

Monday, Nov. 16, 1992.

Dear family,

It is snowing! The ground is still warm enough to melt the flakes as they fall but the sidewalks are slippery. In deference to a risky walk, I decided to share another chapter of my life with you.

My mind plays tricks with me. Since you children are now entering into the picture, I assume you know a lot about our life. Then reason takes over and though you may recall some things, they are not be in the perspective of parents. As a child I recall being punished (most always unjustly!) and remember nothing of the events that lead to the punishment. I will share with you what I remember of those Scotia days and you may add your own. Some of you claim to remember early in life. I don't. My mind picks up with kindergarten and there only bits and pieces.

When we moved into our first home on Holmes street, married life really began for me. Lee Ann and Doris were born elsewhere, but I was glad Jim was brought from the hospital "home"! At last there was little concern for waking or disturbing others when a child cried or got noisy. To this day I enjoy having space around the house and the privacy that comes with it. Isolation that comes with country living is a bit much; having neighbors near but not too close is quite another. Kids need playmates, school, church, doctors, and groceries near at hand. We had these in Scotia.

We were just settled into our house when Jim was born. It was fun being mistress and making decisions for a home. Until I was aware I was pregnant with Mike, I had the "ideal" family and would have coasted happily through life with that many in our group. I sewed dresses for the girls, did not feel too hurried in the tasks about the house, and felt at peace with the world. In spite of Jim spitting up his food, he was a good baby and slept well. I enjoyed that time with him. There is something special with mother and first son. Mike was a beautiful baby! He captured my heart at first glance! Now there were demands on my time. Life started getting very busy, was fulfilling, and gave me a sense of purpose and accomplishment. Somehow I found the strength when I needed it. Your Dad, as always, came through when I needed him most. When I was pregnant with Mark, I had a "talk" with God. I knew that unless I had help from Him, I would go bananas. I found that which I needed and even had 2 more of you in Scotia before we moved to Endwell.

Fortunately most of you understand in having your own children, the rewards of parenthood. Sure there were a lot of tough times; you remember going without sleep, suffering the pain of sick children, enduring to the scrapes (some pretty big ones at times) life puts in the process of growing up, the times you cry when you have to say "NO!" to requests they don't understand. It goes on and on. There are rewards when least expect them. I look at you children with pride in the realization of what you have done with your lives. At first it was the papers you brought home from school, participation in school activities, finding school challenging and cooperating to get good marks. Those projects! Again the list goes on and on. Makes it all worth while!

There are a number of dear things to remember about Scotia days! Foremost in my mind is the pleasure in babies! You may remember a picture of Jesus with children all around Him. He has a couple on each knee and several gathered around. He has a warm and inviting look in the face. Having my group of babes about me and feeling the confidence and warmth you had in me, I can understand the love and compassion Our Lord feels for us. It is one the deepest feeling of love one feels in this life. It is no cliché; the more love you give, the more you get in return. Adoration is for God alone but the deep love and admiration I feel for your Dad and you children is like that--- deep and profound. It is having a bit of heaven on earth when I take time out to reflect upon the goodness of His love for us. I pray this does not make you uncomfortable---my talking of God as I do---but if I am to share who I am with you, Faith has to be included. Without God's help I know I would not have been able to cope. Be happy for me. I am.

A lot of memories flood my mind in regard to those days. The neighborhood had plenty of children and you paired off very easily. You probably remember the Lominis, Heaneys, Peers, Rogers, (the sign painter) Let-terons, (with dog Dukey) and Graebes the best. When you got to school, other friends came into the picture; Paul Witkowski, (with the loud voice!) Diane Gionette, and the Dahlhauser clan. Of course there were the Barlows (who ended up with 14 children) and the Giorgis's kids who remained friends even when they moved. Dad and Unk John still have long phone conversations now and again. Then there was Paul Oulette (?) across the street from us who had all the toys you boys coveted.

To remember also were: the crayon marks on the furnace in the basement, (still don't know the guilty party!) Saturday morning sneaks, computer paper atop the frig for drawing, Lee Ann lighting all the votive candles at church per instigation of Doris, crowning of Mary in May (and rosary), First Communion and Confirmations, eating grapes before they were ripe and subsequent belly aches, Mary's stomach pumping, Mike's bean in the nose, Doris severing a tendon in her leg, Doris scooting up and down stairs on her fanny when she had the cast, Sunday morning breakfast with the Giorgis's, baby sitting the Dahlhauser clan when she had another baby, enjoying fresh strawberries from Lomini's farm along with some other fresh goodies, romps in the woods and playgrounds, trips to the library, swimming at Collins Lake, (remember the water chestnuts! ouch!) picnics at Thatcher Park, Dzia-dzia's 6 week summer visits, all the canning and making of grape jelly that I did, the plays you put on in the garage, the birthday parties (one of Lee Ann's when it rained!) and that just scratches the surface. Tom being the youngest and not born yet certainly missed out on a lot of family living. He got his share in Endwell where our adventure in living continued.

Some of you must remember that long single driveway to the garage we had that housed our car. When we got our station wagon, Dad had to extend it to get the car in. Shovelling that narrow drive was a pain. There was no place to put the snow in the section between the houses. We had snow filled winters in those years. We have snaps that show it. The large front porch was great for evening sitting and watching the rain. The attic was an interesting place but I don't remember you exploring it like I did when I was a kid and we had one. The stairs were sometimes used as time to cool off after being bad when you should have been sleeping. Normally the basement steps were used for time outs. I was glad you thought of the stairs as punishment. As a kid I would love to sit up stairs. We got the strop over the buttocks instead---I believe I told you. Mom did another awful thing. When she put us to nap and we did not cooperate, she would go to the bedroom window (the shades darkened the room), knock hard, and say that she was the "boogy" man come to get us! I learned a lot of what not to do from watching other parents.

You may remember the little sewing room off the dining room where there was room for a crib and little else. The baby slept there nights and daytime up in the parents room. Since Teri would soon need more than a crib, we realized a bigger house was a necessity. We looked at some houses with 4 bedrooms and 2 baths but they did not fit into our tight budget. Then came the hassle of what to do: add a wing on to the back part of the house or turn the attic into bedroom space. Would this old house support another floor? The stairway was so narrow that it would be impossible to get furniture up there without raising the roof---which already was too tall. Ask the guy who had to put the storm windows up and paint the peak! There was also a lot of dissatisfaction with the job at GE so your Dad began looking elsewhere for employment within GE to keep his benefits. God has always been there for us steering us right. We solved our problems by our move to Endwell. I was thrilled in our good fortune. Here we had a newer house with 6 bedrooms, 2 full baths, a family room, DISHWASHER, and a basement in a price we could afford. We did have anxious moments selling our house and ended up taking a loss rather than try to rent one and live in another.

We were sad to leave good friends. We knew that new ones can be found but there is that uncomfortable feeling in getting started. Next letter should deal with those progressive years. Most of you probably look upon Endwell with great affection and I do too. It was a great place to bring up a family. Hope you enjoyed reading about our Scotia days. I had fun recalling them for you.

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Love you!

We think of you often ~~and~~ working hard getting & keeping your house in order to sell. Having gone through that routine 4 times myself, I do appreciate what you're going through. Hope you were successful in getting all the painting done, Mark. Hope (again!) Rosie stayed away from "helping" you. Prayers that you sell soon! Happy Thanks giving!
MOM