the large veranda, or in the shade of the locust tree. This happy mingling of the neigh-

ighbors was a time for the exchange of local news, politics and jokes.

Later, as time permitted and our needs dictated, we took the grain to be ground into flour at Barnes Mill in Kimbolton, 10 miles to the east.

With the threshing done, the summer days were filled with the harvesting of the fruit and other farm products. The late summer road, bordered with the blue chicory, beckoned us to follow, for it was the time for the Fair.

The finest from Father's fields and orchards along with the most beautiful cans of fruits, vegetables and jellies from the rows of shelves in Mother's fruit cellar were chosen. They were securely packed into the spring wagon for the trip to the Exhibit Hall. There were blue ribbons for the finest and red ribbons for the second best.

At noon we gathered in the oak grove on the Fairgrounds to eat the picnic dinner brought in a wicker basket from home. There would be the afternoon of contests before we had to return home to do the evening milking and feeding of the stock. I remember watching Uncle James and John Forney enter their carefully groomed Percheron horses in the pulling contests. The Forney brothers imported French Percheron, Clydesdale, French Coach and Hambletonian horses. They made several trips to France, and on one occasion brought back stallions and mares worth \$60,000. Uncle John was secretary of the American Breeders and Importers Registry Society.

September meant the onset of Ohio's most famous season, when the purple of the grape vied for attention with the reddening woodbine. The trees of maple, oak, ash, sassafras

and sweet gum took on the almost riotous hues that can only be found in the Autumn foliage of hardwoods.

The bright October skies were tintured with a purple haze. The pumpkins were ripening among the corn. The kitchen garden now produced squash and turnips.

I remember a story that my Grandfather Forney would tell:

“Pat and Mike were two Irishmen. Seems Mike was bragging about how fine America was, but Pat would always say ‘Ah! But the’re bigger and better in the auld country.’ Mike pointed out the wide streets, tall buildings, handsome women, and Pat always said, ‘Ah! But they are bigger and better in the auld country.’ So that night Mike went to the orchard and tied pumpkins on an apple tree. The next morning, Mike just happened to take Pat by the orchard and pointed out the ‘big apples’. But Pat, stubborn to the end, said, ‘Ah! But they are bigger and better in the auld country!’”

In our kitchen garden, the butterbean poles stood like a row of teepees. The wind shook their pods like the rustling of Indian turtle-shell rattles. Mother kept a large black pot of beans simmering on the back of the stove and served them at each meal.

The apples were ready for the cider press and fruit cellar. Apple butter took many long hours by the oven, stirring and stirring, until the dark brown sauce was done.

My brothers liked to go nutting, for hickory nuts and chestnuts. They did not pick persimmons, but Grandfather Forney would tell a story about that fruit which is not fit to eat until after a frost:

“Pat and Mike were two Irishmen. Seems they were walking down the road and noticed the yellow-orange fruit of the persimmon. Pat clambered over the fence and shinnied up the tree. Shortly thereafter his worried face appeared among the foliage, and he said, ‘Mike! Mike! If ye have anything to say ta me, say it quick! for I’m closing up!’”

And then there were the winters, with the fun of special programs at school. This varied the routine of geography, history, arithmetic and the recitations from McGuffey Readers. School was held five times a week from 8:30 to 4 o’clock.

Immediately after Thanksgiving Day, the children began memorizing and practicing their “Christmas Pieces”. As Program Night approached, some only nibbled at the contents of their lunch pails. The schoolroom was ornamented with paper chains and colored ribbons strung overhead from the window frames. A tangle of tinsel adorned the aromatic cedar tree which the biggest boys had lugged in from the woodlot.

When the winter roads were frozen and covered with snow, Father took the wheels off the log wagon and put on sled runners. When the hogs were butchered, mother would render the lard and salt down the pork. Meat was also preserved by layering it in crocks and covering it with melted grease.

Father usually had two or three hired hands to help him. These were important members of the household and lived in an upstairs back room. Their room was off limits to us children.

The hired man on early farms was an equal, who ate at the table with the family and was at home in the living room

after supper on winter evenings. On such occasions, Mother would bring up a crock of red Winesap apples from the cellar, and everyone would eat one before retiring.

“An apple a day, keeps the doctor away,” she would say.

I remember that in the winter we had time to visit the homes of our friends. When brother George and I would accompany Mother and Father on an evening call to the Clarks, Mrs. John Clark would make us laugh by playing and singing humorous songs, such as “Pop! Goes the Weasel” and “Whoa, Mulie, Whoa!”

One time, when Uncle Isaac and Aunt Rachel McAllister came to visit, she and Mother were saying, “Oh, I’m so glad to see you. It has been such a long time since I saw you . . .etc”, and then Aunt Hat, who often helped Mother, said, “Oh yes, I might as well be living in Kansas!” Many of our relatives had moved on to Kansas.

The John Clarks were special friends. When Father and Mother were choosing a name for me, Father liked ‘Della’ and they both liked ‘Lee’ as that was Mrs. Clark’s name. So I was named Della Lee.

Father had my birth recorded at the court house in Cambridge. Due to his experience in notary work, he was a good bookkeeper and was very particular about records.

It seems that many relatives led me in developing my love of music. I recall sitting on Grandfather Forney’s knee and hearing him play his violin or his fife. Mother told me that when she and her sister, Rachel, were too active, their father would tell them to get up on a chair and he would play on his violin.

Grandfather Abraham Zacchaeus Forney was born April

14, 1830. He married Hulda Doty, whose family came from New Jersey to Ohio, on October 7, 1849. To this union were born seven children: Clark D., Harriet (McAllister), Joseph W., James, Frank, John, Sarah Frances and Rachel (McAllister). Harriet and Rachel married McAllister brothers, Frank and Isaac, so their children were double cousins.

Uncle Clark Forney's wife, Josephine, gave me lessons and encouraged me in my music. She was the church organist at Plainfield. She accompanied Uncle Clark when he played his violin. When they went to the northwest for her health, she gave her organ to me. Later, Father bought a new organ for me, and then in a few years, a piano.

I remember how proud I felt when my father would ask me play the pump organ for him to sing his Scottish songs, some in Gaelic. His fine tenor voice gave pleasure to our family.

I recall as a child, when visiting at Grandfather's big, two-story frame house, built in 1884, that brother George and I thought it was nice to look through the stained glass in the front door, as everything outside looked to be a maroon color.

Their first house, up near Phillips Creek, near North Bend, had burned. Grandfather, John, Frank and a hired man or two were a mile from the house when they saw the fire and started to run. One of the hired men ran into the kitchen. Grandmother had washed a pan of eggs for market. He grabbed the pan of eggs and hurrying out of the house, threw it! You have to think of the humor along with the tragedy.

It was in this new house that my mother and father, and

her sister, Rachel and Isaac McAllister were married in a double wedding on February 3, 1887. The girls wore matching navy blue silk dresses.

After Grandmother Forney went away to her heavenly home in 1896, I recall that several times we all took picnic baskets of food and drove to the A.Z. Forney Homestead. We cousins did have a good time together.

Brother George and Father would go out to the barn to see the stock, the hogs and the sheep. The most important were the big stallions, which Uncle John would take out of their stalls and exercise in the lane in front of the house. Father knew that I liked to see the horses, but it wasn't considered proper for a young girl to be around the barn.

I knew that my place was in the house with the women-folk. On one occasion, when a neighbor had brought an animal for breeding, Father sent me back to our house, telling me to gather the eggs for Mother. I ran to the chicken house, rummaged through the nests until I found one egg. Hurrying to the corner of the garden fence, I called to Mother, "Here's an egg!" I flung it at the back door, and scurried back to the barn. Father sent me back to the house in disgrace.

I have heard Mother tell of the trials of the pioneer settlers in Linton Township. When Grandfather Forney was a young man, he rode a horse to Plainfield. When he started across the new bridge over Will's Creek, which did not have the railing along the sides yet, some man grabbed the reins on the horse's bridle. The horse backed off the bridge. Both the horse and grandfather fell into the creek. He swam to the other side and the horse did likewise. It was providence

over him that he did not drown. The man ran away.

One time Grandfather and Uncle John took a load of grain in the wagon to Newcomertown. It was a very cold day, so he put on two pairs of pants. He received the money and put it in his pocket. Later, he went to buy something and he could not find his pocketbook. My! what a predicament he was in! He felt his pant leg and whispered, "John, John! Drive out of town fast. I can feel it down my leg, in between the two pairs of pants!" Never a dull moment!

When they drove a herd of cattle to market, they hurried home before dark, because they were afraid someone would be waiting behind a tree to step out and take their pocketbook.

At one time, Granfather Forney compiled a history of the area. This was read when the Pomona Grange met at Plainfield. The Worthy Master asked, "Mr. Forney, you have written a fine history. Will you please tell us what made Will's Creek so crooked?"

"Yes, sir," replied Grandfather, with a twinkle in his Irish eyes, "I can tell you. It was this way. In the pioneer days, they did not have wagon roads, and the people traveled in boats. So they had the creek bend to each settler's cabin door."

When my brother, Reo Miskimen, was born in 1902, he was welcomed by his big brother, George, and his big sister, me. He was a cute little brother. Later, he liked to talk to my boyfriends when they called to see me.

When Reo was three and a half years old, in the fall of 1905, we had the misfortune to lose our house by fire. Father and George were away, and when Mother rang the bell for

help, the neighbors thought we were just calling them in from the fields for supper. We had started the evening meal, and it was sparks from that fire that had caught the roof. Mother and I carried out my new organ and Father's heavy desk and some chairs. That was all that we were able to save.

Reo had a dog harness on his pup, Bonnie. He asked, "Where are Pa and George?" We told him to sit under the big tree. When the fire got very hot, he took his dog around to the front and inside the house. He tied her to a chair and sat down on the stair beside her. Mother saw him enter the house and called to me about Reo. I hurried into the burning house and brought out Reo and the dog.

The neighbors did finally come, and they were able to save the blacksmith shop and the barns.

When Father and George came home, Father remarked that we could be so thankful that no lives were lost.

Losing our home caused a great deal of confusion at the time and a great deal of work later. But we had team-work, and we cooperated and we accomplished a great deal in a short time.

Fortunately, we had just finished building a very large two-story chicken house, and as the flock had not yet been moved into it, this became our living quarters while we were rebuilding.

Brother John Raymond was born January 27, 1906, so we were very busy that summer, with a new baby, building the house and the usual farm work. Mother and I cooked for, and boarded, the men who helped to build the house.

We had the stone blocks for the foundation quarried on the

home place. Then the stonemason left to work on a road east of Cadiz, promising to come back late summer and cut the stone into managable blocks. Not wanting to wait, George and a neighbor hitched the team of horses to the very large blocks and hauled them up the road to the house.

Father had a saw mill come to cut lumber from our walnut, chestnut and white oak trees. A kiln was built to dry the lumber, so we could build and occupy our house by Christmas.

Our homemade kiln was a deep ditch covered by steel plates. At one end, a fire was kept burning, with the chimney at the other end. Dirt covered the steel plates. The lumber was stacked over the ditch in such a way as to allow the warmed air to circulate.

Next, Father had a planeing mill from Kimbolton, come to our farm. Mr. Ephriam Bradford, of Otsego, and Frank Bell, of Bloomfield, did the carpenter work.

Father went to the lumber yard in Cambridge and got doors, windows, large sliding doors and slate for the roof. The plasterer was from Cambridge.

Our new house had a coal furnace and indoor toilet facilities. There was a large, deep basement, with an outside entrance at ground level, and a stairway from the kitchen. In the basement there was a room for the coal, a room with wooden bins filled with sand in which we stored root vegetables, and shelves for our home canned goods.

We had a very spacious veranda with large white pillars across the front and along one side of the house. We could see the Northfield United Presbyterian Church plainly, which was one mile south, as well as, the "Clark Nobs" also

named "Twin Sisters" on John Clark's farm.

It was a very fine house.

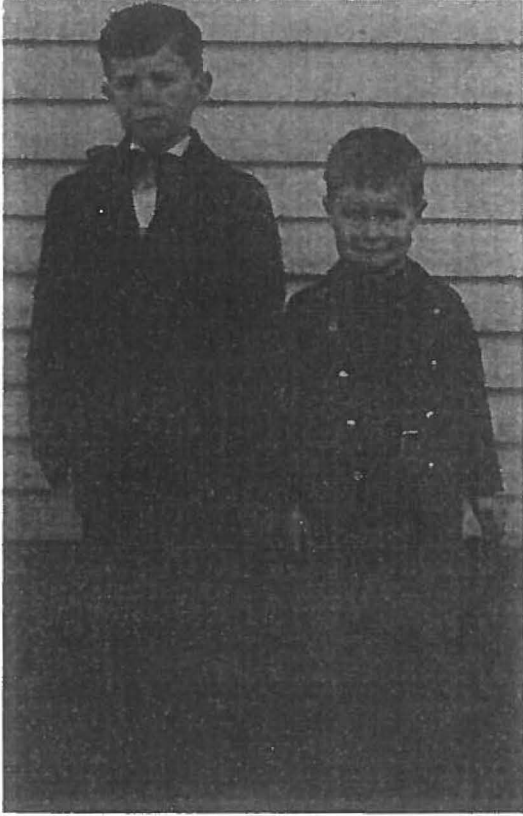
I attended Boden Elemenatary School. My teachers were A. B. Barton, Allen Logan, William Zimmerman, Raymond Roekrig, Howard English and Charles Ford. Each child furnished his own reader and slate. School was a six month winter term, and an optional two month summer term. Usually just the young children attended the summer term, as the older boys would be helping on the farm. The summer terms were taught by A.B. Barton, Amanda Pollock, Laura Coulter and Cora Schwyart. Our teachers were very efficient, and they held up high moral standards to the pupils.

Now and then, when the teacher boarded around, he stayed at our house. These were very happy evenings, full of learning new ideas from the discussions. Father had taught school as a young man, and always encouraged young people to secure a good education.

By studying with the grade school teacher for two years after completing the 8th McGuffey Reader, I was entitled to receive a diploma at the Cambridge Central High School in June, 1907. The eighth grade township commencement and the Guernsey County "Boxwell" commencement were very inspiring to higher education.

In 1904, when I was 12 years old, Father took me to the famed Louisiana Purchase Exposition, in St. Louis, then the nation's third largest city. Mother, George and little Reo stayed at home to run the farm.

Father's idea was to go to the fair, then on to Kansas to visit with his Uncle James Swan, and his sisters, Nannie Koci, who lived near Topeka, and Ella Griffin, 100 miles to



Reo Miskimen and John Raymond
1910



George Forney Swan
1914

the south at Blue Mound, Kansas. Father was a good letter writer who kept up family ties. He wanted me to know the Swan cousins. Josie Kosi (Buehler) and Jenny Giffin (Devin) had been born the same year as I.

We traveled by train. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and the Pennsylvania Lines ran World's Fair Excursion Trains to St. Louis. A coach fare was \$11.00 round trip.

Mother packed a lunch, which was very kind, but I was delighted when Father took me to the dining car for supper. It was just as grand as the Hotel Berwick dining room with white linen covered tables and pretty flowers in a crystal vase.

I still feel happy just to remember the World's Fair, and I cherish my souvenirs.

George, who was two years my senior, was a very good brother and companion. He was attentive to me, and we attended church and social activities together. In fact, I always went to parties with my brother. When going to dances, rather than bother with a buggy, I would often ride behind him on a horse. Mother would wrap a blanket around me to keep my dress clean, and then pin it around George, to prevent my sliding off the side of the horse.

In 1906 the Miskimen-Forney Reunion was organized at the James Miskimen Homestead near Wills Creek, near Plainfield. In 1926 my parents invited them to meet at our home near Boden. What a pleasant way to keep relatives in touch with each other. The Forney ancestors have nearly all been laid to rest in the Plainfield Cemetary.

(I have enjoyed helping my husband collect data for the Swan Family History, also for the McCall Family History.



Della Swan
1910

He cut the stencils and mimeographed about 150 copies of each family tree, and we have sent them to the heads of families. It took time, patience and work to compile them in such an orderly fashion in booklet form. "Whatever is worth doing is worth doing well.")

George and I attended Normal School at Old Washington, Ohio, in the summer of 1907. My roommate was Mary Hawthorne.

Then in the summer of 1908, we attended Teacher's Normal at Muskingum College, and my roommate was Jessie Hawthorne. One outing was a railroad excursion to Cedar Point, on Lake Erie.

That same summer, Cousin Jeanette Forney, a graduate of Oberlin College Music Conservatory, and I attended the Guernsey County Sunday School Convention in Old Washington. A group of us had our picture taken in front of the home of Mr. Laws (?), our host. His beautiful home is now the Colonial Inn Museum.

As I grew up, I liked to give readings and take part in Easter, Children's Day and Christmas programs. My cousins invited me to join them in pageants. Florence, Laura and Clara McAllister would ask me to please give a recitation or help with the singing. All the cousins attended each others churches, so I sang in the choirs of Linton Mills, Flat Ridge, Plainfield and White Eyes Methodist Churches. This was fine training for my life work, a minister's wife.

I taught at Red Brush School, Knox Township. My father had taught at the same school!

The family with whom I boarded had bought the organ which Father had traded in for my piano. This made me feel

at home.

While teaching my first term, I had the pleasure of playing the "Wedding March" for the marriage of my Cousin Laura and John Waters of Otsego. They had a beautiful home wedding. The delicious wedding supper was ended with a wonderful wedding cake and ice cream.

When Reo was about 6 years old, George was hitching the horse to the buggy one evening, at the barn, Reo asked, "Where are you going, George?" "I'm going fishing," replied the big brother. Reo thought awhile, then said "I guess you can't go a-fishing unless you have a hook!"

My courtship by the Reverend John English McCall was conducted quietly. His first wife, Estella McCutcheon, had died following the birth, on May 4, 1910, of a daughter, Bessie Lucille.

As the local pastor, Rev. McCall visited our school to greet the students and give a short message. Noting my careful penmanship, he asked me to fill out the marriage and baptismal certificates. I asked George if I should, and was surprised to hear him snort, "I wish that I had as good an excuse to call on my girlfriend."

Rev. McCall had put off filling out the certificates since his wife's death, and he had quite a bundle under his arm with all the names and dates on a scrap of paper. The certificates were large, approximately 16" by 24". Since people displayed them, it was important that the writing be neat. I told Rev. McCall that my teacher's desk was too small with too many things on it, and if he would come to the Swan Homestead, I could spread the certificates out on the parlor table and write much better in my Spencerian script with

the embellishments.

One afternoon, when Rev. McCall came to call, I served white cling peaches in our nicest tall sherberts. He tried and tried to cut a bite, and blurted out "How do you eat this truck?" I fled to the kitchen to hide my embarrassment and brought back a knife and fork for him to spear and cut the fruit.

The Fourth of July, 1911, Rev. McCall took me to see a baseball game between his Sunday School team and Kimbolton. On the way, we drove past a home, where the pretty daughter was eyeing the widowed minister. She just happened to be by the roadside as we passed. Rushing to the rural party-line phone, she rang-up one of my friends.

"You'll never guess who just passed our house in his buggy! . . . The Rev. McCall, and you'll never guess who was riding with him! . . . Della Swan."

And that was the party-line gossip that my mother heard as she lifted the receiver to make a phone call.

Another evening, while we were returning from a church social, John had stopped the buggy on a covered bridge to adjust Ribbon's bridle. A wagonload of my friends on a church hayride came by and I gaily greeted them. I heard John mutter, "You don't have to be that friendly."

We had a beautiful SURPRISE church wedding in the white frame United Presbyterian church at Fresno, Ohio. On December 11, 1911, the church was filled with delegates to the Mansfield Presbytery, a "Brotherhood Conference" of local men's Sunday School classes, and members of the Fresno and Amity congregations there for Rev. McCall's installation.



Rev. and Mrs. J. E. McCall
1911

Only three people in the crowd knew that a wedding was to be part of the program: my husband-to-be; the minister who was to perform the ceremony, Rev. Hubert Ferguson; and Mrs. W.F. Park, of Fresno, who prepared our wedding supper. The rest of the audience did not know that I was waiting, with my bridal party, in a Sunday School room at the back of the sanctuary.

My wedding dress was a practical two-piece. The fittings had been kept secret with difficulty. The straight, 4-gore, white wool skirt was detailed with a center panel that hung loose in a tassel-adorned point. The white embroidered silk blouse had fitted long sleeves. The high choker neckline was centered with a gold lily-of-the valley pin, a gift from my parents.

Some of my daughters and grand-daughters have worn this pin on their wedding dresses.

The Rev. McCall, after taking the oath of covenant, was installed as the new pastor of the Fresno and Amity churches. At the close of the installation service, as prearranged, he walked back to the room where I was waiting. The Reverend McCall and I, with our bridal party walked down the aisle to the alter to say our vows.

My brother, George, was the best man, and Miss Alta Boyd, a friend of Normal School days, was my maid-of-honor. The out of town guests were John's parents, Daniel and Emily McCall, and his daughter, Bessie, of Idaville, Indiana, Isaac and Rachel McAllister, West Lafayette, and John and Daisy Forney, Plainfield, Ohio.

The delegates to Presbytery came to the parsonage after the evening meeting and serenaded us. Throughout the

years that followed, when those same ministers saw Rev. McCall at Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly, they reminded him of our wedding and how we surprised everyone.

My parents and Reo had escorted me from our country home to the church in our two-seater surry with the fringe around the top. It was cold and rainy, and the roads were muddy that December day. But in spite of the weather, we had a beautiful SURPRISE church wedding.

The following year we began our custom of giving a flower to each mother attending church on Mother's Day. This we have done throughout our fifty years of ministry.

Two of our daughters, Thelma Rosalind and Helen Kathaline, were born at Fresno.

On one of the visits of my family, we served "stuffed sausage". This was a new idea to my brothers of serving sausage. When John McCall passed the meat, he remarked, "Won't you have some groundhog?"

Well, on the way home, John Raymond proudly said, "Mr. McCall didn't fool me like he did the McCall family at Idaville, for I just didn't take off any groundhog."

This story was a joke that John McCall and his father had played on Mother McCall when we were visiting Idaville.

John had been shooting young squirrels which visited the corncrib by the big barn. He would bring them into the kitchen, and Mother McCall would serve them after she had fried them in butter. They were so very delicious, as was all of her cooking and baking.

One day, John and Father McCall hitched the driving horse, Baldy, to the buggy and took a drive, and on their re-

turn trip a young groundhog ran across the road. John jumped out and killed it with the butt end of the buggywhip. When they drove into the barnyard, they skinned it and took it to Mother. John said, "Isn't this a nice squirrel?"

Looking at it, Mother McCall said, "Too big for a squirrel, that's a rabbit," but she cooked it and served it for supper.

John's brother, Byron, could tell that the bones were too big for a young squirrel and when he was ready for a second piece, he said, "Pass the rabbit, or cat, or whatever it is . . ."

Father McCall and John had not eaten any meat for supper, so Mother demanded, "Did you men kill that old cat at the barn?"

I needed to take the baby, Thelma, to the bedroom just then and hurriedly left the table. I have been teased ever since.

In 1915 Rev. McCall was a Commissioner from Manfield Presbytery to General Assembly in Loveland, Colorado and Committee of Missions in Ft. Morgan. As we had our first car, a 1914 Model T Ford, we drove.

We were auto pioneers on the unimproved roads. There were no road maps, so John used the state maps found in our encyclopedia. Roads were not marked by numbers or signs, so we frequently stopped to ask directions. Through Iowa, Kansas and Colorado there was a "Corn Belt Road". This meant that at one mile intervals there was an ear of corn stenciled on the telephone pole.

Few wide rivers had bridges, so we were ferried across the Illinois, Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. The banks were muddy and the car had to be pulled or pushed up from the ferry boat.

We were pleased to have Father and Mother McCall, and our little daughters, Bessie and Thelma with us. The suitcases were strapped on the flat fenders of the car and wrapped with black oilcloth covers. We sent a small trunk on the train.

It took two weeks for us to drive from Indiana to Colorado. In the Plain States, the irrigation ditches were something new to us. We saw a sod house still being lived in. The scenery in Thompson River Canyon, Estes Park and the "Great Circle Drive" in the Rockies was very impressive.

While we were there, on May 7, there was a 7 inch snow fall! which disappeared rather quickly. To find wild flowers at the foot of the snowy mountains was thrilling.

The trip home was different. There had been spring rains on the plains and the roads were a "Black Gumbo" of mud. John was the only one who know how to handle the car. When we would be caught in the mud, Father McCall and I would push, while Mother McCall took the girls on ahead to pick wild flowers. Many mornings I brushed the dried mud from our clothes.

Helen was born in September.

Two years later, in 1917, Rev. McCall was again elected commissioner to the General Assembly, this time in Boston, Massachusetts. Our touring party was the same, except that Thelma stayed with my parents and we took Helen, who was 18 months old. We toured from Mansfield, Ohio to Boston, by way of Cleveland, Ohio and Erie, Pennsylvania. We enjoyed seeing the Holstein cattle and the well-pruned vineyards through New York state. The houses, fences and barns built of stone were new to us.

We visited Buffalo and Niagara Falls. It was a late spring and very cold, with large ice chunks in the Niagara River.

We spent the Sabbath in Troy, New York, as it was our custom not to travel on the Sabbath.

Then we traveled on to Conanjourie in the Finger Lake region, Auburn, Albany and many places of interest in Massachusetts, and finally, Boston.

We visited the historical sites very early each day, before the sessions started.

We returned home by a southern route. We motored through Providence, Rhode Island on Memorial Day. They were having a Decoration Day Parade, so we just joined in, by driving along with the parade. We traveled along the Atlantic Coast through Red Bank, and Asbury Park, New Jersey, Baltimore and on to Washington, D. C.

The Civil War "Boys in Gray" were having an Encampment at Washington. One of the veterans jumped on our running board. Noticing that Grandfather McCall was wearing a gray traveling suit, he shouted, "Hello, comrade! Didn't we give it to the Blue Jackets at Bull Run?"

The next morning Grandfather said, "Emma, lay out my black suit."

Grandfather had been an Union Soldier in the Civil War.

We motored though Virginia, Wheeling, West Virginia, and on to Cambridge, Ohio. Very often on the trip we saw soldiers guarding factories, bridges and tunnels and were thus reminded that our country was in an actual state of war.

We had improved roads nearly all the way.