

FAMILY HISTORY OF LEO I PETRIE OF BRIDGEPORT AND ETHEL TOBIN PETRIE OF GLACE BAY

Joseph F. Petrie (their youngest son)

My father was Leo I Petrie who was born in Bridgeport on May 12, 1906 and who died in Boston on December 17, 1974. We called him Dad and his grandchildren called him Papa. My mother was Ethel Tobin Petrie. Mom had a series of legal given names: Loretta, Loretta Elizabeth, Elizabeth Loretta, Lorretta Elizabeth etc. After she became a US citizen, Mom had her name legally changed to Ethel Tobin Petrie. We called her Mom and her grandchildren called her Gram.

My Dad's parents were Edmund Ernest (Ned) Petrie and Esther Cummings Petrie. (Esther preferred to be called Hester.) Dad was the third of their six children. My Petrie grandparents adopted a child in the 1930s after their daughter Hazel passed away in Boston in 1932.

Mom's parents were William Richard (WR)Tobin and Mary Ann (Nan)Camus (Cames on some of Ancestry's documents). She was born on March 7,1904 in Glace Bay and died in Dedham Massachusetts on January 22,1979. She was the third of their three children.

Dad was born on the family farm in his late grand-parents bed in Bridgeport. He was born in the Gardiner Mines section of Bridgeport. Gardiner Mines became a town with Dominion later in 1906. Bridgeport was broken up into communities named Dominion, Gardiner Mines, and Reserve Mines. Dad always told people that he was born in Gardiner Mines.

He was the 3rd child of Edmund Ernest Petrie and Esther Cummings joining Charles Edward "Eddie" and Hazel.

He went to a one room school in Dominion. I want to that school to see it.

In the 1911 Automated Census of Canada Dad was enumerated with his family, under a Peterie Surname. His first name must have not been legible because it shows as: "?".

Dad had a sixth-grade education. He left school in Dominion in 1918 when he was twelve which was common at the time. I believe that he worked with his father in the family grocery store until 1920.

In 1920, Dad in an US Border Crossing record was incorrectly identified as Leo Petries, going to South Boston with his mother, older sister Hazel, younger siblings: Russell, Roy, and Dorothy. Soon Dad lived with a cousin in Dorchester, Boston, Suffolk, Massachusetts. He worked at the Upham's Corner Market. While still under age, he along with a bunch of minors working at the market was "pinched" for truancy. A court officer suggested that he and others enroll in the Electricity program at Charlestown High School and Dad became an electrician as a result.

Between 1920 and 1925, Dad often returned to Dominion where he would work for his father in the family's grocery market.

On his US Border Crossing Record in Vanceboro Maine on March 30, 1925, Dad indicated that he was born in Bridgeport, NS on May 12, 1906. This is important because there is no Birth record for Dad. It is also important because it is one of a few documents that I have that I know he actually signed. In 1925, as a result of the miner's strike, Dad returned to Boston after his sister Hazel because of "hard-times" in Dominion.

On March 30, 1925, he submitted an immigration form that was filed in St. Albans. Vermont,

He was joined by his father, mother, and siblings Russell, Roy and sister Dorothy. They lived with him in his apartment in Brookline. His mother worked as a domestic while his siblings attended St. Mary's school in Brookline. St Mary's had both a grammar school and a high school. All but Dad returned to Cape Breton each summer.

Dad met Mom, Ethel Tobin, in 1927 at an ice-skating party in Boston Arena (now part of Northeastern University). They married in 1931 during the Depression. Dad was concerned about finances. Mom was not concerned - because they both were employed.

He worked at the Rhodes Brothers Market in Brookline and in Boston's Back Bay until the early thirties. Rhodes Brothers sent him to work with the Chef at the Statler Hotel, Boston's Premier Hotel.

Around 1935, Dad, Mom and Leo Jr moved to Dedham. They lived at 299 Colburn St over-looking the Mill Pond. We lived there until 1946. Until I was 7, I rarely saw Dad. He worked 6 days a week at the two shipyards. He did not take a vacation. He and Mom saved to buy a house.

When they moved to Dedham, Dad worked at the ECCO stores (the forerunner of Stop and Shop) where he was injured on the job in 1938. He slipped and slid into a Meat refrigerator. His x-ray showed 28 pieces of bone. He still had the cast on when I was born in 1939.

In 1932 and 1936. Dad went to Dominion to bury his sister Hazel and brother Eddie.

Oral History: From June until August of 1939, the family lived in Dominion. Supposedly, my brothers and I are dual citizens because Dad registered our Births in Cape Breton in 1939.

Dad was Naturalized in March 1941. Dad had never filed his final Petition form for US Citizenship until after Mom was naturalized in 1939. Because Mom was Naturalized, a minimum of paperwork was required. I was nearly 2 when Dad was naturalized in 1941. As part of the paperwork process to become a US citizen, a christening record was provided but I have not entered the data because oral history indicated that the church records were lost in a fire and that the christening record provided to the Court was based on a Church Census record. The file number was: 5181590. The Petition Number was: 11883.

In 1942, Dad went to work at the Fore River Shipyard as an Apprentice Electrician. Oral History: Supposedly, the Canadian government tried to extradite him for not showing up in Cape Breton for a draft physical. Because Dad was a US citizen, the Dedham Draft Board got involved in the extradition process. Dad was advised to get a job in a war industry to ensure that he had a vital industry position so that the government could refuse extradition, In 1946, he left the shipyard for a short stint at Westinghouse Electric in Readville, Mass. From 1946 until he retired in the early 1970's, he worked at Ziegler's Market in Dedham initially as a meat cutter and later as the Manager. During the Deer Season, Dad made money butchering dead deer. For years we had deer steaks in our freezer. Dad loved to cook them. He cooked every Sunday dinner and on holidays.

In 1945. Dad and I marched in the 4th of July parade. I was dressed in a monkey suit. I won the best costume prize. Afterwards Dad hosted a family party for his father who was visiting us. We were joined by grand-father's brother William and sister Laura. Some of Dad's first cousins were there. We met relatives that we did not know! While I was in high school, Dad and his 1st cousins and their spouses met on most Saturday nights to play poker.

Until 1946, we lived in a rented 4 bedroom house at 299 Colburn St in Dedham. We were at war and Dad was busy at the two shipyards. I remember one Christmas; Santa visited us! One winter, I sat on Santa's lap at Sears in Boston. One Christmas, Dad and Mom had Christmas a day early – usually we celebrated after Midnight Mass. Neighbors were upset!

At Colburn St, we had a piano. Next to it was a loveseat. Mom played the piano to put me to sleep for my naps.

Mom never drove. In 1945, Mom took me on buses to look for houses that would buy. Eventually, with advice from a bus driver, she found 26 Fairview St. We had only 2 bedrooms at Fairview St. No piano and no loveseat!

Dad loved to have a good time, to visit with relatives and friends, to play cards (poker, cribbage and 45s), to go home to Dominion every three years, to look at new cars (bought one every three years), to buy new clothes (two suits, a new top coat and hat each year), and to work on home improvements.

He loved to celebrate the holidays; especially Thanksgiving and Christmas. Other recreation involved sports: hockey (Bruins), baseball (Braves and later the Red Sox), football (Browns, Giants), golf (because we boys caddied and played it), and going to race tracks (especially when his 3 sons worked at race tracks).

One Saturday night he asked me who I was betting on in the daily double. I told him that I was wheeling (select one horse in the first race with all the horses in the second race.) We lost and he griped all week. The next week after the second race, I walked up to him and gave him a pile of money. I won the daily double with a back wheel. All horses in the first race with one horse in the second race. The daily double was large and I gave him half. He often told people about his winnings one night – a night that he did not wager any money.

Dad and Mom volunteered their time and skills especially to Freddie Lane and his mother Marguerite Lane. Freddie was a young boy, a cousin of a friend. His family was from Glace Bay, Freddie was hospitalized in Boston many times while doctors cured his infected leg and later re-built his leg. Dad and Mom provided housing for Freddie and Freddie's mother. Dad organized fund raisers.

Dad provided lots of services to our parish. The rest of the family was drafted to help. We drove and staffed the two company trucks for the Parish paper drive.

I often delivered cooked turkeys at Thanksgiving eve and Christmas eve to the pastor's siblings who lived in Jamaica Plain. Dad cooked the turkeys.

Dad was an usher at 8 AM Mass on Sunday.

When the Seminary cook went on vacation, Dad cooked the dinners.

He volunteered us for other Church activities. We were Altar Boys. We played in the Band.

When I was in Grade 6, I was having problems with a teacher. Dad gave me a hydrangea plant to give to her. No problems afterward.

When my family lived in Dedham, Dad and Mom took care of our 2 sons while we went to Mass. One Sunday we came home to find Dad feeding them big pieces of potatoes. My wife was upset but never showed it.

Dad and Mom loved to visit our house in Norwood. He loved our garden. He loved to take our boys for Ice Cream. He loved fixing their and their friends' bikes. He loved talking to our neighbors, June and Ed. He loved talking to Ed about the racing program.

Dad had lots of Cape Breton individuals for company. Often, we'd wake up in the living room and our beds were occupied by the quests.

One time, a man knocked on our door. He was there to go to the Leahy Clinic. He said that Larry Shanahan told him to visit Dad. Larry and Dad were long-time friends. At one time, Larry and Dad nearly set up a business in Cape Breton. He stayed for a couple of weeks and left suddenly after Christmas. That summer, Dad and Larry met up and Dad asked about the man. Larry told Dad that he did not like the man and would never send him.

When I was at St. Mary's, I ate lunch with Dad almost every Wednesday. The store closed at 1 PM and I was there for about a half hour eating with Dad. I had imported sliced ham, half sour pickles and cupcakes for dessert. I washed it down with coke.

My brother Leo worked part-time at Zieglers until he was 16. He got a better job at Stop and Shop in Oakdale Square – more hours and more hourly rate. He took it. Dad offered Chuck the job. NOPE! I took it initially 1 hour a week. At Thanksgiving and Christmas, I made extra money by working with the turkeys. Dad bought them with heads and feet. We weighed them. Then I used an ancient machine to remove the feet one foot at a time. I also removed the tendons. When I was younger, I went to Boston on Thursdays with Dad principally for Meat and Fish. I was amazed at one stop where a bunch of buyers waited for him. He marked about a dozen sides of beef and they watched. He had the two sides that he finally picked loaded into the truck. We watched the group take the ones that he left. It happened each week! And each week the owner offered Dad a wonderful job and gigantic salary. Dad did not want to travel to Boston.

When I was a Sophomore at BC High, I decided to join the Josephite Priests. They had a junior seminary in San Diego. I left BC High to go there. In August. I met a wonderful girl. I was really smitten! Bye! Bye! San Diego! In about a month, she dropped me for a guy with a car.

Dad asked me where I planned to go to school? I answered Dedham High to play football for Coach Heaphy. Dad got upset. He told me that I was going to go to a Catholic School. Mom suggested St. Thomas and we went for an interview. The Superior said no based on the fact that I needed to complete a year of French. Mom told her I was fluent because I was tutored by Aunt May every summer that Aunt May visited. I was accepted but I had to attend French 1 3 days a week. Dad was pleased!

While at St. Thomas High, I met and dated some wonderful girls. Dad loved Ann. Every girl after Ann, Dad called Ann. Ellen graciously was patient when he called her Ann. Ellen stayed over one night because of a snow storm. I stayed at 218 South St one night because of a storm.

The day that Ellen and I were married, Dad and Mom threw a terrific party after the reception. When we found out, we wished that we were there.

One summer, when I was in grad school, I was starting to panic. No job for the summer! Dad hired me on Wednesday. We were closed when Dad got a call from Mr. Ziegler. His wife collapsed on the kitchen floor. Dad told him to call the fire department. We drove over and found him looking at Flo on the floor. Dad asked if the fire truck was here. No, he never called. Dad did! They were there in minutes. I went to work full-time.

When I left BC, I worked for Dad sometimes up to 3 days a week while I studied German and worked on my PhD dissertation.

I interviewed for jobs. Dad helped me get the job at NASA. He had a customer who had a friend at NASA. The friend helped me a lot!

Dad and Mom loved having us on the second floor. We were there until we moved to 51 Richland Rd. Jay and Chris were there every Sunday when we went to Mass. Dad and Mom fed them – they ate like honored guests in two high chairs. They loved it when Ellen pushed the carriage or stroller to their work place. Dad loved giving our boys the big imported grapes to eat and two each to take home.

Dad and Mom loved to visit in Norwood. They played with our boys. They took the boys and my wife for Ice Cream. Dad fixed bikes. Dad would drop in when Gram was having her hair done. They dropped in a lot!

When Dad got sick, I took him to the doctor's office. I took him to Norwood Hospital when he was having problems breathing. He was operated there and was almost killed.

The family primary care doctor, Dr. Moran asked a friend Dr. Overholt to visit Dad. He went and asked to see Dad's charts. He eventually told the Director that he was Dad's doctor and the Director let him read the charts. He told Mom that the surgeon messed up and she should sue. He offered to testify. Norwood Hospital suspended the surgeon. Dad's new doctor was Dr Overholt who was considered to be the expert in his field. Dr. Overholt wanted him in the Baptist Hospital,

On the trip from Norwood Hospital to New England Baptist he had me stop to get a haircut in Dedham.

They removed a lung at Baptist. He was in intensive care for nearly 3 months.

He loved our son's drawings and we plastered them over a lot of wall space.

I was in the process to have him transported home for Christmas when he died. { visited him almost every day. The last time we talked, he told me to take care of Mom.

DAD'S PARENTS AND HIS SIBLINGS

We saw grandfather Petrie the most.

We saw Uncle Roy and Aunt Dorothy a lot.

When his mother, Russell, Roy and Dorothy lived in Brookline, here is what I knew.

Grandmother was a cook who lived with Dad - until Dad got married. Dad cooked all the dinners for his Mother and siblings.

Hazel was really a Nanny and lived at her employer's house.

Russell, Roy and Dorothy went with grandmother back to Cape Breton each summer and returned when school started again. One September, Russell never returned.

C HARLES EDWARD (EDDIE) (1902 – 1936)

Dad lived with him off and on in Brookline and Dominion.

Eddie and a first cousin John Petrie took jobs in New York. Eddie met Althea Rickard his first wife there. They moved to Cape Breton, had twin girls (Beverly and Barbara). Beverly died. Eddie's wife left him and returned home to New York. (As near as I can tell Barbara is still alive.) For about 10 years, I searched for Barbara. I eventually found Barbara and told her about her step brother Bill. Bill and Barbara met after he returned from a vacation in Florida. About 10 years of searching for Barbara, I found her. I told Bill about her when he returned to Ontario from a vacation in Florida. Barbara and Bill met the next week.

Eddie then married Margaret Malvina Livingstone a girl from Dominion. They lived in a winterized cottage. One night the heating system caused a fire. Eddie, his wife and son Bill escaped. Their guest did not escape. Eddie went back in to find him and was nearly fatally burnt.

When Eddie was hospitalized because of the fire, Dad took a train to Cape Breton and it was delayed due to a fire in one of the cars. Eddie had died before Dad arrived at the hospital. He went to the funeral and burial.

Every time that my parents went to Cape Breton, they found Bill. They never visited Bill after he moved to Ontario.

HAZEL (1903 – 1932)

Hazel visited Dad and Mom one night and told them that her doctor told her that she was with child. Dad was ready to get him and force him to marry her. She told Dad and Mom that she never had relations and intercourse.

Mom called Helen Hodgkins to see if Charles' brother would examine her. He put her in Boston City Hospital where his Hodgkins diagnose was verified. She was released and moved in with Dad and Mom. She eventually died in City Hospital. Dad and Mom paid for her casket and her return to Dominion. Dad and Mom went to the Funeral and Burial. Every time Dad went to Dominion he visited her grave. Also, he visited Eddies (unmarked) grave.

Years later Dad and Mom asked me to go to Charles' brother's wake and bring Charles and Helen home. Home to me was 26 Fairview St and we went there. I went to bed not having done my 3 hours of homework for BC High. Bad!!!!

Last time I looked Hazel's death record was not digitized.

RUSSELL (1909 -1940)

Russell got a job for the Dominion Mining Company. He lived with parents.

He had a car and he had a car pool. One day he forgot a man and went back to get him. He hit black ice and crashed into a tree. He died a few hours later from the damage. He died of a fractured skull on December 18 1940. Dad could not go to the funeral because it was Christmas week at the grocery store (then Ecco now Stop and Shop).

ROY (1913 – 1966)

We saw him every time we visited Dominion. He visited once in Dedham. He took me to a Redd Sox game.

Roy was a miner.

He was hospitalized twice for TB. TB was rampant in the miner community.

DOROTHY (1917 – 1989)

Dorothy was young when the family left Brookline after Hazel died.

Over the years. I think she tried to stay close to Dad. I think that she invited Dad and Mom to her children's weddings. And I think that they went.

In 1946 we stayed at her house. At the time she and George Donovan had 2 children. Colin was a baby. I do not remember where we slept. Imagine 9 people in that 2 bedroom house. Dad moved us to his Aunt Nel's farm in Ball's Creek a few days into our vacation.

Whenever I went to the Beaton Institute, I visited Aunt Dot. Usually, I stayed at a hotel.

I stayed once with Colin and Lil. Colin became close to Mom when he went to BU one summer. I helped him with his thesis. He needed to interview a working mother. I asked my secretary to help him and covered while she met Colin in Boston Public Garden.

Dot and Colin came to Dad's wake and funeral. Mom had Dot stay in the back bedroom and Colin had the dining room day bed. They visited us in Norwood while they were down.

MOM'S HISTORY

Mom was born in Glace Bay NS on March 7, 1904 to William Richard (WR) Tobin a Barrister and Mary Ann (Nan) Camus (Cames on some official documents). Mom was their third child. WR was 30 and Nan was 29 when they married in 1900. Their 3 children were:

- Douglas Anselm b 1901 d 1901 born in North Sydney and is buried with his Tobin Grandfather in Old St. Joseph's Cemetery in North Sydney.
- Mary Aloysia (Aunt May) b 22 June 1902 in Glace Bay d 25 Dec 1988 in Halifax. She is buried with her parents in Holy Cross Cemetery in North Sydney.
- Loretta Elizabeth Tobin b 7 March 1904 in Glace Bay d 22 Jan 1979 in Dedham, Massachusetts. She is buried with Dad and their infant son in Mount St Benedict Cemetery in West Roxbury, Massachusetts.

I believe that Aunt May was named for her mother and WR's sister, Sister Joseph Aloysia (Anna Bridget Tobin). I believe that my mother was named for WR's sister, Sister Loretta (Mary Elizabeth Tobin).

Mom had the following names in her youth:

- **Lettle** – a nickname given to her by her father
- **Ethel** – a nickname from her friends

Before Mom's mother Nan died at age 46 of Breast Cancer in 1917, Mom traveled a lot with her family to Montreal and Boston in their search for cures for her mother's cancer and Aunt May's eyes. Before her Mother died on 1 Nov 1917 Mom and May were sent to Mount St Vincent Academy in Bedford NS. A few months earlier, they had just completed St Anne's Grammar School in Glace Bay. Mom had been double promoted twice and they graduated together in 1916.

They knew a lot of the Nuns because of their two aunts who were members of the Sisters of Charity. On one of my trips to Halifax, May and I visited a nun who taught Mom and May in the 1st grade.

Mom graduated from the Academy in 1920. She was in the new St Vincent College when WR died at age 52 on 14 December 1922. May was a year behind Mom. Mom's plan to join her father's business died with him. They were orphans at age 20 and 18.

After they buried WR, they started to learn a lot. First, they planned to sell the house and found out that the house was the property of the Dominion Coal Company. WR was on the Company staff and lived in it free. They were ordered to vacate the property in a month. Also, they learned that they owed their grandmother Nora Dooley Tobin's brother for the funeral.

They owned the furniture and sold it to pay for the funeral.

Mom and May finished the year at Mount St. Vincent.

Mom taught at St Anne's school in Glace Bay from 1923 to 1926. During the summer she worked at the Dominion Coal Company until the Miners' strike in 1926.

She asked Helen Casey (later Helen Hodgkins) if she could help. Mom worked for the Gulf Oil Company in Boston under contract. She was preparing to leave for her teaching job when she found that her contract ended in September after school started. She wrote the Glace Bay School Board and asked them to hire a temp for the week that she needed to stay in Boston.

The unexpected response was to be back at the start of the school year or a replacement would be appointed.

Mom decided to immigrate. She needed a Birth Certificate. She went to Glace Bay and found that her birth was not recorded. The staff recommended that she go to St Anne's and get a Baptism record which they would accept and issue a Delayed Birth Certificate. Her baptism record listed her as Elizabeth Loretta Tobin instead of Loretta Elizabeth. In Ancestry and FamilySearch, her Baptism record listed her as Loretta Tobin.

She went to Halifax to visit May and booked a trip back to Boston on a ship, the Northland. She was pre-examined by the Immigration Service as Elizabeth Loretta Tobin. On the passenger list she was recorded as Loretta Elizabeth Tobin.

She told me that she met Dad at a Skating Party and it was love at first sight. They married at St. Columbkille's in Brighton, Massachusetts. They lived in: Allston, Chestnut Hill, Brighton and Dorchester Massachusetts before they moved to Dedham about 1935.

She eventually applied for US Citizenship. The Petition those days was typed by Immigration Service staff. There was a typo. The clerk spelled her given name as Lorretta Elizabeth Petrie. Mom signed the document as it was typed. Mom became a citizen before I was born.

Dad applied for US Citizenship after Mom became a citizen. The process was different for him because he was married to a citizen.

Eventually, Mom went to Dedham court and changed her legal name to Ethel Tobin Petrie.

When I was a youngster at 299 Colburn St. Mom met a girl and her mother. The youngster proudly said the alphabet. I could not say it. A few days later, I could say the alphabet. When I took naps, Mom played the piano to get me to sleep on a love seat next to the piano.

Also, at 299 Colburn St, Mom organized a free tutoring program for neighbor kids. I listened and learned a lot.

Mom picked out the house at 24 – 26 Fairview St. We moved in before I started school in September 1946. I don't know where the piano went. I also lost my bedroom when we moved. I slept on the day bed in the dining room. The love seat that I took my naps on was stored in our cellar.

At 299 Colburn St, we used to sled on the hill behind the house. Leo fished in the Mill Pond. At 26 Fairview St, we sled down the sidewalk.

We used to skate and swim in the Mill Pond. We walked to the Mill Pond for years. In the Winter, Mom would put our hands in her hair to warm our hands.

I missed our Vacaro neighbors. They spoiled us because all of their six children joined the US Navy during WW II. In 1946, the six returned home.

In 1946, as soon as I started school, Mom got a job at Rosen's Hardware in East Dedham. It was close to the store that Dad worked in. About 5 PM we boys started to prepare supper. I boiled a lot of potatoes. We'd often get calls to add a potato because she thought that Lil Johnson would be joining us for supper.

In the 1950s, Mom changed jobs frequently. Some employers were the Dedham School District where she was a sub. In the mid-1950s, Mom worked for a company that sold and installed aluminum doors and windows.

She started Atlantic Aluminum. She and her partner started with \$500 each. After 3 heart attacks, she sold her half of the company for \$500. She worked for an electronics manufacturer. Her final job was as a bookkeeper at the Dedham Transcript, a weekly newspaper in Dedham.

Starting in 1946, Mom and Dad went to Cape Breton to visit family and friends. I stopped going in the 1950s. On her days off, Mom loved to do laundry, shop for groceries except meat and fish, iron clothes including our underwear; and watch bowling on TV with Chuck.

Mom loved to play cards: Poker; Cribbage (Klondike etc.); Whist (including Kitty); Canasta; 45s; War etc. We learned all but 45s. Also. Mom loved to teach the grandchildren how to play some of her favorite games. Playing cards with my mother was fun. Friends dropped in and they ended up playing cards. Ellen frequently came over from Jamaica Plain on Saturday afternoons to learn to play cards and to join the group playing Canasta. (I have the deck of cards that my mother used the night that she died. I have one of Dad's and May's rosary beads.)

Mom loved working on jig saw puzzles. Often there was one in progress hidden by table cloth on the dining room table.

Mom loved to decorate the inside of our house. We celebrated our birthdays, Valentine's Day, Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, Mother's Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. We started decorating for Christmas on December 15. I always thought the Mom delayed the start until Chuck's birthday on December 14. Now I wonder if she silently waited until December 15 because her father died on December 14.

Mom and Helen Hodgkins volunteered to be officers in the Mount St. Vincent Alumnae organization. They helped especially when the Motherhouse burned down. Extra fund-raising work occurred when the Motherhouse burned down.

There were a few events that tested Mom after she married my father; specifically; Dad's sister Hazel being terminally ill; the death of her nearly one month old son William Edmund; Chuck being accidentally shot on Good Friday; Chuck's hospitalization with TB; my nearly 3 months illness in 1960 when I had 2 different infectious mononucleosis; Dad being hospitalized from August until he died in December. He died of Mesothelioma.

When I was recovering from infectious mononucleosis in 1960, Mom told me that she wanted to teach. Over the years, we heard it a lot! I offered to transfer to Bridgewater State College and drive her until she graduated. I believe that she said NO because she wanted me to graduate from St. Anselm College. Also, I believe that she was 56 and decided that there were few offers for someone in their late 50s.

Mary Aloysia Tobin (Aunt May) (1902 – 1985)

She led a normal school girl life until she was 12. She was inoculated one day and the next day she woke up nearly 100% blind.

Every thing was complicated by her eye sight handicap.

Her parents took her to specialists in Canada and USA.

There was no way to undo or cure the damaged eyesight.

When she could enter high school, she went to Mount St Vincent Academy in Bedford, NS, She graduated after her parents passed away.

Oral History: She left the Mount and resided at the Halifax School for the Blind. She went to Normal School in Halifax for two years and was certified to teach French. She taught French at the School for the Blind. I believe that she lived there for a few years. Eventually she moved to homes as a boarder,

She had a 3 year summer travel cycle. The cycle included Laval University, staying with us in Dedham and visiting shrines in Europe and Canada. Periodically, she visited countries like Australia. After Dad dies, Mom visited her in Halifax.

She eventually earned a Bachelor degree and a Master degree at Laval. She retired after teaching French for 50 years,

Until I was 16, I was tasked to help Aunt May. She taught me French. Often, we went to French restaurants in Boston where she expected me to read the Menu in French and translate it into English.

After my mother died, I visited her in Halifax about once every three years. One year she stayed with us in Norwood and later with Leo Jr. in Stoughton, Massachusetts.

She identified me as her next of kin. Once, I had to approve surgery.

Her best friend and her daughter came to one son's wedding.

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