

Aunt Jennie really filled the role of "Grandma" for me on the Hoffman side of the family. We always enjoyed going to Jamestown. I remember: the smell of the old out-house and barn; the iris blooming on Decoration day; the pail of drinking water and dipper, and the trap door to the basement in the back kitchen; sleeping in Dad's room in the feather bed, and washing in the china bowl on the washstand with rain water from the big china pitcher; the red couch and the pump organ in the parlor; the sampler on the wall made by Grandma when she was a child; the light fixture in the downstairs bedroom with a rheostat that worked by pulling a chain; playing croquet and flinch; tossing pears off the end of a stick.

Grandpa De Young died before I was born. I have a faint recollection of Grandma living on Cedar Street. It seems to me that she had a lot of canaries. I remember Underwood Street better: the purple velvet couch in the living room; the picture of the moon; the clock ticking; the for-get-me-nots in the back yard; red cabbage for dinner; the round table in the dining room. Grandma always came on Mondays to help with the washing. Grandma and Mother always had coffee on Monday morning and often we would get cupcakes from the bakery. Grandma took 5-minute cat-naps that seemed to refresh her completely.

A few years before Grandma De Young died I asked her about her coming to America. She was only six years old when she came on a ship, but she remembered it. She told me that her family had been quite well off in the old country. They had servants etc. Her father was a dealer in cattle. He was taking a load of cattle on a boat to England, I believe, and something happened to them. The cattle either got sick or drowned or something like that. Anyway, this just about ruined him financially, so he didn't even go back home, but took a boat to America. Later, he sent for his family. They came to Grand Rapids.

Mildred Hoffman Lower (May, '78)