

Life Story of Julius E. Herr

Based on interviews conducted by Dwight L. Herr

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Wishek, North Dakota

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Dad's Family

Dad was born in Wishek, North Dakota, on July 24, 1904. His parents were John and Christine Herr. His older sister was Magdalena, then age four, and his older brothers were August and Donald. Bertha, Gideon, and Johnny were subsequently born to his mother and father. (In addition, his mother later had three more children, Bill Herr and Edna and Adella Zeeb.) Dad's parents lived in a country home at the edge of town when he was born. Their house was two stories and made of cement blocks - one of only two so built in Wishek. The house had four bedrooms upstairs, and a living room, dining room, kitchen, and bedroom downstairs.

Dad's Father

Dad's father was a husky man of about 5'7" and 180 pounds. Dad had fond memories of his father coming through the gate by the well pump, into the house, and having the kids pile on top of him. He had been in the cream separator business, buying and selling cream; and the grocery business. His last business was selling furniture. Dad also remembers that whenever his father was going someplace in a horse cart and saw a prairie chicken sitting on a fence, he would stop the horses, and get the makings for dinner by shooting the prairie chicken off the fence with his old single shot shotgun.

Dad's father was a dedicated, committed Christian. He was a deacon in the Wishek Baptist Church, and was Sunday School Superintendent. On the Wednesday before he died, his father had been the first one out to a country church for a prayer meeting, which was about 11 miles away. He became very sick that night and on the following Sunday he died of appendicitis, then known as "inflammation of the bowels". At that time there was no known treatment for appendicitis. Dad remembers the night his father died. All the kids slept upstairs; toward morning his mother came up and told the kids that their father had died. There was a wake at the home overnight for friends and family to come and pay their last respects. Then the next day some men came and carried the coffin with his father's body out through a large front window of their home, which had to be removed for that purpose because the front door entry to the house was too small to negotiate with the coffin. His father's body was taken to the church for the funeral by a city funeral horse cart. Dad recalled that the song, "Shall We Gather at the River", was sung at the funeral. His father was 31 years old when he died, and his mother was 29 years old with seven children under the age of nine, including Dad who was then four years old. Dad remembered that his mother went out into the back yard and raised her fist and cried out to God asking why this had happened.

Dad's Grandparents

Dad's Grandmother Herr had died quite young of diabetes in 1932, and Dad never got to know his Grandfather Herr very well. Dad said his grandfather did not come over to their house, even though he lived just a block away. "Kids were to be seen but not heard", but he did not even see them that much. (His grandfather died when Dad was 12, and left a sizeable estate. The Herr store was left to the uncles, and his father's share of about \$18,000 was divided among all of the children and administered by an uncle until each of the children reached the age of 21. Once Dad asked his Uncle Crist if he could have \$5 to buy a used bike from a neighbor boy. Uncle Crist replied, "Kid, you don't need any bike". Soon after Crist bought a new bike for one of his son's who was Dad's age. Uncle Crist also loaned out his nephew Johnny's inheritance to a farmer who later went bankrupt. As a result, Johnny only received a small part of his inheritance.

Dad's Eye Problems

Dad began to have eye trouble when he was three and one-half years old. He had a disease of the eyelid called "trachoma". There was no cure for it at that time. (Now it is easily treated with antibiotics.) The disease made his eyes very sensitive to light. Because of the sensitivity of his eyes to light, for a long time Dad spent most of the days under a bed. In the evenings, his mother would put a large coffee pot between him and the kerosene lamp to shield his eyes from the light. Although it was a very infectious eye disease, none of the other kids got it, even though during all the time he was at home, the family would drink water out of a pail with one dipper. Dad said it was "miraculous" that not a single member of his family got it.

Family Hardships and Survival Skills

When his father died, his mother was left some money in the bank. However, it was not sufficient to support the family for long, so the family had to find ways to earn money. Their main support was from herding cows. Every house in Wishek had a barn, a well, an outhouse, a shed, a chicken coup, pigs, and one or more cows. When Dad was six, he and his brothers and sisters began driving the cows to Uncle August Herr's pasture, which was one and one-half miles out of town. Dad and his brothers and sisters would collect and herd the cows along the three parallel streets in the town to the end of town, and then drive all the cows together to the pasture. The cow herding to the pasture would start the first of May when the grass started growing; and they would drive the cows every day, including Sunday, until the first of September. Uncle August would charge \$1/cow for pasturage, and he gave the kids 50 cents/cow for herding the cows. The family would earn as much as \$65/month from the cow herding. The family also sold milk to neighbors.

In summer, Dad and his brothers would hunt gophers, which were pests for the farmers. The county would pay them a penny/tail. They shot as many as 53 gophers in one day. They would also snare them with lassos and traps. Dad's eyesight was bad but he remembers throwing a stone and striking a gopher who had poked its head out of a hole - the gopher jumped straight up. Dad said it was sheer "luck".

The family would also pick and sell tiger lilies, lilacs, buttercups, and other wild flowers in the spring for five cents/bunch. They would also go to the town dump and dig up kettles and other things made of copper to sell to a Jewish man.

Dad's family, like most others, had a vegetable garden, including potatoes, carrots, beans, and rutabagas; and they raised chickens. Every fall, Uncle Phillip Shook, the husband of his mother's sister, would give them his homemade sausages and other cuts of meat.

Separation from Family

When Dad was six years old, he was separated from his family. It was at this time that his Aunt Mary was visiting in Wishek and told his mother that she and Uncle John Franz ought to take one of her kids with them to their home because his mother had too many children to care for. (Aunt Ramona said Dad's younger brother, Johnny, was later also sent to live away from home.) His mother said that Julius cried so much maybe it would be better if he got away from the other kids. The next morning at 5:00 a.m., Uncle John and Aunt Mary Franz came to their house in a pony driven buggy, and collected Dad. They traveled together all day and got to the Franz's home south of Kulm at 9:00 p.m. that night. Kulm was a total distance of 40 miles from Wishek. The Franz home had no running water in the house; they just had a water pan for drinking. Soon after arriving at their home, Uncle John and Aunt Mary sent one of their sons, Ernest, who was two months younger than Dad, and Dad out to the pump to get some water. The pump had a pipe hooked to the stalk of the well, which had to be removed to get water into the pan. When removing the pipe, Ernest dropped it on Dad's big toe, badly bruising it. Between the pain in his toe, and being very homesick for his mother and family, he did not sleep that night. But he said he survived and adjusted after a few days. Little by little his eyes seemed to get better, although he still had discharge from his eyes, which took about a half hour each morning to clean.

The Franz farm consisted of 640 acres. Uncle John Franz had started the farm from scratch. His older boys had helped with the farm until they left home and married. They raised mostly wheat, but also grew flax, oats, and barley. While there, Dad went to a rural, one-room schoolhouse with seven grades. State law required that everything on school grounds be in English, but the farm boys would talk German without thinking. He remembers that Aunt Mary would fix a lunch each day for him to take to school. Dad spent two winters with them and was there until the 4th grade. (In addition, he continued to work summers at the Franz farm until he was about 14 years old.)

School Days

During the time Dad lived with his family, he went to elementary school in a two-story building, which was right across the street from their home. The school had eight grades. One teacher, Mrs. Hartlett, taught the first three grades together. There were 25 or 30 kids in Dad's class. The older children were in classes consisting of two grades. The school was heated by steam registers fueled by coal. One day his older brother, Donnie, wanted to skip school and persuaded Dad to join him. But they were so scared that they hid under an old neighbor's porch all morning. By noon, they wished they had gone to school.

In school they were taught in English and they also sang spiritual songs in English. They did not dare talk German in school as it was forbidden. The country kids would speak German on the playground, but the town kids only talked English. Dad and his brothers and sisters only talked German to their mother. His mother learned some English but had a pronounced accent. Dad stated that his teachers were the greatest influence on his life besides Sunday School and church. The children respected their teachers. He especially remembered Mrs. Eaton, an old maid, then about 45 years old, who taught 7th and 8th grades. As part of the school subjects, she also taught

morality; taught against lying, cheating, smoking, and especially drinking. Mrs. Eaton taught them the poem, "Danger in the Flowing Bowl" - "Touch not, taste not, handle not. It will ruin the body and soul. Touch not, taste not, handle not, the scourge of the flowing bowl". She said some claimed it made no difference if you chose to drink. But she gave the example of an engineer on a train, who became drunk, and was responsible for a train wreck which killed a number of people. She taught them that anyone who drinks liquor is a danger to others.

Mrs. Eaton used a ruler for discipline; once even on Mother! (Dad hastened to say it was not really Mom's fault.) On this particular occasion, Mrs. Eaton punished the two rows of the younger grades for misbehaving when she was out of the room. Someone had drawn a silly picture and written a poem under it, and everyone was giggling when Mrs. Eaton returned to the room. Since no one would tell who did it, she punished the whole bunch. Everyone in those two rows, including Mom, had to stick out their hands and Mrs. Eaton slapped them with the ruler. Martha, who was in 9th grade, ran home as fast as she could to tell that Amy had gotten punished. Everyone liked Mrs. Eaton even though she was a strict disciplinarian. Many years later, Gus made a special trip to see her. She was then an old woman, and she was very glad to see Gus.

Recreation and Fun

The kids had fun playing together. Many of them had nicknames for each other. Dad was called "Juicy", his brother Gideon was called "Geetz", and his brother August was called "Gus". His brothers retained those nicknames throughout their lifetimes.) Two of his cousins were Arthur ("Jelly") and Solomon ("Syrup").

For recreation, the kids would play "kick the can", "hide and seek", and "pomp pomp pullaway". The boys would swim in the railroad water tower, which was where the train got its drinking water. They would also go up in the grain elevators and jump across the rafters, playing tag five-six feet off the ground, at least until they got caught doing it. One time, Dad and another boy took a ride to a basketball game in the neighboring town of Burnstad, about 10 miles away, on a railroad handcart with pump handles. He also recalls getting caught and punished for that escapade.

During the winter, the children had fun in the snow. Dad and his brothers would make homemade sleds with metal runners and go sledding. Also, farmers coming into town would allow Dad and other kids to hitch their sleds to the back of the farmers' big bobsleds, which were pulled by horses, and get a fun, free ride. Later Uncle John Franz bought Dad's family a sleigh. They also went iceskating. Dad's family had no money for nice ice skates so they bought old, rusty skates. They would go out to a lake about a half mile out of town, and build large bonfires from the brush. They would spread their coats out to their sides, and let the strong winds blow them across the lake. Dad said it was very cold skating back across the lake against the wind.

Dad went to see movies as a boy; the first movies he saw were silent films. (The older generation did not approve of movies in those days.) The movie theater showed serials on Fridays and Saturdays. One movie he remembered was "Girls of Pauline", a romantic film. The movie cost about 10 cents for kids and 25 cents for adults.

Holidays and Celebrations.

July 4th was always a big celebration, displaying loyalty and love for country. There would be baseball games, a parade with high school bands, and speeches, which were mostly patriotic and religious in nature. His family would sacrifice one of their chickens for fried chicken, and they would get lemonade, which was a special treat, for five cents a glass.

Christmases were difficult because Dad's family did not have any money for presents. Dad and his brothers never received Christmas gifts except for ones received at a Christmas party put on by a bachelor bookkeeper (Oliver) who worked in the Herr grocery store owned by Dad's uncles. Oliver gave a Christmas party for all the kids in Wishek in a big multipurpose hall above the bank, which was generally used by churches and for wedding receptions. Dad remembered getting a jumping jack, which would jump when you clapped two sticks together. The best gifts were dollar watches, which Oliver gave the older boys. The girls received a little doll.

Christmas traditions at the Wishek Baptist Church included what Dad referred to as "a crazy custom" started by the Herr families who were the richest in town (except for Dad's family who was the poorest). The various families would bring their gifts to church at the time of the Christmas service, and after the last song, they would pass out the gifts to their family members. Dad said, "We sat there like dumbbells. The only thing we got was a nice bag of peanuts, an apple, an orange, and some goodies; but no toys."

Weddings were also big celebrations. When Uncle Jake's first daughter was married, he invited the whole town to a dinner. He went broke.

Sympathy for Mother

Dad did not get to know his mother very well, but he had a deep sympathy for his mother. Anytime he could do something for her he did. When he was eight or nine years old, Dad and his brother, Donnie, worked at the Wishek bowling alley from 6:00 p.m. to midnight, and they each got \$1 plus an ice cream cone. (The only other time they would have ice cream was in the winter when they would make it out of ice from water they would put in a pail to freeze, or make it from snow. Other people with money could buy ice during the summer for ice cream from men who had cut out big pieces of ice during the winter, as big as chest of drawers, and had buried the ice in sawdust and preserved it in a shed in town.) Donnie would always eat his ice cream, but Dad would bring his home, knock on the window to wake up his mother, and give her the ice cream. He enjoyed seeing his mother enjoying the ice cream. She was especially fond of ice cream (and watermelon).

(Sometime after this, his mother started a relationship with a man. She became pregnant, he at some point promised to marry her, but then refused to do so. Living in the small town of Wishek, almost everyone in town knew of the matter and were critical of Dad's mother giving birth to a child out of wedlock.)

North Dakota Winters

Winters were severe in North Dakota. Snow banks would form up to 8-10 feet high. Regardless of the weather, they would have to take care of the animals and milk the cows daily. People in Wishek would have to dig a path in the snow between the house and the barn. Dad heard stories of farmers in North Dakota who froze while

going between their house and barn attempting to feed their animals. Dad's family and others would string a wire between the house and the barn so they could find their way back during blizzards.

Pre-Modern Life in Wishek

Dad remembers before electricity came to Wishek, lamplighters would go around town and light (kerosene) lights each night. He recalls that the lamps did not give off much light. Pre-electricity, washing clothes was a major undertaking. They would have to heat water on the stove and pour it into the washing tub. They used manure most of time to start the kitchen stove, and then to keep the stove going, burned lignite, which was a dirty, soft coal from North Dakota. (Hard coal from Pennsylvania or coal from Montana was used for heating the house.) One of boys would have to stay home to operate the clothes washer and move a handle back and forth to help his mother wash the clothes with their homemade soap. Then some local men formed a company and built a power plant, which generated electricity through steam produced by burning coal. People began to buy electric clothes washers, which saved a great deal of work.

Outhouses were used until running water was put into homes. Dad's family home never had an indoor toilet. (They later did have running water in the kitchen.) Dad remembered that the toilet seat in the outhouse was very cold when the weather was below zero. They all used paper from the Sears catalogue for toilet paper. Dad said, "That was one place Sears did a real service!"

Gadgets and Newfangled Things

While Dad was still in high school, Uncle Gottlieb came home one day and said, "They have a machine downtown and you can hear all the way to Minneapolis!" (The closest radio station was in Minneapolis.) Uncle Crist bought the first radio in town. Uncle Gottlieb also got a radio, and used 12 storage batteries lined up around his dining room to power it. Every time they would have company, and Uncle Gottlieb would try to show off his radio, it wouldn't work.

Dad's sister, Magdelene, had one of the first phonographs in town. Dad recalls she had old Amos and Andy records. In order to make it play, you had to wind it up. (It did not have a big horn like you see in pictures.) Uncle Henry later bought a phonograph with a big horn.

Faith in Christ

Dad was then 12 or 13 years old when he made his decision to follow Christ. Every winter there would be two weeks of evangelistic meetings in which the Wishek Baptist Church would have joint meetings with the Wishek Congregational Church. This particular year, the Congregationalists provided the special speaker, an evangelist by the name of Ninn who was an exceptionally good speaker. In one of these services, August ("Gus") who was 16 or 17, went forward in response to the invitation for persons to be saved. He came back home and told Dad he had accepted Jesus as Savior, that he was happy, and he thought Dad should go the next evening and give his life to the Lord. Dad did so, and he said his conversion always reminded him of Andrew, who after he met Jesus, went and found his brother Peter and brought him to the Lord. They had to go before the board of deacons to be examined and look up scriptures to confirm their faith. Each spring, the Baptist church would have a

baptismal service at Green Lake, a beautiful lake, about six miles from Wishek. At the lake they would have an entire service and lunch, followed by the baptism. Many would come from other churches to see the baptisms. Sixty-five new believers from the Baptist church were baptized that spring, including Gus, Donnie, and Dad. Their minister, Rev. Herringer, who was their minister for 17 years, baptized them.

Church Organization

In church at Wishek, the women sat on one side and the men on the other side, with the children mostly sitting with their mothers. Women were supposed to be silent in church. Women did attend the business meetings at the Baptist church, but in the Reform church which Mom's family attended, only the men attended the business meetings.

Eye Relief at Last

At age 15, Dad was hired out to work for Gus Witt for \$125/year plus board and room. He was there from May until the end of the harvest, but his eyes got so bad that he could hardly see anymore, and he had to stop working in the field. About that time, his mother remarried a widower, Mr. Zeeb; and Dad and his brothers, other than Bill who was then an infant, were forced to leave home and find housing on their own. (Later, Bertha married John Zeeb, one of Mr. Zeeb's sons from his first marriage.) Uncle Gottlieb asked Dad to live with him. A short time later, Uncle Crist heard about a hospital in Lenora, North Dakota, which was having success in treating trachoma. They drove Dad to the hospital and admitted him for treatment. Dad stayed at the hospital for a month. During that time they operated, removing his tonsils and adenoids, scrapped the eyelids, and began to treat his eyes with medicine. They put drops into his eyes four times each day, which felt like sand and were very painful. After one month his trachoma had been cured. However, Dad lost sixty percent vision in one eye and forty percent vision in his other eye due to the disease. The hospital told Uncle Crist that Dad needed glasses, which he got for Dad. (Dad said he used those glasses for 15 years without having to change lens.)

Farm Hand and Bottle Washer

Dad went back to live with Uncle Gottlieb and worked for farmers every summer. Uncle Gottlieb had 20 acres and five-six cows. Dad milked and took care of the cows and fed the pigs and chickens. He always had to get up at 5:30 a.m. to do the chores regardless of the time he had gone to bed the previous night. Dad also took care of their seven or eight younger kids, including diapering and bottle feeding their baby, Evelyn. Uncle Gottlieb was otherwise kind to Dad, but Dad did all this work just for board and room.

Teaching

Dad graduated from high school in three years by taking classes during the summer at the normal school in Ellendale, North Dakota, between his junior and senior year. There he boarded with a friend, Bill Michaelson. After graduating from high school, he got a teaching position in a one-room school about seven miles from town. He taught for seven months for a salary of \$60 plus a \$10 bonus/month when he stayed through the end of the term. The school year was only seven months so that the children could work on the farms. He had 11

kids in school up to 7th grade. Dad said he enjoyed teaching and had no major problems. His biggest problem was to keep the kids from talking German at recess. He initially boarded in the country with the John Coats family. However, he was not happy there, so he went to live with a bachelor who had a house next to the school for the rest of the year. He then went to the state normal school in Valley City, a state teacher's college for college education as a teacher.

Visiting a President

President Calvin Coolidge had a summer home in South Dakota. He was known as "the man of few words". Dad was on a trip in South Dakota and went to see him. Dad, like all the young people in North Dakota, was a Republican. President Coolidge shook hands with Dad. Dad's father had also been a staunch Republican. His ideal was Theodore Roosevelt, and he had even painted a picture of him. Dad said the picture was beautiful. The last he knew, Uncle Gottlieb had the picture but didn't know what happened to it, except he was sure none of the children got it.

Call to the Ministry

However, the next year Dad had a deep feeling that the Lord wanted him to go into the ministry. Accordingly, one day he decided to quit normal school at the end of the term. The very next day he got a letter from Uncle Gottlieb saying that he thought Dad should become a minister. Dad felt this was a real confirmation of God's call, because Uncle Gottlieb did not know that Dad was even considering the ministry. Dad worked that summer and then went to a German Baptist seminary in Rochester, New York in the fall. Dad knew about the seminary because the Wishek Baptist Church financially supported the Rochester seminary, and several other men from his church had gone there. (Dad had been born on a Sunday at home, and his mother later told him that his father had commented on his Sunday birth, "this one is going to be our minister".)

Seminary in New York (1927-1930)

So in 1927, Dad boarded a train pulled by a steam engine to go to Rochester, New York, to attend the seminary. He traveled with two other young men from Wishek who were in their second year at the seminary. He remembers Rochester as a beautiful city with lilacs. The city was originally known as "the flour city", but the name was then changed to "flower city" because of the flowers. In Rochester, Dad, like every other man in the city, bought an umbrella and hat as it rained almost every day. The Eastman Kodak Company was located in Rochester, and Dad also bought a Kodak camera there. Dad said it did not take him long to get acclimated with his friends. Dad lived in a dormitory room at the seminary, and the dormitory students took turns working in the kitchen. Dad formed some good friendships with his fellow students. There were approximately 50 or 60 in the seminary, including a number of students from Germany. The seminary classes were taught in English. There was also a two-year college level academy on the campus, but because of his prior college work, Dad only had to study German at the academy.

Dad worked at various jobs while attending the seminary. He ran a freight elevator, worked at the YMCA, (he was able to help himself to whatever ice cream was leftover), he cut lawns, painted rooms in houses, washed lots of windows, cleaned up shops, and did other kinds of chores. He also had a job taking care of a four-room

drapery shop, which included getting up early on winter mornings to start the furnaces to warm the building for employees, and to remove snow. Once the head of the seminary called him into his office and said "Herr, you certainly don't let any grass grow under your feet".

During his years at seminary, Dad would buy a car in the spring in Rochester, drive to Wishek at the end of the school year, and then sell the car in the fall when he would go back to Rochester by train. Dad's first car was a Model-T shown in some pictures he took. (Dad used part of his inheritance to buy his first car.) The Model-T did not have an automatic ignition but had to be started with a crank. Many men got broken arms trying to start the early cars with the crank handles. He thought John Zeeb (his brother-in-law) sold the Model-T for him when he went back to Rochester.

The summer before his second year in seminary, he traveled around North Dakota selling Bibles at churches. He would preach for the church service and then sell Bibles to members of the congregation. He said he had no trouble getting invitations to preach. The summer before his last year of seminary, Dad had a student pastorate at Bida, Montana, for four months.

Dad was in Rochester when the stock market crashed in 1929. The country went wild; the banks all closed and the bread lines formed. The conditions were very bad. A lot of people lost their life savings and property. Some committed suicide. Roosevelt immediately put a bill into effect to prevent the banks from going broke and later established the WPA to put men to work on public construction projects. The men were paid \$40/month for the jobs. (Roosevelt subsequently repealed the 18th Amendment prohibition on liquor. Bars sprang up all over. Dad thought Roosevelt wanted to get the revenue from liquor sales in order to balance the budget, but in Dad's opinion, the revenue was not near enough to take care of the drunks. Dad also thought Roosevelt was a spendthrift in responding to whatever anyone wanted, thereby putting the country into a huge debt and starting inflation.)

During his last year in seminary, Dad and three other younger seminary students talked about forming a men's quartet and going on tour as a seminary quartet. (Dad had sung in church at Wishek; all of his uncles were good singers, and they always had men's quartets in the church.) However, when they approached the administration of the seminary, the administrators did not want them to go because the seminary already had a touring men's quartet. It was also during the depression, and any quartet would have to depend on freewill offerings. But finally the head of the seminary gave his permission for their quartet.

Men's Quartet Tour (1930)

In preparation for the tour, the quartet memorized 30 songs in English and German. They sang without accompaniment; and used only a pitch pipe. Dad sang baritone, and a student named Timmerman sang bass and led the quartet. The summer of 1930, after he graduated from seminary, the men's quartet started their tour to 104 church singing engagements. Dad bought a 1928 Chevrolet just for the Rochester seminary quartet trip (and sold it when he returned from the quartet trip). They started in Hartford, Connecticut, and went all the way to Washington, Oregon, Vancouver, B.C., Kings Gate, Madison Hat, Calgary, and other parts of Canada. Dad went on his first plane ride while traveling with the seminary quartet. At Coeur de Lane, Idaho, a pilot took people up in his plane for a fee. Dad decided to go up. He was strapped in, and the pilot did some loops and tricks with his open, single-wing plane. According to Dad, "It was hair raising." (It was also a long time before Dad could be persuaded to fly again!)

The quartet traveled 17,500 miles in Dad's 1928 Chevrolet, and never missed a single engagement! (They were five miles from Dad's hometown of Wishek when they had their first flat.) All of the quartet's engagements were with German Baptist churches, except they sang at an Adventist church in Walla Walla, Washington, and at the Christian church in Silverton where his brother, August ("Gus") was a member. Their program in Wishek was arranged for the school gymnasium. Almost everyone in town was there, including all of his uncles and their families. By then his mother had remarried and moved to Streeter, North Dakota, but she also came to hear the quartet. The quartet received its largest offering on their tour at Wishek even though the quartet had sung at a number of large churches.

College in South Dakota and Preaching in Iowa (1930-31)

In the fall of 1930, following his graduation from seminary, Dad went to college in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, to work towards his college degree. Even though he had finished seminary, Dad had two more years of college left and he wanted to get his degree. He roomed with a friend. During that year, a man in charge of music at the college organized a men's quartet, and Dad was chosen as a quartet member. They put on programs in churches, and one in the quartet would be asked to give the sermon. Dad preached in a church in Sibley, Iowa. The man at the college got a letter from the Sibley church asking if Dad could continue to preach for them during the school year. Dad then shared the preaching at the church, and he preached for both the morning and evening services. He would drive out early Sunday mornings to Sibley, Iowa, in his Model-A Ford (equipped with a rumble seat), which he had bought for \$503 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. (Dad said his was the first Model-A in Wishek. Dad thought the Model-A was far superior to the Chevrolet, and he had a lifelong preference for Fords).

Courtship

Dad first met Mom when her parents moved to Wishek from Eureka, South Dakota. Mom was then 12 and Dad was 14. They only lived one block apart. She became friends with Dad's sisters and cousins. When Dad was 17, he began to notice Mom. However, Mom was interested in another guy, and Dad met another girl when he taught school. Young girls would make baskets of food and sell the baskets. He bought the basket of a girl and walked her home. Her name was Celia from Ashley, North Dakota. Celia was a clean-cut, attractive girl who taught in neighboring schools. They corresponded with one another, and then Dad said they agreed to attend the spring term together at the teacher's college. It was then that Dad decided on the ministry. She was peeved, and quite upset because of what it would mean for their relationship. Dad's roommate at the teacher's college had previously dated Amelia ("Amy"), but she was now interested in Dad. His roommate knew that Dad was also interested in Amelia and asked whether he was going to choose Celia or Amy. By then Dad's heart and mind was on Mom. Dad and Mom would date by going to church, to the movies, and by going together on picnics. While in Ellendale, they went out to a well every evening to get water as an excuse for being together. They were together at Valley City in normal school before he went to seminary. He wrote to her throughout seminary. While in seminary, Dad spent one Christmas in the hospital for a double hernia operation. Dad said the nurse reminded him of Amy, which made him even more fond of Mom. Mom never heard Dad's seminary quartet sing, even though they sang in the Valley City Baptist Church. However, another girl took her place in the car and there was no room left for Mom. The girl told Dad that Amy wanted to come so badly but she had no way of getting there.

Dad came home one Christmas from seminary after Dad and Mom had been apart about two years. Dad came to her sister's house. Dad was supposed to tell his cousin Adeena to go to the church to practice for the Christmas program, and that they were waiting for her. However, he forgot to tell Adeena to go to church; instead he asked Mom to go for a car ride.

During the time Dad was attending college in Sioux Falls, Mom was teaching in Kintyre, North Dakota. She had a terrible place to stay. The mother of the household was in a convalescent hospital because she had fallen off a buggy and suffered a broken back, and the father was no housekeeper. The house in which she lived smelled of sour cream, and was infested with bedbugs. That winter there was so much snow that Mom was not able to get home to Wishek for six weeks. Dad was in Wishek on winter break, and he used three sets of chains to negotiate the 40 miles to Fulton from Wishek. Dad finally arrived at midnight. The next day, on Saturday, they drove back to Wishek together. The snow was melting and the roads became muddy. They got stuck three times; and once Dad had to get the assistance of a farmer with his horses to pull the car back onto the road.

Dad and Mom became engaged at Christmas. Dad had to ask her father for her hand. Her father spoke German except for a few words of English. Dad was quite nervous and could not remember anything about that meeting, except that he gave his consent. The custom was for the father of the bride to give a dowry. Mom's father had given a dowry of \$1,000 and bedding to each of his older daughters, but at time of Mom's marriage, he did not have anything much left. (He had given a farm to each of his sons and set them up in business but they had lost everything.) He cried and only gave Mom and Dad \$50 (he also gave Aunt Martha \$50 when she was married.) Magdalene and Adeena gave Mom a bridal shower at Wishek.

Wedding (June 16, 1931)

Dad and Mom set their wedding day for the next June in Bismarck, North Dakota, where a friend of Dad's was to perform the wedding. The wedding day was hot and windy. They drove to Bismarck in Dad's car; and Mom's mother and father, Dad's brother, Donnie, and his wife Irma, and Dad's sister, Magdalene, followed in a second car. About 20 miles outside of Wishek, Mom remembered she did not have her wedding dress, and so they returned to Wishek to get the dress. Then on the way they had a flat tire. As a result, they were three hours late for their wedding. Finally, they were married in a small wedding ceremony held in the church parsonage. After the wedding, they went down to a hotel for ice cream, and spent their first night at the Prince Hotel in Bismarck.

Honeymoon (1931)

Dad's brother, Johnny, had married Ramona in Wishek a few days before Mom and Dad were married, and Ramona's brother, Harold, and his wife were married in Minneapolis the same day as Mom and Dad. (Johnny was the only other member of Dad's family to go to college; he went to Valley City Teacher's College for four years. Ramona and Mom roomed together one summer at Valley City when Johnny was dating Ramona. After graduation, Johnny taught school and coached basketball and football. Later he went to Minneapolis and worked for the Atlantic-Pacific Tea Company, and then began to work for the IRS. For many years thereafter Johnny would always come and do Dad and Mom's taxes for them.) They all went on a honeymoon together on a trip to Oregon where Dad and Johnny's brother, Gus, lived. (Gus had left Wishek for the West Coast about eight years before, at the same time Dad was leaving for Sioux Falls College; they saw each other as Gus's train headed west and Dad's east. Several years after he went West, Gus married Mary in Kinnewick, Washington,

and then moved to Silverton, Oregon.) Dad had a Ford Model-A, and Harold had a Chevrolet. They drove the 17-mile-drive, which went straight up to the top of Glacier National Park. Harold's Chevrolet boiled over like most of the other cars on the mountain (i.e. Studebakers, Buicks, etc.) At the top, Johnny felt the radiator on Dad's Model-A and exclaimed, "It isn't even hot!" (Nevertheless, Johnny always remained a loyal Chevrolet/Democrat man while Dad was, of course, always a Ford/Republican man).

They also drove to Yellowstone Park. The roads were all gravel. They stayed in Yellowstone at a motel near "Old Faithful". After entering Oregon they drove the Columbia River paved highway, which was known as the "Million Dollar Highway". Dad had been over the highway as part of the seminary quartet tour, and he said there was nothing so scenic as that highway. Then they went to Gus's home in Silverton, Oregon, and he took them to see the Pacific Ocean for the first time. (At Seaside they bought the picture of the sea, which Mom still has hanging in her room.) They stayed with Gus about three weeks. Gus did not have much but generously shared what he had. He was a barber and only got 15 cents for a shave and a quarter for a haircut during the depression.

When they had left Wishek, Dad's mother was crying and said, "Be sure to bring August back with you." So they drove back to Wishek for a couple weeks visit. Dad and Mom, Gus and his wife, Mary, and their daughter, Delores, then age three or four, and Johnny and Ramona all traveled together in Dad's Model-A. They had to put the car's big trunk down, and pile up everyone's luggage and tie it on. Dad proudly said the old Model-A took the load with no problem. They also carried a tent that they could attach to the car. They only used the tent in Yellowstone because they couldn't get a motel. The women and Delores slept in the car and the guys slept in the tent. One evening bears came near the tent; the men yelled for the women to open the car doors, and the men crowded into the car with the women and Delores. They all sat up in the car the rest of the night and tried to sleep. They could only watch from the car as the bears tore apart their tin cans of food.

They also went up Mount Washburn in Yellowstone Park and on the way up began to run out of gas. There was no turning back because the road was one way. Whenever the car would start to sputter, Gus would get out of the car and blew in the gas tank to force the remaining gas up to the engine. By this unorthodox means, they made it to the top; and then they coasted all the way down. Gus said he never had a better time than on that trip. (Dad's brothers and sisters were always very close, and they much enjoyed visiting each other and playing games. They liked to show up unannounced to surprise each other or play tricks such as calling from down the street advising that, at the last minute, they were unable for some reason to make a planned trip for a visit, and then knock on the door a few minutes later.)

Married Life and College in McMinnville, Oregon (1931-1932)

After returning to Oregon, Dad enrolled in the fall in Linfield College in McMinnville. Every weekend Mom and Dad would go to Silverton to visit Gus and Mary, and Dad said that every weekend Gus would have a load of wood for Dad to cut. They had a good time playing cards and board games.

In McMinnville, they initially rented one room ("just enough room to turn around") and a kitchenette. Dad would carry the whole stove out to empty the ashes. The stove heated the room as well as the food. They paid rent of about \$15/month. There were no jobs available during the depression, so they lived on Dad's savings.

Graduation and Family (1932)

In June of 1932, Dad graduated on a Sunday, they moved to Silverton to stay with Gus and Mary that Monday, and Mom gave birth to Shirley on Tuesday, August 6, 1932. Shirley was not named after Shirley Temple. Mom and Dad think they got it out of a book. Shirley's middle name, Imogene, was named after a nice girl in the neighborhood in McMinnville. At Silverton, Dad picked strawberries one morning to make some money, and he earned a grand total of 56 cents. It was so little he didn't even collect it. They lived in Silverton for six weeks until Dad got his first church pastor position in Gladstone, Oregon.

Ministry and Life in Gladstone, Oregon (1932-1933)

Life in Gladstone was very difficult because of the depression. The Gladstone Baptist Church paid them \$10/week, and at first their rent was \$10/month. Later they were able to stay in a person's house who had temporarily gone back East. It was a rattrap where you could hear the mice running around all night long. Dad and Mom raised chickens in an upstairs room. Dad said the chickens "lived on the wallpaper". They ate the wallpaper as high as they could reach. Nevertheless, Dad said they had some nice big "Rock" variety chickens. They would eat some of the chickens and save others for producing eggs. They also had a vegetable garden. They stored their car because they had no money for the gas. Most of the time they would walk wherever they needed to go; except when they went to Portland or Oregon City, they would go on the streetcar. They did not know how they would have gotten by if it weren't for an old lady known as "Auntie Mars", who would bring them \$10 every so often; and Brother Ware, a "saint sent from God" who was an old minister who considered Dad "his adopted preacher son", and who gave them wood for the winter as well as groceries. Brother Ware was a widower whose wife had died years before. He had to take care of two sons who were great big men, six feet tall, but whose minds had not developed beyond the age of 12. He also had a daughter who was a bookkeeper of a large store. Brother Ware was a "county missionary" for 30 years. He served five small churches that met in schools or old, dilapidated, rural churches, and he had a woman friend who played organ for the services. They never got married because of the boys; apparently she did not want the responsibility.

The American Baptist Convention had given up hope that the Gladstone Baptist Church would continue. The Oregon City Baptist Church was only a couple of miles away and was growing. Accordingly, Dad said the denomination refused to support the Gladstone Church with a dime, and denomination leaders never visited or contacted Dad to help him in his first pastorate. But Gladstone had a fine Sunday School; they had over 100 attend on occasion. (As it turned out, Dad said the church in Gladstone became bigger than the one in Oregon City, and the Gladstone congregation later built a new church building about 1969.)

There were several families who were especially memorable in the Gladstone Church. Paul Whitkin was a very intelligent man but with unusual ideas, "queer" in the sense of that day. He was always writing biting editorials and got sued several times for what he wrote. His wife was the clerk for the church, but her husband only attended; he was not a member. Dad was warned by others in the church that, before long, he would receive nasty letters from Whitkin. However, Dad went out of his way to treat Whitkin with respect, and to be kind and thoughtful to him. As a result, Dad never received that first letter from him. When Dad and Mom left the Gladstone church after one year and nine months, Whitkin was the last one to remain helping them move. He embraced Dad and they parted as good friends. Whitkin's wife never forgot to send birthday cards to Mom and Dad and Shirley for over 40 years thereafter!

Jim Coates was a foreman of the Oregon City woolen mill with 300 men working under him. Dad baptized his wife to which Jim Coates objected; and he would show his disdain for Dad by crossing over and walking down the other side of the street when they met. Through his drinking, he lost his job, and his marriage was in jeopardy. One day while Dad and Mom were at home, there was a rap at the door, and there was big Jim. He said, "I am going to hell and I need help." Dad invited him in but he said, "I wouldn't come in and pollute your house, I am drunk." But Dad told him to come in so they could pray with him; so he did. He got down on his knees and they prayed together. After they got up, he said he wanted Dad to go with him to their home because his wife said she was going to leave him. He asked Dad to talk to her and see if he could change her mind. Dad went and talked to her. She said she had given Jim so many chances and he had always disappointed her. He also got mean when he was drunk. But Dad said, "Since Jim has now had an experience with the Lord, why don't you give him one more chance? If he doesn't change, then leave." She agreed. Dad asked if there was any booze in the house. Jim said, "Yes." Dad told him to get it and pour it down the drain because he was not fit to fight liquor. Jim said "he could handle it". The next morning Dad and Mom were driving down the street, and in front of them they saw Jim Coates driving his car erratically and obviously drunk. Dad told him to get into their car and they would take him to Dad's doctor to get him something. Jim came with them and Dad's doctor gave him a purgative and other medicine. Jim then cleaned up. He began coming to church every Sunday although he never joined. He was a natural in working and supervising men, and during the depression he got the job of managing the WPA in the region. He also helped take care of an old man's rabbit operation, and every Saturday he would bring a dressed rabbit for Mom and Dad to eat. His wife told them that since Jim stopped drinking, it was like they were on their honeymoon; they were just like a young couple when first married.

Years later, Mom and Dad heard that Jim Coates had turned back to liquor. The Coates had moved to Portland. He chose to drink with "the boys", became drunk all the time, and his wife left him. One time they looked up Mrs. Coates after she had moved back to Gladstone, and she told them the rest of the story. She was a LVN nurse, always had a job, and had received a small inheritance. One day she said, "Jim, we have come to a parting of the ways. I am going to give you half of my inheritance, and you have to go your way and I will go mine." They divided everything evenly. She said she later saw him once. He was on skid row, half-dressed, sloppy and slouching, and terrible looking. He did not see her. She did not want to see him anymore.

Ministry and Life in Roswell and Wilder, Idaho (1933-37)

From Gladstone, Dad, Mom, and Shirley moved to Roswell, Idaho, for Dad was to be the pastor of the Roswell and Wilder Baptist churches. Both were country churches, which were six miles apart. The churches had previously had their own pastors, but because of the depression and lack of funds they decided to jointly hire one pastor. The churches just accepted Dad on recommendation; he did not candidate. Each church paid Dad \$500/year. Dad, Mom, and Shirley arrived at Roswell in the evening. But no one knew where they were supposed to go! Both parsonages at Wilder and Roswell were rented. In addition, Shirley, then age two, fell into an irrigation ditch as soon as they arrived in Roswell. It seemed like that was the last straw. Dad said if he had had 10 cents in his pocket, he would have turned around and gone back to Oregon. They had to stay in a hotel for a month before they were able to move into the Wilder parsonage. The first thing they had to do was to get rid of the bedbugs. After two years, they moved to the Roswell parsonage, which was even in worse condition. It did not have running water but instead had an outdoor toilet. Later, Dad and Mom put in a furnace piped to each of the eight rooms in the house; the church people were amazed how they could do it. The work cost \$1,000.

Both churches had fair-sized congregations but neither had any money. Many of the members were potato farmers, and Dad said the “potatoes were stacked up like hay piles”; there was simply no market for them. To help with meeting expenses, Dad bought a young milk cow. Mom would make cottage cheese and Dad would take it to the grocery store to sell. However, Dad finally had to get rid of the cow since it kept getting loose, and Dad would have to search around town to find it. Often Mom and Dad had to do the janitorial work and start the five stoves in the churches on Sunday morning. Dad conducted a 10:00 a.m. Sunday service at Roswell and then rushed to Wilder for their 11:15 a.m. service. He alternated Sunday evening services between the two churches; and led a midweek prayer service at each church. Dad did lots of calling on members even though most were farmers who lived at some distance. On November 2, 1936, Rudy was born in a hospital in Caldwell, Idaho, about 10 miles from Roswell. Dr. Dudley was the doctor who delivered Rudy. (Many times Dad and Mom said they should have named him Dudley.) They named him Rudyard after Rudyard Kipling. Dad loved the poems of Kipling. “Recessional” was his favorite, which he memorized in high school. “All our pomp of yesterday...” Another of his favorites was the Kipling poem, “If”. Rudy’s middle name, Truett, was named after the person Dad believed was the “greatest preacher America ever had”, George Truett, who pastored a large Southern Baptist church in Dallas, Texas.

Dad recalled some memorable conversions at Roswell. An Italian family (the only one in the area), Albino, virtually adopted Dad and Mom. The elderly Albino was then about 70 years old. He was a “sweet” man. He had been kidnapped from Italy when he was approximately nine years old and brought to the US; he ended up in a Catholic orphanage and then got out when he was about 16. He did not know his actual age or his family. Dad always called him “DAD”. One day Dad was with him in the car and he asked if “DAD” was a member of the church. “DAD” replied, “No one has ever asked me.” Dad said he would, and asked if “DAD” was conscious of a need in his life to accept Christ as his Savior. When he said yes, Dad invited to come forward in church the next Sunday. He said, “Alright.” Each Sunday Dad would give an invitation. The next Sunday, old man Albino came forward. Everyone in church except his family was amazed and thought he was a member already. His family apparently thought he would never become a member because he had been raised a Catholic. Several Sundays later, Dad baptized him. Some time later, Dad was conducting an evening prayer meeting. A road to the church crossed the railroad tracks. “DAD” was struck by a train and was knocked unconscious and suffered permanent injuries. He would later come to the parsonage, and say that if he was going to keep living with “that woman”, he was going to have to get married! Dad told him, “That’s your wife, you have been married to her for 50 years!” He said, “If you say so - OK, I will go and live with her.”

At Roswell there was a man in church named Arnold Skelton. He was not a member but came to services. Many years before, he and his wife had gone on a trip through Wyoming. His wife had died in childbirth during the trip in Wyoming. He had named his daughter “Wyoming”. Arnold was in his 60s when Dad gave an invitation at a special evangelistic evening meeting. Arnold just ran down the aisle and knelt in front of the pulpit. After the meeting Dad sat down with him and asked why he was in such a hurry to come down. Arnold said many times he had promised the Lord he would accept Him, but he kept putting it off, and putting it off. He had been in a train wreck and in a car wreck. Each time he had promised that he would give his life to the Lord if he got well again. But when he got well, he didn’t. When his wife died, he told the Lord he would give his life to Him. But he didn’t. He said the thought that kept running through his mind during the message was, “Arnold, if not tonight, never!” He said that word “never” propelled him down to the altar. Later when Dad baptized him, Arnold jumped up and down with joy in the baptistry, praising the Lord.

The Betts family had a number of daughters. Mrs. Betts was a member but Mr. Betts would only come to church at Christmastime. One Sunday morning it was cold and stormy, one of the worst days they had. Only a few

people came to church. But Mr. Betts came with his family even though they lived about 10 miles away. So Dad gave his message and, as usual, gave an invitation for anyone who wanted to give his life to the Lord as Savior to come forward. Mr. Betts was a big man about 6'2", and was sitting by himself apart from his family. He came forward during the invitation. There was not a dry eye in the congregation. As his wife was leaving the church after the service, she squeezed Dad's hand and said "Brother Herr, I have been praying for this for 20 years and now it has happened!"

Dad and Mom stayed at Roswell and Wilder for a little more than four years. Then the churches were able to afford their own pastor, and both churches wanted Dad to stay as their pastor. Dad and Mom decided it would be better to go elsewhere rather than remain in one of the churches and possibly divide the congregations.

Ministry and Life at Filer, Idaho (1937-1941)

About 1937, Dad accepted the pastor's position at the Baptist church in Filer, Idaho, where they moved when Rudy was approximately one year old. The minister they followed in Filer had left town in the middle of the night; he had a milk bill, garage bill, and owed money to an old woman. (Dad commented that this minister then went to a larger church in Lemoore, California.) When Mom and Dad came to Filer, they needed some money. Dad sought a loan at the bank but they just laughed at him because they knew a small town pastor did not have anything, and the previous pastor of the church was infamous. However, Dad had a small insurance policy in the face amount of \$1,500, and he told the bank he could tender it as security for a loan of \$200. They granted the loan. This was the only church where Dad and Mom borrowed any money. By living frugally, Dad and Mom never otherwise went into debt while in the pastorate.

Once while returning from a visit to Oregon, Mom was crossing the street carrying Rudy when she was struck by a big truck; she could have been killed. Dad took her to the doctor who told them nothing was broken. The doctor just said to watch her two or three days and all the effects of the accident should disappear - which thankfully it did.

The Filer church was a much larger church than the churches Dad had previously pastored. On one occasion, Dad baptized 30 people in that church. A number of young men went into the ministry, more than in any other church Dad pastored.

On December 4, 1940, Dwight was born in a hospital in Twin Falls, Idaho, which was nine miles from Filer. Dwight was named for Dwight L. Moody, and his middle name of Lowell was named after their long-time evangelist friend, Rev. James Russell Lowell Haslin. (They met Haslin in Wilder-Roswell. Brother Haslin had been a pastor in the area, and became a great and well-loved evangelist.)

At Filer, Mom was having periodic crying spells. Someone suggested they have her goiter (thyroid) checked. They went to a specialist, Dr. Coughlin (an Irishman) in Twin Falls. He said she had a hyperplastic, toxic goiter causing her heart to beat so fast that if something was not done, she would not live very long. She needed surgery. The surgery was a "perfect success"; her thyroid was in balance, and she did not have to take any drugs afterward. When Dad asked Dr. Coughlin how much he owed him, the doctor, who was Catholic, said, "Rev. Herr, you do not owe me a dime. I know what you rural pastors make and it is not very much. As a doctor, I would like to help you out." This was a time when there was a real barrier between Catholics and Protestants. But there was no barrier with Dr. Coughlin. Dad said he was a swell man. Dad told Dr Coughlin they could not

accept what he had done without paying him something. (Every so often, as they were able, Dad and Mom would send Dr. Coughlin \$10 to show their appreciation.)

The same night that Mom was dismissed from the hospital to go home, the “old buzzer”, as Dad referred to H.G. Wells, put on the radio program, “Invasion From Mars”. Dad said the people got “fearful, panicked, crazy”. Neighbors came over to their house and said they should turn on their radio and hear about the invasion of our country by the Martians. They turned on their radio and listened to the program. Finally, at the end of the program, they heard the announcement that the program was fictitious. Apparently, there had also been an announcement at the beginning of the program but many people did not hear it and were truly frightened.

Dad and Mom put on a number of church socials at Filer, including ones where they would make taffy and the children would put the plates of taffy out in the snow to harden. Dad and Mom also put on a New Year’s party for the whole church; they made up 12 tables, each one featuring a particular month with decorations and some food representing that month (i.e. pumpkin pie for November). Mom made all the food, and baked cookies, and more cookies. Another time they put on an open house for New Year’s. They served punch and cookies. Dad bought a microphone attachment for the radio, and rigged up the radio so that one could speak in a microphone in the closet and it would come out of the radio speakers. Dad went into the closet and started giving a message through the radio, and the people couldn’t figure out where it was coming from. Various ones had fun going into the closet and speaking or singing and having it come out of the radio. Shirley’s 3rd grade teacher was invited and came to the party. Shirley remembers being one of those who sang in the closet. At Filer, Shirley first sang a duet with Dad of the song, “Under His Wings”. (Earlier, at Wilder, Shirley had sung, “This Little Light of Mine”, when she was three years old.)

In Filer, they had a certain church club consisting of men and women who would get together monthly for dinner and programs on Friday evenings. They also had a lot of activities for youth. Every year Dad and Mom would take the family to week-long, Baptist church family camps in the mountains at Sun Valley. Most years the family slept in canvas tents which Dad had bought. In later years they were able to stay in a tent with a wooden frame. The camp would usually have a trout dinner the last day of camp with fish caught by the men. One year Dad drove the truck from the camp to the nearest town to get provisions, and the family was given free camping in a nice tent that year.

Once, when Gideon and Madeline were on their way back to North Dakota from visiting Gus and Mary in Silverton, they stopped to visit Dad and Mom in Filer. Gideon and Dad stayed up late at night and played a homemade board game with rubber jar rings thrown on hooks. Each took off an item of clothing whenever he lost a round. Dad said pretty soon there wasn’t much left on either of them.

Ministry and Life at Sedro Wooley, Washington (1941-1945)

In 1941, during World War II, Brother Haslin recommended Dad for a certain church in which Haslin had preached. However, the executive director of the denomination didn’t think Dad was big enough for the job and recommended someone else who got the job. Instead, he lined Dad up with the Sedro Wooley Baptist Church for a two-month trial period. After one month, the church asked Dad to stay. As it turned out, the Sedro Wooley church was the better church, and they were very happy there.

Rudy and Shirley were once supposed to sing a duet at the Sedro Wooley church, but Rudy just stood there and Shirley sang the whole song. Rudy later said he just couldn't make any sound come out. Dwight as a boy always wanted to be "tall and skinny like Rebeck", a member of the Sedro Wooley church.

At Sedro Wooley, Dad asked the church board of deacons if it would be OK if he worked at the steel mill while serving the church. During the war every able-bodied man was being put to work. The board said it would be fine, and advised him to tell the steel mill he was a minister. One of the ministers in town was already working there. Dad worked in the warehouse; it was his job to see that all equipment and tools were clean and in proper place. He worked from 4:00 p.m. to 2:30 a.m., except on Wednesdays he would go home at 7:00 p.m. for prayer meeting and then go back to the steel mill at 9:30 p.m. for the rest of the shift. One of the key men in the mill in charge of heavy machinery became close friends with Dad; and respected Dad because he did not smoke like his pastor, so he started attending Dad's church.

Dad remembered hearing a radio broadcast at this time of a speech by Hitler in German threatening Great Britain from occupied France. Dad could, of course, understand the German without any translation.

Later, Dad became sick with an acute kidney infection and had to stop preaching. Dad went to a specialist in Bellingham, Washington, where he was given injections. The doctor would go up into his kidneys without any anesthetic. Halfway home he would have to stop the car because of the pain. He went each week and then every other week, until finally the doctor told him that there was nothing more he could do for Dad. The doctor said there was a good clinic called "Virginia Mason" that he might try. A good minister friend drove Dad to this clinic. Dad was very sick; his blood pressure was very low (90s) and he could not walk straight as it was affecting his equilibrium. The clinic doctor gave Dad pills with no apparent results. After a month he gave him 30 more pills. Suddenly Dad started feeling better; he felt like a new man.

Grocery Business and Life in Oregon (1946-49)

Dad felt that he should leave the ministry for a while because of his eye and health problems, so he resigned. He bought his first store in Salem on 12th Street from Aunt Bertha's husband, John Zeeb, who was a realtor. At that time there was a shortage of meat, which was very important to draw customers. Dad said they were barely making a living. One day, to Dad's relief, a man came in and asked if Dad would sell the store. After selling the 12th Street store, Dad looked at buying another grocery store in Portland, Oregon. The store appeared to be a good one, but it sold liquor, which Dad said he would never do. The prior owner of the store convinced Dad that the store would do all right without selling liquor. Dad retained the liquor license in case he resold the store. A meat market adjoined the store and had always cooperated with the grocery store. Dad would attend to the meat market when the proprietor needed someone to watch it while he stepped out temporarily. However, behind Dad's back, the meat market owner was trying to get the liquor license of the grocery store. (Only a limited number of liquor licenses were issued by the state for an area.) One day the state liquor agency contacted Dad and advised that he had to use the liquor license or lose it. Dad asked for 30 days to sell the store and the agent agreed. On the 30th day, Dad sold the store; Dad said it was a real answer to prayer.

Grocery Business and Ministry in Salem, Oregon (1946-1949)

Dad and Mom then moved back to Salem and bought a little grocery store where the family lived on the second floor of the store building. Dad said the store was in a mess, and they could just barely make it. One day, a couple of young people (foreigners from the Middle East) came in and asked if he would sell the store. Once again, Dad was relieved to sell the store for about what they had paid for it.

Dad then went to serve as supply pastor at the Four Corners Church outside Salem. Dad invited Brother Haslin to conduct evangelistic meetings at the Four Corners Church. The last night of the meeting, Dwight, then about age eight, went forward in response to the invitation by Brother Haslin. Dad later baptized Dwight at the First Baptist Church in Salem. The people preparing the baptism apparently did not realize that a young child was to be baptized. As a result, Dwight had to stand on his toes to keep his mouth above the water level of the baptistry.

Grocery Business and Life in Brownsville, Oregon (1949-1961)

While in Salem, Dad went to Albany, Oregon, to check on buying another store. He inquired at a real estate office and asked if there were any "Mom and Pop" stores for sale. The realtor said no, but he had a real good store for sale; "it is an old-timer about 30 miles from Albany". Dad said they did not have enough money to buy it, and he would not want to waste his time or the agent's. The agent persisted and said he should look at it; and all the current owner wanted was \$12,000 for the equipment. The equipment was not worth much but the money was for the business. The current owner, a man named Chambers, was a good merchant from Corvallis, Oregon, but his wife was not happy in Brownsville. Finally, Dad and Mom went to see it. They arrived at the store at 4:00 p.m. on a weekday, and there were customers all through the store. When Dad expressed an interest in the store, the agent asked, "What do you have in property?" Dad said their house in Salem was worth about \$8,500 and they had \$2,000 in cash; and they might be able to borrow some money from their friend, Dr. Walter Herringer, the son of their long-time Wishek pastor. The agent said he could try to see if the owner of the store would accept the house for the inventory, and then he would have to reduce the inventory down to \$12,000, which would not be easy. Dad went to see Dr. Walter Herringer about a loan and told him their only security would be the store. He said to Dad, "If you are willing to put all your money into it, I do not need to see the store". He and his brother, Dr. Weston Herringer, loaned Dad and Mom \$3,500. (Walter and Dad were about the same age; in their youth they had planted several thousand cabbage plants for Walter's father and Uncle Gottlieb on land around a lake. The land was irrigated from the lake, and grew beautiful cabbages.) So with the borrowed money, Dad and Mom bought the store, and in addition bought the Chambers house for \$1,000 down. Within the first six months, Dad and Mom sold \$17,000 of groceries, and the store did so well that they were able to pay off the loan and all other debts within two years. The next year the lumber mill was lost to a fire, which hurt the business some, but they still sold about \$123,000 of groceries that year. Later, a new pressboard mill was built which partially replaced the lumber mill.

Dad got to know virtually everyone in town, which had a population of approximately 1,200. He was always a real people person. He also had a soft heart. The store extended credit, and Dad had a drawer-full of credit accounts which customers were to pay monthly. Dad was very sympathetic to hardship stories, and as a result he had a number of bad debt accounts. On occasion he would assign bad debt accounts to a collection agency when the former customer was employed, and had refused to make any arrangements to try to pay the bill. One Sunday, a big man came to the house and was belligerent because Dad had dared to garnish his wages for an unpaid bill. Dad, all of 5'3", stood his ground and patiently talked to the man. However, there were also many

faithful customers who bought groceries from the store during the entire time the store was “Herr’s Super Market”. Customers could call in orders for groceries, and Rudy and Dwight would deliver them to their homes in an old van, and later in the Ford family car.

Dad was a big sports fan. He would roam the sidelines to be as close as possible to the action at all of Rudy’s football games, and regularly attended the basketball games of Rudy and Dwight. One time there was a father-son baseball game in which the sons played the fathers. Because of Dad’s eye problems he had never been able to play sports as a boy or as an adult. However, he was put up to bat as a pinch hitter in the game. God must have smiled down on him, because he lined the baseball over the first baseman’s head down the right field line, and ended up with a double or triple.

Dad always maintained a keen interest in world events and current news, and discussed them around the dinner table.

Shirley, Rudy, and Dwight all completed their undergraduate schooling while the family lived at Brownsville, and Dad and Mom helped each of the children to attend and graduate from the University of Oregon in Eugene.

Dad and Mom kept the Brownsville store for 12 years to the day. For those 12 years, Dad would work at the store from about 7:30 a.m. when he opened it until 6:45 p.m. or 7 :00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Dad and Mom did not take a vacation for a number of years. Finally, they took a trip one summer to North Dakota; and Shirley, Rudy, and Dwight somehow managed to operate the store while they were gone.

One year, Dad bought a large number of 50-pound sacks of potatoes from a vegetable trucker who came through town. The potatoes were supposed to be #1s, the top grade, but they were #2s and many were partly rotten. It was necessary to cull through each bag to throw out the bad ones and trim those that could be salvaged. (There is nothing so obnoxious as rotten potatoes, particularly when you put your hand into one!) Several years passed, and then one day, a large number of sacks of potatoes mysteriously appeared outside the back doors of the store. The only plausible explanation was that the trucker had gotten a guilty conscience, and decided to make amends for his prior sale of bad potatoes.

Each morning Dad would joyfully sing hymns while he was opening the store. However, the day came when he no longer enjoyed being a grocer. Dad said there came a time when he hated to see even his best customers come in. A salesman told Dad that it is perfectly normal after being in a business for a certain time, a person will get disenchanted; and that it happens to every grocer. Dad and Mom put the store up for sale. Dad said they sold the store at the “wrong time”, but still made a good profit. They sold the store at inventory minus 20% (markup). The grocer who bought it from Dad later sold it at a very inflated price to another person who had difficulty making it. Dad thinks the subsequent buyer died of a broken heart.

Return to Ministry and Life in California (1961-1979)

In 1961, after selling the store, Dad decided to go back into ministry. Dad and Mom came down to California to visit Shirley and Steve. Steve was then a pastor and they were doing a visitation program, which was being conducted by a pastor who was leaving the Waterford Baptist Church. Dad asked about the church and was told he had to talk to the executive director of the denomination, who was a friend of Shirley and Steve’s. The executive director said that if he were Shirley’s dad, he would be glad to recommend him to the church. Dad was invited to preach at the Waterford church. After the service, the deacons and elders interviewed Dad about

theology and faith, and said they would let Dad know on Tuesday. On Tuesday they called Dad in Salem and advised that the church had called him as interim pastor. Dad started at a salary of \$350/month, but after two months, without Dad asking, they raised his salary to \$400/month.

After finishing at Waterford over a year later, the executive director called and said he had another interim position for Dad at Willits, California, near the northern California coast, where Dad served for six and one half months. Then the executive director called and advised of another position at Avenal, California, a southern California town in oil country, where Dad was interim pastor for another six months; and then Dad served as an interim pastor at Modesto Memorial Baptist for two years. The last church Dad served was Glenn, California, a northern California town in the rice country, where he was interim pastor for two years.

Dad and Mom moved to a mobile home park in San Jose, California, in 1969. While there, Dad preached as a supply pastor from time-to-time, including at the Pilgrim Haven Retirement Home in the San Jose area. Dad did not let a larger city impersonalise his contacts with people. He was on a first-name basis with almost everyone he had contact with, whether it was the bank clerk, the service station attendant, or people at church.

In late 1978, Dad became sick and was diagnosed with cancer of the pancreas. At the time of the interviews in June of 1979, he said, "So here I am, almost 75, ... I have outlived all the Herrs by the grace of God. God has sustained me all these years. I have had rough times. Now the time is coming for me to go. It can't come too soon. Under these circumstances, what is a year or two? I don't know where the years have gone, but they are gone. Of course, we want to live as long as we can. But under unbearable circumstances, we have second thoughts. I see a nice meal but I can't eat. I can talk with you and see you, of course, under a great pressure. Why don't you go eat and we can talk later."

(This was the last interview with Dad. As he had become aware of the loss of enjoyment as a grocer and that it was time to leave for something new, he was now convinced it was time to leave this life for a better one. He died on July 26, 1979, just two days after his 75th birthday, and two months after being diagnosed with cancer of the pancreas. He died peacefully and without complaint or agony. His death witnessed to the entire family of the grace of God, which was sufficient in a supernatural way to take him through the shadow of death.)