

# AUTOBIOGRAPHY

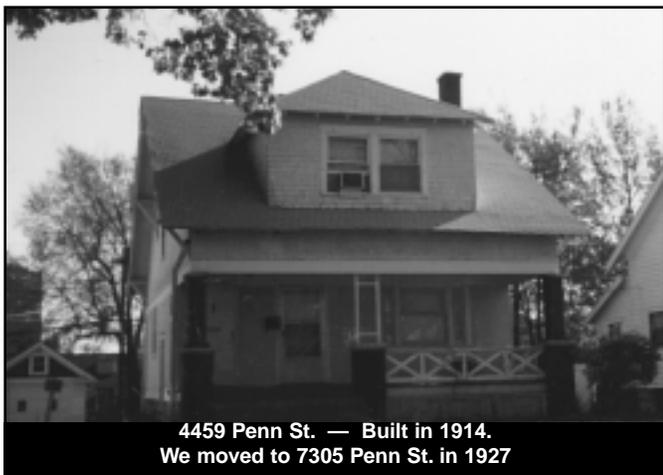
by FRED KLINGE

Since I didn't keep a diary I am writing this the best I can from memory, so some of the information may not be in exactly the right time frame.

My father, August H. Klinge, and mother, Christine Kreiter Klinge, were both born in 1882. My father and his two sisters, Augusta and Minnie, and two brothers, Fred and Willy, came to this country with their father, William Klinge, and mother, whom I only knew as Grandma, in about 1888 and lived in Topeka, KS where my grandfather had a Tailor shop. When he died, at age 75, his son, Uncle Fred, took over the shop until he died, also at the age of 75.

My mother came to this country about 1898 and lived in Peoria, IL. She worked as a mid-wife and did other work for German Amish people. She had four brothers: Christian, Karl, August, and Phillip, who, it was rumored, was killed by his wife with a butcher knife. Through some form of communication my mother and father got together and were married in Topeka.

I was the third of four sons. Clinton was born in about 1907 and Emil in 1909. I came along on October 29, 1912. When I was two years old we moved to Kansas City, MO. I don't know how my father managed to do it, but he built a large two-story house at 4459 Penn Street. This house was ideal for raising a family having large living, dining and kitchen downstairs and two large bedrooms with two more bedrooms over the front and rear porches. We had concrete paved streets with sewers, water and natural gas, smooth 5 ft. concrete sidewalks on both sides of the street, where we could skate and scooter around a six block rectangle.



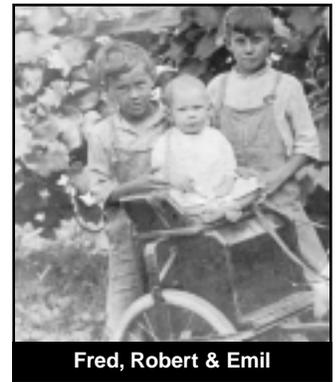
4459 Penn St. — Built in 1914.  
We moved to 7305 Penn St. in 1927

I was the baby and mostly got my own way (to the disappointment of my brothers). I don't remember much of what happened until I was four, when I insisted on going to school even though I wouldn't be five until October.

In 1917 Uncle Willy stopped by our house on his way

to the Army in Texas for training where he died of the flu. Many thousands died of it since they had no cure at that time. Mother believed that if you gave your children a home, clothes, food and discipline, taught them hard work and saved money, it was not necessary to praise them or show that you loved them.

Much to my regret I followed this with my children.



Fred, Robert & Emil

My mother's sister, Anna, had seven children: Henry, Bill, Eddy, Walter, Tillie, Frieda, and Olivia. They lived on a farm near Peoria, IL. Their father's name was Wirth (I don't remember his first name.) I don't remember seeing him. He probably was dead when we visited the farm in about 1919 or 1920, and Henry, the oldest, was working the farm. I remember going into town with him on a wagon loaded with potatoes. Mother's brother Christian owned a grocery store in Peoria and raised a family of three children: Hildegard, Gertrude and Frederick. The fire station was just down the street from his store, and I saw the fire wagon pulled by horses come running down the street to a fire.

In about 1916 or 1917, Tillie and Frieda came to live with us until the early 1920's. Tillie worked as a telephone operator and Frieda worked in a candy factory. Their living with us made life more interesting for the whole family. Clinton suffered with asthma until his teens at which time he no longer had asthma although his heart was damaged, which shortened his life. I remember many nights while sleeping with him that he had to sit up just to breathe. There was no medical help in those days.

During World War I the people hated the Germans, calling them Huns. Once while waiting for a street car, Mother said a few words in German. I told her: "Be quiet, there is a policeman". This shows the feeling in those days. The allies placed many hardships on the Germans at the Armistice; this together with the depression made an ideal situation for Hitler to rise. Russian Revolution 1917; Communists in, Czars out.

Tillie and Frieda left us in the early 20's, Frieda going to Davenport, IA, where she married Alfred Spahr. Tillie went to Peoria, IL, where she met Arthur Streitmatter, who was one of the Amish. She and Arthur came back to K. C. to be married in our house. They had a good, but very short, marriage living on a farm; Arthur came in one day and just died. Their daughter, Wiladeen, was born after he died.

Fred Perdelwitz talked Tillie into marriage. They lived

on a farm and had two children, Lee and Bobbie. Also there was Wiladene and Evelyn. Later I married Evelyn, who was a daughter of Perdelwitz by a former marriage.

The 20's were the days of high pressure tires, flappers, the Charleston, illegal gambling, prohibition, Lamplighters and newspaper Extras, also ice and milk delivered to the house for old fashioned refrigerators. Lamplighters had a match on the end of a stick which they slid up the pole and lighted the gas street lights. If there was a special news item Extra papers would be sold in the streets: like the Dempsey-Tunney fight was proclaimed with Extras on our street late one night.

The ice plant had a blacksmith shoeing horses until trucks took over. Also it was a time of switch over from horse and wagons to cars and trucks. In the vacant land behind the ice plant there were possibly a 100 brand new ice wagons not used because someone with the ice company did not realize wagons were no longer needed. The first radios were crystal sets with head phones and no battery. You could buy the parts at the dime store and put them together. I remember listening to ballgames. The first household radios I remember was in about 1927. Clinton taught himself on his radio and set up a radio repair business from our house until sometime in the early 30's.

The first talking movies came in 1927. It was called Vitaphone wherein a record was synchronized with the picture. At first I remember short items with Al Jolson singing Mammy. When we had our first phone installed around 1921 or 1922 there were two telephone companies, Bell and Home. Ours was a Home Phone. We could only call people with a Home phone. Shortly after, the two Companies merged and became the Bell Telephone Co.

Our neighbor on the south, named Fisher, had a daughter named Gwendolyn. One time when we were both about six or seven years old, we crawled under our rear porch, we wanted to see what the difference between a boy and a girl was. Just as we started Mrs. Fisher called Gwendolyn so we didn't get to see.

Our neighbor next door to the Lovett's, named Bachman, had a daughter named Kathryn. She was about my age – seven years old. One Sunday as they were leaving church Kathryn ran into the street and was killed. She lay in her living room for several days for the people to view.

Robert, my younger brother, was born at our house in 1921. After a few days the doctor came to our house, set him on the dining room table and circumcised him. He let out a cry and I ran from the house. About



**Mother holding Robert on neighbor's porch**

1920, when I was 8 years old and Clinton was about 11, Mother made arrangements for us at a hospital to be circumcised, which was a quick operation with chloroform. Emil wondered why he was left out. He never received an explanation so he called himself the black sheep of the family.

In 1923 my Father bought his first Model-T touring car with side curtains made with celluloid which cracked and broke in cold weather and no heater. In 1925, when I was in the seventh grade, I was walking to school when across the street from the school a large wagon with a team of horses was pulling on to the road. The driver was cursing and whipping the horses. Mrs. Graham, my teacher, happened along and got after the driver. He was embarrassed and drove off.

I graduated from grade School in 1925. There were no black children at our nice large brick School, they had their own school in a couple of wood buildings. Our playgrounds were separated for girls and boys. John Phillip Sousa and his band one time entertained our whole School. As you know he wrote and played many wonderful songs. This I will always remember.

My Father built a large two story house at 7305 Penn Street. We moved there in 1927 at which time I transferred from Westport High to Southwest High



**7305 Penn St. - Built in 1927  
We moved to 7600 Penn St. in 1928**



**7600 Penn St. - Built in 1928**

in my second year. There were no blacks at High School either. Dad built his third house at 7600 Penn where we moved to in 1929. Dad bought one of the first Model-A's, a Sedan, in 1928.

I graduated from High School in 1929 at the age of 16.

My mother and father never argued. He earned the money and she took care of the house, her word was law. She always had enough money to run the house. Dad never disciplined us. Mother warned us that Dad would give us a whipping when he got home but he was very easy on us. Our punishments were tongue lashings, which hurt worse. We were always told how bad we were. I believe that is why I had an inferiority complex in my younger days. She inferred, indirectly, that anything except her teaching was the devil's and watch out for the wrath of God. When we were small we feared thunderstorms thinking it was God speaking against us.

She was not lax in quoting scriptures about the good to those who honor their parents and the bad to those who do not (Deut. 5:16, Matt. 15:4 and Eph. 6: 1-5). No matter what, we respected our parents.

We had a chicken house, a grape arbor, a cherry tree and garden in our back yard. Almost every Saturday we climbed in the old Model-T and drove downtown to the City Market where Mother haggled and bought a bushel or two of fruit or vegetables to be eaten and canned. Almost every Sunday we chopped the head off a chicken and had roast chicken dinner. So with that, and Mother making almost everything from scratch, we always had plenty to eat. That backyard was only at 4459 Penn Street, not at the other houses. She was super at managing the house, cooking, cleaning, making the money suffice no matter what the situation: holidays, company or whatever, there was always plenty.

The Lovett's lived next door. They were English, to them we were commoners. They were rich; Mr. Lovett earned \$400 a month. They had a custom-built car (R. V. Knight). They had three children: Leslie, Muriel and Minford. Mr. Lovett belonged to the Masonic Lodge and Minford to the DeMolays – neither one would talk to us commoners. However Mrs. Lovett, Leslie and Muriel were very friendly. Muriel was about our age and we enjoyed playing with her. In the 30's we sold her and her husband a house. They thought we charged them too much. However, after a few years they sold the house and made a profit of \$3,000. This made them very happy. I ran into Mr. Lovett in the 30's after he had lost his job and his house – he was a humbled man.

Sometime before 1925, my mother's brother, Uncle August, visited us and from that time mother became religious. Although we made wine and homebrew (used with moderation), picture shows and smoking were not allowed. In her religion almost everything and everybody except what she taught was the devil's. She did not believe in doctors except when one was needed like delivering babies and teeth and eye glasses. I stayed home from school rather than be vaccinated. She had a strong will and tried to control people.

Amazingly, Mother's brother Christian was a successful business man, owned his own grocery store and raised a lovely family, whereas her brother August went house-to-house sharpening lawnmowers, knives and scissors for a living.

In the summer of 1929 my two older brothers and I drove to Colorado in an open air piece of tin, visited several points of interest and went on top of Pikes Peak. The Stock Market crashed in October, 1929.

1930 was the beginning of the depression. No work, soup lines, no money. President Hoover was of the opinion that everything would work out by itself.

I worked for wholesale auto supply companies relining brake shoes and driving delivery trucks for \$12 to

\$15 a week during 1930 to 1931. A fellow worker had a Model-T roadster which he sold me for \$25.

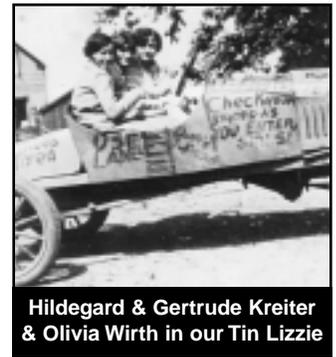
In 1932 15,000 veterans marched on Washington seeking bonuses. Hoover called out Federal troops to disperse them. People starved while farmers had an abundance they could not sell. Some farmers even killed their animals and buried them, and milk was being poured out on the streets. All this happening while many people were standing in soup lines.

Hoover was defeated and Roosevelt was elected. Roosevelt realized that in a land of plenty, people had no money. So he started to make work programs to get money into circulation. Before prohibition was repealed some people made home brew in their homes to sell. The home a friend and I visited one time served home brew in their living room; people, strangers to each other, just passed a pan with a handle for each to drink.

There was an abundance of vacant houses but people had no money to rent or buy them so lots of people just doubled up in their houses or rented rooms. We had a young couple rent a bedroom at 7600 Penn with only bathroom privileges. Emil and I bought a hamburger shop next to the Roanoke theatre on 39th Street for \$250. It was a failure for there was an established Restaurant just around the corner. We found a man that was looking for a business like this so we had him come look at it at 12:00 noon when we had the counter lined with some friends we knew. We sold it but we had to pay a commission so we only got some of our money back.

1933 to 1935 was the time of dust storms. A good portrayal of the times was the movie "Grapes of Wrath" starring Henry Fonda. No rain, terrific heat, dust piling up against buildings like snow in a snowstorm. As portrayed in the movie, farmers in Oklahoma and Kansas loaded up their beat up old car with all their belongings and family and drove to California. With no air-conditioning and day and night over 90 degrees, many times we slept on cots in our back yard. At times we looked up at the sky begging for rain to come down and wash over us. If you would drive by a public park at 6:00 in the morning you would see people getting up from their cots.

During these deep depression days we worked hard for a living. We built several homes at lake Lotawana. We drove 20 miles, worked nine hours six days a week no matter how hot or cold. We also did repair and remodeling in town. We were making 75 cents an hour, which was more than many were making in those days. It wasn't until the early 30's that we got our first portable power saw, before that we cut all our boards with hand saws. Pre-cut studs didn't come until the 50's.



Hildegard & Gertrude Kreiter  
& Olivia Wirth in our Tin Lizzie

In 1933 I purchased a Model-A Coupe with rumble seat for \$100. Clinton and I drove up to Peoria to visit relatives. When we were at Uncle Karl's farm (he had 12 children, no wife) we decided to visit the World's Fair at Chicago in Uncle Karl's old Packard sedan. This was an interesting experience.

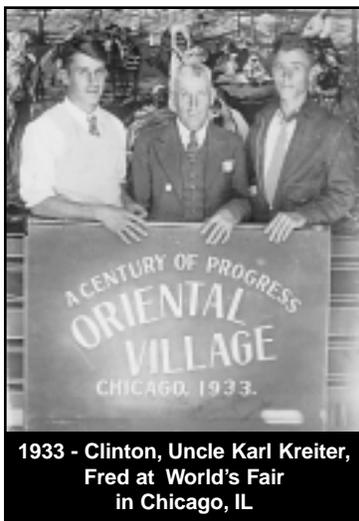
Uncle Karl's wife was an ambitious woman. Besides having 12 children and taking care of the household, she boasted how she also worked in the fields. Sad to say she died young, possibly in her 40's. Uncle Karl managed to get by with the oldest daughters helping until the bad news came out that he was having sex with one of his daughters. I don't want to say the name so I will just say she was between 12 and 15 years old.

He was sentenced to 10 years in prison and served the whole time. His youngest son was about five. All the children were taken in by various families, our parents taking three: Frank, Dorothy, and Carolyn. They were possibly between the ages of 8 and 12, Frank being the oldest. My parents adopted the two girls.

Frank and Dorothy lived at home until they were married. Carolyn lived with me a short time until she got her own apartment and got married. After school Frank worked with us and the girls got office jobs.

I was working for Koch Butchers Supply as shipping clerk for \$19 a week in 1935-36. I was confused at that time, messed up and got fired.

In August, 1937, Frank, Robert and I took a trip out



1933 - Clinton, Uncle Karl Kreiter, Fred at World's Fair in Chicago, IL

west in my Model-A Coupe. We had three cots which we slept on at night no matter where we happened to be at some vacant ground. We took the northern route west through Yellowstone Park, Idaho, Oregon and down the west coast, Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego. Southern route back: Arizona, Carlsbad Caverns, El Paso Texas, Jaurez Mexico, then north to K. C. One night at Yellowstone Park I was on my cot in between Robert and Frank when I saw a black bear come up and sniff at Frank while he was sleeping. The bear walked away. Robert graduated from High School in 1938. (The Golden Gate bridge was completed in the spring of 1937).



1938 — Clinton, Emil, Fred, Robert Frank, Dorothy

I was still living at home in 1939, which my mother liked because that way she had control. Evelyn Perdelwitz visited us and we were married by a Justice of the Peace.

In the 1930's it was common talk that the salvage cars and old iron that we shipped to Japan would one day come back at us in the form of bullets. Well, we all know about Pearl Harbor.

In the early 30's Cap (Emil) married Evelyn (don't remember her maiden name), built a house at 7603 Jefferson, and raised three children:



1940 — Our house at 7601 Jefferson after remodeling

Marlene, Christine and Paul. Later Clinton married Gladys and built a house at 7605 Jefferson. So when 7601 Jefferson became available I managed to buy it for \$2,500. Now all three of the brothers could live next door, and my backyard joined my parent's backyard. I removed all the lath and plaster, re-plastered the house, enlarged the front bedroom, built a laundry room, modernized the kitchen and bath and built a double garage in the backyard. I built a small chicken house in the backyard and raised a few chickens during the war.

So we moved in and started having children: Ruth,



1936 — Gladys, Florence Stone, Claude Stone, August (Dad) Klinge, Evelyn Klinge, Aunt Bertha, Christine (Mother) Klinge, Augusta Fusch, Emil (Cap) Klinge, Fred Klinge, Minnie Stone, Clinton Klinge

John and Clinton. I was drafted in 1944 and passed the physical, but was not called because of the three children. The children were born in our house.



1942 - Evelyn, Ruth, Fred and John

Clinton was a breach birth in 1945; Evelyn suffered considerably. Because of problems, Mother helped us by taking Clinton while he was a baby. Up to this time we were still able to have a doctor come to the house for \$5.00. Many doctors had their offices in their homes.

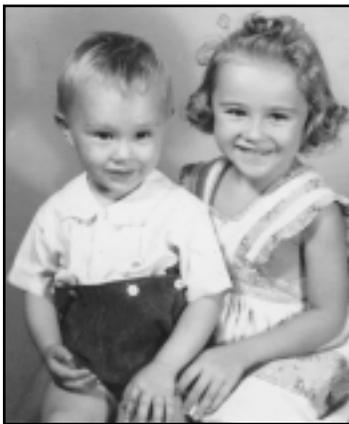
Evelyn was a person who would not speak out for herself. Even though she was a Beauty Operator,

macho me made her a homemaker and mother. She was unhappy and dissatisfied but would never speak for herself and, of course, with Mother controlling my life, and hers, it would have been like running up against a stone wall for her to stand up for herself. She felt trapped.

Mother advised me not to humor or feel sorry for her. This was opposite of the advise I should have gotten. So in about 1947 Evelyn had a breakdown. After she got out of the hospital we sent her to live with her stepmother (Tillie) on their farm.

From about 1943 to 1946 I printed a religious paper. I installed a linotype machine and printing press in the basement at 7600 Penn. I think I was more fascinated in the machinery than in the contents of the paper.

A man who was called Daddy Kitchen corresponded with us and one day came to visit. He tried to convince mother to preach more encouragingly to the people instead of condemning them, but to no avail. He had a heart attack while with us and was bedridden for a few weeks until he



1944 — John & Ruth



1946 — Clint, Cap, Carolyn, Mother, Dorothy, Dad, Frank, Fred, John & Fred holding Clinton

died. We notified his son who came and took care of the body.

In 1942, Robert, being a conscientious objector, was sent to do public service and returned home in 1946. He married Jane Mathews in 1947 and built his house at 81st and Bellevue where they had three children: Nancy, Allen and Norman. At that time we also built a house for Frank and Marie at the same location. We also built three other houses, which we sold.

We weren't allowed to build houses during the war. In about 1948 we bought three lots from J. C. Nichols in Prairie Village and built, and sold, three houses. Then we built 12 houses on 77th and Penn, one of which we sold to Dorothy who was by then married.

In about 1946 Billie Wirth came to visit us. We had heard that he had syphilis of the brain but he seemed O.K. While living in Peoria he was taking medication which made him normal. When the medication wore off he became unmanageable. We hired a man to take him back to Peoria in a straitjacket. We could not help him with our prayers.

In about 1947 I thought a train ride for myself and John and Ruth might be interesting. So, just about the time railroads were doing away with passenger trains, we went by train to Davenport, Iowa and visited Frieda and her children. Also to Chicago where we visited the Museum of Science and Industry. In 1948 I bought my first (10") TV where at first they showed mostly Hop-A-Long Cassidy.

Cap and Frank got jobs with a builder named Jim Stanton. While working for him they both sold their houses and each moved into a Stanton Home.

In 1950 we bought a lot facing Wornall Road which ran through to 82nd Terrace, so we built our house on 82nd Terr, and the commercial building on Wornall Road. We had two stores in the front half of the building and our cabinet shop in the rear. Dad worked in the cabinet shop. We sold our house at 7601 Jefferson for \$10,000 and moved into the house we built at 82nd Terrace behind our business building.

In 1951 Evelyn, Ruth, John and I took a trip to Corpus Christi, Texas. We visited Harold Mathews and Daisy. We then went to Brownsville and



1949 - Dad & Mother



1950 — Ruth, John & Clinton

walked across the border to Matamoros, Mexico. Evelyn was pregnant with Melvin at the time.



1954 — Melvin, Dad & Mother

In 1952 Melvin was born at our home. We had a lady doctor to deliver him. His tongue was grown somehow so that he would not have been able to talk normal unless it

was corrected. It was a minor operation the lady doctor performed at our house.

One day shortly after Melvin was born, I was in my office anxious to get rid of a salesman who would not leave so that I could go in the house and see how Evelyn and the baby were doing. If it hadn't been for that salesman perhaps things might have been different. I went in the house, the baby was laying peaceably with his bottle. I didn't find Evelyn so I went down into the basement and found she had committed suicide. What a terrible tragedy! I cried for days knowing that if I had paid attention to the signs things might have been different. So now mother had Melvin and Clinton, and I had Ruth and John. Carolyn stayed with us for a short time and when she left I hired housekeepers. Carolyn rented an apartment on Main street until she married Harold.

One day in 1955, John and Clinton were playing in the back yard when suddenly I heard loud yelling. As I ran through the garage I grabbed a blanket that was hanging on the wall. Clinton's clothes were on fire and he had run around the house. I ran out into the yard and immediately smothered the fire with the blanket. We called a doctor we knew in Waldo (Dr. Reitz) who, when he saw what happened, immediately made arrangements for him at the Lutheran Hospital. Although he had third degree burns on 40% of his body, he felt no pain because the nerve ends were destroyed. Third degree burns means that the skin is actually lifted off in pieces revealing a red liquid flesh. I watched as Dr. Reitz lifted off the burnt skin and bandaged him. He began to feel pain after about a week.

After about three weeks I knew we must get a plastic surgeon since Dr. Reitz was a general practitioner. I called the hospital and they recommended Dr. Gaskins who started immediately putting him to sleep and thoroughly cleaned and disinfected him and started the skin grafts. They had a way of peeling skin from the unburned parts and placing it in strips with spaces between since there wasn't enough to apply solid. He was in the hospital for about a year and came home shortly after Irmgard and I were married. For a few months we had to soak him in a tub and bandage him until it got down to a bandaid. The IRS audited my income tax return because they couldn't see how I could spend \$10,000.

From the time 7600 Penn was built in 1929 mother held meetings in the living room without fail, Sunday's at 10:00 and 7:30 and Wednesday's at 7:30. Other than the family the only people who came regularly were Mrs. Bowers, Jane, and sometimes Jane's sisters. Cap and Evelyn stopped coming sometime in the late 40's. Once in a while a travelling Evangelist would stop for a few days. Baptism was in the bathtub.

Mrs. Bowers believed in mother's teachings and healing, so when her oldest son, Phillip, got polio she would have no doctor, only believed in prayer. The K. C. Star Newspaper had pictures of us praying on her front porch. We all prayed for him to no avail; his kidneys were paralyzed and he died. Several years later her youngest son Earl drowned while swimming in a public pool. Cousin Tillie wrote to us one time that her appendix broke. Not believing in doctors she suffered until the poison was eliminated from her body. Years later she complained to us in her letters that she had cancer of the stomach; so one day she decided to come and be prayed for as she was getting very sick. She was only with us a few days when she died. I remember her sitting on the couch and saying with tears, "I want to live I am only 52".

I saw these things happening yet I was afraid to protest and withdraw. Mother was a fun person until she got religion, then she became paranoid. We could not gain new members by knocking them down verbally instead of lifting them up. Several friends tried to convince her of this to no avail. In about 1955 mother had a breakdown and was in a hospital for a few days. From then on the meetings were over.

With four children at home, I needed someone to take care of them during the day. So I placed a want-ad and received an answer from Irmgard. While I was looking for help, it didn't hurt to find out about the person at the same time. So I remember asking her age and how tall she was. So she had me meet her at a



1956 — Irmgard



1956 — Just Married

friend of hers (Mrs. Vogt) house. We had several dates and broke up. After six months I needed a baby-sitter for Melvin until Ruth came home from school, and Irmgard agreed.

This was 1955, and we were married in 1956. We drove to New Orleans on our honeymoon. At a

dime store in New Orleans they were selling horoscopes. I bought one Virgo for Irmgard and the man said "you will have to take your shoes off in your house."

So we had a ready-made family, Irmgard's two: John Michael (4) and Marlies (8), and my four: Melvin (4), Clinton (11), John (14) and Ruth (16). Then along came Fredy in December, 1957.

We had a Corporation consisting of Dad, Robert and myself. We built many houses in the 50's. Dad worked in the shop and Robert was the foreman on the job. I negotiated for vacant land, drew the plans, talked to customers, coordinated the subcontractors, did the bookkeeping and sometimes set tile in the bathrooms.

In 1950 I had trouble keeping good laborers, because they would work a few weeks and then quit and draw unemployment. The state had a program where you could get help. They sent me a black man named Caesar Hudson, who turned out to be one of the nicest, most conscientious, steady, dependable workers you could ever want. He knew he had a steady job, and I knew I could depend on him. He was with us until we quit building in 1963. We picked up vacant ground wherever we could find it; mostly in the south part of town and Raytown.

In 1955 Robert and I bought a lot at the Lake of the Ozarks and built a home with one bedroom, a porch and basement. On weekends in the summer we took turns to go there with our families.

In 1958 Ruth married Jerry Henderson and they had three children: David, Jerry Wayne and Steve. They went through some tough times but did a good job of raising their children. Years later they were divorced.



In 1959 we managed to buy some land at Gregory and Askew, Monroe and Cleveland which happened to be zoned for duplexes.

In the early 60's we built six two-story duplexes on Askew, ten one-story duplexes on Monroe and two two-story duplexes on Cleveland. These we held for rental which was good income for us.

From about 1955 Dad hired someone during the day to be with Mother until he retired in 1961 at the age of 79. Mother passed away in December of 1962. About this time Dad started having accidents with his car and we had to make him stop driving. In About 1965 his mind started getting bad and the housekeeper refused to stay because he was accusing her of things. We got another housekeeper for him, but things kept getting worse, so by 1967 we had to put him in a nursing home. Dad was in a nursing home until 1969 when he died.

In about 1943, my brother Clinton started working for

Clipper Manufacturing Company during World War 2. Neligh Coates invented a masonry saw and started his business with Clinton working for him in a small storeroom downtown. He soon built a factory on Main Street across from St. Mary's Hospital and soon built a much larger factory in Grandview. These saws were sold internationally; Neligh Coates was a super business man.

I don't know exactly when Clinton started with the lady he was living with, or if they were married. For a time they were living in a house in the low area near 71st and Prospect. When the area was flooded their house had water almost to the ceilings. In 1963 we had just completed four houses south of Wornall on a cul-de-sac leading off of 95th Street. Clinton was in the market for a house. As he and I were talking about the deal he told me that he had had a heart attack while doing some painting. The doctor told him his heart was damaged from the asthma he had when young. I said: "Wait a minute, you aren't going to die on me!". A few days later Neligh phoned and asked if I had heard from Clinton. He said Clinton was working at his place at Lake Lotawana and wondered about him and he said he would have the lake patrol take a look. Well they found him dead laying where he had fallen in the yard.



In 1961 we paved Harvard, a street running south off of 63rd Street in Raytown. We built six houses on each side of the street; Robert having built one for his family and there he had his fourth child, Cheryl. All of his four children are doing well. I think Jane Klinge is worthy of honorable mention. Being the kind caring person she is, over the years she never refused to help when it was needed. Once she took care of Dad for a time, also Melvin for a time before I met Irmgard. And when Wiladeen was a very troubled person with nowhere to go, Jane took her in.

During the time between 1962 and 1967, John was staying with Dad while he was doing public service as a conscientious objector. John was a good carpenter and was doing some work along with his public service. He was very troubled and, like his mother, could not express it to others. The same situation – he was afraid he would be put down if he complained. I wish that I had understood this. At any rate, one day when I stopped at Dad's, there was a suicide note from him. He hooked his exhaust to the inside of his car and was found parked on the highway.

It is no wonder I say many times today that I wish I could live my life over knowing what I know now.

After World War 2 you could not build unless your plans were approved by FHA. In about 1947 I brought plans which I had drawn for several houses to FHA. Vic Hill was a new employee for this local office. He, being a new employee, and I, being a dinky builder, had quite a long talk. So in 1965 when I was looking for a job I called FHA and asked for Vic Hill. Amazingly after 17 or 18 years he remembered me. He was now the head man and said he would give me a desk job that payed \$600 a month. I could not see myself tied down to an office, so I took rather a building inspector's job for the City of Kansas City, MO at \$412 a month. This was probably the wrong decision because the benefits and pensions would have been much greater with the Federal Government than with the City.

I do believe it would be impossible to work for any government and be entirely honest, because government doesn't have to make a profit. They just spend the taxpayer's money. Therefore they keep requesting more Indians so that they can have more chiefs. Hiring is not done on the basis of how much help is needed, but how much help can they get. Therefore reports for work accomplished must be falsified to look good. It has always been my philosophy that a person can be honest and still make a living. We always had a good name and reputation in our building business. I have no regrets for being honest but I do have regrets for the few times I was dishonest. We cannot make our past deeds good, but we can be forgiven by HIM who died for us.

Irmgard and I took a trip to Canada by way of Niagara Falls in 1960 while Irmgard was pregnant with Janette. We went to Sudbury, in northern Canada where the family of a girlfriend of Irmgard lived, her husband worked as an engineer for a nickel mine. They were very friendly. I even drank bruedeschaft with her. The trip to Canada was interesting; we found that each province had its own laws concerning the sale and drinking of alcoholic beverages.

Around 1962 we decided we wanted to be "city farmers", so we bought 20 acres, the south side of which was the city limits of K. C. and the north side the city limits of Grandview. We built a split level house with four bedrooms and a cul-de-sac in front. Also an outbuilding, 24 x 50, with a stable in the rear. We had some interesting experiences with our animals, once a cow had twin calves. The street we faced was Food Lane – an interesting name.



1962 — House on Food Lane

My brother-in-law Arnold and his wife bought a house nearby. Across the street was farm land. We even gleaned the corn dropped by the harvester for our cows. Our land was 1,320 ft. facing Food Lane and 660 ft. deep. The cost to pave our half of the street and storm sewer was \$23,000. A few years after we moved there they started developing the land across the street. With the help of a government program blacks were able to buy some of the houses. This lowered the value of our property.

In about 1968 two building inspectors, Emerson and Miller (men I worked with) and I, decided to take a vacation to the World's Fair in Montreal, Canada. We drove to Milwaukee and took a ferry across Lake Michigan. This ferry boat held 12 railroad cars besides I don't know how many automobiles. We landed on the west coast of Michigan then to Detroit where we visited one of Ford's steel plants. Then on to Montreal. You probably know the Province of Quebec wants to become a separate French State within Canada. The couple who lived in the house where we stayed could not speak a word of English, but luckily their son was on furlough from the army and could interpret for us. Montreal has a wonderful subway with trains running on two levels in different directions and escalators leading to the levels. They used the material excavated to build the subway to build an island upon which they situated the World's Fair.

Marlies graduated from High School in 1966. In 1967 she married Carl Misner and in September their son Wesley was born.

Clinton left home and was married a few years after we moved into the house on Food Lane. Melvin lived with Ruth and Jerry in 1969, at which time he quit school. He joined the Navy in 1972 and was released in 1975. He was married the first time in 1978 and had his son, John, in August of 1979.

Johnny was with the Kansas City Fire Department in the 70's, I don't know exactly when he started. He married Kathy in 1979. We went to their wedding.



1976 — On my Honda

Marlies married Kim Rightmire in December of 1978.

In about 1975, we visited Chuck and Gertie in Florida. Since I was retiring from the City job in 1976, we thought we would sell our house and move to Florida in the area where Chuck and Gertie lived. We put our house on the

market and found a buyer. So we bought a lot on a canal, close to the beach, in the city of Satellite Beach which is



1976 — House in Satellite Beach, FL

on a barrier island. Satellite Beach is about 20 miles south of Cape Canaveral.

I contracted with a builder for a nice three bedroom house with a swimming pool.

Janette and Fredy were in their teens when we moved to Florida. Fredy having graduated from high school and Janette transferred to the high school in Satellite Beach; she graduated in 1979.



1975 — Fredy & Janette in Turner's Band



In 1978 Fredy got a job as a fireman for the City of Titusville; in 1980 got on the fire department at Melbourne.

In 1982 Fredy quit the Melbourne Fire Department and joined the Navy. He served in Jacksonville, FL and then in Okinawa. He was in for four years.

Melvin married his second wife and had his second son, Justin, November 29, 1982. He married his third wife, Sarah, in 1987. Johnny and Kathy had one son (Ryan) born in 1982. He and Kathy were divorced in 1988.



1983 — Fredy in Navy

In the fall of 1982, after a biopsy, it was found I had cancer of the prostate. The biopsy was done at the Weusthoff Hospital in Rockledge.

I went for radiation treatment to a Hospital in Melbourne where I was treated by Dr. Charles. I



1982 — Fred, Irmgard, Janette & Fredy Satellite Beach, FL

asked him what the effects of radiation were. He answered, "there are no known long-term effects of radiation". This was a lie as I found out later. Radiation began January of 1983 when I was given 90 shots. It seemed that I was cured.



1980 — Christmas in Satellite Beach

We moved to Sarasota on the West Coast. In the fall of 1984, while Irmgard was in Germany, I noticed my right leg beginning to swell. I didn't know what was happening at first but when I realized it was caused by radiation I went to see Dr. Charles and asked why he had lied to me. He said he didn't want to worry me.

The right leg kept getting larger and then a year later the left leg started. Now I have two super large legs which I must treat continually with a compression machine and compression garment. Luckily there has been no pain involved.

We sold our house in Satellite Beach in 1983 and bought a Condo in the Pompano Building located on Siesta Key, Sarasota, FL. We moved there in 1984. We could walk a short distance to the best beach in Florida. Our two bedroom apartment was on the 3rd floor. There was a canal on the north side where we had a pontoon boat for a time. On the east we fronted the inland waterway and could watch the boats go by. This was nice, but I prefer a single family house.



1985 — Janette & Ron's Wedding

In 1984 Janette attended college where she met, and later married, one of her professors, Ron Tuttle. He was a Major in the Air Force and later advanced to a Lieutenant Colonel, and then Colonel.

In 1988 we contracted to build a house in The Inlets in Nokomis, FL. We put our Condo on the market. Our



1993 — Nokomis House

house was finished before we were able to sell, so we moved in September of 1989. We decided to rent the Condo a month at a time while we were trying to sell. In order to rent it we had to furnish it; we did get two months rent and finally sold it at a loss. So while writing this we are living at 117 Inlets Boulevard, Nokomis, FL.

When we moved to Sarasota Marlies and Steve Smith had married and were living in Texas. They visited us and decided to move to Florida. In April of 1988 we bought a Duplex at 3602-04 Wexford Lane so that they and Fredy could buy it jointly and live in each side.

Fredy had a lawn business for about a year and then moved out when he married Lynn. He quit the lawn business and worked at various jobs. He then got a steady job with an air conditioning contractor and divorced Lynn in 1992.

In the spring of 1994 he and his girlfriend, Sherry, are in the process of buying a house.

On August 7, 1993, Wesley Misner was married to Lisa Rose. Marlies and Steve flew to K. C. to attend the wedding as did Janette and Ron.

Irmgard and I have been married 37 years in December of 1993. This is quite an accomplishment considering all the complications with all the children.

It was not easy for Irmgard to step into a ready-made family, but she survived. She has been a good wife in many ways such as keeping life interesting, keeping in touch with friends and relatives, living in various places. Also she has made it easy on me by taking care of Christmas, birthdays and holidays, and many other things that come up in life. If it was me I would probably still be in K. C.

Life is short and the Bible teaches, "after the death, the judgement". No one need fear the judgement if we just read, believe and follow the New Testament. Remember the Golden Rule!



1993 — Still going!!!