

OF MILDRED HOFFMAN LOWER

I think that one of the earliest memories I have as a little child is when the roof of our house got on fire. Mother was sewing in the kitchen and I was with her. Someone pounded on the door and yelled, "Your house is on fire." The fire was put out but after that I always worried that our house was on fire when I heard a fire engine.

I remember: riding trikes around the block with Dad timing us; Dad telling us his "life history"; (One of the things I remember him telling was a story of how his name became Robert. The first day of school the teacher asked him his name. He responded, "Roeloff." (sp?) Whereupon the teacher told him, "From now on your name will be Robert.") playing with the neighborhood kids on Matthew's court, sliding down the hill in the winter, and playing ball and hide-and-go-seek in the summer; walking to Dad's office and playing in his lab and the dental chairs; getting my hair cut--"bangs $\frac{1}{2}$ inch above the eyebrows, a semi-shingle in back, and sides cut so the tip of the ear shows"; sitting on the front porch summer evenings; walking to meet Dad on other summer evenings and all of us going out to the dairy for double-dip ice-cream cones.

Thursday afternoons were special family times. When school was not in session, we always took day trips. We would take our lunch and eat at a roadside table. Quite often it was a hot meal, scalloped potatoes with pork chops being a favorite. Then we would drive someplace--sometimes to the beach if it was hot, other times longer distances. Usually Dad would take a few extra days off around the 4th of July and we would take a longer trip. When I was seven we went to Niagara Falls, and a few years later Dad rented a house trailer and we took a trip to the upper peninsula. These two trips were the longest ones I remember. The others were less than a week.

Health: I do not remember ever going to a doctor before I was married. I guess about the only sickness I had was the usual colds. When I was quite small Marion and Bob had their tonsils out. Mother had hay fever every fall but other than that was never sick. I remember when I was about ten Dad had bleeding ulcers. I'll never forget the day they came and took him to the hospital in an ambulance. His ears were as white as a sheet. I think he was in the hospital less than two weeks but it seemed like a long, long time to me.

Relationship with parents & religious training: My parents taught us many things both by precept and example, probably more by example than precept. We knew what was expected of us, but I can't really remember rules. We observed Sundays as a special day, and there were certain things we didn't do on Sunday such as buying anything except perhaps medicine in an emergency. We didn't sew or ride bikes (except trikes when we were little) or do unnecessary work. However, we went for rides or walks on Sunday afternoon, and were allowed to play games in the house. Mother always cooked a good Sunday dinner. Sometimes we went for rides to visit relatives. As I think back, I think my parents gave us quite a bit of freedom, and trusted us to act according to their expectations. Dad was more verbal in our religious and spiritual training, but here again, the example of both parents was more important. The folks went to Calvary Church. They started us in Sunday school at Berean Baptist when we were little, I think