

***I R E M E M B E R***

*by Lea D. Field*

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I want to express my thanks and appreciation to Sylvia Pohlmeier for the many hours she spent typing my handwritten pages and putting my story of "I Remember" on the computer. My thanks to my daughter, Harriet Siden for procuring and processing the many photographs which add so much and to my husband for his support and encouragement throughout.

## I REMEMBER

Upon the urging of my children and grandchildren, I have decided to accede to their wishes and tell them what I remember about myself, my parents and grandparents. I suppose it is because we are all so interested in our past and the generations of ancestors who have influenced and shaped to a great extent our future as to who and what we are. Perhaps this tale of my thoughts and experiences as I went through life will help you to understand yourselves and to appreciate your heritage.

I was born on a Friday at 7 o'clock in the morning, the youngest of five children. Two brothers and two sisters had preceded me into the family -- I have been told that I was a quiet and good baby which means that I must have been contented.

I was born into a middle class family of Orthodox Jews. My father was a hard-working, industrious sheet metal contractor and, as time progressed, an air conditioner contractor as well. He had his own place of business. He was a gregarious, outgoing, very friendly person. Everyone called him by his first name, Louis. My mother by contrast was shy, retiring, but very beautiful and delicately grained. In ten years, she had born five children and it had left its physical limitations on her.

Both my mother and my father had come from Kovna Province in Lithuania alone, my mother at 16, my father a little older, in 1890 or 1891. They did not know one another until they met quite by chance in New York. It was love at first sight and their love was constant all through their 44 years of marriage. Although I never saw them exchange a single kiss or hug or any other sign of affection, I knew their devotion and affection for each other was deep and real.

While they were still engaged my father was able to bring his parents, two sisters and a brother to America. My grandfather chose to settle in Utica, New York, where he had an older sister and a brother already established there. My grandfather was not an ordinary poor immigrant -- he came with plenty of money. My grandmother owned a prized strand of real pearls, which I remember was stolen, and other jewels of value. In Europe, my grandfather had supplied the Russian army with flour, sugar, grain and the like. He was an imposing figure -- large, well built, with graying hair and a red beard. He also was the dominating type but where my father was jolly, good hearted, generous and loving, my grandfather was dour, serious and penurious to a fault.

After his parents and family were settled, my father sent for my mother to meet her future in-laws and to be married. Mother often described the meeting. It was in April and New York had been balmy. She got off the train in

a spring outfit with high button dainty shoes and stepped into a foot of snow. Utica is in a valley and has severe winter weather and a late spring. Well, my grandparents took one look and decided she was too delicate, too dainty, to be a suitable wife. Their son needed someone more robust, strong and hearty to fit the role. My mother spent her entire life trying to prove that she was capable and hard working. I truly attribute much of her poor health to her desire to please and prove them wrong.

I often wonder what this meeting must have been like for my mother. Although she, too, came from an Orthodox middle-class family, there were vast differences in their upbringing. Mother's father, David Charles Berger, was a scholar. He spent all his time in the Yeshiva studying the Talmud. The family, which was large, (Mother [Jennie] was the oldest girl), was supported by her mother (Sarah) who had a small grocery store. This was the routine carried on by all such families. The women were the bread-winners and the men were the scholars.

Today in Israel in the Yeshivas, this system is still in vogue, more now than ever. Scholarship is considered the highest priority and wives whose husbands are so occupied consider themselves "special" and willingly go to work to support their families.

However, my father was much in love and so, regardless of his parents' opinion, on June 19, 1892, they were married in Utica.

My father was the dominant figure in the household and seemed to set the standard and codes of behavior and morals. I say "seemed" because although my mother, as I have said, was shy, she was no "shrinking violet". On matters of importance, she managed to express her opinion and influence the decision.

The small town of Utica, New York, to this day is still a small town. Then it had a small Jewish population and we all lived in a space of a few miles. I can honestly say that until I entered high school, I did not speak to, or know, a single non-Jew. Utica was known for its cotton mills which employed Polish workers. It was also known for its lush farm lands where Italians planted onions and celery. Most of this produce was in turn brought into the stores owned by Italians who had a large and sometimes violent population. My father loved to visit these farmers and would buy chickens, turkeys, and eggs, as well as produce directly from them.

We had our small group of rich people, too, who lived in beautiful homes on upper Genesee Street or streets running counter to it. My father's work was so well liked by these people and his honesty so unquestioned that they would give him the key to their homes when they were away and work needed to be done. Christmas time, they plied him with toys

for his children. Somehow Sarah, my oldest sister, always became the recipient of these favors which of course angered my sister Hannah who was next in line. She fought back by doing her darndest to destroy or mutilate any she could get her hands on.

We lived on Whitesboro Street in an upper flat when I was born with the help of a Midwife. We lived there until I was almost four. One incident in my childhood stands out in my mind ever so clearly and I cite it here because it seems to me to have had a bearing on my entire life.

Friday nights, my parents relaxed after our Sabbath dinner and usually went for a walk in the neighborhood visiting with friends who also walked or sat on their verandas and porches. Being the youngest, I was always taken along but soon became tired and had to be carried. This became burdensome and ended the walk. My parents had an idea. They purchased a stroller, put me in it and thereafter enjoyed their evening. All went well until one Friday eve, we passed Mrs. Kowalsky's home. She was sitting on her porch and when she saw me in the stroller she said, "Aren't you ashamed, a big girl like you, to be sitting in a carriage like a baby?" With that, I stepped out of the stroller and never stepped in it again! I felt humiliated, belittled and my response was quick and sharp.

All my life, this characteristic has been part of my being. When I feel unjustly accused or humiliated, my

retaliation is quick and to the point. More than once, my family has accused me of being overly sharp. And yet, once I give vent to my hurt and outraged feelings, I do not harbor any grudge or seek revenge. However, I do remember so as to avoid any further occurrence; but in those instances where I cannot or must not "speak out" and must be silent, I tend to walk away and do not ever, ever forgive or forget!!

This characteristic can be termed either good or bad as is the way with all people. We all have our faults, assets, sensitivities and must live with them and our loved ones must understand and empathize with us.

When I was about four years of age, my father and grandfather together built the first "high-rise" apartment building in Utica on Washington Street. It was three stories high -- two flats or apartments on each floor. The first floor facing the street consisted of two stores with the entrance to the building between. There were living quarters in back of each store consisting of a large kitchen, two bedrooms, bath and alcove. My grandparents lived in one of the apartments on the top floor, we lived on the second floor, but not underneath them. These apartments consisted of three bedrooms, a large kitchen, dining room and living room - also a connecting room with laundry tubs - not unlike our utility rooms of today. They were furnished throughout with the new electric light fixtures.



Before this time, my father's younger brother who had come from Europe with the family had drowned and also the younger of his two sisters, Mollie, had met with an accident to her spine while standing on a chair to hang curtains. She could never walk again and spent her remaining years, when not lying down, reclining in a chaise lounge all day embroidering articles, hemstitching or sewing lace and doing various kinds of fancy work. She was so quiet, gentle and dear, never once complaining or bemoaning her fate. I thought she was truly an angel and I loved her dearly.

At four years of age, I started kindergarten and every day upon returning from school, I rushed upstairs to visit my Aunt Mollie. Sitting on the floor near her, I recited all the games, rhymes, songs that had made up my school day. She seemed to delight in my company. When she passed away a few years later, I felt her loss keenly. Many years later, I was given a lace handkerchief which she had made. I treasure it to this day and recall with affection her sweetness and gentle manner.

I must say that although my grandfather was penurious, no delicacy was too expensive if it would appeal to Aunt Mollie. My other Aunt, Anna, searched the stores for very special foods that she might fancy.

I must say something about my Aunt Anna. She never married which, of course, bothered my grandparents. When suitors were brought to her, she refused to even see them.

Instead she went to night school, learned English so she could speak fluently and read a great deal. She then took a course in corsetry, learning to fit girdles, brassieres, etc. and became known for her efficiency. By the time I was grown up, she had a very fine store on Genesee Street (our main street) and carried fine lingerie items and occasionally a few very special linens. One of these, a lace tablecloth or bedspread which was made in the handicraft schools of the Empress Eugenie of Austria, she bequeathed to Harriet at the time of her wedding. She died shortly before that time.

I have no recollection to this day of another sister, Lena, older than my father. When she came to this country, whether she was already married or anything much about her has always been a mystery. I only know that when her husband contracted tuberculosis, they and their two little boys were advised to live in Denver, Colorado. Later, when her husband passed away, she decided to go on to Los Angeles, California. My grandfather was very disturbed that the boys were not receiving any Jewish or Hebrew education and so when the eldest, Isadore, was 12, my grandfather went to Los Angeles by train (a matter of five days then) and brought him back. The enclosed picture shows the party at his Bar Mitzvah in my grandfather's house. There I am, holding my mother's hand. Am I two or three? I don't know and have no recollection of the event.

My closest friend lived two doors from us. We played school together and sometimes when I was alone, I played librarian. I loved books and was an avid reader. I remember one time when I was in the library, I looked at the stacks and stacks of books and I thought - is it possible that anyone could possibly read all of them?!?!

And so childhood passed into adolescence. In the meantime, my sisters and brothers were growing up, too. My oldest brother Charles was at Cornell University and became a great mathematician. He graduated in 1917 a civil and mechanical engineer. My second brother, Max, did not like school and was mechanically inclined and after high school went into my father's business. Both my sisters had taken commercial courses in high school and became bookkeepers going into the business world soon after graduation. Both sisters excelled in their work; Hannah particularly. She could have easily become an accountant.

In high school, I distinguished myself in English, History and also French. These were the classes and teachers I liked best. Algebra and geometry I abhorred! It was a strange tongue to me and fell on deaf ears. My college course allowed me one elective subject. I chose Public Speaking taught by a Mr. Ginther, a graduate of the Leland Powers School of the Spoken Word in Boston. It was here I discovered my real talent and my future. He encouraged and persuaded me to make "speaking" my career. My parents, too,

took notice. They were always proud of their children's educational achievements for they considered education their highest priority and, I must say, I do too.

While still in high school, my brother Max married a girl from Troy, New York, an even smaller town than Utica, in upstate New York. It was to be a grand wedding and so my mother, my sisters and I were outfitted for the occasion by a designer who made all our clothes. I remember my dress well (a pale yellow taffeta, trimmed with turquoise velvet ribbon) [see picture] for at 15 such a dress is a big event. I also remember going to the wedding.

Two days before, mother and my two sisters had already left to participate in some of the festivities. I stayed home with my father to come the next day. However, the evening before, we received a phone call that a terrific storm had left several feet of snow. We were to take the train immediately before they stopped running. All transportation had come to a halt. We finally arrived, but went to the wedding in a sleigh pulled by horses.

Now it was time for graduation. I received honor awards in English, History and Public Speaking. I was in the class play - I don't remember the name - it was something out of King Arthur's Court and very dull - but I was the "Queen" and loved it.

During the two years of Public Speaking under Mr. Ginther, I had made much progress in speech and drama. Mr.

Ginther had several visits with my parents and had persuaded them that speech and drama in one form or another was my special gift.

So after much excitement and trepidation and a trunk full of new clothes, I was off to Boston, all on my own. The first time living away from home is always a traumatic experience, but in my case it was doubly so. As the youngest in the family, I had always been sheltered - I was never called upon for an opinion nor did I participate in any family discussions. I had never even shopped alone! In fact, I leaned on my sisters to a great extent - thinking since they were older, and already in the business world, they knew better.

As I see it today, my going to Boston without even visiting the school or the city and only knowing one young man, Jack Savett from Utica going to Tufts Dental School, was frightening. But I was young and adventurous and happily all went well. As I look back, I feel I must have had a guardian angel or my own innate good sense or intuition that saved me from many pitfalls and mistakes.

I was happy at school, made many friends, had a good share of dates and worked hard for I felt a responsibility to my parents to do well.

Leland Powers School was a three year college course and devoted itself exclusively to the Spoken Word in every form. Today it has enlarged and has its own T.V. station and its

own theater. It can boast that its graduates are actors, actresses, T.V. personalities, etc. Although you received no degree upon graduation, your diploma guaranteed your acceptance by the New York State Board of Education to teach Drama and Public Speaking at all schools, public and private.

During my Junior year summer vacation, Utica had a theatrical stock company changing plays every week. Sometimes extras were needed so I auditioned and soon became a regular member of the cast. When the season was over, the director asked me to stay with the company as they moved on to other cities. I refused, saying it was more important for me to finish college. He was shocked that I would let such a "golden opportunity" pass. Personally, I was not so enamored with the life these people led - however, the experience was of immense value. Acting in one part while memorizing and rehearsing for another had sharpened my already good memory so that, to this day, it is one of my assets. Also, it has made me acutely aware of good acting and good theater.

Time passed quickly and soon it was time for graduation. Mother and Sarah came to Boston for the event. Graduation at Leland Powers was different from the Cap and Gown type we've come to accept. There each graduating student gave a recital - presenting a play or a portion of it from memory, using voice and gestures to indicate the different characters. A "one man show" it was called. I chose the play "Pygmalion"

by W.S. Gilbert in which a sculptor makes such a perfect statue that he breathes life into her and falls in love. It is a beautiful play that I "read" many times since and always I experience the same thrill and excitement of that first time.

With school behind me, diploma in hand and a sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach, I came home. Now what?

I did not have long to wait. Mr. Ginther contacted me, "would I take his place, teaching his class for a week while he went out of town to stage a ceremony for the 33rd degree Masons?" It was a very unique experience. I was completely on my own and for a whole week taught as best I could. Evidently, the students gave me good marks for my efforts for not long afterward, Mr. Ginther recommended me to the Monsignor of the Catholic Parish in Little Falls, New York (a very small town about 20 miles from Utica). The priest in charge of the Church and Parochial School had jurisdiction over all the smaller parishes in the region. He felt very strongly that Public Speaking should be a requirement for all students in every grade. Only nuns taught in these schools but since there was not a single nun who was equipped to teach "Speaking", he allowed an outsider to come in for these classes and under very strict supervision of the Mother Superior. After a proper interview, I was hired (with a rather good salary) to teach three days a week from the kindergarten through the Senior High School grades. The

other two days, he arranged that I also teach at a smaller Parochial School in Herkimer, New York (another very small town outside of Utica).

This was an experience I shall never forget. Imagine, this was a completely new project for the schools and pupils alike. It was incumbent upon me to put it over and in a way that both the Priest and pupils would find agreeable. To appeal to the High School pupils, the Priest had managed a regent college credit of 2 points toward graduation. In order to accomplish this, he had to appear before the Board of Education in Albany, New York (the state capitol). He must have had much influence to even get a "hearing". There were no educators to write a test at the end of the term so I was required to do that as well.

I cannot say I enjoyed this year of teaching. I was never allowed in a classroom by myself - a nun was always present to report what I said and did. At first, it was rather difficult but I soon paid no attention to these "intruders" since they certainly knew how to keep order and threaten disciplinary action. I soon became accustomed to their supervision, but never felt free to express myself.

However, teaching the kindergarten and first grade was delightful. We dramatized stories they knew and they responded enthusiastically to "acting out".

Success in this department led me to start a Children's Theater on my own with children who paid to be taught. It



was a great success. We entertained before several clubs and of course the children and their parents loved it. My father made a toy theater out of an orange crate for me. Miniature furniture showed the children their entrances and exits. I also had private pupils, both young and adult, who had problems in speech.

During that second summer after graduation, I was a playground director, overseeing and planning programs for the girls. There was a young man, also a recent college graduate, looking for a position in Social Work, who was in charge of the boys and their activities. Although I have never been athletic, I was able to supervise the girls' games like volley ball and the like.

One day, my partner showed me an ad in the current Social Service magazine. It was from a Jewish Center in Detroit, Michigan which needed a woman to direct dramatics and plan programs. Was I interested? Indeed I was and immediately sent a letter and my resume. To my delight, a prompt answer asked me to come for an interview.

Detroit was an overnight journey from Utica by train. Unless you wanted to sit up on an uncomfortable train seat all night, one took a sleeper bunk bed. This was the first time I had ever been in one and tried to make myself as comfortable as possible. However, I slept very little in anticipation of the interview.

We arrived early in the morning. I had breakfast at the



Station lunch counter and as I ate my roll and coffee, a feeling of warmth and "belonging" came over me that this was where my future lay.

Taking a taxi to the Jewish Center, I found myself in front of a large old home. The sign read "Young Women's Hebrew Association" under the auspices of the National Council of Jewish Women. Miss Landsman, the executive director, and Mrs. Glogower, president of the National Council of Jewish Women, conducted the interview and showed me through the house. It was, as I have said, a large old home with many bedrooms on the second and third floors. These became meeting rooms and were rented to other small groups for meetings during the week, with the exception of two bedrooms on the second floor. One large front room and bath were occupied by Miss Landsman and the other was to be occupied by the dramatic director.

The first floor was made up of the former dining room and living room and now served as the recreation room. There was an office and a so-called "powder room". The kitchen and servants' quarters were occupied by the caretaker and his wife. In back, the three-stall garage became the auditorium with a raised platform for a stage. Its capacity was 120 chairs.

The interview was very successful and I was offered a good salary which included the room and bath on the second floor. This was a great advantage as I did not have to look



for a place to live. I was to start immediately after the High Holy Days which were soon approaching. I returned home like a great conqueror and prepared to leave home.

Soon I was on my way - once again to a new adventure in a new city and this time much farther from home. This time I could truly say that except for the two ladies who had interviewed me, I did not know a single person.

To my great disappointment and dismay, upon my arrival, Miss Landsman, whom I had liked so much, informed me that she was leaving in four days to return to her home in New York City. Besides my duties as dramatic and program director, I was to be left in charge until a suitable replacement could be found. With the help of the office secretary and an occasional suggestion from the Board of Directors of the organization, we managed to carry on.

However, in the four days before Miss Landsman left, she tried to introduce me to some of her friends who were also in Social Work. Irene Kaplan and Sadie Hoffman became my friends, also, Birdie Michalson, the office secretary was truly helpful and we all remained friends after we were all married, although we no longer saw much of one another.

It was more than three months before another executive secretary, Miss Feldman, came from New York City. She was an older person, very business-like and to the point.

During these three months, however, I had literally changed the entire dramatic department and put it on a more

was a great success. We entertained before several clubs and of course the children and their parents loved it. My father made a toy theater out of an orange crate for me. Miniature furniture showed the children their entrances and exits. I also had private pupils, both young and adult, who had problems in speech.

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professional basis. First, I had three classes each week - beginners, intermediate and seniors. I taught them speech, diction, poise, stage presence and gestures. Instead of only presenting one-act plays with an all girl cast, and girls trying to take men's parts, I encouraged men to come to our classes. Then, in preparation for a three-act play to be presented at the end of the season, I turned my attention to creating a proper stage. I had only a raised platform and a curtain which had to be pulled by hand and a few scattered overhead lights to work with. There was no budget to speak of, so all alterations had to be done by volunteers. I decided to visit each young men's group who held their meetings at the Center and asked for electricians, carpenters, paperhangers, painters and those involved in various crafts to help. As a result, we had footlights, dimmers, stage scenery, even stage hands to move "flats" and change furniture during intermissions. I used my experience in the Theater Stock Company in Utica, when I was still a student, to make this little theater as professional as possible.

My "crew" fell into the spirit, worked evenings and became a jolly group, happy to be part of this "great adventure".

During the evenings when I had no classes, I would start a "Sing-a-Long" with those young men and women who just dropped in because they had no place to go and wanted to meet





young people. Soon word went out that the new young program director was a peppy person who made you feel welcome.

By the time Miss Feldman came, I was so well integrated into my program and so well liked that she knew she could make no changes that involved my schedule and, for the most part, left me to my own devices.

She made many changes, though, and some were good. Noting the success of our informal evenings, she started the Saturday Night Dances, once a month at Webster Hall\* with a live Orchestra appealing to singles. It was amazing how many came. A very nominal fee offset the expense of the orchestra. These dances became very popular and continued year after year.

It was nearing the end of the winter season and time to present our first three-act play we had been rehearsing for many weeks. We posted notices in the club rooms, sent invitations and tickets to the Board of the National Council of Jewish Women and reserved a section of seating for them and many came! We played three nights at a charge of \$1.50 a ticket. The auditorium was filled to capacity well before show-time and we had to turn many away. It was a huge success. The "players" all gave a fine performance and even the "stage hands" knew their "cues".

\*Webster Hall was a residential hotel on the Wayne State University Campus for married students and foreign students.

I was jubilant and after that I was given full reign for any dramatics I suggested. We even began to pay royalties for better plays as we became more ambitious.

During the summer months of July and August, the Council owned a young women's camp at Jeddo, Michigan on Lake Huron. (One of the five Great Lakes of Upper Michigan), I became Head Counselor, again planning programs. This was a camp especially for Jewish working girls and charged a very nominal fee per week. The girls were allowed to stay one week only, to allow for a greater number to participate. They were to do all the K.P. duty themselves, taking care of their quarters, sweeping halls and tidying bathrooms. Of course, many objected to this, saying this could no longer be called a vacation.

As Head Counselor, it was my duty to inspect and hear these complaints and I'm afraid I was not a popular person with many girls. However, I also walked with them on hikes, planned picnics, evening programs, masquerades, etc. so that everyone really had a good time and returned year after year.

My own vacation was always in September - I always chose to spend it at home, particularly the High Holidays, with my parents.

And so the second season of winter activities started. Much easier since all was to continue with not much variation - after all, one does not change successful patterns. It was during the winter months and we had just returned from a

Saturday Night Dance that a telephone call in Miss Feldman's room (there was none in mine) brought me dreadful news from home. My father had had a stroke and was not expected to live - my brother Max was in another hospital, very ill with a white corpuscle disorder. I was to come home at once. At 2 a.m., I was standing on a train platform waiting for the train with a heavy heart. I could not get a sleeper so I sat up all night. By the time I arrived in Utica, the crisis thankfully had passed; my father had survived and happily I could see him alive. My father was a diabetic - diet and insulin injections kept the illness under control and he had never been ill.

I stayed home a week, during which time my brother also improved and so I returned a shaken but much happier person than when I had left.

Several of the people in the Center that evening greeted me warmly. From time to time, I had noticed a tall, good looking young man who came once a week to attend a meeting of the Y.M.H.A. but we had never spoken. He was there this night. I noticed he had been ice skating. The skates were slung over the shoulder of his red leather jacket. Now he asked about my father and seemed interested to know about him. After that, we not only always spoke but soon he asked me for a date. That was the beginning of many dates until he became the only one.

That summer at Camp Jeddo, the campers had much to talk about. When the mail came - what excitement!! for I received beautiful bouquets of fresh flowers - not once, but many times throughout the summer.

I took my vacation in September as usual and told my parents all about this young man with whom I was now "going steady". They were very unhappy. Who was he? Where were his parents, his family? A struggling young man just going into the building business! What was his future? What would be mine?! A few years earlier, my sister Sarah had married a very suitable man in every way - good family, well established and wealthy, only to have the marriage end in disaster. Now they wanted to protect me and were indeed cautious. Here I chose an unknown, a European, no family and not yet established.

In our many dates, my young man had freely spoken of his family in great detail. I almost felt I knew them. He was a staunch Zionist. As a youth, he had been trained in tobacco growing so he could go to Palestine as a pioneer. He had gone to Canada with such a group which had dispersed so, in turn, he went to an uncle in Chicago. After several years of working there, he had come to Detroit to meet a family friend and decided to stay. The family he was now living with (William Adelson) were close friends of this uncle. Also, he had a brother and his family in New York.

All this I told my family, trying to ally their fears and assure them of his integrity and sincerity. It was decided that they would go to Mt. Clemens to take the mineral baths and meet him in a few months.

When that day came, we made arrangements to spend the week-end with them in Mt. Clemens. I was sure they would see what an intelligent, sensitive and fine young man I had chosen. I was sure he would convince them that he was sincere, reliable and responsible and take care of their daughter to their utmost satisfaction.

Alas, the visit did not turn out quite as I had envisioned. Instead of exerting every effort to be agreeable and convincing, my beloved became resentful of the cross-examination, the scrutiny and the inspection. It was only when my parents met the William Adelsons and were assured of his character and family background that they finally consented to our engagement, when they left for home.

Back at the "Y", I was unhappy and confused. Why had he behaved in such a negative manner? Why hadn't he been more understanding of their concerns?

Only many years later, when his own daughter brought her suitor home, did he understand the concern, the responsibility a father feels at such a time.

But now, I felt I needed more time to sort out my feelings. I did not feel ready to announce an engagement. So I said, "Let's just be friends for awhile." In less than

two weeks, he came with a beautiful diamond engagement ring which he had designed himself and said, "Let's be friends all our lives." And we have been friends these many years!

We were married at home in Utica, May 28, 1929. Walter's brother, Sam, his wife Rose and their 4 year old daughter, Shirley, came from New York. My parents liked them so much that they invited them to stay for a week after the wedding as their house guests.

Off we went on our honeymoon to Chicago, to see the sights of a truly big city, to meet his aunts and uncles and many cousins and to be warmly entertained by his several old boyfriends. All agreed that he had made a good choice!

All too soon, it was time to return to experience the greatest of all challenges! Making the transition from a career oriented person to a wife, establishing a home and, in my case, learning to cook.

As I approached each new phase in my life, I concentrated on doing my very best, even though at times that was difficult. When Harriet came into our lives, and then Irwin, we became a close and devoted family. I am happy that throughout these many years, we have remained a close and devoted family.

Friday evening has always been, and is still is, a very special night for us. Candle lighting, Kiddush, wine and blessing over bread, is the normal routine whether it is just the two of us or many others present.

When Harriet and Irwin were small, perhaps 5 and 9 years old, we formed a Family Club - just the four of us. Our "meetings" were held after the Sabbath meal - we discussed a myriad of "old and new business" that had happened during the week, that concerned us - where to go for our Sunday outing, any problems with teachers or friends. I was the secretary and took minutes which were read at the beginning of each meeting. Our motto with which we closed our meetings was "All for One and One for All".

We smile now in remembrance, but I do believe it served an important function in all our lives which has carried on through the years. We know that we can talk things over and, above all, count on one another whatever may come.

As I watched the growth of my children, from infancy to adulthood, each child became an integral part of my life. Their diverse personalities as they developed through college, marriage and careers has been an interesting study. I have watched with delight as they too became parents, raising their own children and now, my children also know the pleasure of grandchildren, making us adoring great grandparents.

To go back a bit, I channeled my energies into the many civic and Jewish organizations that appealed for my assistance in creating dramatic presentations for their many programs. I worked diligently and was proud of each one. For each program, I tried to emphasize the organization's

purpose and ideals into creating a play or a "skit" that had a meaning and relationship to their particular projects and endeavors. Thus, I gained a reputation for excellence and was much sought after. However, all this was done gratis. I was just a volunteer, doing my bit. I was indeed kept very busy. This was not the era for pursuing one's career as it is today and being paid for one's knowledge, time and energy.

Throughout all this activity, my family always came first. Now that I look back, I am happy and proud that during all my volunteerism, our religious traditions of observing the Sabbath and Jewish holidays were always kept. I am sure you, my children and grandchildren, can well testify to this!

If there is any advice I can give you, my children and grandchildren, culled from these pages of events and living these many years, it's this: Believe in yourself, remember who you are, be proud of your heritage and know you have the potential for greatness. No one's role in life is ever insignificant, everyone makes a difference to someone - to family, friends, those you come in contact with and the memories you leave behind.

Above all, have patience, things can and do happen if given time and always, always, be the very best you can be!

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