

MARY BARBARA [KILLIAN] METHERAL (1899-2005)

Our mother Mary Barbara [Killian] Metheral was born July 1, 1899 in Arcadia, Wisconsin, the fifth child of Peter Jacob and Barbara Mary [Lisowski] Killian. The Killians emigrated to Canada in 1869 and the Lisowskis in 1880 from Poland to the United States. The Killians sailed from Hamburg, Germany to Ellis Island, New York and then travelled to Arcadia, Wisconsin, where other kinfolk had settled.



The men were conveying hay up to the loft when like any curious young people, Mary and her sister went to the barn to see what they were doing. Mary's dress and petticoat got caught in the conveyor belt hoisting her to the loft. Her father who was at the top instructed her brother Peter who was at the bottom to slowly back up the horses to bring the pulley and Mary down. Her father wrapped the arm in her petticoat to take her to the hospital at Independence, Wisconsin where there must have been good doctors as she was left with only a slightly crooked arm with no scars.

It was a sad time for the family in 1905 when Mary's two year old baby brother died.

Mary often recalled her father raising beautiful peacocks as well as having goats, horses, cows, bee hives, and an abundance of nut trees. He also wove baskets. Daughter Audrey still has the baby basket that he wove.

They were well established on the farm in Arcadia with a good house, shed, and barn when her aunt Mary Katherine and John Henry Benning, who had been north to Weyburn, Saskatchewan, Canada, encouraged them to go north too. Good land was to be had with many opportunities. It must have been a very hard decision to leave their relatives and friends.

Peter with the oldest son, Peter Henry, travelled by train with their livestock, implements, furniture etc. to section N 4-7-1 4, about six miles south of Weyburn. It must have been a worrisome journey for Mary's mother travelling north later by train with five young children unable to speak English. One of youngsters broke out with measles.

It had been a bad winter in Saskatchewan with still lots of snow when they arrived in Weyburn on April 4, 1907. Mr. Benning met them with horses and sleigh to take them to their new home that only had two bedrooms for a family of eight. Mary recalled having to climb down from a high snow bank to the door. It is hard to imagine how this uncertain, nervous and tired family were able to cope, but they were thankful for the Bennings and other neighbors.

Their youngest son, Oscar Emil, was born on the farm August 16, 1908. All of the

family had to help with chores, but visiting and going to dances was their entertainment. It was at a dance where Mary met her future husband, Carman Metheral. She was only sixteen when they met but they didn't marry until she was nineteen.

During the flu epidemic Mary looked after family and neighbors as she was fortunate not to become infected. The family was saddened with the passing of mother Barbara Mary on May 24, 1924 from stomach cancer while she was in the hospital in Rochester. Eldest son Peter Henry passed on February 26, 1926 from typhoid fever leaving a young family that his wife had to cope with.

After Carman and Mary married in Moose Jaw on January 6, 1919, they lived south of Weyburn where Harvey and Marge were born. They sold the farm to Mary's brother Oscar and Gertie Killian and bought the farm 18-8-14 west of Weyburn where Ron and Tory Metheral lived, now occupied by their son Tyler Metheral.

Carman and Mary's second son, Sherwood, was born March 13, 1928, when they lived in the Holder Block on Souris Street while waiting to get on their land 18-8-14. All the children walked every day to Souris School and the Weyburn Collegiate, regardless of what the weather was like.

It was devastating for the family when Sherwood died of polio on September 4th, 1945, Harvey being overseas at the time. There was just a burial with Carman, Mary, Ron, and Audrey being quarantined for two weeks without visits or comforts from family and friends. The family lived in a four room house with five children, no electricity and no washing machine, with a well far from the house and, of course, no other conveniences. Mary was very good at baking, canning, knitting, crocheting and she was an excellent seamstress. Her main outing was the United Farm Women, when farm women would meet at the "Rest Room" in a small house on Second Street that had a small suite upstairs for a caretaker and a public bathroom in the basement.

During WWII, two RAF airmen would walk to the farm most Sundays to have fun with the family playing football, shooting gophers, and having one of Mary's great meals. Sometimes there would be ten of us at the table in this small house.

Both Mary and Carman were involved with the Weyburn Fair, with Mary in charge of homecrafts and the Farm Girls Camp. She often won the Blue Ribbon for biscuits. She was honoured several times by being the one to officially open the Fair.

When son Ron and Tory moved to the farm, Mary and Carman moved to a home on 6th Street that had been Carman's mother's home. After Carman passed away July 9, 1977, Mary moved to Heritage Place where she enjoyed activities at the Kinsmen Centre. She played in a band that performed at parades and continued playing while in the Special Care Home.

She entered the nursing home in 1992 when she was 92 years old and was there for thirteen years.

Although Mary had some very sad times in her life, she also had many highlights such as the Centenarian celebration in 2000. How many people can claim that they had lived in three centuries?

Mary passed away June 27, 2005 at the good age of 105 years and is buried in Hillcrest Cemetery.

We were like many families who didn't have very much but were happy, made our own fun, enjoyed Saturday trips to town with always an odd treat and perhaps a movie.

We are very thankful for a life with its many ups and downs.