

Turn My Face Toward Cliffside

A Collection of Memories by Jennie Louise Hawkins Metcalfe

Introduction

THESE STORIES ARE JENNIE LOUISE Hawkins Metcalfe's - our Mema's - memories. Many nights as she tried to sleep, she would lie awake in her big four poster bed and let her mind wander back to Cliffside. Revisiting the pleasant, happy days of her childhood gave her comfort and helped her pass time in the wee hours of the mornings she couldn't sleep. Mema doesn't remember how many years ago she began to record her reminiscences, but she thinks maybe when her two children, Harold and Rachel, were small. She scribbled these memories on any paper close at hand and ensconced them under her mattress. Over the years, she filled unlined notebook paper, scrap paper, adding machine tape, notepads, Stallings Jewelry Store receipt books, and even a Blue Cross Blue Shield claim form.

Sallie (Summey Morse) eventually received this accumulation of stories, anecdotes and memories. She organized and typed them, a loving, laudable endeavor. In 1987, Sallie passed the document she had created along with the notes to me. I have worked on them on and off ever since, consulting with Mema on details and elaborations and adding the transcript of a graduate course interview with her.

Although Turn My Face Toward Cliffside has gone through several revisions and reorganizations, the words and most importantly the voice belong to Mema. Through this voice we glimpse Jennie Hawkins: a generous, fun-loving child whose sweet spirit shines still in her eyes, whose mischievousness cavorts yet in her laughter and dry humor, and whose loving gentleness touches us now with gnarled hands that bestow grand gifts. This then is her gift to us, her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren: precious childhood memories, stories of our kinfolk, Mama and Papa Hawkins' wisdom, and a glimpse of herself that only she could give us.

A. Suzanne Metcalfe
Christmas 1995

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ON A COLD WINTRY MORNING in the year 1880, exactly one month after Christmas Day, a baby girl was born to James Whitson McDaniel and Nancy Jane Biggerstaff McDaniel. She was their fourth child, and she was named Nancy Leota. That was Mama. At this time the McDaniels were living a few miles from Burnt Chimney (which was later called Forest City) at a crossroads known as Striped Store, named so because of the small store building at the crossroads painted in stripes of red and white. This store building was also the post office, and James Whitson (Grandpa Mac) served as the postmaster. Later the McDaniels bought several hundred acres of land a few miles down the road from Striped Store and built a five-room house for the family. Grandma Mac lived here until she died. Grandpa had built this house when Mama was three years old, and it had five rooms and a hall. Every room except one small bedroom had a fireplace in it. There was even a fireplace in the kitchen. They always kept a fire going in the kitchen and in Grandma's room.

Just four years before this, October 18, 1876, several miles nearer the South Carolina line, a baby boy was born to George Sylvester Hawkins and Annie Octavia Green Hawkins. He was their first child, and they named him Plato Commodore Hawkins. Several years later, the family moved to the Providence section of Rutherford County, and it was here in a one-room school house, that Nancy (Nanny) McDaniel and Plato (P.C.) Hawkins happened to meet. Later, when Papa was a young man, he briefly taught school in the same small school where they met.

The two children started out walking to school together carrying lunch pails filled with sausage and ham biscuits and hot sweet potatoes. Soon their childhood friendship turned into romance and at 2:00 pm on December 19, 1899, with friends gathered in the parlor of James Whitson and Nancy Jane McDaniel's home, Mama and Papa were married. Grandma Mac, an expert seamstress who sewed for a lot of people, made Mama's dress. It was a beautiful shade of deep teal blue with leg-of-mutton sleeves and a tight waist with a full skirt that came down to her ankles. She was especially proud of the dress since Grandma Mac had made it, and it went perfectly with the navy blue suit that Papa so handsomely wore. The ceremony was simple. They were married in the parlor where there was an organ. Mama's cousin, Miss Kate Webb, played the organ, and since all she could play was Marching Through Georgia, that was the wedding march. They moved up the hall to the parlor, and Mama's best friend Florrie Matheny and Papa's best friend, Ben Butler, stood up for them. Back then they were called waiters. After the wedding, several couples got in their buggies and drove over to Ellenboro for the wedding trip. They went over and back in one day. They returned late that afternoon, then the next day went over to Grandma and Grandpa Hawkins' to stay for a few days. When all the visiting and celebrating was over, Mama and Papa returned to live at Grandma Mac's home, out from Henrietta.

At this time, Papa was working at the Caroleen Mill and rose each morning at 4:00 am to walk the several miles to work. It being winter time and cold, snowy weather; he often had to make tracks to get to the mill by 6:00 am. He would get off work at 6:00 pm and return home long after dark, proud of his dollar-a-day wages.

It wasn't long before Grandpa Hawkins gave Mama and Papa an acre of land near Caroleen. Soon they had built their first house, a small, four-room frame house with front and back porches. It was here on September 26, 1900, that Muriel Glenn, their first baby was born. In

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the spring of 1902, the little family moved again, this time into the small village of Caroleen, where Papa was closer to his work and the Baptist church in which he took a great interest all his life.

Not long after the move, on June 28, 1902, Daniel Reid was born. Mama and Papa were proud of their little family, but when Dan was only five months old, his older sister, Muriel, died with a form of baby diarrhea. Even though early deaths such as this were common at the time, nothing could prepare for the shock of grief that comes with losing a child. But Mama and Papa were blessed, for on June 24, 1905, another baby was born into the family. The baby was a beautiful little girl, and Mama did not name her immediately, but called her Sister. She continued calling her Sister for several years, but when I was born two years later on October 12, 1907, a problem arose: there couldn't be two Sisters! So Mama finally named her Melrose, but to this day she is still called Sister. To name me, they sent word to both grandmothers that I would be named after the first one to get there. Of course Grandma Mac got there first as she was a traveler all her life, so I was named Jennie Louise -Jennie as a nick name for Jane.

In the summer of 1908, we all moved back to the country near Grandma Mac to a place we called the red house, a small house painted pokeberry red on Grandpa Mac's farm. All this time, papa was working hard and learning all he could about textiles. In the spring of 1909, Papa was offered the job of overseer in the weaving department of a mill in Charlotte. He decided to take the job; so we packed up our household things on a two-horse wagon, and Papa hauled them over to the depot at Caroleen and put them on the train for Charlotte. Grandpa Hawkins then brought Mama, Sister, Dan, and me in his big surrey to the depot and waved good-bye as we left on the train for the big city.

To me it seemed as if we were going to another world, an enormous and strange place with streetcars, bright lights, and hundreds of people. We liked Charlotte, but really looked forward to the summertime when we could get on the train and come back to Grandma's for a visit. Grandpa Hawkins would always be the one to meet us at the train station with the two big horses and the surrey. He would be waiting for us many blocks away, holding onto the horses for dear life as they would rear and jerk and whinny with terror at the sight and sound of the loud and frightening train.

While still in Charlotte, on July 5, 1910, George Robert, whom we called Buster, was born into the family, But again we did not keep this baby for long, for in September of 1911, he died. We put the little casket and a very sad Mama on the train. Papa, Dan, Sister, and I came with the little body back to Henrietta. George Robert was buried close to Muriel in the Providence Methodist Cemetery.

Our stay in the big city with street cars, lights, and lots of people was a real experience, but it just wasn't home. We lived in Charlotte from the time I was about one year old until I was around five. We were all very happy when Papa was offered a high position with the Cliffside Mills. Again we packed up our belongings on the train and moved back to Cliffside: Home Again! All this traveling on a big noisy train was quite frightening to Sister, Dan and me: and I can remember how fast my heart beat as we rode along, peering out the window at the blurred countryside.

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Back in Cliffside, we moved into a nine room house and Boy!, were we in high cotton. Here we had our first parlor, a dinning room, Mama's room, kitchen, children's rooms, playhouse and Aunt Lucy's room. Aunt Lucy was a fat, jolly Negro woman who lived with us for a long time, doing all the cleaning and washing for Mama and helping to take care of the babies as they came along. How long she lived with us I can't remember, but it must have been years as she was almost like one of the family. She was in her forties when she came, but to us she was old. As long as we lived in that house, even after Aunt Lucy left, we still called that room Aunt Lucy's room.

Even though Aunt Lucy was there to help Mama with the cooking and cleaning, we each had our chores to do. Dan had to draw the water, keep the buckets and kettle full, and bring in the coal for the heater. Sister was in charge of keeping the stove wood box full of wood, and my duty was the beloved chamber pot which had to be taken out every morning, rinsed out, put in the sun, and brought back in at night. Not once did it occur to us to go to bed without our work done as that would mean a trip to the playhouse.

The playhouse was a room built off the back porch for Sister and me to play in. It was a good-sized room and Sister and I kept all our toys there and played there often, especially on rainy days. But the play house was more than a play house, it was also used for punishments, or in Papa's words, "Straightening us out." Sometimes we got straightened out so well it was difficult to bend to sit down. Mama left most of the discipline up to Papa, and although she gave us many a hard shake, Papa administered the real punishment. One thing I remember was that Dan was forbidden to go to the river or the Roller Mill where there was a pond for swimming, but sometimes he would slip away and go, knowing that he would be taken to the play house when Papa came home. All afternoon Sister and I would dread it for him, and when the punishment came we would cry louder than he. Sister never did get a whipping. Dan got several, but not many. I never did get many.

Everything was pleasant, and when we went to the table to eat, we never complained, "I don't like this, and I don't like that," or talked and fussed back and forth. We had to have good table manners, and we had to be there when the meal was served. If we were out playing, Papa would just come to the front porch and whistle. He had a shrill whistle; you could hear him half over town, and brother! we were there in two minutes; we were never called twice. We all sat down and ate together. Once Mama sat down, she never got up any more because she always had a baby to help feed. Sister and I got up when we needed more bread or needed more vegetables to fill the plates. We just kind of knew what to do; I don't know that they ever did tell us.

Cliffside, where we all grew up was a beautiful little village. The houses were owned by the Haynes family and the people paid twenty-five cents per room each week to live in them. The houses were painted often and kept in excellent condition and the yards were kept clean and neat. Each year Mr. Haynes, the owner of the mill, gave a nice cash prize for the prettiest yard. No dogs were allowed in town, and all cows and pigs were kept together at the edge of town.

Although a small and quiet place, life in Cliffside was never dull. Papa's brother, Uncle Zeno, had a livery stable there in town and we often hired a horse and buggy and went to visit relatives and friends. These were great outings which we all looked forward to with excitement and anticipation. When riding in the buggy, Mama, Papa, and Dan sat up front in the seat, and

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sister and I sat on a plank in the back. On special occasions, we rented two big brown and white horses and a surrey with two seats. Then Papa would let Dan help him drive; and Mama, Sister, and I would sit in the back seat. Once we rented this outfit and drove all the way to Sunshine, about twenty miles, to visit Mama's Uncle Sam. This was too much of a trip for one day so we spent the night.

At this time only five cars had been shipped into Cliffside, and we were lucky enough to get one of these first cars. Mr. Haynes had ordered five T-model sedans: two seated cars. This was a very exciting event and we were thrilled to get to ride in a car and own one! We used to take it to Charlotte. We wouldn't think of going to Charlotte and back in one day. We'd go down one morning, and it would take us all day to get there because weren't any roads marked. We'd go down a dirt road and come to a fork in the road. Papa would say, "I wonder which way we go here?" He never got upset or worried. He'd say, "I believe I'll take this one, and we'd go down that road about three or four miles and stop at a house, and he'd ask "Is this the road to Charlotte?" They'd say "No, go back up yonder to the fork in the road and take the left road." We'd have to go way back up there, and it would take us half a day to get to Charlotte.

The second car we called Hulda, and this big, black, open Buick sedan could go flying up a hill in high gear if the hill wasn't too steep. On our trips to Grandma's, it was often cold, and Sister, Dan, and I would sit in the floor huddled under a quilt. In the summertime, we always stirred up big clouds of dust wherever we went since the roads weren't paved. Mama had a long, beautiful linen coat called a duster and a cap for her head that she wore when we went for rides. This coat was made especially to wear over your clothes to keep the dust off. We children took the dust, and the three of us would end up looking like little brown Indians once we reached our destination. When bad weather set in and it got too cold to ride, Papa would put Hulda in the garage and jack her up for the winter.

After Mama's brother, Uncle Oscar moved to Charlotte, we'd go to visit him there. He was the runniest thing you've ever seen. He'd just keep you laughing all the time. One time when Dan was at Wake Forest, a friend of his and he got that far and were going to stay with Uncle Oscar and come home the rest of the way the next day. They parked the friend's old, bad-looking car out in front of the house. Uncle Oscar went out there and said, "If you boys don't mind, put your car in the back yard. Somebody might think it's mine!" Back then everyone had an organ and open toilet outhouses. Uncle Oscar said he could always tell when he got to a mill village because he could "hear organs and smell dung!"

Some of our most exciting times in Cliffside were the times we went to Uncle Oscar's before he moved to Charlotte. We knew that once we got back home, there would be a surprise waiting for us. Back then, having no hospitals meant that babies were born at home. The other children were sent to the neighbor's house while this happened. We were always sent to Uncle Oscar's.

So on November 19, 1912, off we went. We came back, and there was Whitson, a precious baby boy. Whitson was a baby that I remember well, but in January of 1914, he developed pneumonia and died. Doctor Shull worked hard to save little Whit's life, staying at our house both day and night. But with the lack of medical knowledge and available antibiotics,

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there was nothing that could be done to save him. He was buried beside George and Muriel at Providence Cemetery.

One highlight we all looked forward to was the visit from Mr. Hughes. Mr. Hughes came by our house about every two weeks bringing with him two large satchels filled with cloth and notions. In one satchel were the dress lengths in many designs and colors. In the other he carried buttons, thread, pins, needles, elastic, and many other sewing items. Mama nearly always bought three dress lengths, one for her, one for Sister, and one for me. Then we took the cloth to Teenie Reynolds, and she made the dresses for us. She was an expert seamstress, but it seemed like we had to go every day for a week to try them on. But it was worth it, for these dresses always turned out wonderfully and sister and I came to be known as the best dressed little girls in Cliffside.

It was at Cliffside that Sister and I first started school, Dan continued with the schooling he had begun in Charlotte, and we all went to a big six room building for classes. The building had an outside door to each room, and it was heated by big stoves. In the morning, we all met in one room for chapel, praying, and singing to start the day. We had class until 10:30, then recess, which meant a mad scramble for a seat in the little house at the edge of the woods. The seats were always wet, and some children never made it to the seat and just went in the floor. The odor lingers still. I always swore I could find my way to that place in the dark, it smelled so strong. The boy's privy was about twenty feet further into the woods, and I'm sure some of them never made it to the seat either. After recess we had class again until 12:00, then home for lunch, eating in a hurry to get back in time to play with our friends. School was out at 5:30.

After school our favorite snack was good crunchy apples and peanut butter and crackers. Papa bought peanut butter by the gallon and crackers in five pound boxes. Kids from all over the neighborhood ate with us after school as Mama and Papa were always generous with what we had.

Having no high school at Cliffside, Dan went away to Boiling Springs High School which is now Gardener Web College. To us, he had gone far away when really it was about ten miles. I am sure Dan had many amusing times there. Sister also went there a couple years; I went for one.

Then we had a new high school with Mr. Clyde Ervin, principal. He later became superintendent of all schools in NC.

The years passed, and on April 12, 1913, it was time to go to Uncle Oscar's again. When we came back, just as expected, there was a new addition to the family. Mama named him Paul, and he was the prettiest baby you've ever laid eyes on, He had dark ringlets all over his head and big brown eyes to charm anyone. Paul's beautiful curly hair was to be a grievance to him for many years as he tried again and again to wet and straighten it. He spent many hours wetting it, then combing it down flat in hopes that it would one day dry straight. It never did and if you look closely you can see curls to this day. Paul also hated getting his hair cut and cried every time the barber started to cut it. Mama finally had get him to fall asleep and then call Mr. Sparks, the barber, to come to the house and cut it while Paul slept.

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Although Paul was the prettiest baby with charming curls and big brown eyes, he was also the most strong-willed and rambunctious. When Paul was born, Sister and I were 8 and 10, just the right ages to care for him and this became part of our daily chores. We often carried his diapers to White Line a line of houses where the colored people lived to get them washed. I'll not say how old Paul was before being house broke. Paul was also very stubborn and often cried to sleep with Mama. Many times Sister and I would put him in the bed with us and tell him stories until he went to sleep so Papa wouldn't spank him.

As our little family grew and grew, life in Cliffside continued to be filled with a quiet happiness built out of love, respect, and pride in each other. We were fortunate in that we always had plenty of love and plenty of good food to eat. Mama had a big black Majestic stove from which came biscuits twice a day and loads of tea cakes. Mama's biscuit pan measured 20 x 20 and she sometimes baked it full several times before quitting. One of our favorite treats was soft, buttery, gooey stickles. These were made with biscuit dough rolled out thin, then filled with sugar and butter and rolled up in a log.. Mama would cut them into thin slices and bake them in the oven: delicious and gooey and rightly called stickles. We often had them for breakfast!

In the summertime we always ate in the dining room. Papa never allowed any loud talk or bad manners, and one rule was that we always ate what we took out. After we sat down to eat, Mama never got up any more until we finished as Sister and I always waited on the table. Sister and I also washed up all the dishes when Mama didn't have hired help, and we took it time about cleaning the pots and pans. We were both famous for soaking the pans, sometimes having most of them hidden and soaking.

We always had plenty of visitors, and Papa would often bring the preacher and many others home. Sometimes Aunt Kate (Grandma Mac's sister) and her husband, Mr. Powers, would come to spend the night. Mr. Powers, being very religious, would always call for family prayer before bedtime. Thus we would all gather and kneel around the room, ready for the prayer. Paul, being still in the crawling stage, found this a perfect time to go crawling around the room from person to person, tickling our feet. It was all we could do to keep from bursting out laughing, an offense that would have taken us straight to the playhouse, visitors or no visitors.

There was no water in the house, but as far as I can remember, we always had electric lights. They turned them on every night at 5:00 and off at 8:00. Of course they were free back then and house rent, only \$1.00 per week; steak, 15 cents a pound; eggs, three dozen for 25 cents; and coffee, 15 cents a pound. I can remember going to the company store, down a dark stairway into the screened-in market where all the pork chops and beef roasts were kept and where the sausages were being made. There were no chickens to be bought in the wintertime because of the cold weather and no way to keep them alive. But when Spring came, you could buy nice fat fryers, perfect for Sunday dinner. Mama always bought several and penned them up for a while, feeding them meal and corn to clean them out. Then we killed and dressed them ourselves.

Nights at home were cozy and comfortable. Papa would often half-sole our shoes while Mama looked through our hair. She couldn't stand the thought of anything being in our hair. Sister, with long black curls was forever bringing lice home from school, It seemed like we'd be rid of them one week and the next week she'd bring them home again. Mama would often say,

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"If I were a louse, I'd swim the Mississippi to get to Sister's head." But Mama's conclusion on the subject was, "It ain't a shame to get 'em, but it's a shame to keep 'em." We all agreed and used plenty of lye soap on Sister's head.

Every Saturday in winter a large tub of water was brought in at night and filled with water. Dan would draw the cold water from the well, and it would sit in the sun all day warming. Then we'd all take turns bathing and lucky was the one who got to wash first. After our baths, our hands and feet were examined for splinters, our nails cut, and everything tended to that looked red or inflamed. This was Papa's department as he was always a doctor at heart. For the sores or boils, he applied Gray's ointment, a black mixture that looked like tar. If we had colds or were hoarse, he gave us a teaspoon of sugar with a drop of kerosene on it - this remedy must have been Papa's favorite, for he gave it to us religiously, even when we didn't have colds. "To keep them away," he said. Papa also used figs, prunes, and raisins and ground them together with a few senna leaves. He would mold this into balls or squares, and we'd eat them without ever tasting the senna - a sure-fire laxative. When Dan was young he had rheumatism so bad in his knees he sometimes couldn't walk. Papa had a cure for this too - Yeager's liniment rubbed on his knees plus a dose of pokeberry wine mixed with water which Dan drank. After these treatments, Dan walked a lot easier.

Papa also ordered from a mail order company cases of Jo-He oil, an all-purpose remedy for sore throat, colds, coughs, and many other ailments. He would sell this to the people in the village, and always did it for the good of the people, never making any profit and sometimes even giving it away to the poor people.

If any emergency came up, I was the one to go to the mill after Papa. I would go flying down the hill and into his office, then all over the mill looking for him if he wasn't there. Sometimes I went to the mill in the afternoons after school and always took a friend with me as we knew for a big hug, Papa would give us each a nickel. That was a tremendous amount of money, and it took us hours to figure out how to spend it - most candy was five pieces for a penny.

I remember lots of friends from Cliffside, but having brothers and sisters to grow up with was what meant the most. Since Sister and I were so close in age we became not only like sisters, but friends. Growing up with Sister was always entertaining, made more so by the fact that she was afraid of a number of things. Sister would faint at just about anything. Children are often quick to capitalize on other children's fears, and I'll have to admit I was no exception.

I'll never forget the time Clyde (Papa's baby sister) and I, helped Sister get across the swinging foot bridge at Caroleen. Every time we went to the store, we had to cross that bridge, and Sister was always afraid to death to cross it, dreading it the whole way there. Everyone else would just walk on across, but poor Sister never met that bridge without fear in her heart or terror in her soul. I'm afraid I didn't do much to ease that fear...

One day the three of us were walking to Caroleen and here came that bridge. Sister's eyes got big and her knees got weak and started to shake, and Clyde and I, being right concerned about the situation walked on across the bridge to ponder awhile and see how we could best help

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poor Sister cross that bridge. Well, we stood there and thought a while and finally decided how she could best cross that bridge.

"Sister, get down on your hands and knees," we said, "and start crawling across real slowly." So she got down on her hands and knees, knowing that bridge wouldn't swing when she crawled across it like that. Well, it did swing, just like it always did, and she said it really made her head swim. So the next time we came to the bridge we told Sister that she didn't do it right the time before.

"Now before you start, put a stick in your mouth to chew on and that will keep your head from swimming," we told her. And here she came.

Well Clyde and I were just about to die laughing at Sister. Now that was a funny sight: Sister crawling across that bridge on her hands and knees with a stick in her mouth, and by the time she'd reached the other side, she'd just about chewed that stick plumb through. Sister never did get over being afraid of that bridge.

Another thing Sister dreaded was Papa's white gloves. Back then the only people you ever saw wearing white gloves were pall bearers at funerals. Papa was often a pall bearer so he kept a pair of white gloves at home, locked up in his desk drawer.

Well, whenever I could I'd slip around and find that drawer unlocked and sneak those white gloves out and put them on. Then I'd go at Sister with my hands and arms up in the air and make a sound like a ghost. Well poor Sister would see me coming and think she saw a dead person and would either take off flying or faint, Sister hated those gloves and I loved them.

But the funniest thing about Sister, she was afraid to have her picture taken. Back then they didn't have any studios so every now and then a man would come around and take the family's picture. It was a big thing to have our picture made, and w^e'd all gather the family together and get on the porch or in the yard to pose.

We'd be standing there and the man would go and get under that black cloak and he'd yell, "Watch the Birdie." About that time, Sister would faint. Poor Sister was afraid to death of that birdie, waiting for it to fly out from under that cloak and get her. She'd faint right away every time, and we like to never got that picture made.

Dan was also quite a character, and the one thing I remember about him was his long underwear. In the wintertime, Sister, Dan, and I all wore long underwear. The fashion was for children to wear long, black stockings over their underwear. Well, Dan used to get holes in his stocking, and his white underwear would show through. Dan solved the problem simply by taking black shoe polish and blackening his underwear where the holes were. No one could tell the difference, but it sure looked funny whenever he took his stockings off to see his spotted underwear.

When Sister, Dan and I were little, we had to be home at 9:00 PM. We weren't allowed to stay out late, I guess, until we were twelve or fourteen years old. Then after we got up big enough to go to parties at Cliffside, we had to be home by 9:30 or something like that even then.

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One girl Ella Scruggs who lived out past the cemetery, had more parties than anybody one every two or three weeks. They had a big old house out there.. We'd go out to her house and have our party, and then it would be dark when we started home. We had to go through the cemetery or right through the edge of it. Boy we'd start through that thing, the crowd of us. Somebody would say, "Do you see that ghost over yonder?" and you never have seen such running in your life. The little ones would get behind and holler and take on (they were scared to death because back then they talked a lot about ghosts). We had a colored woman who lived with us then, and she used to scare the life out of us with her Ghost Tales. Annie would tell about riding horses through the cemetery and ghosts jumping on the back of their horses. They'd just fly, but if you ever came to a creek, the ghosts couldn't cross water and they'd jump off. They'd run their horses nearly to death looking for a creek so the ghost would jump off the back of their horses.

I always looked forward to the summertime because that meant I could go and stay with Grandma Mac. I loved both my grandmothers dearly but visited Grandma Mac more often than Grandma Hawkins because there were more children to play with where Grandma Mac lived, We played with the Kennedys: Hoyt, Akin, May Phene, MB, Robert and Virginia. Robert was a little retarded boy who died at age ten with a fever. Up the road were the Wilkins, the ones we played with most: Ola, Ethylene and Sarah, At night we would walk up there with a lantern. Ola and I remained friends all through life, and we still see each other as she now lives in Forest City.

During the daytime, we played outside in the yard or close by in the woods. We'd sweep out pine needles and leaves from the ground and lay out rocks in a circle to make a room. Grandma Mac would save all her baking powder cans for us, and these would become pot and pans or cups and saucers in our imaginary kitchen. Two bricks with a plank across them served as a stove, and we baked imaginary biscuits and cakes of mud and served imaginary guests in the finest of styles.

Part of staying with Grandma was helping her with the chores. But we never minded because she was a person who made work seem fun. One of these chores was digging white dirt for the kitchen floor. Our job was to dig up buckets of white, chalky-looking dirt that Grandma would sprinkle all over the hardwood floor. As she swept up the white dirt, she also swept up all the grease and dust with it.

Late in the afternoon, Grandma would always say, "Let's do up our night work." Night work consisted of carrying in stove wood, filling two big wooden buckets with water for drinking, cooking, and bathing, and washing the lamp chimneys which Grandma then filled with oil for the night. Each night she lit three lamps and put one on the dresser, one on the mantel, and one on the table. The light from them was soft and comforting.

While we were all doing our night work, Grandpa Mac was busy reading and studying his Sunday School lesson. For years he walked the many miles to Henrietta to teach the Men's Bible Class at the First Methodist Church. When Grandpa Mac first moved to Henrietta, he built a small village of three room houses. There were sixteen houses in all, and he rented them to Negroes who were hired to help the farmers. I used to go with him to collect rent- about twenty-five cents a week. This small village of Negroes came to be known as Rag Town. Grandpa Mac was very kind to his Negroes, knowing all of them by name, where they in turn, out of fond

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respect, called him Mr. Whit and Grandma Mrs. Whit. At Christmas, he always carried the Negro children apples, oranges, and hard candy, and took the grown-ups a nice gift. Some of the houses he built are still standing today.

Summertime with Grandma Mac meant going places and seeing people. Grandma Mac was a traveler at heart and never hesitated in taking me with her wherever she went. I never hesitated in going because there was no telling what new relatives and friends I was going to meet. Our longest trip was to Waynesville. I'll never forget it because we walked several miles to the depot at Caroleen to get on the train, and once we did, we rode forever. Actually it was only about one hundred miles, but the ride took most of the day. Being such a long trip, we stayed an entire week visiting an aunt of Grandma's.

One trip I looked forward to was visiting Aunt Etta, Grandma's sister in Gastonia. This was also a long trip, but well worth it to me because Aunt Etta lived in a large white frame two-story house with a big stairway going up from the hallway. To a small girl from Cliffside, it was almost a mansion!! All of the rooms were huge, especially the dining room where we ate. Aunt Etta always welcomed us with Devil's Food cake: she knew it was my favorite. I can still taste that Devil's Food cake with white icing as thick as the layers. Aunt Etta's house still stands on York Street in Gastonia.

We also took trips to Shelby to visit another of Grandma Mac's sisters, Aunt Abi. Aunt Abi ran an inn and boarding house there in Shelby. Since Aunt Abi lived close to the depot, and such things as motels were not heard of back then, she often kept traveling sales people overnight or other people passing through town. I can remember the long table in the dining room where she served dinner to the travelers. It could seat at least twelve people and often did! The table was always loaded with good food, and Grandma Mac and I ate many a good meal there.

Grandma Mac was born in Sunshine, October 11, 1854. She attended school there at Sunshine where she learned to love books and reading. She read even7 book she could find and had read the Bible through a number of times. She never went to bed before twelve or one as she was always staying up late reading or sewing, but was surprisingly an early riser. She never drank milk or ate butter or beef and lived to be 86. She would slip around in the kitchen to make sure butter wasn't put in anything.

We always had big reunions on her birthday. She would invite all the family and anyone who lived nearby. A photographer often came and took pictures of the whole gang in front of the house,

Grandma Mac remembered the Civil War. She used to tell us about one of her uncles. When the Yankee soldiers came through, the family hid the horses from the Yankees and the horses never did whinny. The soldiers wanted the family to get up from the table to let them eat. Grandma's uncle wouldn't do it, and they just took an ax while he was sitting there at the table and split his head open.

Grandma Mac was an expert seamstress and sewed for many of the people in Henrietta. She was called on to make shirts for many of the mill officials and doctors of the county

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including J. B. Ivey, Mr. Tanner, and Dr. Whisnant who later became an eye specialist in Charlotte. The shirts were much like the ones of today except they had no collar. The collars were made separately, starched real stiff, and fastened on with a collar button. She died on November 7, 1937, and we missed her so.

Time passed, and on August 20th of 1917, soon after our older brother Dan went away to college, it was time to go to Uncle Oscar's again. We came back and met our new baby sister, Agnes. Agnes was a very sweet and pretty little girl, always so kind and thoughtful and never causing any trouble.

The last time we went to Uncle Oscar's was for Frank to be born. He arrived on September 1, 1920, and soon after his arrival, Preacher Jesse David Hunt came by so Mama named him after the preacher, Jesse Franklin. Frank was a small, quiet baby who never caused any trouble. We almost lost him at about age two when he quietly plodded out to the back porch, picked up a cup of kerosene and drank it. Fortunately, Dr. Shull was nearby and came in time to pump his stomach. By this time Paul was getting larger and begged Mama to let him play in the yard, so she paid a twelve year old colored boy twenty-five cents a day to come and play with him while she cared for Frank.

Dan and Sister and I grew up together, and then there were the two who died between us. I'm eight years older than Paul, and Paul and Agnes and Frank grew up together. Dan was in college when Frank was born. He was at Wake Forest. When Dan came home for Christmas, Frank was four months old, and he had never seen his new brother.

Grandma Hawkins (Annie Octavia Green Hawkins) was a fat, jolly woman, always with a smile on her face. Sister reminds me of her. She and Grandpa lived on a large farm near Caroleen in a big eight room house with porches wrapped nearly all the way around it. We visited with them sometimes on Sundays, and I loved their big, old house. My favorite room in the big house was the parlor which was kept closed except on Sundays when visitors came. In the parlor was a beautiful organ, a lush couch, and a center table in the middle of the room on which lay the family Bible.

Grandpa Hawkins was a stern quiet man, never talking very much. He was a good business man and farmer and always worked hard and saved his money. Other farmers would often borrow money from him for fertilizer or feed and pay him back when they sold their cotton. He was a very religious man and never missed church, driving the several miles in a wagon and later the surrey that he bought from his savings. He always took all the children to church with him, and he was well known at church for leading the singing with his beautiful deep voice.

My great grandmother, Granny Becky, Grandsir's second wife, lived with us for a while. Papa's own grandmother, Drusilla, died and Grandsir married again. Grandsir fought in the Civil War. Somehow he was shot through the hand. They gave him three months furlough. It took him a month to walk home from Virginia, because there were no marked roads. He stayed a month at home and then had a month to walk back, but the war ended and he didn't have to go back. I remember him well. We used to go over to see him. He looked just like the picture we have of him with that long gray beard. Granny Becky was an old maid when Grandsir married her, and

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when he died, none of her people would have her. She'd stay with Papa and us a while and then go to an aunt and stay a while and then another aunt for a while. At this time, Pap and I were married and living with Mama and Papa. Rachel was a baby and there were four generations living in the house.

Mama loved to play jokes on people. Granny Becky was at our house when she died. She had a room upstairs that we called Granny Becky's room, and she died in that room. We had a maid named Maggie that stayed with us all the time, and about a week after she died, Mama said, "Maggie let's go upstairs and you bring a big bucket of hot sudsy water and we'll clean Granny Becky's room. Now, Granny Becky always wore a bonnet and a shawl. Mama went ahead, and she got over in the corner where Granny Becky always sat and put that bonnet on and that shawl around her shoulders and rocked in the chair. Mag came in the door with that big bucket of hot soapy water, and she looked over where Mama was sitting there in the corner with that bonnet and shawl on. She threw that hot water everywhere and went down those steps three at a time and didn't stop running until she got way down behind the house and nearly to the railroad.

We were always a close family, but we never did show affection; we never did hug and kiss and go on like a lot of families do. We loved each other. Why I'd no more speak a sharp word to Sister than I'd fly. Mama instilled that in us. She said she had never been mad but one time in her life, and I don't remember her ever being mad, Mama said that was when Dan and Wyman and Hobert were little. Hobert was Uncle Oscar's son. Uncle Oscar was really good looking and a "dude." Ellen, his wife and Hobert's mother, died when Hobert was four months old. She got kicked by a cow and the wound festered. Grandma Mac raised Hobert, and he was always a little, puny, sick fellow. Mama loved Hobert and looked on him as a brother because he came to their house to live before she ever married and left home. One time Uncle Sam (Mama's brother) and Aunt Fanny were up there, and Wyman (Uncle Sam's son who lives in Greenville, SC) jumped on Hobert and was beating him. That made Mama so mad, she liked to died. She said that was the oonly time she was really mad in her life. Of course I guess she got aggravated. I never heard Papa or Mama say a bad word.

Mama and Papa were also very religious, Papa a devout Baptist and Mama just as much a I Methodist. Papa guided us with a firm hand, but Mama with her kindness and strength really was the backbone of the family. When there wasn't a small baby at home Mama always was working at the church in the Missionary Society, helping with bazaars, cooking at suppers, and doing many other things. As Mama was not always able to attend regular because of family duties, Papa took all that were housebroken to church every Sunday. Paul, being the slowest one to learn this, did not get to go to church as early or as often as the rest of us.

But when he did go, he was not forgotten. One Sunday, the Sunday school teacher asked the class if any of them knew a Bible verse and little Paul raised his hand eagerly. She called on him and he said this one:

I had a little mule
And his name was Jack
I put him in the stable
And he jumped out the crack.

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Paul was just as proud as if he had said the twenty-third Psalm.

Back then they kept Sunday as a Sabbath day, and we weren't allowed to run and play and holler on Sunday. Now we could sit down and play quietly with other children, but as far as getting out in the yard and running and hollering and getting on, we couldn't a bit more do that.

Papa never allowed a deck of cards in the house. Because Papa did a lot of ordering as superintendent of the mill, every Christmas the salesmen would send him a nice Christmas present. One Christmas I remember, they'd sent him the nicest package, and he sat down in front of the fire to open it. It was a beautiful set of gilt edge playing cards. Back then they called them gambling cards, but they were just bridge cards. He opened them up and looked at them, and just like that he put them in the fire.

Much could be written about Papa Hawkins. He had sparkling black eyes and a melodious laugh. His gentle kindness, his thoughtfulness, and concern for others made him a man the entire town and county respected, admired and loved. He had a great love for people and God. He was a generous giver to the church and to those less fortunate than he. Every winter he helped widows and orphans by arranging for one-hundred pound sacks of flour and sugar plus a sack of meal to be left on their porches without them ever knowing who had given it to them. Not long ago I answered an ad on the radio and got to talking to the woman. As it turns out she was raised in Cliffside and vaguely remembered me, but remembered Papa well. She said when she was a little girl and her father died, they were too poor to buy dresses to attend the funeral in. On the day of the funeral, Papa showed up at her house with little dresses for each girl. She said she will never forget that as long as she lives.

Papa was also concerned about those who had not been able to go to school, and the mill let him set up an informal school house in an empty house in the village to teach the men to read and write. You just don't know the people he taught how to read and write. So many people back then were illiterate. He would take his time at night and sometimes he would teach two, three, or even more nights. If any young boys wanted to go to college, they often came to see Papa, and he helped so many finance their studies, especially if they wanted to go to Wake Forest and make a preacher.

Education was important, and we all finished high school. Dan and Frank graduated from Wake Forest. Paul finished at Clemson. Frank and Paul went on to Atlanta to Emory University. I went to King's Business College and then married. Sister went to Limestone one or two years and then got married, Agnes was the only one who never did go to college. She finished high school and married right after.

I met Pap while I was in Charlotte. Ella Scruggs' (the one that always had the parties) mother was a widow woman, and after her husband died, she moved to Charlotte and ran a boarding house. Mama and Papa wouldn't have let me go down there if I had been among strangers. They let me go and live with Mrs. Scruggs. This girl, Beatrice Hawkins (may be distantly related) and I went down there together to take a business course. She knew this Wright boy, and they were courting. He boarded at the same house Pap did. One night he brought Pap over there with him. Pap told Beatrice, "Go in there and get the best looking girl you

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got in there and we'll double." They were going to the movies. Beatrice went in there and got me, and we dated. Beatrice still lives in Charlotte.

I was dating another boy Brevard , whom I met him at Boiling Springs. I graduated high school at Gardener Web and met him there. He went on to Emory University and made a dentist. Pap would take me to the bus in Charlotte, and Brevard would meet me in Shelby. Pap and I kept dating. He had a good job and he took me out a lot. We went to a lot of movies and Vaudeville shows. Sometimes we'd go out to eat. All this was new to me because I had always lived in that little mill town, and I was traveling in high cotton there going to those places.

We went to York to get married. We kept talking about getting married, and it just came in a round about way. Beatrice and her fellow went with us. We went to York one Saturday afternoon and got married. My parents would rather I didn't get married because I was still down there in Charlotte. I was working; I had finished school. I was about eighteen and a half. We married March 13, 1926. All the girls married young back then. Seems to me Grandma Hawkins was just about 13. I was twenty when I had my first baby.

Papa was always an early riser, sometimes getting up by four o'clock to grind the coffee and get the old range red hot. Mama could bake biscuits in three minutes once the stove was hot. This achievement could never be equaled on today's gas and electric ranges. Early in the mornings we could hear Papa grinding coffee. Back then the only way to buy coffee was in beans and everybody ground their own. We had a square-shaped orange coffee mill attached to the wall with a cup underneath. I don't know why I can remember the sound of the coffee mill so well as I'm sure I was never awake many times at that hour, but it was a comforting sound to wake to and then fall back asleep.

Papa was always volunteering for things and during the great flu epidemic of 1918, he went from house to house carrying in water and wood for the sick families and taking food to them. Papa also helped with the doctoring some as Dr. Shull had more than he could do alone so he called on Papa. Sometimes all the members of a family were in bed and some families had as many as three deaths, The Freemans lost three fine boys, and there was hardly enough well people to bury them. During all this epidemic Papa never caught the flu, and as well as I can remember none of us ever did either. I guess the teaspoon of sugar with a drop of kerosene had delivered us.

Papa was a family man and took great pride in his wife and children. He had a joyful personality, and the air seemed to light up whenever he was around. He always encouraged us to do our best and be our best, and he understood children like few grownups could. He fixed us swings in trees and helped us with our lessons, never stopping until he was sure we knew them well and could recite forwards, backwards and under pressure. Papa often brought catalogs home and would send off for free samples in them. The samples would arrive in mine or Sister's name, and it just tickled us to death to receive these small surprises in the mail.

In August of 1937, Papa fell and broke his leg. We got him a hospital bed and they put his leg in traction, but in three weeks, he had a clot in the heart. Not having the knowledge or the medicine available, now there was nothing the doctor could do. Early the morning of September 1, Papa left us and went to heaven. We know he did because he told us he was going. Never have

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any children suffered so, We lost our counselor, our teacher, our doctor, our friend, and our Papa. On September 3, our sorrowing family buried him at Cliffside, home to him: the place he spent so many happy years. As the song goes we can all say, "Oh my Papa, to me you were so wonderful."

Many years later, in 1978, Mama left us to join Papa. She was ninety-eight. As long as she was able, she always kept busy every day cleaning, sewing, cooking and helping in every way she could. In her later years, she was not able to grow flowers and work in her yard and do many of the things she loved to do, but was always at home waiting for the boys to come visit in the summer for a few weeks, waiting for Agnes each week when she could come up, and waiting each day for Sister and me and the little brood who lived close by. In the quietness of her last illness, I'm sure her unspoken thoughts were of the many happy days when we were growing up, for many times she whispered, "Turn my face toward Cliffside."