MRS. G.I. JOE

Blanche Egerton Baker

Fremont Woman's
Club Book

1952 + 53

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W. E. Howard

Mrs. W. E. Howard

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MRS. G. I. JOE

By Blanche Egerton Baker

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BLANCHE EGERTON BAKER
Goldsboro, N. C.

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BLANCHE EGERTON BAKER

PREFACE

"We pass this way but once." At the beginning of World War II young men, prospective soldiers, from all over the United States began to gather at Seymour Johnson Field just out from Goldsboro. They came from every part of the country until they numbered some 30,000. It was not long before their sweethearts, wives and mothers, or other relatives began to come to Goldsboro to be near that they might see their dear ones, speak to them and feel their presence until the expected call came for the young soldiers to join the army overseas.

Life throbbed in high tension. The town was taxed to its capacity to care for the visitors. Most of them were young women, who stopped wherever they could find a place to stay. Uneasy, alert, thoughtful, in a strange present and with the future unknown, they were reaching out for comfort and assurance and stability. They were brave under the trying conditions.

Those thrown together were the rich, the poor, the sophisticated, the sturdy farm lass, the girl from the slums, and the protected daughter of plain but fond parents. Thinking the same thoughts, their interests lying in the same direction, they made friends with each other easily. The young mothers discussed their babies and compared notes. Sweethearts looked forward to the moments when they would see their loved ones, it might be for the last time. Each girl left an impress upon her companions, though for those who were together for only a short time the conscious picture of the individual may in time dim or fade out. With others who were together longer, the friendships were deeper and the conscious picture will remain clear and lasting.

They laughed and passed the hours, often lightly it seemed, but their very laughter was the overflow of intense feeling and an unconscious striving for mental rest. At times a shadow would cross a face and linger at the thought of the near separation and the uncertain future. They hoped and prayed and sometimes shed tears. Some of their dear ones would come back; others would not. As their husbands and sweethearts were called and sent to ports of embarkation, the girls would go sadly back to their homes and await the news from across the seas.

The writer of this book lived with these young people, with some for only a few days, with others for months under conditions that had never before existed and could never be again. It was interesting, tragic, and filled with intense meaning. To draw a true picture of this phase of life during the war has been the aim of the writer in presenting these pages, that others too might see it as it was. How well she has drawn it each reader may decide as his heart and sympathy help to make the picture clear and true.

GEORGE S. BAKER.

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AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

"Mrs. G. I. Joe" is a true story of the young women who lived in our home while their husbands were stationed at Seymour Johnson Field near Goldsboro during World War II. It contains humor, pathos, and romance, but most of all the everyday life of these young women, their husbands while they were at the home, and their babies.

The incidents in the book are true, and the characters are given their true names except in some instances when fictitious names seem best. To not only these fine young women whom I remember so pleasantly, but to the thousands of others who were similarly situated all over the country at that time, this book is dedicated.

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CHAPTER I
WE BUILD A CAMP

I never dreamed there were so many different kinds of people living right here in our United States—never until the Camp was located at Goldsboro, and they began to move in and had to be taken care of somehow. And I also never dreamed that so many of them could work their way right into my heart, and that I could love them almost like they were my own children.

This quiet little city of about twenty thousand suddenly doubled its population, not counting the thirty thousand soldiers at the Camp. Activities and industries were enlarged or new ones sprang up to try to meet the needs of seventy thousand people instead of twenty thousand.

It started this way with us. We were lonesome. After being accustomed to a house full of children, suddenly my husband and I found ourselves alone. Three of our children were married and had moved away, and the other daughter was teaching and was at home for only a part of the summer. Our oldest grandchild, who had been born and reared in our home and was then about five years old, had gone with her parents. We had three other grandchildren, all babies, but we were alone.

Our country had gone to war in December, 1941, and England and Germany were already at war. We had read that English refugee children would be sent to America to be cared for for the duration, so we decided to take one, a little girl about five or six years old. I looked carefully at every little girl I saw on the street. Would my little girl look like that one? Or this one?

I went to the Welfare Department to ask about the procedure for getting the child. To my surprise, I learned enough to show me that instead of doing a favor to the government by opening our hearts and home to a poor little refugee, the government would be doing us a great favor, and that it would be a most difficult and expensive undertaking. Expensive before we even began the expense of caring for the child. First, her passage across the ocean would have to be paid by us. Then we would have to go to New York for her, and then put up bond of a thousand dollars to insure her care. And the red tape! It was out of the question.

But I didn't give up the thought of my little girl. I would find one somewhere. Not really adopt a child, but just borrow one who needed a home for a while.

But suddenly something happened, and we were no longer lonesome. We no longer needed a little girl. With the coming of the camp, we had a succession of young men and women and babies, hundreds of them in our home, sometimes as many as four babies at one time. Our house and hearts were full.

In the winter of 1941 and 1942 the government bought a huge tract of land two or three miles south of Goldsboro for a camp. Good prices were paid for the property, farm houses were torn down, and the people living there sought homes and farms elsewhere. A Methodist church was moved out of the area and located at Adamsville, a village east of Goldsboro and near the camp. A call went out from the Goldsboro Chamber of Commerce for rooms for the hundreds of men and women working on the great Army camp that was in process of construction.

The people of the city, both rich and poor, opened their homes to them, and ours, like those of other people, was soon filled. We had electricians, inspectors, carpenters, and foremen. We liked them. Some of them boarded with neighbors, others took their meals down town or at concessions at the camp, as we did not furnish meals. They usually stayed only a few weeks, and then were replaced by others.

Some of the first we had were four young men—two pairs of brothers. They had one large room, and from the laughing and frolicing we heard at night they must have had a pretty good time. Then there was a big foreman, whose wife and two little girls visited him for a few days. The younger girl, a beautiful child about four years old, was recovering from infantile paralysis and was expected to be entirely cured in time. We noticed the loving care shown her by her sister, who was a few years older. It was heart warming.

A neighbor telephoned me one morning to the effect that a "very nice couple" wanted a room. The man, she said, was one of the "big bosses" in the camp construction work. I hesitated, for I had not thought of taking women as roomers. However, we decided to try it as an experiment, and the couple, Mr. and Mrs. Conrad, came. We decided to give them our room, which was a large front one with a private bath and was farthest from the kitchen.

We were much pleased with them, and they with the room. Mrs. Conrad was *such* a lady! They were stopping at the hotel and said they would like to move in as soon as possible. We hired a Negro man to move some of the furniture, and we moved into the bedroom

back of the living room and adjoining it. Our daughter, Emma Hall, was occupying a cool comfortable sleeping porch which also opened into the living room, and this arrangement gave us three practically a private apartment.

We were ready for the Conrads and waited for them, but they never came. I learned from the neighbor that they had taken rooms at a tourist home. I went to the house, found Mr. Conrad and told him his room was ready.

"Didn't you get the message we sent you that we had decided not to take the room?" he asked.

I knew perfectly well he had sent no message, but it taught me a lesson in business—when reserving a room, require a down payment.

We then decided that we wouldn't take women, and rented the room to some young men. Later, however, when a very sweet looking young woman, Mrs. Browning, wanted a room for herself and her husband, who was employed in the construction work at the camp, we took her, even allowing her to prepare their breakfast in our kitchen. She was a perfect housekeeper and never left a sign of having been in the kitchen, and both of them left for their work before we were up in the morning.

Mrs. Browning showed me pictures of her parents, her home, and her twelve year old daughter.

"Is she pretty?" I asked, referring to the daughter.

"She is perfectly beautiful," she replied, her face lighting up.

I was delighted with this arrangement at first, but something happened that made me change my mind. Late one night we were awakened by the sound of someone stumbling through the hall. Mr. and Mrs. Browning were going to their room, she helping him, as he was barely able to walk. She got him to bed in their room, which was next to ours. In a short time we could hear him snoring, and heard her sobbing way into the night. Next morning she arose at the usual time and went to her work, but he remained in bed nearly all day. This was repeated about once a week.

Poor girl! She had left her home, had left her child with grandparents, and had come with her husband in an effort to look after him. We were full of sympathy for her, though we never said a word to her about it, but we could not help feeling relieved when after a few weeks the company sent him away.

Two of our roomers, Mr. Charles West and Mr. P. E. Simmons, told us their wives were coming to visit them and they wondered if we had room for them. We decided to move the dining room furniture out and fix that room as a bed room. The back hall would do for a dining room for us. Odd how a house can expand! We took

the leaves out of the table and put the table at one end of the sleeping porch. We put the china closet in our bed room, the sideboard in the hall, scattered the chairs about the house, and made a very good bed room of the dining room.

Mrs. West and Mrs. Simmons came, and also Mrs. West's son, Charles, who was about ten years old. He was a fine little fellow, handsome and with excellent manners. They stayed over the week end, and everybody enjoyed them.

Then we decided to let the dining room continue as a bed room. We had a door cut from that into the bath that adjoined the front room, thus giving one bath room to each side of the house.

The next applicant was a most attractive young woman, Mrs. W. W. Whitaker, who brought her twenty months old son with her. I fell in love with them at first sight, and rented them the dining room bedroom with permission to cook breakfast in the kitchen. When her husband, an engineer connected with the runways at the huge camp airport, came, we liked him too. There was already a bond of friendship, as he knew my brother, who was a state chemist and inspector of materials used in paving state highways.

We found them congenial, and we enjoyed being together, and little Wilson was a joy in the house. Mrs. Whitaker told me when she first came that she was very careful with him. It was true; she was almost too careful. She was so afraid he might make some noise that she hardly let him play enough. Sometimes I would take him into my room or the kitchen and let him play and make as much noise as he wanted to.

But she was fine, and we were very sorry when Mr. Whitaker was transferred to a camp being constructed in Georgia, and they had to leave. She wrote me:

"We are living in a three room cabin, expect to get a cottage any day now. We are seventeen miles from the nearest town, surrounded by swamps, snakes, bears, wild-cats, etc. I didn't know Georgia had so much wilderness.

"However, Pine Harbor is beautiful, situated on the water way. Huge oaks draped in moss, the famous Georgia pines tower to the sky. The sunrise over the water is a sight to behold. Wish your daughter could do some painting here. Wilson is fine and speaks of you each day."

When the construction of the camp first began, my husband, our daughter and I drove out there one afternoon and saw where roads and streets were being laid off and where a temporary wooden building to take care of some of the equipment was going up. That was all. Later we went again. This time we were stopped by guards, and

as we had no credentials we were not allowed to enter. From the outside we could see that an enormous amount of activity was going on both inside and outside the camp proper.

This wasn't satisfactory to me, and I felt that from the standpoint of a newspaper reporter, if nothing else, I ought to get a peep into the camp, at least. So I called the Public Relations office, got the officer on the phone and explained who I was and that I would appreciate any news of interest from the camp at any time. He was very cordial and invited me and my husband to come to his office and have a talk with him.

Fine! That was just what we wanted. Emma Hall was glad to take us and to get the opportunity to go in. No use to waste good space in the automobile and a good opportunity for someone else to see the camp, so I phoned our daughter-in-law, Florine, and invited her and Anne, our granddaughter, to go with us. They came right over, and away we went.

When we reached the gate, we explained our mission to the guard and were allowed to enter. Just inside was the gate house, entrance—or no entrance—to the mysteries of the Camp. We went into the house and awaited our turn to explain ourselves. The officer in charge telephoned to the Public Relations office and was assured that Mr. and Mrs. Baker were expected.

"The others cannot go," he said. "They will have to wait here."

"How far is it?" I asked.

"About a mile."

"Well, we cannot walk there, and this is our daughter's car, and she is driving," I insisted.

"Oh, the driver may go with you," said the officer, "but the others cannot go. We have to be very careful."

I looked at Florine critically, never having suspected that she might be a spy. But with her curly blonde hair and innocent blue eyes, she could not be the one! That left only Anne. Five year old Anne, who also had curly blonde hair, but her eyes were brown. Perhaps she was the spy!

We left them to the vigilant care of the officer and proceeded to the Public Relations office, taking with us a paper indicating what time to the minute we had left the gate house. We dared not go anywhere but to the designated place, for the time clause would show it.

Upon reaching the office we were greeted politely by a WAC in uniform, who informed us that the officer was not in. Would we sit down, or come back again or something?

There seemed no point in hanging around, and we thought of

Florine and Anne in that hot little gate house, so we decided to leave. The WAC carefully timed us and filled the time in the blank indicated on the paper.

When we got into the car I said, "Emma Hall, let's go back another way. Maybe we can see something." So Emma Hall drove as rapidly as she dared around a corner here, down a street there, past a little chapel and lots of barracks, up another way and around another corner, and back to the gate house. We expected to be shot, but we had seen that much. Florine said she and Anne had looked out of the window as much as they dared. I must say, however, that during the life of the camp here the Public Relations officers were usually very helpful about giving me news.

A month or two later, when the camp was more nearly complete, the newspapers and radio programs were filled with invitations to the public to attend the grand opening of the camp. Buildings, hangars, etc., would be inspected by visitors and explained by guides. There would be music and speeches. This would be our opportunity to see the camp!

Emma Hall had returned to her school, but Florine, Anne, and my husband and I started out to the camp, which would be open from one to five p. m. We drove to the corner of Ash and Slocumb streets, three blocks from our house, and got in line. Each car had to be stopped at the camp gate, inspected for possible firearms, cameras, and, I suppose, bombs. Then all cars in the line, which was over two miles long, would move up the length of one car. At the end of the first half hour, when we had progressed one block, my husband got out and said he would walk home. The rest of us determined to stick it out and see that camp.

In another hour we had moved two more blocks, and then saw that a line of cars coming up Walnut Street from downtown was being let into the line ahead of us.

"Florine, I am going to get out and walk home," I said.

"Don't get out. I am going home too," said Florine, and we turned down Walnut Street and came home.

Later in the afternoon two girls who were staying at our house drove out there and said they got in easily and enjoyed it. We didn't try any more until a year or two later when we went there to an open air band concert and drill given for soldiers and their "invited friends." This entertainment was held near the gate, and guards saw to it that the guests got no farther than the bleachers.

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CHAPTER II
THE CROWD POURS IN

This was a very different life from the one to which we were accustomed, but in spite of the fact that my husband and I were already past middle-age, we slipped easily into the new way of living and enjoyed it.

I was in my late fifties and my husband around ten years older when the war began. Both of us were retired school teachers and had for nearly twenty years been occupied with newspaper work, writing local news for North Carolina and Virginia papers. Though we have very different personalities, we like the same things. I have always been talkative and friendly, liking people and especially children.

My husband is quiet and dignified. He, too, likes young people and children, but in a different way. He watches the children play, but does not take part. He listens at the young people talk, enjoys them and helps them in any way possible, but lets them do the joking. They respect him and go to him for information, and many a time I have seen him looking up information for them in the Encyclopedia or dictionary or helping them locate some place on a map or arrange a route.

But as for me, I play with the children and joke with the young folks, and they do not hesitate to tease me or laugh at me whenever they want to.

Our yard is the neighborhood playground, and many a game of football have I seen played right before our front door, and I have been called out to umpire a baseball game. The neighbors' children, dressed in cowboy—or girl—costumes, slip around our house and shoot at each other with guns made of pieces of wood or whatever is available, and it is a frequent occurrence that some small child comes to the door after supper with the request, "Mrs. Baker, will you please turn on your porch light so we can play in the yard?" And, bless their hearts, sometimes they gather under the living room window and serenade us.

Our home, while located on beautiful Park Avenue, is a modest little house painted white with green shutters. It is small on the outside, but marvellously big on the inside, especially when homeless young folks need somewhere to live.

The best thing about the whole place is the back yard. It is large and covered with grass, which we keep neatly mowed. At the eastern edge is an enormous pecan tree, which shades the entire back yard all the morning. Under this tree is a built-in sand pile, the joy of the little folks. In the center of the yard is a beautiful mimosa tree that fills the air with its perfume. At the west side are two smaller pecan trees, and across the entire back of the yard is a large scuppernong grape vine. Flowering shrubs, a few rose bushes and buttercups and jonquils grow close along the fences where they will not be in the way of the children's feet. This back yard was a joyful gathering place for the young folks and babies who were at our home during all the years of the war.

When the camp was nearly completed and most of the workers had gone away, I thought that soon everything would be quiet and we would have the house to ourselves again, but I was never more mistaken! We were just beginning. Soldiers began to pour into the camp, and with them came wives and a succession of visitors—parents, relatives, friends and sweethearts. The hotels and rooming houses of the city overflowed, and the Chamber of Commerce and the USO issued calls requesting the people to open their homes and help care for the visitors.

The need for rooms became so acute that housing desks were set up in the railroad station, the union bus station, the USO building and in the lobby of Goldsboro's largest hotel. At the latter, two women workers sat at a table, each with a telephone, trying to find rooms to accommodate the crowds. Seats were arranged for the applicants before the table, and as fast as a room could be located an applicant was given the address and a card of introduction.

We had daily calls and kept all our rooms filled, some of the visitors staying as much as a week, but most of them for only a night or two. As our daughter's school had now opened, and she had gone away, and as Mr. West and his brother-in-law and Mr. Simmons occupied a room together, we had two other rooms and the sleeping porch that we could rent, and we kept them busy. Sometimes we took the sleeping porch ourselves. We had to turn down applications every day.

Finally I said, "The day bed in the living room can be opened to make a double bed and it is comfortable, why don't we let somebody use it on weekends?"

"Because we can't get out of this sleeping porch except by going through the living room," replied my husband. "But we might use a step-ladder and climb in and out of the window," he added.

"Yes, and a neighbor would see you and shoot you for a burglar," said I.

That little joke ceased to be a joke, for it wasn't long before not only the living room, but the attic and occasionally even the hall and kitchen were used as sleeping quarters. We were not too crowded at first except for giving up the dining room, but one day the local daily paper carried an urgent request for more rooms. The article stated that people were sitting up all night in the railway station, hotel lobbies, city hall, and that some even got a night's lodging in jail. The union railway station kept open all night, and about twenty-five people sat there every Saturday night, the article stated.

I went to the phone and called the housing desk. "Mrs. Palmer," I said to the woman in charge, "I did not know people were sitting up all night because they had nowhere to sleep. We could take a few more."

She was very grateful, and after that our living room was occupied every weekend. We bought a light screen that could be set up in front of the couch, and the occupants of the sleeping porch went through the room when it was necessary.

We put a bed in a little unfinished half story room upstairs, and my husband and I began to use that ourselves each weekend, coming back to our room during the intervening week days.

Such a succession of people! They came from practically every part of the United States and were descendants of almost every European nation. Some of the names were Desjardins, P'Simer, Bourgeois, Sobieski, Eder, Chew, Fee, Schwartz, Skouboe, Karpt, Zadowsky, Augi, Kries, Dzvonchyk, Oinstein, Boos, Sinkwich, Kuczuk (pronounced like a sneeze), and strangest of all, Krazymowski. Of course we also had Smiths, Joneses, Browns, and other plain every-day names.

Many a time one of the regular roomers would call us in the night to come down stairs and answer a call for a room. My husband put a doorbell upstairs and attached a cord to it so the girls could call us without coming up or shouting at us.

Since we were now using the upstairs room so much, we decided to fix it up—make it comfortable and attractive. A cool breeze came in through the window. We ceiled the walls with cloth ourselves, put in a little dresser, rugs and pictures, and invited the girls to come up and see it. They were enthusiastic. Pleased with the result of our efforts, we proceeded to fix up the other little attic room. We ceiled this room with bright flowered chintz, put in some furniture and—kept it rented. Frequently both of these rooms were occupied by regular roomers.

The most pressed we ever were, however, was one night when a sailor and his wife came in about one o'clock and wanted to stay just that night.

"I am sorry," I told them, "but every room in the house is occupied."

They waited.

"Someone is even sleeping in the living room," I added. "Why don't you go to the USO?"

"We went there, but they had closed. You see it is now one o'clock," the sailor replied.

He said he would not mind for himself, but that on account of his wife he did not know what to do. They kept standing at the door, until finally, on account of their importunity, I said, "The only thing I possibly can do is to give you some quilts and pillows and let you sleep on the floor here in the hall."

Joyfully they told the taxi driver to go on, and in they came. At this point, a girl in the front bedroom opened her door and said, "Mrs. Baker, my husband is not here tonight. The girl may come in and sleep on this cot in my room if she wants to."

But the girl would not leave her husband, so we took the mattress from the cot, put it down on the rug in the hall, and there they slept. When I started back to my room, the young man put his arm around my shoulder and said, "You will never know how much I appreciate this."

Such gratitude for being allowed to sleep on the floor!

They told me they had to get up at six o'clock the next morning to take a train. They were sure they would wake, but I, knowing what a short time they had to sleep and how weary they must be from their travel, was afraid they would not awake. At six o'clock I went to the hall door and called them, but there was no response. They were too sound asleep to hear me. I bent over and spoke. Still no answer! I leaned down and shook them, and finally succeeded in arousing them. Then I went back to bed.

In a little while a young woman in one of the rooms started to the kitchen to heat a bottle of milk for her baby. Imagine her surprise upon opening her door to find a man and woman dressing in the hall!

The next visitors were a mother and her daughter from New York. They had come to visit the young lady's fiance, who was located at the camp. The fiance had a three day leave of absence, and wanted to stay here too.

"Just put a cot in our room for him," the mother suggested.

"I don't think that is a good idea," I said.

"Why that's all right," said the daughter. "We are practically married."

I didn't think "practically" was enough, so I insisted that he take another room, which he did.

Then came C. Neil and his wife, who occupied the sleeping porch for a few days. Mrs. Neil had a very unusual occupation at home. She said she was a fur worker. They wanted to go down town to get lunch, but it was raining. I lent them my husband's umbrella, and when they reached the corner of Center and Walnut Streets at the hotel, the wind blew the umbrella inside out. The corner is known to be the windiest spot in town. A young man who roomed at our home after the close of the war lost his hat at that place once, and ran after it down Walnut street almost a block, while the hat rolled around between the cars, drivers dodging here and there trying to miss it, and finally settled under a parked car, where the embarrassed and exasperated young man crawled on his stomach to get it, while others stood by and watched him.

Mr. and Mrs. Neil were distressed about the umbrella and wanted to buy another, but I told them an unbrella mender came along frequently, and I was sure he could fix it. So they gave me a dollar to have it mended, and the umbrella man never came, and the umbrella was relegated to the attic, then I suppose to the garbage can, and my husband bought a new one—for much more than a dollar.

Later Mrs. Neil came back to Goldsboro to stay, and they wanted a room with us, but we were filled up and couldn't take them. We were sorry, for we liked them.

Everybody was excited over the next visitor, Pvt. John Keernan, a paratrooper, who was here only one night while on his way to some other destination. He was the only paratrooper who ever came to our home, in fact the only one I ever saw. We asked him some questions, such as whether he felt afraid when he was coming down from a plane, how many jumps he had ever made, etc. Someone even suggested that, since his room was upstairs, he might prefer to jump out of the window instead of walking down the steps. He answered the questions, but didn't show much enthusiasm and probably thought he had found a rather silly crowd.

He seemed to have just about the attitude I would have expected from a paratrooper—quiet, cool, as though he were equal to the occasion.

An elderly gentleman and his wife came in one day looking for a room. They were in no way connected with the Army, but were planning to move to Goldsboro in connection with some new business that had sprung up.

It was easy to see who was the head of that family! The wife held her head high and gave the orders, and her obedient husband, his shoulders stooped under the burdens of life, especially the burden of his wife's personality, meekly said, "Yes, dear." They came in and she asked if we had a room. I said we did. The husband said, "I'll sit here, dear, and you can see the room."

He knew that it was useless for him to look at it since his opinion would be worthless anyhow. I took the lady to the room, which was rather attractive looking, having been done over recently with delicate pink walls, and as it also adjoined the bath room, she wasn't displeased with it. She asked if she might cook. I told her I had only one kitchen, and that the roomers took their meals down town.

At this she raised her voice angrily.

"Isn't it a shame," she almost screamed, "that I can't have a place to cook? I have to get up in the morning, cream my face and go out in the cold to get some breakfast, and we've got to stay here twenty-six weeks!"

At the thought of twenty-six weeks in the house with this woman, I was ready to faint. Twenty-six days of her would have killed me. I didn't say a word, but she stalked back to the living room and said to her husband, "Come on, let's go to LaGrange," (a small neighboring town.)

"Yes, dear," replied the dejected looking spouse, and they left.

I knew that I had escaped a terrible fate.

Pvt. and Mrs. Phillips of Alabama took a room for a few days. Mrs. Phillips had left her baby, Armetha, with her mother, and for that reason could not stay here long. I asked her why she didn't go home and get the baby and come back and stay while her husband was here in camp. I thought no more about it, but evidently *she* did, for she came back, and her coming added quite an episode to the ever increasing number of episodes in the household.

Several months later, a couple, who were here as regular roomers, decided to go home for a weekend. I asked them if they would like for me to rent their room while they were away, which of course would save them the rent for that length of time and at the same time provide a place for someone during the weekend. They were glad to do this.

About four o'clock Friday morning one of the girls came upstairs and called me from the door.

"A soldier and his wife and baby are downstairs and want to know if you can take them," she said.

Hurrying down, I found—of all people—Pvt. and Mrs. Phillips and Armetha.

"I thought of your home all the way from Alabama," said Mrs. Phillips.

It was now November, and, especially at that time of the morning, it was cold. I took them into the room, made a fire in the grate, and made them as comfortable as possible, then went back to bed. The next morning, when the girls learned that there was a baby in the house, they could hardly wait to see her. She was a dear little thing, nine months old, but somewhat the worse for her trip. During the day she became sick and began to spit up her milk, and I learned to my dismay that the mother had kept her bottle in the warm room, and the milk had soured, and she had given it to the baby.

She didn't know anything about what to give a baby or what to do with one. She said her mother always told her what to do at home. I helped her the best I could, had her keep the milk in our electric refrigerator, and the baby got better.

Pvt. Phillips went to the camp in the morning, but that night he came back to town and phoned his wife to take the baby and come down town and go to the movies with him.

"The baby is sick and it is cold, and I don't think we had better take her out," she told him.

"Bring the baby with you, and come on," he said.

She put the poor little child in a stroller that cold night and took her to the movies.

Sunday passed and Monday came, and I knew that the other couple would be back Tuesday. I phoned the housing desk, but they had no vacant room. I kept trying until I found a young woman who had a room to rent and would give kitchen privileges, so the Phillipses moved. I heard that the new arrangement was very satisfactory, that sometimes Mrs. Phillips kept the landlady's children for her to go somewhere, and that she could leave Armetha with the landlady when she wanted to go out with her husband. She also got some help and advice from the other women as to the care of her baby.

Meanwhile, every blanket that was in the room they had occupied here had to be sent to the cleaners. It cost all they had paid us for room rent and more to have the blankets washed, but what would the poor mother and baby have done if we had had no place for them that cold night?

Ellen Lenk was a shy Hungarian girl with a very foreign accent. Her husband, Jim Lenk, was of German descent, but born and reared in this country. They wanted a room for a week, as Ellen had a vacation from her work in a Northern city, and had come to spend it with Jim.

After a day or two she got up courage to tell me something of her life. She said she was born in Hungary, and went to school there. At the age of fourteen she came to America, where she picked up a broken English. She never attended school here, but she had spunk enough to write letters in English, spelling the words as they sounded to her.

At the end of her week here, she returned to her home in New York. A few months later a letter came, announcing the birth of a baby. Ellen said it was a boy, "just what we want it," she added.

With difficulty we deciphered the letter, after which I said to my husband, "Pathetic, isn't it?"

"No, it isn't pathetic," he replied, "it is fine. It is a much better letter than you could write in Hungarian."

I had to admit the truth of that.

Jim got a leave of absence when the baby arrived, and went home for a few days. Several months later, Ellen decided to leave the baby with her mother and visit Jim again. This visit was to be a surprise. She remembered our home and came here. A telegram was waiting for her when she arrived, saying, "Stay there, I am coming." Jim had gotten a furlough and had gone home—his visit also planned as a surprise. Like Evangeline and Gabriel, they had "passed each other in the night."

"What must I do?" wailed Ellen. "I only had the weekend off from my work. I must go back Tuesday."

Jim couldn't get here until Monday, and by that time Ellen had decided to risk losing her job. She stayed a week longer. Our house was filled when she came, and our next door neighbor took them into her home. Jim had to leave every night at twelve o'clock, since he was on a night shift at the camp. Of course he planned to give up the room and go back to his cot in the barracks after Ellen went home.

The day came, and Ellen left. That night a roomer in the neighbor's house heard a strange noise in the hall like someone snoring. He waked the man of the house, and they investigated. They found a man asleep on a sofa in the hall. It was Jim. Grieved at Ellen's departure, he had taken too much and, remembering where he had been staying, went back there and retired. It was already almost twelve o'clock, so they waked him and told him to get up and catch his bus for the camp.

The next day he came back and apologized profusely, but thanked the people very much for arousing him, as he got to the camp in time not to be counted tardy or have his privileges taken away.

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CHAPTER III
MARCELLA AND CASSIE

Mrs. Palmer called me one morning from the Housing desk to say she was sending us a very nice couple, Maynard and Marcella Lonis of Stoney Point, N. Y. They came and liked the room and moved in. Almost at once I realized that they were "homey" sort of young folks and that we were going to enjoy having them here.

Maynard was not a soldier. He was a civilian instructor in the School of Airplane Mechanics at the camp, though after they left Goldsboro he entered the service and served overseas. He had a turn for doing nice handwork, and had constructed beautifully decorated leather backed books for his notes and for scrapbooks. The work was so perfect with its cleverly turned corners and spliced edges that it was hard to believe anybody could have just *made* those things. Marcella was interested in helping him make scrapbooks of places they had been to and things they had done. I showed them my scrapbooks and family records, which were quite a hobby with me, and they were very much interested, and Marcella wanted to help me with the typing, and did quite a bit of it for me.

This was the first couple that came and really lived with us, as everybody else except Mr. West and his brother-in-law, James Baldwin, had come in for a few days, or at the most, for a few weeks, and then had gone. The Lonises fitted in like they belonged with us, and it was lovely to have them in our home.

Maynard and Marcella had kept house at the last camp, and brought with them their cooking utensils, canned fruit, bed linens, etc. Since they had many things that they did not need here, they decided to go through them and repack the surplus and store it in our enclosed back porch and attic. Marcella was distressed on opening one box to find that a glass jar of fruit had broken and ruined a beautiful silk dress. I don't know why they had packed them together, but I suppose they thought the soft material would keep the cans from breaking.

Marcella said her maiden name was Hoey. I told her we had a congressman, a former governor of North Carolina, by that name. Marcella was not the kind to hold back. She sat down and wrote him a letter, and in a few days received a very nice letter from Ex-

Governor Clyde R. Hoey. He said he did not know whether the families were related, but was much interested and certainly hoped to be able to see and talk with her while she was in the South. However, I do not think she ever saw him.

Soon after they came here, the number of soldiers' wives looking for more or less permanent rooms seemed to increase. Most of them would have liked apartments, but were glad to get rooms. Many, especially those who had cars, took rooms or apartments in farm homes in the county, while others found shelter in the nearby towns of Fremont, Pikeville, Mount Olive, and LaGrange. Sometimes our door bell would ring a dozen times a day, and someone would ask for a room.

Two soldiers, Howard Uhland and Freddy Webber of Bridgeton, N. J., engaged our other two rooms for their wives, who were coming soon, so we were filled up. One morning a couple came, and while I was telling them that we had no vacancies, the man looked beyond me into the hall, spied Maynard and said. "Oh, there you are! I might have known you would get the room ahead of us."

"Why, hello, Claude," said Maynard, and calling Marcella said, "Come here, Marcella, here are Claude and Lucy."

The two couples had known each other at another camp, were good friends, and were delighted to find each other again. Claude and Lucy came to the house frequently after that.

I was sorry for the homeless young couples who came, and appointed myself a committee of one to help them find homes. I would invite them in and offer to phone around to see if I could find rooms for them. They seemed *so* appreciative of my help. At first I succeeded very well in placing them, but pretty soon all available rooms in the neighborhood, and elsewhere that I knew of, were taken, and it became increasingly hard for them to find anywhere to stay. But they liked to come in and talk.

About this time Cassie Uhland and Reba Webber arrived. Their husbands were students in the School of Airplane Mechanics. The girls liked Marcella, and the three became good friends.

Cassie and Reba wanted to get jobs down town, so Marcella decided she would too, and they set out job hunting. Reba, who was Italian, though Freddy was not, was an experienced sales girl and soon secured a position as head of the cosmetics department in a five and ten cent store. Marcella and Cassie had a harder time. They went to the employment office and to practically every store in town. Cassie, who had a good sense of humor, said, "Marcella, I think you and I had better go off and kill ourselves."

Pretty soon Marcella secured a place as clerk in a store, and in

a short time her ability was recognized and she was made head of a department.

Poor Cassie! Nobody wanted an employee with no experience. She had had plenty of experience, but it was not the right kind. She had worked in a garment factory, beginning when she was sixteen, and was very expert. I mentioned this to my son, who with his brother had a wholesale business here. "Mother, she's got a job," he said. "We need her to hem handkerchiefs."

Before I had time to tell her, the phone rang and a merchant, to whom Cassie had made application, said he had a place for her in his store.

"Cassie," I called, "come here. You are being offered two jobs."

"Two jobs!," she exclaimed, "Let's jump up and down!"

She talked with both prospective employers and decided to take the handkerchief job. My sons provided her with an electric sewing machine and bolts of soft white material. She would take the cloth, tear it into three strips the entire length of the bolt, which was usually about thirty yards, put a strip into the hemmer and hem it faster than anything I ever dreamed of. The strip would pile up behind the sewing machine like a snowdrift as high as the machine. When she would finish a strip, she would say, "I have finished that one. Let's jump up and down."

Then she would cut it off into squares and hem the other two sides. When Howard came home he would help her fold the handkerchiefs, place them in cellophane sacks and clip them onto cards. She was paid by the card, and was well pleased with the remuneration for her work. I could hear the hum of her sewing machine before I got up in the mornings.

All the week these girls worked and waited—waited for Saturday night when their husbands would come home.

"Come on Saddy. Hurry up Saddy," sang Cassie.

"What do you want with Saturday?" asked Marcella, whose husband, not being a soldier, came home every night.

"Cause I won't see my pooch any more 'til Saddy." Cassie replied.

For this little time of happiness, these girls, and hundreds of others like them, had left home and parents and comfort, and lived here under cramped conditions and with people entirely unlike those they knew. These soldiers' wives were brave spunky girls!

On the mantel in Cassie's room was a framed photograph of her mother, a sweetfaced motherly looking woman. Cassie idolized her. She said, "She doesn't seem to me like mother. She just seems like a Mom." Both Cassie and Reba called their parents "Mom" and "Pop."

At that time, coffee, as well as many other things, was rationed,

and hard to find even if you had a coupon. In one of her letters home, Cassie wrote something about some coffee. Her mother wrote in reply—"Coffee! What is the darn stuff?"

Cassie went down town, bought a pound and mailed it to her.

Whenever Howard came home, the first thing he did after greeting his wife was to go out into the back yard and call two little black dogs that belonged to a next door neighbor.

"Here Lassie! Here Nigger!," he would call. The dogs knew his voice and would come as fast as their short legs could bring them. They would jump all over him, wagging their stumps of tails in an ecstacy of delight. Then such a romp as followed!

We began to learn a strange thing. All dogs loved a man in uniform. On the streets a dog would pass a civilian with scarcely a glance, but would follow a soldier and love him to death. So many dogs followed soldiers to the camp and took up there that they really became a great nuisance.

For weeks Cassie went on with her sewing, but finally my son told her he was having great difficulty in getting material. He said only one store in town had any that was usable, and they refused to sell more than one bolt to a customer.

"We will be glad for you to keep on with the sewing as long as we can get the cloth, but I think it is fair to tell you so you can look out for something else," he said.

Nothing daunted, Howard said he would get material. He and Cassie went down town and each bought a bolt. Then he took his soldier friends in and each bought one.

"What on earth do you soldiers do with all this cloth?" asked the clerk.

Quick as a flash, Howard replied, "We string it up between our cots so we won't catch cold germs from each other."

But at Cassie's rate of sewing, even this gave out, and the job had to end. However, there was now so much demand for helpers in the PX at the camp that she got a job there and held it as long as they remained in Goldsboro.

The Government began to ask citizens to hunt up old iron, anything that could be donated, to be used in war work. A big drive was launched throughout the country, and Goldsboro went to work on it. The Chamber of Commerce announced that on a certain morning stores would be closed in order that the clerks might get out and search for iron.

Reba was always an enthusiastic worker, and had plenty of executive ability. She asked us if she could get some iron here. We had already looked in our garage and attic, under the house, in closets

and pantries, and collected more than we had had an idea that we could. We told her we would be glad for her to donate it and get the credit.

On the appointed morning, when the girls went out from the stores, Reba appeared at our house with a bevy of companions. They rounded up the metal, placed it on the sidewalk in front of the house for a truck to pick up,—old stoves, iron bars, cooking utensils, etc. Each girl had to bring something back to her store just to show that she had been working. If the situation had been less serious, they would have presented a comical picture as they went back down town, Reba leading the way with a big old frying pan, and the rest armed with iron bars and scrap iron of various types.

The course in the school of Mechanics lasted about three months, after which the students were sent to other camps or overseas, except a few who were kept as instructors for new classes. Howard and Freddie finished in January.

I was in the kitchen, which adjoined Howard's and Cassie's room, one morning just before Howard was to be sent to a camp of embarkation, and I could not help hearing something that was said in their room.

"I'll be right back. And it won't be long," he said in soothing tones.

Not a word from Cassie, but I knew she was crying. Every word Howard ever said, every thing he did, so far as we knew, toward man, woman, child or dumb animal, was one of kindness.

One night Maynard came to the living room and asked if he might speak to me for a few minutes. He sat down and looked at me as if he were about to announce a great catastrophe.

"Mrs. Baker," he said with hesitation, "We have found a room down town close to Marcella's work and right where I can take a bus to the camp, and also where we can have a kitchen. I wonder if you will release us from our room here."

"Why you are not under any lease," I said. "Of course it is all right. I don't blame you at all. It is exactly the right thing for you to do, and I hope you and Marcella will come to see us often."

His face brightened with relief. We went back to their room, and in a little while Marcella came in and talked brightly of her plans. She told me how much they had enjoyed living with us and that she hated to leave. They were frequent visitors in our home as long as they lived in Goldsboro, and after they left we had nice letters from them.

They came to tell us goodbye about the first of August, 1943, and went to Stoney Point, and from there we had a letter from Marcella.

In September Maynard write from the U. S. Maritime Service Training School at St. Petersburg, Florida. He said:

"I enlisted in the Maritime Service Aug. 9th at Raleigh. I had three weeks vacation at my wife's home and then was sent here to St. Petersburg for my basic training. Following my five weeks training here I expect to be sent to Radio school at Huntington, Long Island. I have passed the required tests to receive training as a radio operator. I enjoyed my stay in Goldsboro very much and appreciate the friends I made there. I will let you know at some future date how my training is coming along."

Marcella wrote us in January, 1944: "Maynard is in the Merchant Marines and at present is stationed in Boston, Mass., going to officers training school. Upon graduation, which will be the end of April, he will be commissioned as an officer. He will be a radio operator on board a ship. He will get a month off before being shipped out to sea, so we plan to come to Goldsboro for a short time to see some of our dear friends."

Of course I wrote her to come, and in March she wrote: "We are planning to come down in May, but can't tell the exact date yet. We do want to stay at your home, but will be there only one week or two at the longest. My cousin had a baby boy born yesterday, Feb. 29 (leap year.)"

But a letter received in May showed that their plans were all broken up. Marcella wrote: "Maynard graduates May 25th as a radio officer in the Merchant Marines, and his leave has been cancelled due to the invasion. Therefore he will ship out on Saturday, May 13th.

"We both feel rather badly about it, but since this is war and his services are needed, we have to take disappointments as they come. He is shipping out from New York City, and I am going back home. I don't know just how long he will be gone, it may be eight months and then it may be for the duration.

"I've put off writing because we thought we'd be coming to see you folks. This war can't last much longer, and some day we both hope and pray that we'll have a reunion in Goldsboro at your home."

She wrote again in December: "Maynard is somewhere in the Pacific. He is chief radio operator on board a merchant vessel. I am sorry we never did get to Goldsboro to see you folks, but we hope to some day when he returns.

"May God bless you. You are a sweet couple and I love you both."

Perhaps we shall see them again some day.

CHAPTER IV
LOUISE AND DOROTHY

One morning just before Marcella and Maynard moved to their downtown room and while Cassie and Reba were still here, a pleasant faced young corporal, Oliver Ramsey, applied for a room for himself and his wife for one night. Since the other rooms were occupied, he took the sleeping porch. His wife, Louise, an attractive looking girl with dark hair and eyes, came, and I learned that she had come to Goldsboro to stay. I think the "one night" was just to take care of them until Oliver found out whether Louise liked it here. He always wanted her to have things like she wanted them.

Louise liked it and decided to keep the sleeping porch. The weather was warm for October, and when it became cool we bought a portable oil stove which heated the porch bedroom comfortably, and besides, Oliver and Louise found themselves welcome by the fire in our living room.

They were much in love with each other and they were happy. Oliver showed her all the little thoughtful attentions that any young wife could want, and she appreciated it. When her birthday came, he brought her some flowers and arranged them in a vase on the table in their room. She was away at the time, and when she came in later and saw the flowers, she was as happy as a six year old. The expression on her face was one of pure delight.

Louise was the daughter of a Swiss farmer named Bruegger, who lived in Ohio. He had a gas well on his farm, which supplied the needs of the nearby town. By some business arrangement the gas company pumped gas to the Bruegger home, where it was used for lights, cooking, and heating the house. Strange to say, Louise was afraid to light the gas oven in our kitchen.

Louise was the eldest of a large family of children. The names of her sisters were Norma, Reta and Cleta, and there were several brothers. Her youngest sister, Reta, was her special pet. She bought a doll for her, and when Anne came over, she let her play with it. I watched closely, however, to see that nothing happened to the doll.

"Grandma, I think Louise is the sweetest one you've ever had," said Anne, and she always looked for Louise the minute she got into the house.

Oliver had a widowed mother at home, and he and Louise helped her with part of their income. He had a twin brother, also in the Army. Louise had graduated from High School at the head of her class. She said she liked Latin and had done well in it, and when she found that I was a Latin teacher and had a variety of Latin books in the house she borrowed some of them and went to work on them. She easily and quickly obtained a clerical position at the Camp, which, by the way, ended her study of Latin.

We never had a girl who enjoyed the social affairs provided for the enlisted men and their wives more than Louise. One of the first things she did with part of her salary was to buy a rose colored evening dress to wear to the dances, and she was beautiful in it. When she put it on for the rest of us to see, one of the other girls ran to her and hugged her.

Louise and Oliver took their meals down town or at the camp, or sometimes brought something home for a little supper at the house. One night they came in excitedly, saying they had not come from the camp together, but met at an appointed place down town, and that Oliver had gone into a little store on the edge of town to buy some weiners. He asked for a pound, and the merchant, wrapping them up, remarked, "You are lucky to get them; these are the last I had, and they are hard to get."

A half drunk bum stepped up and struck Oliver and said, "What are you doing buying the last hot dogs in town? You are a soldier, you can eat at the camp."

Oliver's inclination was to strike back, but the man was drunk, and not only that, he was accompanied by several companions just drunk enough to start a brawl, so Oliver quietly and wisely slipped out of a side door, taking with him the weiners and some other things that he had already paid for. He found Louise, and they came home together.

"It makes me so mad!", Louise said belligerently.

Safely at home and out of trouble, they opened the can of mixed vegetables that Oliver had bought and boiled them with the weiners, and heated the dozen rolls. What amused me was that I happened along just as they finished their supper, and they had eaten every hot dog, every roll, all the vegetables, and were drinking the last drop of the soup!

One Saturday night Oliver brought home a friend from the camp, a soldier, Raymond Phinney, who was perhaps forty years old. We liked him very much. Mr. Phinney had bought some steak, and Oliver brought some other things for supper, and the three went into the kitchen to cook supper. I had not at that time ever thought

of giving regular kitchen privileges to any of the roomers, but always allowed them to cook anything if they asked, which some of them frequently did.

After supper they came back into the living room, and we talked pleasantly for a while. Around ten o'clock Mr. Phinney said he would have to go. "But," he sighed, "it gets so tiresome, always staying at the camp. Do you have a room you could rent me for the night?"

"All the rooms are filled," I replied "but we have this day bed in here, if you think that would do."

He was delighted, and I brought sheets and blankets and began to make the bed while he sat in the room. The blankets were new and very pretty, but I was surprised when he said, "You have made that bed look so comfortable I never will want to get up in the morning. Just look at that, and think of our army cots!"

After that he was a regular visitor, using the day bed (unless it was previously engaged) nearly every Saturday night for the next two or three months. My husband, who is methodical and businesslike, asked his initials and home address so he could put them in his register. Mr. Phinney replied, or I thought he did, " E. I. Phinney, Auburn, Maine."

How can your initials be 'E. I' when you name is Raymond?" I asked.

"I-a-y-m-o-n-d," he said.

Then I realized that he pronounced the letter "R" as we pronounce "I." Later when a girl came here for a few days and told me her name was Rita Routhier, and spelled it this way, or so it sounded, "I-i-t-a I-o-u-t-h-i-e-i," I said, "You are from Maine."

"Yes," she replied, surprised. "'How did you know?"

"Because you pronounce your "R" like we pronounce "I."

It really was interesting—we could often locate a new person by some local difference in pronunciation.

Since Mr. Simmons had gone home, Mr. West and James Baldwin decided to take the southeast room, the one recently occupied by Maynard and Marcella Lonis, and we arranged the large front room for a couple. Emma Hall occupied the room during the Thanksgiving holidays.

One morning Emma Hall called me and said a young Jewish couple wanted a room. She said, "Mother, I think you will like them. They are real nice."

She was right; we liked them very much and rented them the front room. Emma Hall did not need it, as she had to go back to her school. They were David and Dorothy Kaplowitz of New York City. David was a civilian instructor in the School of Mechanics, and

Dorothy was a student in the school. At that time, women were taking the course in preparation for becoming instructors, thus relieving some enlisted men for other duties, especially overseas service. These women were paid while taking the course, and I think they had to sign up for a given time.

They told us they had paid a deposit of twenty-five dollars as reservation for one of the houses being built in the Eastern part of the city for war workers and soldiers' families. These were attractive little five room houses all painted white. They were not a part of the government War Housing Project, but were owned and were being built by a corporation. That was November, and David's and Dorothy's house was not completed until the middle of May. They stayed with us until that time.

Dorothy's personality was wonderful, and I was interested in every word she said. Her voice was soft and low, her English excellent, and, though she always seemed busy and did not spend much time talking with the rest of the household, sometimes she came in and talked with us in our living room. I found in her a kindred spirit, a girl who understood and talked my language.

She told me her parents were natives of Austria, and that her mother came to this country at the age of thirteen with some other people who were coming. She never saw her family again, though she kept in touch with them through the years.

"Now that the war is going on, we cannot hear from them, and we do not even know whether they are living," said Dorothy.

The greatest heroine on earth to Dorothy was her mother, and she sometimes spoke of her as "that girl," with the utmost pride in her voice. Dorothy insisted that she herself had been a wilful child, and her mother's management of her reminded me of my mother's of me. When Dorothy insisted on doing something that perhaps she ought not to do, her mother would say, "Yes, you may do it, but you will know that Mother doesn't want you to." That would just ruin it, and she would give it up.

Dorothy was a graduate of a New York college, and before coming South had done welfare work in New York. Some of her experiences were interesting. One difficulty she said she had was to get the poor ignorant class of people with whom they had to work to give their children cold-liver oil even after the Welfare Department furnished it for them. "They used it for furniture polish!" she said.

I wanted David and Dorothy to enjoy their stay here, so I phoned the USO and told the man who looked after Jewish young people, himself a Jew, about them. The next time they went to the USO he greeted them warmly and told them he knew of them and had been

looking for them. Dorothy told me about it and seemed to appreciate it, so I phoned some of my Jewish friends about them, and they invited them to the services and social affairs at the Temple. Dorothy said her mother was orthodox in her religion and had kept house that way, but that she never forced it on her children, and none of them had orthodox views.

Students and instructors in the School of Mechanics at the camp dressed in overalls or "fatigues," as they called them, since their work was with machinery. Dorothy wore slacks and blouses until she was told by someone in authority that she ought not to attend classes "looking like a million dollars."

"I didn't know slacks looked like a million dollars," she told me.

She wrote to her father, who owned or conducted a "ready-to-wear" factory in New York, and he sent her some one-piece "coveralls," which made her look like a little girl—or a little boy. Our son, who happened to be at our house one day when she came running home from the bus stop two blocks away, said "That's the cutest little girl running along there in overalls that I ever saw."

One night Dorothy and Louise came into the living room with long faces. I saw that some weighty matter was under consideration. Dorothy was the spokesman.

"Mrs. Baker," she said, "We are having a terrible time. We have to go to the camp so early in the morning that almost no eating places down town are open, and we pay a very high price for a little orange juice and toast. Then at the camp we have to walk a long way to a place to eat lunch, and after we come home in the afternoon all tired out, we have to dress and walk down town for supper."

"Well, that just won't do," I said, "We must work out a better plan. How would it do if you cooked your breakfast and supper in my kitchen?"

They beamed. That was what they wanted, and I had offered it without their having to ask. So we began to work out plans. They paid a nominal fee for "kitchen privileges", and not only cooked breakfast and supper here, but even made sandwiches to take to the camp for lunch. And too, I arranged for them to ride with Mr. West to the camp every morning. They paid him less for their share of gas than bus fare had been costing them, yet they were saved at least half an hour each morning and the walk to the bus line.

After that we began to realize that the girls were so much better satisfied and even better fed if they had kitchen privileges that we allowed it to all, and the kitchen became the most popular room in the house.

David often helped Dorothy make sandwiches for their lunch. He was deliberate in his movements,—just the opposite of Dorothy with her quick little ways. They were working in the kitchen one day and Dorothy was giving directions about the sandwiches. David stopped, looked at her, and said, "You are not paying me anything."

Glancing at my husband, who happened to be in the room, with a twinkle in her eye, Dorothy said, "I don't like inefficiency."

After a while Dorothy graduated in Airplane Mechanics. She then took an instructor's training course, after which she became a full fledged instructor. We were very proud of her,—but she still had to wear coveralls. Her hours were then changed, and she made arrangements to ride to the camp with a friend who had a car. Later in the spring as the weather became pleasant, David and Dorothy bought bicycles, which they used to ride back and forth to the camp.

The school became so large that the class rooms were not sufficient to take care of all the classes at one time and three eight-hour shifts were arranged. Sometimes David and Dorothy were on different shifts, one coming in about three o'clock in the morning, the other going out about three-thirty. This was a bad arrangement for them, but the convenience of instructors was not consulted. One good thing, however, was that they always had the same day off. Although some classes were held on Sunday, each class met only six days in a week, and everybody had one day off in seven.

About this time I saw in a local paper an advertisement of an auction sale, which would be held at the home of a Goldsboro woman who had died not long before, and all her personal effects would be sold. Among other things offered was a large library. My husband and I decided to bid on the books. On the appointed day I attended the sale. To my surprise the books caused less interest among the crowd than almost anything else, and I bought most of them and at very reasonable prices, even though they were of a high class. These included a set of Stoddard's Lectures, a set of Shakespeare, some other sets, and several hundred works of fiction.

We already had a good library of history, poetry, religious works, reference books, and standard sets such as Dickens, Scott, and Thackery, but not much modern fiction, so this big addition was hailed with delight by our girls, especially Dorothy. We had a book case built to fit the entire wall space in the hall between the living room door and the next bed room door, and in this Emma Hall arranged the fiction according to authors and style, using one section for juvenile books, as those of Louise Allcott, Mark Twain, and books like "Pollyanna," "Mary Cary," and the like.

I was so pleased that I remarked, "I wish I had bought *all* the books they had, and not let anybody else have any of them."

"What a sweet unselfish thought, Mrs. Baker!" said Dorothy.

I didn't let that bother me. The girls were always trying to tease me, and I didn't care, and I certainly did enjoy seeing them enjoy the books.

There were many changes in the personnel of the household that winter, but Louise and Dorothy were with us through the entire winter and until late in the spring, and shared with us the many experiences that came our way.

CHAPTER V
LUCILE AND SUDIE

William and Lucile Barfield, who were from a large city in the Middle West, were looking for a room. They had lived for one week at a private home in Goldsboro, but were very dissatisfied. They had to pay ten dollars a week for a very small back room with a little rusty heater, and not only did not have kitchen privileges, but hardly dared to step out of their room into the hall, as the landlady looked at them as if they had no business walking around in her house. "I wouldn't give two dollars for it," said William.

We gave them the room recently vacated by Howard and Cassie. Dorothy and Louise spoke kindly to Lucile, and she soon seemed at ease and slipped into the ways of the household. We found that she was jolly and good natured and one of the kindest hearted girls we ever had in the house. She would do anything for anybody, and didn't expect much for herself, but her gratitude at any kindness shown her was very evident. She was of French descent with the maiden name " Girard," and was the eldest of several children.

She showed such a willingness to help that I made arrangements with her to help me with the housework, and she took her meals with us except on weekends when William was here, and then they went out for their meals or she cooked them here. She was strong and capable, and it was quite a relief to me to have some of the housework taken off my hands.

I had heard of a number of people who received help with their housework from some of their roomers who, having no other work, were glad to find something to occupy their time and at the same time make a little spending money. One woman had a spare room that she offered for rent on condition that the girl do her housework. A young officer and his wife, not at all in need of money, but much in need of a room, took the room and the job because it was the only way they could get the room.

William had a helpful turn in a mechanical way. He found things that needed repairs and fixed them. He mended broken hinges, sharpened the kitchen knives, and was a wizard at repairing electrical appliances.

Lucile enjoyed a joke on herself or anybody else. "I get a kick

out of seeing Mrs. Baker with her hair net hanging down her back," she said one morning. Sure enough my hair net had come unfastened in front and I did not see it when I took a hasty peep in the mirror before I hurried in to prepare breakfast.

But Lucile soon found a job at an eating place down town, and my help was gone. Having found it possible to get help from a roomer, and knowing that some other people did too, I resolved to apply for a soldier's wife who would agree to take a job. I told Mrs. Palmer that I would give a girl her room and board in exchange for help with the house work. She promised to let me know if she found one who wanted the job.

In a few days they came—Ezra and Sudie Angers. They were from the Middle West too, but were from a small country village, and had none of the city airs of Lucile and William. Ezra was quiet and timid; Sudie was friendly but simple. She wore a long heavy black coat and had her head tied up in a figured scarf. They had left their belongings at the home of some people in a distant part of Goldsboro where they had spent the night, and had walked here after learning that we had a room that wouldn't cost them much.

It was one of the half story rooms upstairs, but as my husband and I occupied the other room Sudie wouldn't be lonesome or afraid during the week while Ezra was at the camp. They were delighted with the room and the job. Yes, Sudie would be glad to wash the dishes and help with the cooking and cleaning.

They then walked back to their former room, a distance, I suppose, of ten or twelve blocks, and walked back here, each bringing a big suit case. But that wasn't all. After placing these in their room, they set out again and walked back, this time bringing more baggage. Thus they travelled over the same route five times, walking every step of the way, and on two of the trips loaded with bags.

And the contents of those bags! Sudie had brought a strange assortment of things and she showed them to me with pride—a half finished bed quilt, little pieces of embroidery done in bright colored thread, half made baby garments and odds and ends of pictures. She added to these things occasionally, as one day she told me with glowing pride, "Look, I bought this picture of Jesus for a nickel."

Ezra went back to the camp after he and Sudie finished their treck, and Sudie, thoroughly exhausted, sat with us by the fire in the living room that night.

"I'm having a baby in May," she said. Poor little girl! She ought not to have taken those long walks that day.

She told me her maiden name was Whitley, but that her father's name was O'Malley until he came to America from Ireland and

then he decided to take a more American sounding name. She said she had been a Sunday School teacher, and also that she had been an employee of a filling station, that she wore overalls and washed cars, sold gasoline, and did the usual work of an attendant.

In the night I heard her coughing and sniffling, and I realized that she was sick. Next morning, however, she came downstairs and said she was all right. I insisted that she see a doctor, and as neither she nor I knew at that time that soldiers' wives could have the services of an army physician free, she agreed to go to our family doctor. Lucile, who had the afternoon off, went down town with her soon after lunch. A cold wind was blowing and I was sorry I had let Sudie go out. They did not come home until nearly night and then told me that the doctor said Sudie was very sick, and that unless she went to bed in a warm room and stayed there she would have pneumonia.

"I knew I couldn't go out any more," said Sudie, "and we were already down town, so we went to the movies."

"To the movies when the doctor said you were about to have pneumonia!" I exclaimed horrified.

Lucile was so penitent that I didn't have the heart to scold her much, and Sudie was too sick to be scolded.

I don't know what I would have done in the days and nights that followed if it hadn't been for Lucile. I had gotten Sudie here because I needed help, and instead of help I had a very sick girl to wait on. And furthermore, she couldn't stay in her room upstairs. It was unheated and was reached by out door stairs. I had to put her to bed in the living room!

Sudie was sweet and quiet and made few requests, but she would not take her medicine unless Lucile or I poured it out and gave it to her each time. At night Lucile was near and would go to her if necessary. However, she said Sudie seldom, if ever, called her in the night.

Then Sudie began to get better and to get about the house a little. She moved into Lucile's room and stayed with her whenever William was at the camp. One morning Lucile said, "Sudie, you make up the bed and I will straighten up the room."

"All right," replied Sudie, and reaching for a magazine, sat on the bed and began reading. Lucile put away the clothes, swept and dusted the room, and then said, "Sit over here, Sudie, while I make up the bed."

Sudie obediently—and willingly—moved over to a rocking chair and continued her reading, and Lucile made up the bed.

On Sunday morning when I came downstairs, the ground was

soaking wet. It had poured down rain all night. When I entered the kitchen I realized that something was in the air. Something was wrong. Lucile, Sudie and Louise looked so guilty and giggled at each other, and then looked at me like bad little girls caught in mischief.

"What is it?" I asked.

"Mrs. Baker, we went to the dance last night," said Lucile, who always told everything, good or bad.

"What! Not Sudie, in the rain!" I exclaimed aghast.

"Yes'm, all of us," said Lucile. "and Sudie danced the heel off her shoe."

Lucile told me after we were alone that she supposed Sudie danced with twenty-five soldiers. As far as I could see, it didn't hurt her, as her cold didn't get any worse, and she was getting better every day. The dance was one of those regular Saturday night informal affairs held in the gymnasium of the William Street school just one block from our home for the enlisted men and their wives and Goldsboro girls. They were properly chaperoned by USO hostesses.

During this time, Ezra had paid me a small sum for Sudie's board, but Sudie wanted to begin helping me so they could save this. One day she washed the breakfast dishes; the next day she peeled some potatoes. On the third day she decided to make a pineapple upside-down cake. I ordered the pineapple and furnished all the ingredients, and Sudie made a cake that was passable, with much instruction and assistance from everybody. She was so proud of it that she generously sliced it and passed it around, inviting everybody in the house to "have some of my cake." Mr. Baker and I got one slice each—and Sudie had paid her room and board for that day!

We tried to teach her to sweep with the vacuum cleaner, but she never could hold it so it would take up any dust. I could not picture her working on automobiles. I tried to have her at least wait on herself, but she could not fix a slice of toast without burning it. When Lucile or Louise would say, Sudie, you are burning your toast," she would reply, "I like it burnt."

Though Sudie appreciated the things Lucile did for her, all her admiration was for Louise. She would have been the happiest girl on earth if she could have looked, dressed, and danced just like Louise.

"I think I'll name my baby Louise Blanche," she remarked.

"It would fit better if you named her Blanche Louise," said Lucile.

"All right, I'll name her that," she replied.

One Saturday night about that time a soldier from the camp, Pvt. Pete Dearborn of Texas, wanted to spend a night here. He just

wanted to "get way from the camp," he said. The boys were allowed a night off each week if they wanted it and if they had a pass from their superior officer. As Sudie had gotten well and had moved back to her room upstairs, the day bed in the living room was available and we let him take it.

The next morning when breakfast was ready, I thought of the poor lonesome homesick boy in the living room, and invited him to breakfast. He accepted without hesitation. After breakfast I went to Sunday School and church, and when I got home about 12:30 I found Pete in the living room talking gaily with Louise and Sudie.

I prepared dinner and invited him to eat with us, which he did. After a big and satisfying meal he went back to the living room, sat down in my husband's favorite easy chair and went to sleep. Lucile and Sudie, Mr. Baker and I were sitting in the room talking, but it did not disturb Pete. With head back, eyes closed, and mouth wide open, he snored loudly and regularly, his tongue curling itself into a long roll which vibrated with each snort.

I never will forget the expression on Lucile's face as she watched him with a horrified sort of facination.

Finally Pete finished his nap, but he didn't go away. He sat and sat and the day wore on. Sudie had a bright idea; she announced that she was going for a walk and wondered if anybody wanted to go with her. O, yes, Pete would go, and my hopes went up. Sudie would shake him off somehow. She was showing more initiative than I had known she had.

About an hour and a half later Sudie and Pete came walking in, and Pete stayed for supper. Well, hadn't he paid me a whole dollar for the privilege of sleeping at my house? Surely I ought not to mind just throwing in three square meals! He left about eleven o'clock that night with an apology for leaving so early, but explained that he was required to be back in camp at twelve.

Sudie told me that they walked down town and by the bus terminal where the boys collected to take the buses back to camp, and that she hoped Pete would stop there, but I suppose he was too chivalrous to let her come home alone.

The next Saturday night Pete came back and spent the night and stayed for breakfast and dinner. I went away in the afternoon, so he did not stay for supper. He wanted to come again the next week, but we didn't have a room!

I finally had to explain to Ezra that Sudie couldn't do my house work, that she was sweet and we all loved her, but that I had more work with her here than without her, besides the fact that we were giving her her board and room.

"Well, I'll pay you-uns" he said, and he did, and we let Sudie rest in peace.

A few days later she decided to go home, or rather Ezra decided it for her. She did not want to go, for it was like a wonderful house-party to her, a delightful occasion in her life, the like of which she had never dreamed before. Everybody hated to see her go, for she had been like a sweet irresponsible child in the house. After she went home she wrote to Louise, but never a word to Lucile or me.

Lucile and William stayed here until March, when they told us they had secured a room downtown right over the place where Lucile worked.

This, of course, would be very convenient. They were going home on a furlough and would move as soon as they got back. They packed up their belongings so I could rent the room to someone else, but left them here.

Another couple took the room, but when William and Lucile returned to Goldsboro there had been some misunderstanding about their new room and they couldn't get it. We had no other, and they had nowhere to go. They were really in a quandary, and something had to be done at once.

We had a cot in a little alcove adjoining our room upstairs that we had arranged for Anne whenever she wanted to spend a night with us. This was really a part of our room and was separated from ours only by a chimney in the center. I agreed for Lucile to occupy this until they could find a room. William, of course, would sleep at the camp. There was a window in the alcove, and Lucile and I hung curtains on each side of the chimney, thus separating it from us and making a cozy little room.

In the night I was suddenly awakened and astonished to hear Lucile say, "Hi over, Willie, hi over." I thought William was at the camp, but he had come in with Lucile and they had gone to bed before we went upstairs. No wonder she said, "Hi over," with both of them trying to sleep on one cot! Next morning at five an alarm clock suddenly pealed forth on the other side of the curtain and not more than six feet from my head. William got up and dressed and went out. I settled down for another good long nap, but at six "b-r-r-r-r" went the clock again. I waited for Lucile to get up, but she had changed her mind and didn't get up until about seven o'clock, and by that time I was too wide awake to go back to sleep. The second night the cot fell down with them, and by that time they were ready to go out and try to find another room.

They came back to see us sometimes, and several times I saw Lucile down town and talked with her. One day several months later,

William came to see us alone. He said he was going overseas, and Lucile was going back to her mother. We never saw them any more, but I had some letters and cards from Lucile, and I wrote to her. I shall always remember her as a kindhearted girl who was doing the best she could and was moving along and upward in life.

CHAPTER VI
SALLIE EURE

David and Dorothy Kaplowitz said that they were going to have a week's vacation and had decided to go home. They told me to rent their room to someone else while they were away if I cared to.

The young man who came to take the room was Pvt. Thomas Eure of California, and he said his wife was already on her way here to be with him during the remainder of his stay. The next day she came, and as soon as I saw her I thought, "There is a girl after my own heart."

Well, she continued to hold that place in my heart, but she let me in for some of the surprises of my life. I thought I had found a kindred spirit, but I realized later that I was barely brushing the surface of her deep inner life.

Sallie was very small, hardly reaching Thomas' shoulder. She had an intelligent face, brown eyes and pretty curly brown hair. She was unusually intelligent, well educated, refined and dainty. She was the soul of unselfishness, of thoughtfulness for others.

One day she said something about "when I am doing religious work." Interested in church work myself, I asked, "To what church do you belong?"

Imagine my surprise when she replied, "I do not belong to any church. We embrace all religions. I was brought up in the Catholic church, but came out of it when I learned Truth." That was all then, for I didn't know what to say.

Sallie fitted beautifully into the ways of the household. She went with me to the Curb Market, which was a wonderful place to buy good things to eat. Since the market opened at eight-thirty and it was well to be there on time so as to have a pick of the best, she had asked me to wake her in time. In two or three minutes after I called her, Sallie came walking out dressed and with her hair beautifully arranged.

"I don't see how in the world you had time to fix your hair," I said.

"Oh, I didn't touch my hair. It is just like I slept with it all night. It always stays like I fix it," she replied.

She said she had never had a permanent, but that her hair was naturally curly and always stayed in place. Lucky girl!

I heard Sallie say she had used up her coffee coupons and didn't know what to do as she and Edward—as I learned was her name for her husband, though he had told us it was Thomas—were so fond of coffee.

"I will give you a coffee coupon," I said. "We never use all of ours. It is sugar we run short of."

"Will you?" she said joyfully. "I will give you a sugar coupon. We do not need all of ours."

That was fine, and both of us were pleased.

Sally began to tell me something of her life. She had been married before and had had a little girl who, if she had lived, would now be seventeen years old. I was surprised at this, for I had thought of Sallie as about twenty-five. We also had a surprise in store from Thomas. He was a musician, and when my husband asked him what instrument he played he replied, "Anything, but my favorite instrument is the cornet."

When we asked him about his work in the Army, we learned that he arranged music for bands and was director of a band. In fact, he was just everything in the way of a musician. I had never thought of a man's going into the Army to arrange music, but I began to realize that it was important. The soldiers needed music and they needed good clean recreation. Evidently he was well thought of by officials at the camp, for he received promotions faster than any other soldier I ever knew. He came here as a private, was soon promoted to Private First Class, later to Corporal, and then Sergeant.

When he received this last promotion, he and Sallie, who were then living with some other people in Goldsboro, came to see us to tell us the good news. They said he was walking along a street at the camp when he met an officer.

"Good morning, Sergeant Eure," said the officer.

"Since when?" asked Thomas, as he saluted.

"Since right this minute," said the officer.

Sallie and I were chatting over our work in the kitchen one morning when something was said about the color of a dress."

"White stands for frankness, so I always wear it when I lecture, and I can get in closer touch with my listeners," said Sallie.

"That is interesting," I said. "I didn't know you were a lecturer. I thought you told me you were a professional toe dancer."

"I was a toe dancer before I learned 'Truth.' I have no more time for dancing."

Then she began to tell me about colors. She thought it most important what colors people wore and on what occasions. Blue, she said, was an excellent color to wear, especially an indigo shade. "I

cured a woman of what had been considered an incurable disease by having her wear blue and by prayer," she said.

Bright red was a good color, but dark red was the sign of passion and should never be worn. "Yellow stands for intelligence, and I always wear it when I write poetry. Green is for prosperity, and I always wear something green. Brown is for selfishness, and black for tragedy."

"But Sallie, you have on a brown skirt, and you are not selfish," I said.

"Oh, I have overcome brown," she said, "but I never could overcome black."

Sallie knew she could have the room for only a week, so she went every day to the USO desk to apply for a room and sat there with a group of other young women while two workers phoned and phoned and tried to place them. Every day she came back with the same report, "No room."

The week sped by rapidly, and everybody in the house was growing more and more concerned over what was going to become of Sallie. She had to sit at the housing desk practically all of every day, for whenever a room became available it was given to one of those seated there, never to one who had merely left an application.

In a day or two David and Dorothy would be back, and something had to be done, or else Sallie would have to go home. Two of the girls agreed to use a room together—for a discount on their rent, of course—until Saturday when their husbands would be back. They were glad to do this, so I called Sallie to the living room and told her. That would give her nearly a week longer.

"Oh, Mrs. Baker, my prayers are answered!" she exclaimed. "Wait, I will show you something."

She hurried to her room across the hall and back with a notebook in her hand. Opening the notebook, she showed me a prayer she had written the night before, in which she asked God to let her find a room so she would not have to go back home and leave her husband.

"Yes, Sallie," I said, "that was an answer to your prayer, and I believe He will help you find a permanent room by the time you have to give up the room here." And He did.

As soon as she left the room I called Mrs. Palmer at the USO and told her about Sallie's prayer. She said, "We do not usually save a room for anyone who is not at the desk at the time, but Mrs. Baker, I am going to get that girl a room if it is the last thing I ever do."

Dorothy and David came home. Dorothy seemed interested in hear-

ing Sallie talk, and I told her some of the things Sallie had said about colors—but we hadn't heard all. One morning Sallie said something about a "celestial letter."

"What is a celestial letter?" I asked. Dorothy pricked up her ears as Sallie began to explain.

"A celestial letter is one that rhymes with the letter C, which is the best letter in the alphabet. I know this is true and is important, for my name used to be Sally, but "y" is the hardest letter in the alphabet, so I changed it to Sallie, as "e" is a celestial letter. I got on much better after that, and I got a one man show."

"A one man show?" I asked uncertainly.

"Yes, a one man show for my paintings and drawings. It is very hard to get a one man show."

"I should think it would be," I said. "I didn't know you were an artist."

"Oh, yes," she replied, "that is my most important work. Some time I will show you some of my paintings."

"I certainly would like to see them," said I.

Then Sallie proceeded with her discourse on celestial letters.

"My husband's name was Thomas, but I got him to change it to Edward. Edward and David are the best names for men because they begin and end with celestial letters. Since he changed his name he has been given a much better place in his work and has received a promotion."

All this time Dorothy had stared as one facinated. She said, "Well, I certainly am glad my husband's name is David. I shall name all my children David."

Later I asked Dorothy, "What do you make of it?"

"I don't know, Mrs. Baker," she said, "but if you and I can't understand it, we needn't ask the other girls; they can't either."

Before the week was over, Mrs. Palmer called me and said she had a room for Sallie, and gave me the address. Sallie went at once to the house, where she was welcomed by a lovely young woman who said she was glad to have someone in the house just to keep her company, and that she wanted her to feel free to use her living room and kitchen—just to make herself at home anywhere. Her price was very reasonable, and I thought Sallie was quite fortunate.

When my son came here one day soon after, I told him about the prayer and about Sallie's getting the room. I said, "It was a direct answer to prayer."

"Yes," said he, "with a good bit of help from you."

"That is the way God answers prayers," I said. "He uses human

aid. You didn't expect Him to just drop a room out of the sky, did you?"

So Sallie moved away, but she was a dear little friend, and came back to see us often. Sometimes she explained more things about "Truth."

"The Lord Jesus was Christed through His sufferings, and the Lord Confucius was Christed through his teachings," she said, "I have seen the Lord Jesus with my own eyes, and since I saw Him I have been able to heal many people through faith. I healed a woman when she was in advanced stages of cancer. She was so grateful that she wanted to pay me, but we do not accept money for our services. We may accept gifts though. One day the woman came to see me and she had something wrapped in a package that she said was a present for me. When I opened it I found a beautiful leopard skin. I took it to a fur expert to get him to tell me its value, and he offered me a hundred dollars for it, but I did not sell it. I am going to have a coat made of it."

One day Sallie came over to see us and brought some of her pictures, one of which, a portrait of a girl friend, she had just completed. I was very glad, for I had been anxious to see her work. And I was especially glad that she had come while my daughter, Florence, was visiting us. I had told Florence about her.

My husband, our daughter and I sat in the living room with Sallie and heard some of the most amazing things we had ever heard before. First we admired the pictures, which were beautifully done; in fact, I think I never saw more beautiful work. Each picture was about twelve by fourteen inches. One was a portrait of an old man with a beard, an Oriental type; one, the portrait of her friend; and the other, a picture of a beautiful white curly haired dog.

"Where did you take lessons?" asked Florence.

Sallie had told me that she never had had any lessons, and that a celebrated artist had advised that she should not take lessons at all—that it might hurt her original technique, but I was totally unprepared for her reply.

"I never have had any lessons in this life," she said, "but I studied art while I lived in a convent in Germany about the fifteenth century. I took dancing lessons when I was in Greece in another life. Once I was an American Indian, and when I first began to talk in this life, I spoke in an Indian dialect."

"Do you really believe that people live several lives?" I asked.

"Oh yes, they do," she replied, "many lives. All new souls are colored, and they become white through repeated lives. Booker T. Washington was at one time a white man, but came back again as

a Negro for punishment for a sin. He has lived such a good life this time that he will probably be a white man again. People are often punished for sins committed in a previous life. Jealousy in one life will cause cancer in the next."

I asked Sallie why she drew the picture of her friend with a halo of lights around her face. She had enlarged the picture from a small photograph that she brought with her, and the photograph did not have the lights.

"Those are lights that I can see around her face," she said. "Everybody has lights around their faces, but some more than others. I can see lights around your face."

"Then why don't I see lights around faces?" I asked.

"Because you don't have extended vision. I did not have it until I saw the Lord Jesus face to face. I was very ill, and I saw Him. His face was brighter than the sun. I began to talk and said I saw Jesus. Everybody thought I was going to die, but I wasn't, I *really* saw Him. Ever since then I have had extended vision. I am under the direction of the Master John, and he lets me see into the past of people's lives, and I can tell how a person lived in a previous life, but I am not permitted to tell them. I hope to live such a life that I may some day become a Master."

One of us asked some question, I have forgotten what, and she said, "I don't think I would be permitted to tell you that." She seemed to be concentrating, and then said, "Oh yes, I am permitted to tell you," and she answered the question.

She said souls chose their parents before they came into the world. I wondered why some parents ever were chosen. Sallie told us that she had often explained "Truth" in lectures before large groups, but that "We prefer to talk to small groups just as I have to you this morning." She said that it was not religion she was explaining, but just Truth. I do not remember that she made any explanation of the "we" that she used, but I got the idea that she meant the others of her belief.

Finally she said she must go. Florence and I went with her to the door, and there on the front porch was Florence's baby son, Sammy, with his nurse. He looked up with his big serious blue eyes, and we told Sallie this was Florence's baby.

She looked at him rapturously. "Oh, Florence," she said, "he is wonderful! He is an old soul, much older than you. You must be very careful in training him. He has a generous nature and will want to give his toys to other children. Don't stop him; let him give them away."

I told some of this conversation to someone afterwards, and I was asked, "Didn't you laugh?"

"No indeed! I didn't laugh, and you wouldn't either if you had been here. I believed it," I replied.

"You know you didn't!"

"Well I almost thought I did at the time," I said. "She was so earnest and so evidently believed it herself."

One thing about Sallie was that she did not try to force her beliefs on any one or even talk it unless she was questioned. Then she told it gladly, evidently feeling that she was doing missionary work.

Once I asked her if her husband believed as she did.

"Yes, he believes," she said, "But he doesn't talk about it much."

For many months Sallie and Edward lived in Goldsboro and often came to see us, and when they went away they wrote us cards and letters.

CHAPTER VII
KATE AND MAYME

Mrs. West and Charles came to visit Mr. West again for a few days. The only vacant room in the house was one of the little ones upstairs, so we decided to give James Baldwin, who was Mr. West's roommate and brother-in-law, and Charles that room, so Mr. and Mrs. West could have the one downstairs. Charles was very much pleased. "It's just like a tent," he said, looking at the sloping walls. I took him into Anne's alcove and showed him a collection of toys she had left there.

"Too little!" he said with the superior air of one who was almost ten years old. He was interested, however, in a bat and ball, and brought them downstairs to play with.

Mrs. West, who was James' sister, was so sweet and gentle that I did not want her to go away, and I tried to persuade her to stay with us and let Charles go to school here. But Mr. West said he knew his work at the field was almost finished, and that it would be a useless interruption in Charles' school work, so after a few days' visit they went back to their home in Virginia, and a few weeks later Mr. West and James went too. They had been with us ever since work on the camp started eight or ten months before, and we felt that we were losing an important part of the family. Mrs. West wrote me a nice letter, and to my surprise sent me a beautiful white satin slip for a Christmas present.

Before they left, a soldier, Carl Troop of Cleveland, Ohio, came to reserve a room for Christmas week for himself and his wife. We told him we had no room except a small one upstairs, which he would find cold.

"To heck with the cold!" he said. "Just so we have a room! That room is all right. I'll take it."

But before Mrs. Troop arrived Mr. West and James had gone home, so the Troops had a good warm room downstairs.

Mrs. Troop, who was a very pleasant young woman, was full of the Christmas spirit. She had brought from home a little folding Christmas tree and lots of presents for her soldier boy husband. She arranged the tree and the presents and called me into the room to see. The lighted tree on the mantel, the soft rose and blue rug on

the floor, and a bright glowing fire in the grate made a picture that would please anybody.

This was just the picture that presented itself a few days later when Kate Stanley, wife of a student soldier at the camp, came to look for a room. She was delighted, especially with the open fire, and engaged the room to begin as soon as the Troops should leave. Kate and Jimmy had come to stay, and Jimmy's mother, one of the loveliest women we ever had in the house, had come with Kate for a visit of a week or two. On week ends when Jimmy was here, Mrs. Stanley slept in the living room.

Kate was a delightful girl to have in the house, and we thoroughly enjoyed her. Though she was quiet at first, we found her an unending source of fun. She was the only child of well-to-do and I think aristocratic parents. She was dainty and pretty, had beautiful clothes, and had had unusual advantages, including a trip to England, where she visited her mother's family. Her mother, now a widow, was probably very lonely with all her relatives in the homeland except her only child, who was way down here in North Carolina. She sent Kate boxes of beautiful clothes but wrote her depressing letters telling her how unhappy she was without her dear child. A letter from Jimmy's mother was always bright and cheery and left Kate in a happy frame of mind.

Kate seemed not particularly interested in the other girls in the house, but set about getting a job at the camp. This she soon succeeded in doing, and took much interest in her work. Jimmy had only Saturday nights and Sundays off, and usually they saw each other at no other time. But Kate was happy. She had come here to be with Jimmy, and it was worth waiting and working all the week to be with him just that one day and night. She told me once, "I am going to church today to thank God for Jimmy."

Then came Mayme! Mayme, who was to be like a daughter to me, a friend to all the girls in the house, and a blessing to all whose lives touched hers. She and Kate became the closest of friends, and it was a joy to see them together. Their husbands, Arthur Frey and Jimmy Stanley, were also good friends.

Mayme was a tall well-built fair haired German girl. She was born in Nebraska, the daughter of a well-to-do farmer, John Bargen. Her parents, natives of Germany, had brothers and sisters still living in the old country—or perhaps they were *not* living. There was no way to know. Mayme was proud of her ancestry, though she and Art were loyal Americans.

On the farm there was plenty of everything, including plenty of work, and everybody knew how to do it. The farm was large;

there were lots of cows, horses, pigs, chickens, fruit, and vegetables. I had never heard of freezer lockers until Mayme told me how her father and mother kept their meat, fruits and vegetables in a freezer locker and had them fresh any day in the year.

Frequently the postman would bring Mayme a box from home. And such a box! Canned chicken, beef, fruit and vegetables, home made cakes, cookies, and candy, smoked side meat, and even eggs, each wrapped and packed with such care that there was hardly ever a broken one. Mayme's parents adored her, and she adored them.

Mayme had a beautiful voice, and we would listen quietly when she sang, seated alone in her room or on the porch, all unconscious of her audience. She knew how to wash, iron and keep house, and she was always busy. Frequently I found my dishes all washed, wiped, and neatly stacked away. I knew who did it! When I found her making a dress by hand, I asked her if she would like to use my sewing machine. This she gratefully accepted, and Art moved it into her room. This made her room a sort of center, as the other girls also liked to use the machine sometimes, and I too would run in to stitch up a seam. With Mayme as director, dress-making became quite the order of the day. Then late in the afternoon Kate would come running in after her day at the camp, and shout to the others, "Here comes that little tough guy." And her coming was always welcomed, for it meant more fun.

Mayme had a good laugh at my expense one day. I knew my husband would expect dinner at one o'clock, but on this particular day I was late. No use to have a hungry looking husband walking around and asking if dinner was ready, so I turned the kitchen clock back about fifteen minutes.

Pretty soon he came in and, looking at the clock, exclaimed, "Who put that clock back? It was later than that when I was in here a minute ago."

Mayme told it half a dozen times that day, mimicing Mr. Baker's way of saying, "Who put that clock back?"

Kate came home from the camp late, for her, one night and terribly excited and frightened. She had worked overtime, and when she came home it was dark. After getting off the bus she had to pass the William Street School to come home. It was always dark in front of the school, and still darker around the corner where big oak trees shaded the street lights. Just as she reached the school, a soldier, who had evidently been drinking, caught up with her and said he would walk home with her.

"No," said Kate, "I live near and I do not need anyone to walk with me."

"I am going anyway," he said.

When she insisted that he go back, he took a knife out of his pocket and said, "When girls talk to me like that, I cut 'em."

Though thoroughly frightened, Kate put on a brave front. "Put your knife back in your pocket," she commanded, "I am not afraid of you."

"I like your spunk," said the soldier as he put the knife up. But he walked on with her until she turned into our yard, and then went on his way.

About this time a young Italian engaged a room for his sweetheart and her mother, who were coming for a visit of a few days. They were the most loving sweethearts I ever saw, and they didn't care who saw them loving. I happened to be in the kitchen with several of the girls when I saw them in the back yard. Perhaps I shouldn't have said anything, but, not taking time to think, I exclaimed, "Oh, look!"

Everybody hurried to the window, and there stood the couple with a neighbor's garage for a background, hugging and kissing. They would kiss and kiss; then she would take her handkerchief and wipe the lipstick off of his face, and they they would kiss again.

"Oh, I wish it was me! I wish it was me!" sighed Kate ungrammatically but ecstatically.

Finally the show was over, but Kate didn't forget it. Later when Jimmy came home, she told us to watch through the kitchen window. We got ready for another show. Kate grabbed Jimmy by the arm and pulled him out into the back yard and to the garage.

We got a show, but it was different from what we expected. Kate began to put her arms around him, but Jimmy was bewildered and suspected a trick of some kind. He looked suspiciously around the corner of the garage. Kate tried to pull him nearer, but he was entirely uncooperative and undemonstrative. Glancing up with a grin at the audience at the window, Kate reached up, gave Jimmy a slap in the face and raced back to the house, leaving him standing alone in the yard wondering what it was all about.

One night Kate lit the oil stove in the bathroom and, closing the door so the room would be warming up, went back for her towels and clothes. When she returned she saw through the crack of the door that there was a light in the room, and supposed that someone was in there. Once in every little while she would go and look. Finally, exasperated, she came to me and said, "Mrs. Baker, I lit the stove

in the bathroom an hour ago to take a bath, and somebody has been in there ever since."

About that time, my husband happened to go into the back hall and saw that smoke was coming out over and under the door. He threw the door open, and a dense cloud of black smoke poured out. No one had been in the room since Kate came out. She had left the light on herself and unfortunately had not closed the oil stove properly, leaving it cracked open, which always caused it to smoke.

But what a mess! The entire room and its contents were jet black with tags of soot hanging from the ceiling and window. The tub and other bath fixtures looked like they were of ebony. We took cloths and wiped down the ceiling and walls, each swipe leaving a broad white mark in the inky blackness. We wiped and wiped, and then washed the bath fixtures so the room could be used, but it looked awful!

The next day we had a colored girl wash the walls, windows, floor, everything, making it clean to touch, but leaving it looking so bad that there was nothing to do but have the room repainted. A funny part of it was that Kate never believed that she had left the light on and that no one had been in the room but herself. We didn't insist.

But the day came when Jimmy's group received orders to be ready for overseas duty. Kate gave up her work at the camp and waited until the final orders came, and Jimmy left. Then she went home to her mother. Some months later we heard that she had a little daughter, Joanne. But Jimmy never saw the baby. He never came back; he had made the supreme sacrifice.

CHAPTER VIII
THE PASSING CROWD

Whenever a room was vacated, we freshened it up and called the housing desk in the lobby of the Hotel, and in half an hour or less the next renters would arrive. I visited the desk once just to see what it was like. A worker sat at either end of a table with lists of possible rooms. Each had a telephone. Seats were arrranged before the table for applicants, and from six to a dozen people sat there eagerly hoping for a room, while the workers called and called and located rooms when they could.

Sometimes I would phone: "Mrs. Palmer, do you need a room?"

"Oh, Mrs. Baker!" she would say, "I certainly do. I will send you a couple right now." And they would come.

They sent us nice girls. Mrs. Palmer told me she picked them for us because I helped her so many times and because whenever she talked with any who stayed at our home they said they liked it here.

One night she called me about 12:30 and asked if we could take two women who had just arrived in the city. They came, and the story they told us showed something of the unselfish work of the USO workers, some of whom received no pay for their services. They said they were walking along the street from the railway station, each carrying a suitcase, when a lady spoke to them pleasantly, asking if they were looking for a room.

"Yes," they replied, "we thought we would go to the hotel."

"The hotel is filled up," said the lady, (Mrs. Palmer.) "I work at the housing desk in the hotel lobby, but that closes at twelve o'clock, and I was going home, but I will go back with you and try to find a room for you."

She could have gone home to bed, and I'm sure she needed rest, but back to work she went when she was needed.

The East room that the Webbers had occupied and the little northeast room upstairs were not rented to permanent roomers the rest of the winter or spring, but were used by a varying stream of people, most of whom were here for short visits to husband, sweetheart or son.

The passing stream of humanity was like a panorama on a screen, and my husband and I were the spectators, sometimes amused, some-

times pleased at finding really interesting people, and often filled with compassion at the difficulties and heartbreaks that we saw.

Many things puzzled people who came from far away and knew little of life in a Southern town, especially a war camp town where even the regular citizens were puzzled. One thing that bewildered many of the newcomers was the open fires. They never had seen one before, and didn't know what to do with it. One old gentleman, who had come with his wife to visit their son, was seated in our living room with his wife and us. After staring quietly into the grate for a long time, he said suddenly, "That thing makes it real warm in here!"

They didn't know how to make a fire; one girl tried to start it by sticking a match to a lump of coal. Most of them piled the coal up so high that it was dangerous, and once we actually found a hole burnt in the floor just off the hearth, where a lump had rolled down. Fortunately the occupants of the room heard it and jumped out of bed in time to prevent a conflagration.

Another couple made the biggest fire I ever saw on a day that was almost too warm for a fire at all. They told me the reason they put on so much coal was that the small fire they had made the room so hot that they thought it would be best to cover it with a lot of coal to hold the heat down.

Another girl washed her stockings and hung them wet on the back of a dainty walnut parlor chair that had been handed down in my husband's family. Knowing that she had left the house and that there was a fire in her room, I looked in to see if it was all right, and saw the stockings steaming. The chair was just as close to the fire as possible, and was covered with blisters. We had to have an expert to do the chair over.

We had frequent calls for a room for just one night, and if there was no other vacancy we gave them the day bed in the living room. Three girls occupied that room one night, two of them sleeping on the day bed and the other on a mattress on the floor. They had come to visit sweethearts at the camp.

Miss Miriam Rothenburg stayed one night while on her way to Fort Bragg, where she was to serve as a hostess. I found her quite interesting, but was suprised when she told me she was a Catholic.

"But your name!" I said.

"Yes, my father is Jewish, but my mother is Irish, and I belong to her church."

Pvt. and Mrs. George Seabolt and their little son, barely three years old, spent one night with us. I told the little boy that I had some grandchildren like him. He seemed quite pleased at that and

proceeded to call me "Grandma." Mrs. Seabolt was embarrassed, but I hastened to assure her that it was all right, that I was glad to be his grandmother. After that we had other children here who also called me "Grandma."

A sweet faced young woman, not sent by the USO, came one morning and said she wanted to get a room here because she had heard that the girls had such a good time here, and that she was lonesome.

"My husband and I have a nice room, and the people are good to us," she said, "but there is no one in the house but an old lady and her husband and us, and my husband is away most of the time, and I am lonesome."

I was sorry that we had no vacant room at that time and couldn't take her, for she seemed so sweet and so lonesome.

The next couple was Mr. and Mrs. J. DeRidder, who were here for a few days. They wanted to stay, and we would have liked to have them, but the room had been reserved after that time, so they had to go. One day Mrs. DeRidder was sitting on the back steps in the sunshine, when her husband came quietly and unexpectedly around the corner of the house.

"Jake!" she exclaimed with joy.

They took their kodak to the front yard, and I saw them taking pictures of each other. I offered to take some pictures of them together, and they were very appreciative.

A few weeks after they moved away, Mrs. DeRidder came back, bringing with her another soldier's wife, whom she introduced as "Jane." Jane wanted to come here. They said the house in which they lived was run something like a reformatory. There were rules stricter than a boarding school, such as no talking after nine o'clock, lights out at ten, no walking around the halls or visiting in other rooms at any time.

"It doesn't matter about me," said Mrs. DeRidder, "as I am going home in a few days, but I do hate to leave Jane there without me."

Poor Jane! I couldn't take her, for every room we had was filled. Mrs. DeRidder told me this story:

"One night I was in Jane's room and we were scarcely talking above a whisper. We were really saving money for Mrs. Jones as I had no fire in my room, and both of us were sitting by Jane's fire.

Suddenly Mrs. Jones called, "Jane, is anyone in your room?"

"Yes, Mrs. Jones, Mrs. DeRidder is in here with me."

"Well, you know that isn't allowed. Better get on back to your room."

I tried to console them by telling them that Mrs. Jones had been paralyzed, and perhaps that made her peculiar.

Another girl told me that her landlady wouldn't give her roomers any clean sheets. Finally she and another girl went to the rents office and complained, and they were told, "We can't do anything with that woman. Everybody knows she is crazy."

Yet many other couples had such wonderful homes. I've heard a number insist that they had the best homes in Goldsboro.

One of my friends once asked me how I liked my roomers.

"They are the sweetest things I ever saw," I replied. "It is a joy to have them in the house."

"I am glad to hear you say that, for that is just the way mine are," she replied, "But I have heard some people speak so differently."

It was true. There were all kinds of girls here, just as there were all kinds of soldiers at the camp; and there were all kinds of landlords. One woman told me that she and her husband were out of town one weekend, and in their absence the roomers had wild parties; all got drunk and practically ruined the house and left every dish they used while she was away unwashed.

Nothing like that every happened at our home, and almost all the young people we ever had were lovely. I had a neighbor who went to the seashore for the entire summer, leaving her house to the roomers, who kept it in beautiful order, watered her flowers, and if a couple had to leave Goldsboro they secured another nice couple to fill the vacancy. The girls frequently came over to see my girls, and we went to see them.

But of course there were exceptions. A lady told me that she had a couple in her home who seemed very nice, but that after they had been there about a week a chaplain at the camp phoned and said, "Please tell Miss (giving the girl's maiden name) and Sgt. So-and-so they can come out here and I will marry them."

The landlady said she told the girl as nonchalently as possible and didn't look at her. The couple went to the camp and were married!

Then came Mrs. Eubanks! A new type, absolutely different from anyone who had been here before. She was a small wiry talkative little woman about forty-five years old, who had come from Lubbock, Texas, to see her son. When she arrived he had already been sent on to another field. It was too bad, for she did not feel financially able to follow him.

She seemed in no hurry to go home; in fact I think she had no special reason to go home. She was a widow, and the boy was her only son, so unless she could be with him, one place was as good as another. I never saw such an active energetic woman in my life. She offered to do housecleaning for me for a part of the day for her

room and board. I was glad to have the work done, and left it to her to decide what hours and how long she would work.

Then in her spare hours she started out to find a paying job. First she put in an application to join the WAC's, then applied at the Employment agency for a job, and on to the USO and asked them to help her get work. They gave her work for several hours a day, sewing on buttons and chevrons for the soldiers. She decided that she needed a new dress, so she bought some pink figured print, brought it home and cut it out without a pattern, and went in Mayme's room and stitched it on the sewing machine. She made it in a remarkably short time, and considering the fact that she had no pattern and was a wheelhorse of a worker rather than an accomplished seamstress, I thought it did very well. The girls enjoyed having her come in with them and sew, and in fact everybody liked her, for she was never at a loss for something interesting to tell.

She watched the want ads in the local paper and saw that the Sisters at the Catholic school had advertised for a maid or housekeeper. She hurried away to investigate this and came home an employed woman. They had offered her a dollar a day and room and board, so that was the end of the housework she was doing for me. She had to keep her room here for a few days longer, however, as the room she was to occupy at the school would not be available yet.

"The Sisters are just like other people," she told us. "I was afraid they would be queer because they wear such funny clothes, but they are all right," she said.

She went to work the next morning, but each night she studied the advertisements, not only in the local but in the state papers. One night she found an advertisement that attracted her attention at once. The State Hospital for the Insane at Raleigh was advertising for ten attendants, and named what seemed to Mrs. Eubanks as a very good salary with room and board.

Mrs. Eubanks was straightforward and honest in her dealings. She phoned the Sisters that she could not work the next day or probably longer, and explained that she was going to Raleigh to investigate this job.

"That's the kind of work I like," she said. "My husband and I were attendants at the State Hospital in Texas for years. I know all about that work."

"Aren't you afraid of those crazy people?" one of the girls asked.

"Not me! I ain't afraid of nothing," she replied.

She went to Raleigh and at the end of the second day was back here for her baggage. She had secured a position—not as an attendant

—but as *head of the women's suicide ward,* and at a much higher salary than that offered as an attendant. She had already worked one day to find out for certain whether she wanted the job.

"It is easy," she said. "I don't have to do anything but see that they don't kill themselves or each other. One woman thought she would scare me. She came up to me with her hands held as if she was going to put them around my throat and said slowly, "I'm-going-to-kill-you."

"I grabbed her hands and pulled them apart and said, 'Take your hands down, I'm not 'fraid of you.'

"She took 'em down. She saw I wasn't scared of her and wasn't going to take any foolishness."

So we lost Mrs. Eubanks after her ten days' visit. All of us, especially Mayme, Mr. Baker and I, were sorry for her to leave, for she had been a live wire in the house.

A young civilian, Duncan Urquhart of Massachusetts, came for a visit of a few days to his brother, Kenneth, who was stationed at Johnson Field. He was handsome, well educated, and a good conversationalist, and the young people in the house liked him, and he and the Ramseys became especially good friends.

Kenneth came over to see us too, and after Duncan had gone, he frequently took a room here for a Saturday night "just to get away from the camp." He was interested in music, had specialized in it in college, and planned to go into some phase of it as a profession after the war was over. They were fine boys and evidently from an excellent family.

Sometime later Kenneth came to see if his father, who was coming to visit him, could stay with us for a week or two. We had a double room and told Kenneth to come and stay with him all he wanted to.

Mr. Urquhart was a real gentleman with every evidence of culture. He gave us a picture of his wife, himself and Duncan taken in the living room of their home. A photograph of Kenneth in his uniform was on the mantel. A beautifully decorated Christmas tree was at one side of the group, and on the other side an open door showed a part of the dining room, and on beyond through a window, a beautiful tree in the yard. It was a picture of a happy family and an attractive home.

As soon as Mr. Urquhart arrived he called the camp to speak to Kenneth, and to his consternation was told that his son was on the alert and would not be allowed to leave the camp one single time. I never saw anybody more upset than Mr. Urquart was. He said he was going to call the commander of the camp and demand that,

after he had come all the way here from Massachusetts to see his son, he should see him.

I don't know just what he did or said, but anyway, though they did not allow Kenneth to leave the camp, they did allow his father to visit him for hours everyday. Mr. Urquhart stayed here ten days, after which time Kenneth was sent away. Mr. Urquhart gave me a kodak picture of Kenneth taken in front of the USO building, and we had cards from all three of them after they left.

Long after Kenneth went away, Duncan, who was passing through Goldsboro on his way to some station, came to see us. He was dressed in the uniform of a Naval officer, and if we had thought him handsome in civilian clothes, we just didn't know how he *could* look in his uniform.

The East room was then taken by Pvt. and Mrs. Clarence Dix of Wichita, Kansas. Mrs. Dix was the most beautiful girl we ever had in the house. She was unbelievably beautiful. She reminded me of Snow White in the old fairy tale, with her jet black curly hair, blue eyes, and creamy white skin. But alas! Her hands were scarred and drawn, having been burned in an accident several years before.

They were here for only a week, and Mrs. Dix said she had left her baby daughter at home with the grandmother. They had named the baby "Dorothy" for Dorothy Dix.

Two years later Eunice White of Flint, Michigan, who spent the summer here while her husband was in the camp, told me: "Mrs. Baker, today I was going out to the camp on the city bus and I saw the most beautiful girl. She had black hair and blue eyes, but her hands were scarred and drawn.

"That was Mrs. Dix," I said. "She stayed here at our house once. Who was she with?"

"She was with a man and a little girl about two or three years old."

"Was the man tall and good looking?" I asked.

"Yes," said Eunice.

"They are the Dixes, and I suppose they have an apartment at the War Housing Project," I said.

When Cpl. and Mrs. Carl Fee came for a week the East room was occupied, so they took the little upstairs room, but Mrs. Fee sat most of the time with us in the living room or with Mayme in her room, where both were busy sewing on tiny garments.

Almost all the girls we had belonged to one of three classes: those who had babies, those who were going to have babies, and those who hoped they were going to have babies. This may have been partly due to the natural desire to be in the style, but I think there was also the lingering fear of being left alone, perhaps temporarily while

Joe was overseas, or perhaps forever—and the little one would be all that was left of Joe.

Most of them sewed on layettes, and the exchange of patterns and ideas was a matter of absorbing interest. One member of the hopeful class began work on her layette, crocheting dainty little bootees, embroidering little pillow slips, etc. Her baby arrived *twelve months* later!

Inspired by the atmosphere around, and not liking to be left out of things, I began sewing on a little dress for a prospective grandchild. My husband looked up from the book he was reading, and his glance fell upon the little garment. Looking at me suspiciously, he asked, "What is that little thing you are working on?"

Calmly I held it up so he could see it and replied, "A baby dress."

He smiled and turned back to his book, and I continued sewing on our grandchild's dress. He understood.

One Goldsboro woman who took roomers during the time of the camp, told me later that every couple who ever lived in her house sent her a birth announcement sooner or later. Mine weren't one hundred per cent, but there were so many that sometimes when I had an announcement I would buy half a dozen presents at one time to have them ready, and they were always used sooner or later.

After about ten days Mrs. Fee went home, and we had a nice letter from her. When Christmas came she sent me a card, on which she wrote, "The daughter is seven months old, and her Daddy has been overseas eight months. I'll forever be grateful for that little attic room that brought us so much happiness those few days."

CHAPTER IX
HORTENSE

I wish I could truthfully say that all of the girls were as sweet and lovable as these, but there were a few exceptions, and Hortense Swetser was one of the exceptions.

Cpl. Albert Swetser came to engage a room for himself and his wife, who was expected to arrive soon. We found him so pleasant and nice in every way that we were sure we would like his wife, but the minute she arrived I knew we had been mistaken. She came into the house wearing slacks, smoking a cigaret, talking loudly, and showing none of the gentleness of the others.

She had come from "the wrong side of the tracks" in a large Northern city and was ever on the defensive, expecting to be imposed upon, and determined to "do" the other fellow first. She said she didn't want kitchen privileges and that she was going to work down town and therefore would have a fire in her room for only a little while each day, and somehow I let her talk me into giving her a reduction in the rent.

When she had unpacked her things, I went to her room to speak to her about some arrangement. When I entered, she stood in front of a table and tried to hide her electric iron and something she was ironing on the table. I understood at once; she thought I would object to her using the electricity for that purpose. She looked surprised when I asked her if she would like to use my ironing board, but accepted it. It never occurred to me that any of the girls could get along without washing and ironing.

The second day she was here she asked me if I care if she washed her bed spread.

"Of course you may wash it if you want to," I said, "but I do not expect the girls to wash their bed linen. We have it done at the laundry. But why do you want to wash it? You have used it only one day."

"It smells musty," she said.

It was a fresh spread, and there was no reason for it to smell musty, but I gave her another.

When she first came, my sewing machine was in her room, but I told her we would take it out.

"That's all right, let it stay," she said. "If I tear anything I can sew it up."

"You are welcome to use it," I said, and I heard her sewing on it a little once or twice.

I thought it would be a good arrangement, since Mayme did not want the machine in her room at that time, and as Hortense would be working I would not disturb her if I used it. She soon got a job at the Camp. One day I went into her room to sew on the machine and raised the shade a little and moved a small box that was in the sewing machine chair.

That night Hortense knocked at the living room door. I invited her in and offered her a seat, but she stood at the door.

"Is it necessary for anybody to go into my room while I am away?" she asked.

"No one has been in your room but me," I replied.

"I found that someone had raised the shade of my window and had moved a box that I left in a chair," she said.

I felt myself grow sick. So this was the attitude of the girl who had come to live in our home!

"Hortense," I said, "I left my machine in your room at your suggestion. I supposed of course that you expected me to sew on it, but we will move it out."

My husband was indignant, but the only thing he said was, "We will move it now," which we did.

I thought it over and the next day I said to her, "Hortense, I want to tell you something. I never have disturbed or used anything that belonged to any of our roomers. I never have opened or read any of their mail; but this is our home; it is not a hotel. We have given some of the young people a place to live here with us, and I do not promise not to go into the rooms when I think it necessary. We always look to see if the fires are safe."

She flushed a little and said, "Oh, it is all right if it is anything important."

But she was ashamed. Sometime later I showed the girls a new winter coat I had bought.

"I don't know where I shall keep it," I said. "I have so little closet space downstairs."

"Keep it in my closet," said Hortense.

I thanked her and told her it was "mighty sweet" of her, but I certainly did *not* keep it in her closet.

After Hortense had been here several weeks, she asked me if she might cook a spaghetti dinner in the kitchen one Sunday. Evidently remembering that she had a rent reduction on account of not having

kitchen privileges, she added that she would also cook enough for my husband and me. I was very well pleased, for I didn't care too much about cooking anyhow. I furnished the onions and some other ingredients and stayed out of the kitchen so she could have more room.

The dinner was delicious, and we enjoyed it. Hortense gave some to some of the girls, but I noticed that she excluded Louise and Oliver, who had been very nice to her.

Two or three weeks later, she again asked to cook a spaghetti dinner. Fine! I got the onions for her, kept out of the way in the kitchen, and didn't cook anything. When the dinner was ready, she and Bert ate in their room, after which she threw all that left into the garbage can! I warmed up some leftovers and opened a can of soup for our Sunday dinner.

There was quite a surprise for Hortense one Saturday night when Bert came home from the camp accompanied by her brother, who had just been sent to Johnson Field. She threw her arms around the brother's neck and kissed him, whereas he muttered disgustedly, "Rotten." He knew that the demonstration was put on for the benefit of the audience.

After that the brother became a frequent visitor to the house, in fact so frequent that he would come during the day while Hortense and Bert were at work and would make a big fire in their room, and actually began doing his washing here. I never said anything, though we now practically had three using that room instead of two.

One day a taxi drove up to the house and an elderly woman and a girl got out. They were Hortense's mother and sister, and had come to visit her. She had known they were coming, but had not told me. While they were here Bert slept at the camp, and the mother and sister slept with Hortense. They stayed several days and did not offer to pay anything, though I would not have made a charge, since they used no room expect Hortense's. However, I furnished their towels, and they used the bathroom and hot water, but nothing was said about it.

When Christmas came, Hortense received several nice boxes of candy, one from Bert and others from her people and his. She showed them to the rest of us, but not one chocolate drop did she ever give anybody except perhaps Bert.

After awhile Hortense told me she wanted kitchen privileges. She paid the small difference and began cooking breakfast and supper here. One night she came home from the camp late, having worked

overtime, which she often did, receiving double pay for the extra time.

"Where is Bert?" she demanded.

"He has not been here," someone replied.

"He knew I was working overtime, and he said he would come home and cook supper," she stormed.

She began to prepare supper, making a salad and frying potatoes. About the time she had things ready, Bert walked into the kitchen.

"Why didn't you come home and cook supper like you said you would?" she asked angrily.

"I could not get away from the camp. We were given extra duties, and I came as soon as I could. I am sorry," he said.

"You could have come if you had wanted to," she said, and added, "You may have some salad. I only cooked enough potatoes for myself" and taking up the frying pan, emptied its entire contents into her own plate. I have no idea she was able to eat all of it.

At first we had only one electric refrigerator, and each girl had a little corner. We made out pretty well and with practically no unpleasantness, but one evening while I had visitors in the living room, Hortense stormed in.

"Where is my sandwich meat?" she demanded.

"I don't know what you are talking about," I said.

"I had several slices, and it is gone," she said.

It was really quite embarrassing to have such a thing occur before my guests. No doubt someone had gotten her few little slices of meat mixed up with theirs, and I think it was a wonder there were so few mixups. The next day I ordered some sandwich meat, half a pound of the kind she said she had lost, and gave it to her, and she accepted it.

But I had reached the limit, and realizing that having her here would always be unpleasant, I told Bert that I would like for them to find another room. I was sorry for him, for he was good and kind and unselfish, and certainly deserved a better wife than Hortense. He told me he was sorry she had talked like she did, and went on to say that they had always lived in an apartment to themselves and that she didn't know how to live with other people. He uttered not on word of blame for her or me. I told him I thought the trouble was that Hortense was working too hard, but I didn't know what I learned later—that she was working hard to get ready for the little one that was coming.

They moved away in a few days, and I learned that they had found a little apartment. Once Hortense came back to get some mail that came after they left. She stayed a few minutes and talked pleasantly.

Later I met her on the street down town and we talked for a few minutes. She told me about her apartment and seemed quite happy. When the baby came, I went to see her at the hospital and took a present, and she seemed to appreciate it. Perhaps I didn't understand her, or perhaps it was like Bert said, she just didn't know how to live with other people.

CHAPTER X
ROMANCE

"In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love." Spring had now really come, and with it a host of visitors. The east room, one of the upstairs rooms, and the day bed in the living room were not occupied by regular roomers, but were in constant though ever changing use by visitors. With these visitors came romance. We lived in a world of romance. Many of those who came were sweethearts of soldiers, and had come here to see them. They were *so* much in love. Each visit was one of ecstacy, but ended in tears of parting—happy tears though, in the hopes of seeing each other again soon, and in promises of eternal love.

Mrs. Schultz and Miss Hoft arrived in Goldsboro from New York City. They had come to visit Mrs. Schultz's son, who was Miss Hoft's fiance. A worker at the USO housing desk called to asked if I could take them.

"I have no vacant room except an unheated one upstairs," I said.

"They have travelled all night in a day coach and want to go right to bed, and we have no other room for them. They will come right up," was the reply.

I took them upstairs, gave them lots of blankets, and came down, thinking they were taken care of for hours to come. In less than an hour I heard them walking around, and downstairs they came. Mrs. Schultz was shivering and half crying, and said she couldn't get warm, so I gave her a glass of hot milk, put her to bed in the living room by the fire, covered her with blankets, and put an electric heating pad to her feet. We really warmed her up!

After awhile she got up. "I had a feeling I ought not to come," she said, "and I am going home." She looked in the mirror and said, "I look like I am fifty years old." I didn't dispute with her, but I thought she looked seventy. She called her husband on the phone to come from New York, which he did, and she went home without even visiting the camp. Her son came over, and they insisted on having dinner with us, and though I protested that I did not take boarders, I had to give them dinner.

But Miss Hoft had come to see her lover, and she meant to stay. She found a room somewhere with another girl, the sweetheart of

a friend of young Schultz, so she was with *us* for only a day or two.

A young Russian named Dzwonchyk engaged the east room for his mother and his sweetheart, Miss Jean Garifolo, an Italian girl, who was as beautiful as her name. She and young Dzwonchyk were terribly in love. Dear old Mrs. Dzwonchyk was a very suitable chaperone, as she sat quietly in the room where they were courting and gazed into the fire, not understanding English well enough to know very much about what they said. I offered her books and magazines, but she didn't care to read. I gave her a book of kodak pictures to look at, and this she eagerly accepted. I do not think she could read English.

She told us that at home she worked in a plant where rubber boats for seaplanes were made. This seemed a queer occupation to me, but I was learning not to be surprised at unusual occupations, for we heard of many. Among others were Mrs. Neil's fur work, Sudie's work as a filling station operator, and Mrs. Troop's work in an electric bulb factory. Mrs. Troop said her job was placing the delicate filaments in the bulbs. She received an excellent salary for this work, far more than the salary of any girl that I knew of around here, but said it was a great strain on her eyes, as she had to look through the bulbs as she held them between her and a bright light.

One girl told me that her work had been making little gussets to be set in between the thumbs and forefingers of workmen's gloves, hundreds of these little things every day, day after day, every one just alike! Even the thought of it bores me with its monotony. Another said her work was packaging cookies and crackers. Of course if I had ever thought of it I would have known that all the boxes of cakes and crackers that are sold in the stores had to be packed somehow, but I had not thought of the hundreds of girls working at it day in and day out.

Then came our first wedding. Pvt. Harold Bennett came to engage two rooms, one for his fiancee, Miss Dorothy Webb, and one for her friend, Mrs. Rudolph Smith, who would be here for a week. Mrs. Smith's husband was located at the camp, and she of course was coming to visit him. Pvt. Bennett confided that he and Miss Webb would be married while she was here.

The girls arrived. They were pretty, young and attractive. The young men came over, and arrangements were made for the wedding, which was to take place in about two days. I was consulted as to corsages. The wedding dress was a light blue wool, and I suggested a red or pink rosebud corsage, and they decided on red. Pvt. and Mrs. Smith were to "stand up" with the bride and bridegroom at the wedding, which was to take place in one of the chapels at the

camp, so a corsage of yellow jonquils was selected to go with her brown dress. When the girls were dressed for the wedding I thought they looked beautiful.

The two couples planned to leave after the ceremony for a bridal trip to Raleigh, where they would spend a day and night. I had asked them if I should rent out their rooms the night they would be away, thus saving them the rent and at the same time giving someone else a place to sleep.

They agreed to this, and I offered the rooms to the USO. A man took one of the rooms, and fortunately no one took the other. The man had some kind of filing to do and spread his work out on the table, but after the ceremony the couples decided that it was too late to go to Raleigh that night, and that they would wait until the next day, so back here they come.

Then we *were* in a quandary! What should we do? I had worked out of difficulties before, so I went to work on this one. I phoned and phoned and finally located a room for the night. Then the problem was whether the man would agree to move or whether the bride and groom would have to take a room across town. They hated to do that, as they wanted to be with their friends, and also as the bride's belongings were here.

I put it up to the man. He was big and middleaged and good natured, but he didn't want a cold room or a single bed.

"I am a heavy man," he said "and I can't sleep on a cot."

The landlady assured me that the room was warm and the bed full sized and comfortable.

"Where is that bride?" the man asked. "I want to see her."

"She is in the living room," I replied.

He went into the living room, looked at the blushing bride and said, "So you don't want to give up your room, do you?"

"Oh, I would like so much to keep it," she replied.

He joked and teased her a little, then said, "Okey, you may have it." We refunded his money and all of us showered him with thanks, and he packed up his things and left.

The next day there was a joyful honeymoon trip. After their return the two couples kept the rooms for a few days, then the wives went home and we never heard of any of them again.

Then we had another wedding. Pfc. Harry J. Vanderhaar of Cincinnati wanted rooms for his mother, his sister, Louise, and his fiancee, Alice, who was coming here to marry him. We had only one room to offer them, but were fortunate in being able to get one for the girls at a next door neighbor's. The girls were constantly in and out of our house, and young Vanderhaar was here much of

the time. Everything was in a bustle of preparation for the wedding. Louise was to be maid of honor, and one of Harry's friends from the camp would be best man.

The day came, and everything was ready. The girls' dresses were alike except that Alice's was white and Louise's pink. They wore short veils over their heads and shoulder corsages of tiny rosebuds, and they were beautiful. The wedding took place in St. Mary's Catholic Church, and with it budded a new romance. Louise and the best man had fallen in love!

Mrs. Vanderhaar and Louise went home in a few days, but Alice stayed here as long as Harry was at the camp. They kept the room next door, and Alice came over frequently. She was a lovely girl and all of us liked her very much. Mrs. Vanderhaar, who was very friendly, wrote me an appreciative letter after she went home.

But all of the romances did not end so happily, and the old proverb about true love not always running smooth was sometimes true. We saw some disappointments, some heart-breaks that made our hearts bleed. A young man engaged a room for his sweetheart, but the sweetheart never came. He came back to cancel the reservation, and the pain in his face when he had to tell us she wasn't coming was pitiful.

But even more pitiful was the disappointment of the girl who came to visit her sweetheart and found that he had grown tired of her. This girl, whose name I shall withhold, was sweet, pretty and attractive, and if the man had ever loved her I don't see why he stopped. She was happy when she first arrived and hastened to call him on the phone. He told her he couldn't get away from the camp that day. She called again the next day, but he couldn't come. He never did come or even telephone. She did all the phoning.

One day she and Mayme walked down town, and Mayme told me afterwards that suddenly the girl saw the soldier on the street and ran to him, joyfully calling him by name. The soldier not only wasn't glad to see her, but he showed positive annoyance. He said he was sorry, but that they hardly ever let him off from the camp, and that he was off for only a short time that day and would have to hurry back. Mayme said it was terribly embarrassing, and that she was *so* sorry for the girl.

At last the girl understood. Her sweetheart didn't care! She took the next train home.

The USO called one night to ask if we could take a young girl, Miss Janice Clark, for just one night. In a few minutes she arrived, accompanied by three soldiers. One, evidently her lover, piloted her

into the living room and the others followed. After the introductions the girl looked around excitedly.

"Sit down, sit down!" said the young man.

She took a seat, and he placed his chair close by hers, and as the rest of us talked together they carried on a whispered conversation. They were infatuated with each other, drunk with love.

After awhile the soldiers left, saying they would be back in the morning. When they were gone the girl said, "That was my husband I was talking to."

"I didn't know you were married. They lady at the USO said you were 'Miss Clark'," said I.

"We got married this afternoon," she said.

"What is your husband's name?" I asked, for in the confusion I had not understood his name when he was introduced.

"James Clark."

"His name is Clark too?"

"Yes, my name was Janice Clark, and I married a Clark," she said.

The next morning *Mrs. Clark* waited impatiently and nervously for her husband, but as he did not appear as soon as she expected, she suddenly decided to go home to Mother. Taking her suit case, she went to the bus station, bought a ticket and left.

Later Clark came.

"Where is Janice?" he asked.

"She said she was going home on the bus," my husband told him.

"What!" he said in a startled tone.

After learning that it was really true, he said he would go at once to the bus station and see if he could stop her. Mr. Baker asked him if he had married the girl.

"Yes," he said, "she is my wife."

He hurried away, but I learned from the USO that he arrived too late. She had really gone. I never understood it, just as I never understood many of the queer things some others said and did. About a month later the USO sent me money to pay for the girl's night's lodging.

Now it was May, and the days were warm and pleasant. Mr. and Mrs. Elwood of Illinois came to see their son, and accompanying them was Elsie Bryan, young Elwood's sweetheart. These two young folks were so much in love that all of us loved them. "All the world loves a lover." We were crowded, but were able to take care of the parents and the girl, but there was no room for the young man, and I suggested that he go back to the camp to sleep.

"No!" exclaimed Elsie in dismay, thinking that would mean for him to leave at once.

"But he can stay here as late as you would be up, and can come back in the morning," I said.

She began to look relieved, and my next words fixed it just right. "Why don't you two go and sit on the porch or take some chairs out under a tree in the front yard? Mr. and Mrs. Elwood can sit in here with us."

Ah, that was it! That was fine. It was a warm night and it was pleasant on the porch, especially pleasant *that* night, and all was well.

Finally in May the house that David and Dorothy Kaplowitz had been waiting for since Thanksgiving was finished, and they moved. David was inducted into the service, but was retained here as instructor—the same work he had had as a civilian—all that summer and fall, and Dorothy continued her work.

Emma Hall's school closed, and she came home and took the room the Kaplowitzes had just vacated. Now romance was in our own family! Emma Hall told us she was engaged to John Martin, a sergeant in the Army, who was stationed at McDill Field near Tampa, Florida, and that they planned to be married in the fall. Meanwhile she had resigned her teaching position and was planning to take a government course in draftsmanship at summer school at State College, Raleigh. John would probably go overseas, and she would take a government position until he came back.

Soon after she came home, a young woman, Helen Cranford, from a northern state, came here to marry a soldier, and Emma Hall suggested that we put a single bed in her room for Helen. This was a satisfactory arrangement, as they liked each other.

When Helen arrived she told us she was Miss Cranford, but that after Thursday she would be Mrs. Nolan. The young man was quite attentive, but when Thursday came they didn't get married. Helen said they had to wait for the rings to be sent from home. She said they had written for them. Several days later the rings came, but they didn't get married. Nobody knew why.

One day Emma Hall told me, "Mother, Helen has been crying and crying all day."

I was terrible concerned, but there was nothing I could do or say. That afternoon Nolan came over and found Helen in tears. They talked together a long time, and then she went into her room and put on her wedding dress, a light blue crepe, and they went out to the camp and were married by one of the chaplains. When they came back, Helen was wearing a pink rosebud corsage and seemed happy again.

Emma Hall and Mayme went down town and bought a wedding present for Helen from all of us. Some couple had moved out and left a room, so the bride and bridegroom moved in. Helen stayed a few more days and then went home. We never knew what caused the interruption of the wedding plans.

CHAPTER XI
JUNE, DOROTHY, AND MILDRED

Louise was beginning to grow tired of her work at the camp. The hours were long and the work confining, and she needed out of door exercise and time to rest. She was also tired of being cramped up in one room and wanted a little home of her own where she could cook and sew on tiny garments and lead a domestic life, so she gave up her work, and she and Oliver found an apartment in another part of the city and moved into it.

After they moved they found to their surprise that another couple from their own home community had an apartment in the same house.

"And what do you think," said Louise when she came back to see us, "I used to go with that boy, and Oliver used to go with the girl!"

I don't know how two couples like that got along living in the house together, but I suppose it was all right.

A few months later I heard that Louise had entered the Goldsboro Hospital. I went at once to see her and her baby daughter and took a present for the baby, an illustrated baby book. The little girl had been named for her mother, *Louise Almeda Mae Bruegger Ramsey.*

When the Ramseys gave up the sleeping porch a soldier named Medlin engaged it and paid five dollars on it. The next day a sweet little couple, Bob and June Stewart, came to the house and brought the receipt that my husband had given Medlin. They said Medlin had found a room he liked better and that they had given him five dollars for his receipt for his room here.

I was delighted, for this new couple was much more to my liking. They were young and sweet and I was sure they would fit into our household nicely. They were pleased with their room and began unpacking and putting away their things.

Suddenly the doorbell rang, and I answered it. There stood Mr. and Mrs. Medlin. Medlin said they couldn't get the room they had thought of and had come to take the one here. They came in and I called the Stewarts. Bob wouldn't argue, but I said that since they had paid for the room and had moved in I thought it belonged to them. Mrs. Medlin, who up to this point had not spoken a word, turned to her husband and said, "Let's go."

After they left Bob told us that Medlin was a friend of his, and

that he would have given up to him, but it was plain that he was glad I had taken their side. Later I heard a lady say the Medlins had a room at her house and that they were very nice to have in the home. I was glad to hear it.

Mayme missed Kate and was glad June had come. As soon as another room was vacant, Arthur Frey told me he had a friend at the camp, Clyde Middleton, whose wife was just leaving home to come to Goldsboro, and who wondered if we could take them.

"Yes, we would be glad to have your friends," I told him. "That would be much better than taking strangers."

Since Pvt. Middleton could not get off from the camp to meet his wife, he wired her our address and told her to come here. Mayme and June were enthusiastic over the prospective new comer, and helped me get her room ready.

We expected Dorothy on a morning train, but she didn't come. Maybe the train was late, or maybe she didn't get the telegram and was waiting somewhere down town. Finally Mayme decided to go to the hotel and look for her.

Sometime after she left, the door-bell rang and I answered it. There stood a pretty girl with an eager and somewhat frightened look on her face.

"I am Mrs. Middleton," she said.

"Yes," I replied, "We have been expecting you all the morning, and Mayme has gone to the hotel to look for you. Come in."

With a surprised look she came in. "June," I called, "Dorothy has come."

June greeted her warmly, and we took her to her room. I phoned to the hotel and had Mayme paged and told her Dorothy was here. She hurried home and greeted the little stranger with affection. I knew that I would not have to worry about her any more. Mayme had taken her under her wing.

The three girls were inseparable. They bought their provisions together, cooked, ate, worked and played together. Always Mayme made the plans, told the others what to buy, what to cook, and how to do it, and they followed her willingly.

"Mayme, what do you want me to do?" I frequently heard one of them say when they began to prepare a meal. When the three washed their dishes they washed mine too, and left the kitchen in perfect order (Mayme would have had nothing less), and I believe they would have done it just the same if we had not credited them for it on their rent. Most of the time except on weekends when Art and Clyde were at home, Dorothy slept in Mayme's room.

In the pleasant part of the day they took folding deck chairs out

into the yard and sat, Dorothy and June calmly basking in the sunshine, while Mayme's busy fingers plied her needle back and forth on her layette.

Some of the days were still rather cool, and sometimes I was afraid the girls would take cold sitting out of doors, but it didn't seem to hurt them. I told them I knew how they wanted spring to come, but I did not want them to sing like the frogs in the "Twee Deedle" book my children had when they were little:

"Oh Sprig! Oh, Sprig! Oh, cub; Oh. cub! We've waided log for thee."

After Dorothy had been here for some time she told me that when I met her at the door when she arrived she thought she had gone to the wrong place. The first night she was here she wrote her mother, "You were afraid I might be lonely and not have any friends. Don't worry about that any more. I have friends. They were waiting for me when I got here. Everybody is so good to me."

And June, dear little June! Every word she said, every thing she did was full of kindness for someone; yet there was a little something that kept us smiling. When someone showed a new dress or told of another who had brought a car, June sighed, "Why wasn't I born rich instead of just pretty?" When I said my daughter, who was a teacher, was coming home, June, who was only about seventeen years old, looked a little frightened at the thought of having a teacher in the house and asked, "Is she very old?"

"No, she isn't old," I replied, "and she will expect you all to call her by her first name just like you do each other."

June looked relieved, and when Emma Hall came she was accepted by the girls as one of themselves.

June told me that her mother died when she was born. Her father had been shell-shocked or gassed in World War I, and she had always lived with her uncle and aunt and called them "Daddy" and "Mother." She called her father by his first name. He could never look at her without crying.

The next couple that came to us were Roy and Mildred Lane. They took the little upstairs room. Mildred was tall, blond, and rather attractive. She had not been married as long as the others and had never received an allotment check, and was financially embarrassed. Her husband took his meals at the camp, and she made out somehow, but I was really worried about whether she had enough to eat. The other girls and I would offer her something, but she would refuse. One day I had a brilliant idea. I told the girls I was not going to let them go home after living in North Carolina and say they had never yet eaten any grits—that I was going to cook enough grits for everybody in the house.

That was a noble dish of grits. Everybody ate grits and enjoyed it. It did me good to see Mildred take her second and third helping.

Mildred felt obliged to work and tried to get some kind of job, but the only thing available when she applied at the employment office was housecleaning. She went at once to the place and was put to work scrubbing floors and woodwork, and that night came home exhausted and sick. I was indignant and advised her not to go back.

"I knew you wouldn't let me do it if you knew it," she answered, but I felt like I had to have the money. You know the other girls sew on their baby clothes, and I have no money to buy any material."

"Well, let it wait. You can sew later," I said. "You stay here with us and let the work go." And she did.

Then one morning the postman came and Mildred went to the door to take the mail. Suddenly she screamed, "Money, oh, money!" and came running to me waving a check for fifty dollars, her first allotment check. I am sure I was almost as glad as she was.

The phone rang one afternoon and someone asked to speak to Mrs. Lane. "Is that Roy?" I asked.

"Yes," was the reply.

I went to the stairs and called Mildred and told her her husband wanted to speak to her on the phone, and then turned around and there stood Roy. I stared in amazement. How could he have gotten here that quickly when I had been talking to him on the phone the minute before? Or maybe the man I was looking at wasn't Roy Lane. I shaded my eyes by holding my hand over my brow and peered at him hard.

"Do you think you see a ghost?" he inquired.

"Well, maybe so," I said. "Did you fly from the camp?"

It was his turn to look puzzled. By this time Mildred was coming downstairs and was as puzzled as Roy and I. When she answered the phone a soldier said, "Mrs. Lane, I wanted to speak to your husband." I had misunderstood. When the soldier had asked for Lane, not *Mrs.* Lane, I had asked, "Is that Roy?" He had replied, "Yes," thinking I meant "Is that Roy you want to speak to?"

A Mrs. Campbell, who was here for a few days' visit to her husband, was sitting in the sunshine in the back yard one day, and Mildred was sunning on the little upstairs porch, when I heard Mrs. Campbell calling me excitedly. I ran out into the yard, and there flying just above our house was something different from any air plane I had ever seen. It looked like a big silver cocoon and was flying so low that I felt as if I could speak to the pilot. Mildred insisted that she had to duck to keep it from bumping her on the head.

Army planes zoomed over Goldsboro every day, but we never had seen anything like that before. I think they called it a "blimp."

The time came all too soon for June and Mildred to go away. Bob and Roy were sent to other camps or overseas, and the girls went home. June wrote: "This is June. I am sorry I didn't write sooner, but I have been working so hard.

"I miss you both lots and lots and would give anything to see you. My days at your home were wonderful, so I take time to let you know that. Maybe I'll see you again when the war is over, and I only hope that is soon. Say 'Hello' to the girls and your son's little girl for me."

But like most of the others, we never saw her again.

CHAPTER XII
IRENE, EULAH, AND ANNIE

The next application was from a couple with a baby. I hesitated over this as I was afraid a baby in the house might annoy the other roomers, though I didn't think *I* would mind it.

I was assured by the USO that it was a "mighty nice young man" who wanted the room, so I agreed. When he came I found him indeed a "nice young man." He was Edgar A. Strunk of Dayton, Ohio. He was tall, handsome, and well built and had the most beautiful teeth I ever saw. I told him I would be glad to have the baby in the house, but would take him only on condition that if we found that the other roomers were annoyed that they would find a room elsewhere.

A few days later Mrs. Strunk (Irene) and Mr. Strunk's sister and the baby arrived. Irene was very pretty, attractive and friendly, and we were *so* much pleased with her; and as for the baby—everybody loved him. Instead of not being wanted here, he became the pet of the household. After they had been here for some time I heard Mayme say, "I think little David gets sweeter and sweeter every day." The sister went home after a visit of a few days.

David was only ten weeks old when they came, and Ed had not seen him since he was three days old. As soon as Ed had brought in the luggage and had done his part of the "straightening up," he took his seat by the side of the crib and looked and looked at the baby. I have never seen any father as devoted or as interested in a baby as he was. During the months that followed, he was David's constant and devoted nurse all the time he could be at home. Ed was a Corporal and was an instructor—not a student—so he was allowed to live here at the house. For hours at a time he carried David around the yard or sat with him on the porch or rolled him up and down the sidewalk or, when he was older, in his stroller.

"Look at him smile," he would say to me, or "Look at him; just as serious!" Either was wonderful.

Every word or sound that ever came from their room was something sweet and endearing. Irene sang sweet little rhymes and songs to the baby, and the little fellow thrived and grew under the wealth

of love and care that he received. They stayed with us from April through September, and every day of their stay was a joy.

I was glad to see how much Mayme and Irene enjoyed each other. Both were members of the Lutheran church, and they often went to church together, rolling little David along in his carriage. Some of the ladies of the church conducted a nursery in the Sunday School rooms and kept David and the other small children during the service.

One Sunday the two couples and David went to church and stayed so late that I thought something must have happened to them. Finally they came home smiling. The ladies of the church had served dinner to all the soldiers and soldiers' wives, so they had had a good dinner. I thought it was fine. In fact it was such a good idea that it was soon taken up by other churches and the ladies of our church, the Methodist, began serving dinner and supper every Sunday. I helped often.

One night after my husband and I had retired in the sleeping porch, we heard a sudden noise right outside our window. Someone shouted, "Halt!" There was a flash of light, the sound of a heavy thud, then footsteps running.

We jumped out of bed and hastened into the living room just as the front door opened and Ed came in excitedly. He came into the living room and told us what had happened. He said he and Irene had retired, but that it was warm and he got up to raise a window shade. When he drew near the window, he saw a man in the uniform of a soldier standing under the window. Ed stood back a little way to watch the soldier, who had his back toward our house and was looking into the window of a bedroom of the house next door, which was only a few feet away. Then the man turned toward the sleeping porch, caught hold of the window sill and raised himself up to peer into the window.

Ed went back to the bed and in a whisper told Irene what was happening and told her to keep quiet. Then he put on his trousers, took his flashlight and went quietly out of the front door and around the side of the house until he was almost right on the soldier. Suddenly snapping on the flashlight, he turned it directly into the man's face and shouted, "Halt." The intruder could not run toward the street, as Ed was standing in his way. He didn't know the premises and evidently did not think it safe to run to the back, so he took the only way left—a jump over the hedge that separated our yard from the neighbor's, a run across the neighbor's lawn to the street, and a quick get-away down to the corner. The next day we found plenty of tracks under the windows and in the soft ground of the neighbor's flower bed just over the hedge.

I think it would have been better if Ed had gone to the hall and phoned the police department. They could have surrounded the house and captured the man, but he didn't think of that and decided to face the intruder alone. We thought he was pretty brave, for he was unarmed, and the man might have shot him.

Irene was excited of course. The others in the house didn't know anything about it until the next day, and of course everybody talked about what might have happened, but I suppose things like that might have been expected occasionally in a town where thirty thousand soldiers taken from every walk of life were quartered. But anyway it left us feeling none too comfortable, and when new couples came to our home to live I thought it best not to tell them anything about it. Nothing like it ever occurred here again.

About the same time came Anita Gaynor, blond, and efficient. She said when she first arrived that her stay would have to be temporary because she had a six months old baby at home, but her mother was keeping little Faye so Anita could visit her husband here.

She secured a position as private secretary to a lawyer during the vacation of his regular secretary. He told me he found her one of the most satisfactory secretaries he ever had, but since she was to be here only a few weeks he could keep her only during the other girl's vacation. I had heard my son say he needed a secretary, so I told him about Anita. He hesitated because he felt that he would have to train her for such a short time, but on hearing the excellent recommendation of the lawyer, decided to give her a trial. He didn't have to train her! She was wonderful and the six weeks she worked for him went by all too quickly.

But good secretary as she was, Anita did not know the first thing about sewing. One of the sleeves of her house coat was partly ripped out, and instead of sewing it back, she just ripped out both sleeves and wore the coat that way.

Anita loved her husband with an almost worshipful love. She admired everything he did or said, but the other girls, though they liked her, thought he was conceited. They asked Anita if she and her husband would like to go to church with them, but Anita said, "No, he would not want to go; I wouldn't ask him."

One morning Mayme told me that the night before she, Irene, Anita, and their husbands were talking together about the war and when and how it would ever end.

"We will just have to hope and pray," said Art.

"We can hope, but to h--- with the prayers," said Gaynor.

"Everything got quiet," said Mayme, "and we didn't feel like talking any more. Pretty soon Irene and Ed went to their room, and

Art and I went to ours. Mrs. Baker, you know Mr. Gaynor is an atheist."

Well, I don't know whether he was an atheist or not, but that was the impression the young folks got, and with their simple and earnest faith, they did not like it.

We were sorry when the time came for Anita to leave. After she went home she wrote me a nice letter asking about the girls and asking if Egerton and George had found a secretary and if they liked her. She said "Faye has grown a lot; is still a little red head."

Emma Hall left in a short time for State College, Raleigh, where she took a summer course in Draftsmanship given by the government, since draftsmen were so badly needed in the war work. She had always had a talent for drawing, and this was just to her liking. As Anita and Dorothy had just gone also, there were now several vacant rooms, and three new couples moved in.

These were Pfc. and Mrs. Earl Payne of Bergoo, West Virginia, Mr. and Mrs. Minton of Buffalo, New York, and Mr. and Mrs. Philip Kelly of New York City. The Mintons and Kellys took the upstairs rooms. Mayme and Irene were still with us. It was almost a new household, but everybody liked everybody else, and they were just like old friends.

Mrs. Payne was "Eulah," and was one of the most lovable little girls we ever had. Mrs. Minton was "Doris," a very likable girl, and Mrs. Kelly was "Annie," the funniest girl in the house and the life of the crowd.

Doris started looking for a job almost as soon as she got her things straight in her room, and in a few days was clerking in a store. She was a good clerk and continued with the store for many months. One afternoon her husband came in before she reached home and brought a beautiful vase of gladioli and fern, a big birthday cake and some ice cream. He said it was Doris' birthday, and he wanted to give her a surprise party. We thought that was fine, and Mayme and Eulah helped me get things ready. We put the ice cream in the refrigerator, set the cake and flowers on the dining table and got out my best china and silver.

When Doris got home her husband proudly escorted her to the dining room where all the young folks in the house were waiting, and who began singing "Happy birthday, dear Doris." It was the first party we had had, though there were others later, and it was a happy occasion.

Eulah was small and only about seventeen years old, and in a short time I found that she was the busiest little thing I ever saw. She had only recently graduated from High School, but her special

art was cooking, and in this she excelled. Such pies and cakes! All of us became inspired and began to try to make some good things like Eulah's. I have some of her recipes now. Once when I had guests Eulah made me a cream custard pie, and it was delicious. She also made lemon and chocolate pies and chocolate cakes, and she could take a piece of pork, season it all up and roast it in the oven with such savory odors that it was a wonder the rest of us didn't go in and take it away from her.

When she would have all the vegetables ready she would pull her table out into the middle of her room, arrange the meal on it in a most artistic way and always with a little vase of flowers in the center, and then invite me and some of the others to come and admire it before she called Earl in to eat.

"I know you are trying to kill him," I told her one day. But it didn't seem to hurt him, and he enjoyed it and praised her until she beamed with pride and happiness.

But cooking didn't take all her time, and she had to be doing something. She washed and ironed and cleaned up her room until I was afraid her clothes and the room would be worn out. Then she started on the rest of the house, and such a housecleaning I never saw. Of course I was delighted and made suitable refunds on her room rent, but she assured me that that wasn't necessary, that she liked to clean up.

"Why I used to keep the whole house clean at the last place we stayed," she said, "and the lady never paid me anything."

She said the lady was very religious and always gave a tenth of her income to the church. Eulah said she and Earl paid eleven dollars a week for their room and didn't have kitchen privileges, besides the fact that Eulah did so much of the housecleaning. I thought the lady would have been carrying on the Lord's work better if she had charged less rent and had given something more substantial than just thanks for all that good help.

Earl was so proud of Eulah that he said to me once when I praised her, "I know I will never go hungry and things will always be clean where Eulah is." But one day Eulah carried it too far. She had gotten up at six o'clock in the morning because she had so much to do, or thought she had. She didn't take things calmly like Mayme, but worked at a feverish rate, when suddenly she became very ill. She called me and I ran to her room and found her nauseated and almost unable to breathe. She could scarcely speak.

I was frightened and called a doctor on the phone and told him I thought she had a heart attack. When I described symptoms he said,

"That girl has a nervous attack. Just give her a dose of ammonia and she will be all right."

It was true; she had worked herself into a nervous state. After that I tried to keep her from doing quite so much.

Eulah had a funny way of talking, and one of her favorite expressions was a "poke full" of something. She talked very rapidly, which made it hard for me to understand her. One day she answered the door bell and in a few minutes came to me and said, "There is a colored woman at the door, but I can't understand anything she says."

I went to the door, and a comfortable looking country colored woman standing there asked me in perfectly good plain Negro dialect if we wanted to buy some "ros'in' years." After I bought the corn and the woman left, Eulah said, "She talked so funny I couldn't understand a word."

"Why Eulah," I said, "I could understand her a whole lot better than I can you."

Eulah seemed to think this was very funny and told it several times. When Earl came home I heard her tell him about it and she said, "Mrs. Baker said she could understand that woman a lot better than she could me."

Annie Kelly was good natured and funny. She had come straight from the East side of New York City and was to be here as long as her husband was located at Johnson Field. I had always heard and read of the big tenement houses in New York, but this was the first time I had ever known or talked with anyone who lived in one. She told me something of what it was like. She said she was an orphan and lived with her married sister, but that she didn't like it.

"My sister has a four room apartment, and its just swarms with roaches," she told me. "Every time you open a door they race around the floor. She uses one of the rooms just to put things in that she doesn't know what else to do with. When she sweeps the rest of the apartment, she opens the door of that room and sweeps the trash in. She can have it; I don't want it, and I am not going there any more."

"Where will you go when Philip leaves?" I asked.

"I have decided to live with his people," she said. "Of course I know it is crowded there as they have ten children and only three rooms, but one more won't make much difference, and besides, they live in the country, and if I feel crowded there's plenty of room out doors."

Annie was nice looking, well mannered, and had a low sweet voice. I told her that we had had another girl from New York City,

and that their voices were exactly alike. I wasn't prepared for her reply.

"That is because in New York there are no drawls or peculiar accents," she said. That's what *she* thought.

Annie was here during Florence's visit, and since I had told Florence about her she wanted to hear her talk. Annie warmed up at once to the interest Florence was taking in her and confided, "I have a perfectly awful disposition. I talk dreadfully to people."

"Why, I think you have a very nice disposition," said Florence, "and Mother says you have been so sweet here in the house."

"'That is because I am on my good behavior here. You just don't know me like I really am."

Philip and Annie stayed with us until the middle of the summer. Word finally came that Philip was on the alert to be sent to a point of embarkation for overseas, and was restricted to the camp. He phoned Annie that she could come out to the camp, so she went out and stayed with him several hours every day. They knew that the summons might come at any time and they remained in a state of suspense. The time dragged on, and one day it was so hot that Annie phoned Philip that she would not try to came that day.

About two o'clock in the afternoon the phone rang, and Philip was calling from the Union Station in Goldsboro. He told Annie that the train would probably be there for awhile, and told her to call a taxi and come to the station at once, that she might be able to get there before the train left. She called the taxi and rushed to the station, but arrived just after the train had pulled out.

Poor Annie! She came home in tears, blaming herself because she did not go to the camp that day. We tried to console her; it wasn't her fault, we told her, she gone every day except that one.

She went to her room, packed her belongings and left on an afternoon train for New York.

Then Doris went away. I think she hated to leave us, but it was a long walk to and from her work, and she found a room down town. I talked with her often when I would go into the store where she clerked. Her room was taken by a young couple from Nebraska. I liked them but was sorry for them because they were in such financial straits. In about a week, however, the girl received her allotment check, and I thought their troubles would be over.

She and her husband were delighted to have some money and they proceeded to get rid of it as fast as possible. They took a trip to Raleigh for the week end, and he bought her a locket and chain. They literally "blew in" almost the entire fifty dollars in a few days, and then were as "broke" as ever. I decided it was not worth while

for me to bother about feeling sorry for them any more, since that was the way they wanted to do and were really quite happy about it.

A couple who had a six year old daughter, Shirley, moved into Emma Hall's room and were here for about a week. Shirley spoke rather wistfully about her grandmother, who was so far away.

"If you would like it, I'll be your grandmother while you are here," I told her.

This pleased her, and she seemed to take it as a matter of course that I was her grandmother. One day our granddaughter, Anne, who was about the same age, came over to play with her. Everything was progressing nicely until Shirley called me "Grandma."

Anne was indignant and maintained that I was not Shirley's grandmother. They came to me, each equally certain that I would prove that *she* was right.

"Grandma, Shirley says you are her grandmother. You are not, are you?" demanded Anne.

"You *are* my grandmother, aren't you?" asked Shirley.

"Anne, I told Shirley I would be her grandmother while she is here because her other grandmother is so far way," I explained.

"Well, anyway I have three grandmothers," said Anne.

"Have you?" I asked. "I didn't know you had but two."

"One is my great grandmother. She is dead," said Anne.

The matter now being satisfactorily settled, they went back to their play.

CHAPTER XIII
EMMA HALL

About this time Emma Hall came home from State College for a week-end visit and to tell us some important news. She and John Martin were going to be married. We had known that they planned to be married in the fall, but now John had learned that he would be sent overseas much sooner than he had expected, so they wanted to be married at once. Emma Hall had not finished the course at State, but said she would go on with it after they married.

John could get only a three day pass, which was not long enough for him to come from McDill Field, Florida, to Raleigh or Goldsboro and return, so they decided to go to Savannah, Georgia, and be married. I wanted to go with Emma Hall, but she is an independent person, and she would not hear of it. They had made their own plans, and they were going to carry them out.

I thought of the girls who had come here way across the United States to marry soldiers, brave independent girls. Our own child was one of them, caught in the current of the war, and there was no use for us to try to make plans for her. So all the family began to plan wedding presents. We knew what she wanted was "silver in her pattern."

I insisted, however, that she have her picture and a writeup in the papers. She had some beautiful pictures made, and I sent them with the wedding account to the Raleigh, Greensboro, and Goldsboro papers, and all gave them prominent positions in the society section. When she and I discussed the data for the writeup, she told me to say that John was "chief aerial phototopographer" at McDill field.

"Emma Hall, you know there is no such thing as that! You mean 'photographer'," I said.

"Well, I ought to know," she replied. "Don't you know, Mother, that topography is connected with maps and the lay of the land? He goes up in planes and makes photographs and then uses these in making maps."

Evidently I wasn't the only skeptical one, for when the account of the wedding appeared, two of the three papers said John was "chief aerial photographer." Only one said "'phototopographer."

So they were married, and John went back to the camp in Florida,

and Emma Hall back to Raleigh, where she remained until she finished her course and received her certificate. Then she went to Florida where John had engaged a furnished apartment in the house with several other young couples. She was very pleasantly situated, and they stayed there about two months, after which John was sent to a camp of embarkation in California. Emma Hall wrote us that he "might be there a long time, or he might be there a short time," but that she and three other soldiers' wives, whose husbands were being sent in the same group, were going to California. One of the girls would use her car, and the others would share expenses.

They took the trip all the way across the United States and found a place to stay near the camp. Almost as soon as the boys arrived they were restricted and were allowed to leave the camp only twice. The girls were admitted to the camp each evening and could see their husbands for about one hour in a sort of recreation room or lounge. The husbands said they would not be allowed to tell them when they would be leaving, but that whenever they (the girls) came and did not find them it would mean they were gone.

Four times these young couples saw each other, but on the fifth night the boys were not at the appointed place. I had a letter from Emma Hall, in which she said, "Last night when we went to the regular place at the camp, the boys did not come. We think they have been sent away, but just in case something else might have happened and they may still be here, we are going again tonight. If they do not come, we will know they are gone."

They went back the next night, but the husbands did not come. Emma Hall did not see John again in two years.

As the girl in whose car the four had made the trip was remaining in the West, Emma Hall and one other girl came home on the train. They had to wait two weeks before they could get a reservation on a Pullman. In a short time after she came home, our daughter began working as a draftsman in the government ship yards in Wilmington, a position that she held until "Johnny came marching home." She was like the rest, brave and ready to face whatever came.

John spent the two years in Australia and the Philippines. He was not supposed to be in combat, but the enemy did not want pictures and maps to be made by Americans, and several times the plane was attacked and they were under fire from the enemy.

Then my brother's son, Edward Egerton, Jr., a lieutenant in the Army Air Corps, was sent overseas, crossing the Atlantic ocean by airplane. The plane was forced down into the ocean, and the occupants floated around in rubber boats until they were picked up. They lost all their personal belongings, but no lives were lost.

Three more of my nephews, Wingate Underhill, a lieutenant, and Brantley and Frank Hicks, entered the Army. Frank spent a year or more in the Aleutians. The war was coming closer and closer to us. Four nephews and a son-in-law! But it had not come as close yet as it was to come later. What we saw happening to other families all over the country was to happen to us too.

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CHAPTER XIV
ANOTHER IRENE

We now lost Art and Mayme, who had been with us so long that it seemed like losing our own children. Art was sent to another field, and Mayme went home to have her baby. She was brave and looked on the bright side of things and reminded herself that she had good parents and a good home to go to.

As it was very little out of her way she stopped for a visit of a few days to Kate, then went on to her home near Superior, Nebraska. She promised before she left that she wouldn't forget us and that she would write, and she kept her promise. We had many nice letters from her, and she not only told us about herself and Art, but also about Kate.

A few months after she left, the announcement came—a daughter, Linda Marie. We sent her a little crocheted wool sack. When Mayme wrote to thank us for it she said: "Art has completed his schooling and is working as a first class mechanic at the National Airport near Washington, D. C. He is trying to find a place for Linda and me to stay and if he succeeds, we will go there to him. He wrote that he wished Mr. and Mrs. Baker lived in Washington, and we could make our home with them again. We think of you so much and how nice you were to us while we were there."

She sent me a picture of Linda when the little girl was four months old, and also a good kodak picture of ourselves that she had taken while she was here, and the film from which it was made. On the back of the picture she had written, "Taken on your thirty-third wedding anniversary." She remembered the date of our anniversary and on the next one sent us an anniversary card.

The next April we had a letter written from Arlington, Va. "I suppose you are surprised to see from the address that we are not far away from you. Art was sent out here on December the first, and Linda and I came out on the twenty-fifth of January. We have a lovely little four room government apartment. It is new and very nice. We are very fortunate and thankful to be together and to have our dear baby with us. Art is working in an office from eight in the morning until five. He spends every night and Sundays with us, and we are so happy. Linda has been a healthy baby all the time,

and is active and happy. We are so proud of her and enjoy her so. I hope Art will never have to serve overseas, but one never knows. We can only hope that our prayers will soon be answered and we will all be living in a peaceful world. I wish so much that we could come down to see you dear folks, since we are so near to each other."

I wrote at once and urged them to come and pay us a visit, but a few weeks later she wrote: "We would like so very much to come to see you, but just can't get away now."

They never came. Another baby was born a few months later at Arlington; then Art was sent overseas, and Mayme took her babies home. She wrote: "Art was sent away on V. J. night, August 14. He flew to California and from there flew to Okinawa."

Nearly a year later Mayme sent snapshots of both of the children. They were beautiful. Linda Marie was standing by a birthday cake on which were two candles. She had blond curls like her mother. James Richard (Jimmy) had dark hair like Art. "Art was discharged the fourth of this month, so we really had a happy Christmas," Mayme wrote.

In a few days after Mayme and Art left, Sgt. and Mrs. Kenneth Adams of Milton, Vermont, took their room. They were not sent by the USO, and we had not even heard of them, but someone had told them that we might have a room, and they came. They had the most adorable five months old baby boy.

I called Irene and Eulah to meet the new girl. When she heard the name "Irene," she said, "My name is Irene too." It was odd how many times it happened that we had two or even three by the same name at one time—three Dorothys, three Bettys, two Irenes, and two Gladyses, also three Bobs at one time, and two of them had babies named Bobby, and the other, a baby daughter named Barbara.

The new Irene was of French Canadian parentage and had the beautiful maiden name, "Deranleau," pronounced De-ron-lo. Ken and Irene had brown eyes and dark hair, and Larry, like his parents, had beautiful brown eyes. When they came he was dressed in a little blue embroidered and ruffled sun-suit, and I thought I had never seen a more beautiful baby.

Irene was so quiet and unobstrusive that it took us a week or two to realize what a treasure we had in her. She was the most thoughtful, unselfish girl I ever knew, always ready to do anything she could for anyone else, but never seeming to think it worth while for others to do anything for her. My husband often spoke of her thoughtfulness. He said she was almost a mind reader, that if he even started to reach for something she handed it to him. If someone was ready to set a cooking vessel on the gas range, Irene lit

LINDA MARIE FREY

Age: 2 Years

the burner. Never one time in all those months did she do or say anything that annoyed anyone, and after she went away, if we had a particularly nice girl here and we wanted to pay her a very big compliment, we would say, "She is almost as nice as Irene." Ken and Irene lived with us for nine months, the longest of any of the soldier couples.

The two Irenes and Eulah were congenial and happy together. The two babies were exactly the same age and weighed exactly the same. We had scales and weighed them often. One day Eulah and Earl took Larry and David into the front yard and had their pictures taken, Eulah holding one baby and Earl the other. They said they were going to send the picture home and write their folks that they had had twins. I have one of the snapshots now. In fact, I have pictures of most of the roomers, and it is one of my great pleasures to look over them.

One day Larry became very ill. Just as soon as he would drink his milk, it would come right back. We were frightened, and as for Ken and Irene, they were pitiful. Ken looked at Irene and asked, "Will he get well?"

"I think so," said Irene, but she wasn't sure. They had a physician from the camp, who said it was nothing serious, and that he would soon be over it. He did not advise any change in the baby's formula, but Irene *did* change it. She stopped the canned milk and began giving him cow's milk boiled, and he got well.

Larry was growing and learned to pull himself up. He had been sleeping in a little crib that Florine had had for Anne and Little Florence, but the sides of it were not very high, and I told Irene that every baby that had used it had finally pulled up and fallen out. Well, hers was one baby that did not fall out, for when she heard that, they immediately bought a large crib with high sides. It was hard to find things in stores at that time, and Ken bought one from a soldier whose baby had outgrown it. He took it to pieces in the back yard and painted it all over, and then bought a new mattress for it.

Larry was now fixed up, but even then he had a fall, which didn't hurt him, but almost frightened his mother out of her wits. Irene was lying on her bed ,and Larry was standing on the bed with his arms over the tall footboard. Suddenly he turned a flip over the footboard and landed on his head in his crib. Irene said she saw him go over, and did not have time to remember that his crib was in a position to catch him. He wasn't hurt.

From the very first, Larry seemed to love me and would hold out his arms whenever I entered the room. I would walk about in

the yard with him in my arms and show him the birds or one of the many airplanes that were always flying over, and I would say, "See, Larry, see." These interested him very much, and he would point up at an airplane and look at me to be sure I saw it. When he was older, one of his first words was "See, see," as he pointed at a flying plane.

In the months that followed, other young people came, and Irene always shared the new experiences and friendships with me.

CHAPTER XV
BEULAH AND CARROLL

As soon as Annie and Lorraine moved away, the upstairs rooms were taken by Sgt. and Mrs. Elton Reaves and Mrs. Vaughn and her daughter, Carroll.

The Reaveses were a bride and groom of about a week. They were good natured, but noisy and boisterous. Beulah announced soon after her arrival that she was a tap dancer, and proceeded to prove it. She could dance—there was no doubt about it—she was a professional, and she had an interested audience. The other young people gazed at her in astonishment.

When the time came for her to prepare her meals she completely monopolized the kitchen, spreading her cooking all over the tables and using most of the burners of the gas stove at one time. Eulah told me privately, "I can cook with anybody in the kitchen except Beulah."

I had always allowed the girls to do their laundry here, but expected the boys to have theirs done at the camp or at a laundry. However, if any girl wanted to wash a few pieces for her husband I did not object. Sgt. Reaves came walking in one morning with a big sack and announced that he would like to do his washing. And he did it! I never saw one soldier have as many clothes. He hung them on the line in the yard, more than a dozen shirts and as many pairs of pants.

"I didn't know soldiers had as many clothes as that," I said to him.

"I work in the supply room," was his reply.

"Oh!" said I.

One day, apropos of nothing, he nodded his head toward Beulah and said to my husband, "She's older'n I am." Beulah paid not the slightest attention. Another time he remarked to me that Beulah could ride a motorcycle.

Carroll Vaughn, who was only sixteen years old, had come to visit her sweetheart, who was located at the camp, and her mother had come to take care of her. They seemed real sweet and nice, and Carroll was pretty and the girls liked her, but she soon became completely infatuated with Beulah. They went everywhere together and did their cooking together. Their meals were noisy affairs, and

I was thankful that they ate out in the back yard under a tree. While they were having one of their little picnics one day and frolicing boisterously, the sweetheart leaned over to pick up something from the ground, and Carroll climbed up on his shoulders and took a seat astride his neck.

"Won't you two ever grow up?" asked her mother.

At the end of the week I happened to look out of the window, and Sgt. Reaves and Beulah were putting their suit cases into a taxi. They had not told us they were leaving.

"I wish you would look!" I said to my husband. As he reached the window, they got into the taxi and drove away.

It was a relief! I went to their room, and I never saw such a mess. I don't see how in one week's time they could have gotten things as dirty as that if they had tried. Their unannounced departure, however, was not rent skipping. They left on the day that their rent ran out. Not once in the years that the camp was here did anyone try to cheat us out of a penny of rent.

Sgt. and Mrs. Reaves had taken a room at a tourist cabin at Adamsville, a village two miles out of the city and near the camp. Carroll wanted to move out there with them, but Mrs. Vaughn wanted to go home, but Carroll wouldn't go. Mrs. Vaughn asked me what I thought she ought to do. She said she felt that she ought to go home, but that her husband would just have a fit if she left Carroll here. I advised her not to leave her for more reasons than one, one of which was that I was not at all willing to take the responsibility of looking after her. She was now going to the camp, staying out late at night, etc., but her mother had the responsibility, not I.

At the end of another week, Mrs. Vaughn and Carroll moved to the tourist camp with the Reaveses. I did not see them any more and do not know how long they were here. The next two girls who took the upstairs rooms were of a different type—just plain sweet girls like the others who were living with us, who had come here to be with their husbands because they loved them.

CHAPTER XVI
MARY AND BETTY

Pfc. and Mrs. C. R. Simms of Meadow Bridge, West Virginia, engaged the South room upstairs, the one recently vacated by Beulah and her husband. They seemed to like it here, but they wanted a downstairs room. Well, we didn't have one, and that was that, but the next day, instead of Pfc. and Mrs. Simms, Cpl. and Mrs. George Finney of Caney, Kansas, came to take the room. They had exchanged rooms with the other couple and had made financial arrangements satisfactory to themselves. It was all right with us.

Mary Finney was pretty with brown eyes and black hair, a rather Latin type. She seemed young, about sixteen, I thought. George, who was about twenty-one, had curly red hair and was an instructor in the school of airplane mechanics at the camp. They had been married only two days before, here in Goldsboro, and Mary asked me to write up their wedding, which I did, and we sent it to the paper in her home town and also to our paper here. She was much pleased with it and cut it out and saved it.

Some of the particulars of the wedding that I shall relate here were not included in the newspaper accounts. Mary said that when George started to the home where she was rooming it began to pour down rain. He ran, but when he arrived his soldier's shirt was soaking wet. About that time the rain held up, and as it was only about two blocks to the Methodist parsonage, they walked there. I don't think I ever heard of a wedding before in which the bridegroom wore a wet shirt.

When they rang the doorbell, the minister, a kindly elderly man, opened the door. He smiled and said, "I guess you want to change your name." As soon as the ceremony was over he said, "Now you have changed your name."

Mary was a fine little girl and one with a most interesting personality. She became a general pet and favorite in the household, and everybody loved her. When she and George had been here about two weeks, Pfc. Ernest Cornelius of near Cincinnati came to engage a room for himself and his wife, Betty, who was coming to stay during the remainder of his term at the camp. He showed us his wife's picture, and as she was very pretty and attractive looking,

I showed the picture to the other girls, especially Mary, who I thought would be interested because Betty would have the other upstairs room, and I hoped the two would be good friends. But Mary didn't show much enthusiasm.

In a few days Betty came. She was very pretty, though quiet and timid. It turned out as I had hoped; she and Mary became the closest of friends and were regular pals during the months that followed. Some time later Mary told me she didn't think she was going to like Betty when she saw her picture because she was so pretty. She thought she would be "stuck up." The very thing that I thought would please was exactly what didn't please. But it was all right after they knew each other, and besides, Mary was pretty herself.

I always told all the young folks to read our books as much as they pleased, and Betty availed herself of this from the first. She read novel after novel, and meanwhile was so quiet and shy that her real personality was kept a secret from us for a long time. One day I asked her, "Betty, aren't you afraid you won't have time to finish your job before you go home."

She looked a little puzzled at first, then smiled as my meaning dawned upon her. "You mean read all the books?" she asked.

"Yes," I said. "I am afraid you might not get all of them read."

"I have read more books since I've been here than I ever did in all my life before," she said.

The secret of Betty's personality was that after her shyness wore off she was the liveliest, jolliest girl in the house, the very life of the crowd.

Mary read too, but not as much as Betty. She was like Eulah, too energetic to keep still. She asked me once, "Mrs. Baker, do you care if George and I clean up the attic?" It was all right with me, and they not only cleaned up, but rearranged things until they made it really attractive looking. She did everything she could to help me, and I don't see how I could have gotten along without her. She certainly was going to see to it that I got a square deal. She told me confidentially, "Mrs. Baker, some of the girls are using your washing powder."

"Well, never mind; don't say anything about it," I said.

"I am not going to let them do it," said Mary. "I am going to put it in this cabinet. When you want it, just look in there."

When the kitchen floor had been scrubbed nicely, I found a sign tacked on the door, which said, "Don't come in this room before twelve o'clock on pain of death," and signed, "The Boss." When she found burnt matches lying around she put a tray in a convenient place and announced that anyone who left burnt matches

on the gas stove would "be shot at dawn." When my birthday came Mary found it out somehow and when down town and bought me a glass fruit bowl and small bowls to match. And she didn't forget the date, for each year since she has sent me a birthday card.

One night some of the young folks were cooking supper, and George said, "We'd miss this garbage can if we didn't have it," and threw a piece of potato peeling toward it.

"Yes, and you missed it that time too," said Mary. "You go and pick up that peeling."

Meanwhile Mary was having trouble about her coffee coupons. George wanted coffee, but they couldn't buy any. The soldiers were supposed to eat at the camp, and even if allowed to take their meals with their wives they had no ration books, and all the coffee coupons had been torn out of Mary's book. I gave her a coupon, and I think maybe someone else let her have one.

One of the girls asked Mary why her coupons were torn out. She replied, "Because I don't like coffee."

That seemed to me a very strange reason, as I had never heard of anyone being questioned as to his likes or dislikes when ration books were issued. One day Mary left her book lying on the kitchen table, and one of the girls picked it up. It was made out in her maiden name, and this is what was written on it—"Mary Ellen Hanks. Aged fourteen years."

So that was it! Coffee coupons were always removed from books of children under fifteen. And that child had come all the way to Goldsboro from Kansas alone to marry her school boy sweetheart! When she found out that the girls had seen her book, she owned up that she was only fourteen. She passed her fifteenth birthday here in our house a few months later. She said that when she asked her father if she might come here and marry George, he said, "Yes, if you will promise never to do it again."

Mary told us some about her home life and her school. She said it would get so cold there that when they went out of doors an ordinary coat just felt like nothing at all, and that the wind blew though it like icicles. She was very fond of her stepmother, and said she was her stepmother's favorite. Her older sister, she said, was her father's favorite. Besides the two girls, I think there were some younger children.

Betty told something of her home life too. She teased herself about her rather unusual name, "Bessie Elizabeth," and said she couldn't imagine why her father and mother gave her such a name. She said she was called Bessie at home, but that she hated it and wanted to be called Betty. She had a great many beautiful clothes, and when

I commented on it she explained that before she came here she worked in some kind of manufacturing plant, and that every week when she received her pay check she bought a new dress or something pretty to wear.

One morning Betty made the startling announcement that there was a *rat* in her room the night before.

"You mean a mouse, don't you, Betty?" I asked. "We don't have rats in the house."

"No ma'am," said Betty positively. "It was a rat. I heard a noise and turned on the light and there was a rat with my box of Ex-lax in his mouth. I paid twenty-five cents for that Ex-lax, and I wasn't going to let a rat have it. I jumped out of the bed and ran after him, but he got away."

When Mr. Baker went down town that day he bought a rat trap and we set it in Betty's room upstairs. About eight o'clock that night while we were in the living room I heard a yell in the back hall. Rushing out, I found a terrified soldier standing up in a chair.

"A rat ran right by me!" he gasped.

"Well," I said, "suppose it had been a Jap! I thought women were supposed to be the ones afraid of rats. But Betty ran after him, and you jumped up in a chair."

In the night we heard the trap spring. "That's Betty's rat," said my husband. Her room was over ours, but strange to say, though it woke us downstairs, Betty didn't hear it in her own room. When she waked next morning, the rat was lying dead near the trap, but not in it. Evidently he had tried to jump away and had been struck on the head by the heavy spring. It really was a rat, but a very small one.

Sometimes I think I am growing terribly absent minded, as I am always forgetting where I put things. The girls were a great help to me in finding what I lost, and I often called on them to tell me where I had left something. One morning I couldn't find my sugar bowl and asked, "Has anybody seen my sugar?"

"Do you mean Mr. Baker?" asked Mary.

"No, Mary," I laughed, "I mean my sugar bowl."

Mary and George were very affectionate, and Mary didn't hesitate to sit in his lap regardless of who was present. Many of the couples at different times bestowed their caresses on each other at any time and before any audience. Of course my husband and I did not, but Mary pondered this over, and finally blurted out, "Mrs. Baker, I

know I ought not to ask you this, but would you mind telling me how long it has been since your husband kissed you?"

"No, I wouldn't mind," I said. "I think it has been about six hours."

"Oh," she gasped in surprise. "I didn't think anybody as old as that ever kissed his wife!"

CHAPTER XVII
FLORENCE

Just after Mary and Betty were added to the family a new family came, one not only of the greatest importance to my husband and myself but who proved to be a welcome addition to the household. They were our daughter, Florence, and her husband, Sam Watkins, their baby, Sammy, and their little dog, Snookey.

They had been living in Durham and had a nice home there, but Sam decided to go in business with our sons, Egerton and George, so they moved to Goldsboro. The idea was that they would stay with us until they could find a suitable house to rent, but a "suitable house to rent" that wasn't already occupied was something Goldsboro didn't have. After they had been here two months they bought a home but had to wait two more months before the occupants found a place to go.

That fall we had a happy crowd here with the exception of a few flurries from outsiders. All the regulars were congenial and worked and played together happily. Especially well did they get along together over their cooking all in one kitchen. One suggested that we hang a red and green "Stop and Go" signal in the kitchen. My sister-in-law, Mary Egerton, was visiting us one day, and she sat for a while in the back hall where she could watch the girls going in and out of the kitchen and moving about in the room. She laughed and laughed and finally said, "It reminds me of a communion service in a Methodist church, 'As these retire, let others come'."

Florence and Sam kept house with my husband and me. They brought their own electric refrigerator and set of kitchen shelves, which proved quite an added convenience. After they went away we bought another refrigerator, as one was certainly not enough, and we had a set of shelves built like theirs. This gave each couple a separate shelf besides space in the refrigerator.

Sammy was a beautiful baby and had always been good, but when they came he was sick with tonsilitis and felt so bad he would not let anyone touch him except his parents. I told Florence that every baby who came was fretful the first few days—that they didn't understand their new environment and had to become accustomed to it. I always had to explain that to newcomers with babies, as the mothers

LARRY AND SAMMY

would say, "I don't understand it, he was so good at home." The babies may also have been tired from their long trips, but they always got over it in a few days and became their good little selves again.

But Sammy was sick. Everybody in the house was full of sympathy and wanted to help, though there wasn't much they could do. But with the best of medical attention he began to improve. One day Eulah heard him cry or call out when he waked from his nap. She went into the room, and he held out his arms to her, and she came walking out proudly, bringing him in her arms. She was the first one he went to voluntarily. Soon he was well again and began to love everybody and was happy. So were we!

Snookey was a little black and white brindled bull terrier. She came here already loving everybody, and soon found herself quite a pet. She had a big rubber ball, and it was the joy of her life when one of the soldiers would play ball with her in the back yard. Sammy was her idol, and she would stand or lie on the floor near his pen and tremble with excitement when he would throw a ball or other toy through the bars to her.

But Eulah didn't enjoy Snookey! She was scared to death of her and said she had always been afraid of dogs and just couldn't help it, but Snookey was so harmless and friendly I didn't see how anybody could mind her. Eulah was so good and kind herself that she tried to be nice to Snookey at a distance, but one day she left the door of her room open and Snookey innocently wandered in and was taking a nap on the floor when Eulah entered. Eulah gave a startled exclamation, and Snookey jumped up and started running toward the door. When Eulah saw the dog headed right at her it was more than she could stand. She screamed and, running into the hall where my husband was sitting, threw her arms around his neck. Everybody laughed and enjoyed it, but I don't know which was more embarrassed, Eulah or Mr. Baker.

It pleased me very much to see that the others in the house liked Florence and Sam, and that they in turn liked the others. At night almost everybody would cook at the same time because they wanted to be there together, and the boys would line up around the room to be sure they didn't miss anything. After supper there would be a big dishwashing, after which the young folks would play games, or the boys would come into the living room to listen to "Gabriel Heatter" in his regular news broadcasts about the war. Especially interested in hearing these were Ken and Ed.

About that time I visited my sister in Louisburg for a few days, and while there bought a good typewriter from a man who lived in

one of her apartments and brought it home. My husband had a typewriter, and during the years that we had done newspaper work he had done all the typing. I had kept thinking that some time I would learn to type, but just kept putting it off. I had a typewriter repair specialist to work on mine a little, and he offered me twice the price I had paid for it, but I didn't sell it, as now I was going to learn to use it, and was going to learn right—the touch system. No hunt and peck for me!

I took an instruction book that my children had used at school and went to work. Eulah, who had taken typing in High school, was my teacher, or at least she showed me the actual mechanical use of a typewriter—how to use the spacer, how to make capital letters, and how to change to the next line.

But the book's methods seemed too slow for me. Where it said, "Write the following exercise three times," I wrote it only once and went on to the next. I was determined to learn it all in a few days. Soon I was way over in the book, but doing some awfully poor typing. Florence, who is an expert typist, began to look over my work.

"Mother," she said "you are not ready for this part of the book. You must go more slowly."

"Do you mean to say that I have got to go as slowly as the book says and just sit there and tap tap it out?"

"That's the only way," she answered.

Badly as I hated to do it, I turned myself back to the first of the book and carefully, slowly, took it step by step, writing every exercise as many times as the book said, and after a while I had learned the key board and could actually write words with any letters of the alphabet without looking at the keys.

Soon after Florence and Sam came, Ed and Irene Strunk went home on a furlough, and we rented their room to Dennis Myers for his wife and baby and his mother, who were to arrive that day for a visit of about ten days.

Elaine was pretty; Mrs. Myers, Sr., was pleasant and motherly; and the baby, Denny, was a darling child about nine months of age. He had the most beautiful and appealing smile I ever saw, but somehow he didn't seem to have much appeal for Elaine. To her he was a nuisance and nothing more. She was so impatient with him that soon everybody in the house was mad and disgusted.

To make matters worse, when Dennis arrived his attitude was no better. Dennis and Elaine rushed into each others arms, but when Dennis looked at the baby, whom he had not seen since he was a few days old, he remarked, "Huh, he's got white hair!" Next morning they took Dennie into the bathroom and gave him a bath. When

they came out I happened to be in the hall and said, "He's all clean and sweet."

"He's clean," said Dennis, "But he's not sweet."

We could hear Elaine in the bed room saying, "Shut up, Dennie!" or "Cut that out, Dennie." But outside, where there was an audience, she would use the most beautiful and extravagant pet names for him, such as "Bubbles," and "Butterfly," etc.

But there was one member of the family who loved little Dennie, and that was his grandmother, Mrs. Myers. She was gentle, kind and loving, and did all she could to make up to him what he missed from his parents, but at the same time she never criticized Elaine or Dennis or even insinuated that they were not perfect. She even told me that she and "Lainie" always got along nicely together. She told me that Dennie seemed like her own baby, that it seemed that he was Dennis when he was a baby.

Dennie loved everybody, and there was something about him that made everybody love him. Elaine was taking him through the hall one day just as my husband passed through. With an angelic smile Dennie held out his arms. He was irresistable, and Mr. Baker took him and carried him out into the yard.

Elaine had some difficulty one day in getting enough milk for the family. She needed milk for Dennie's formula, and also for the others to drink. She told Florence that she couldn't get but one bottle.

"Well, anyway, you have some for the baby," said Florence.

"No," said Elaine, "We are going to drink this. Maybe we can get some more for him."

One night she told Florence laughingly, "I want to tell you the funniest thing you ever heard of. You will kill yourself laughing. I prepared Dennie's formula and put it in the refrigerator in a milk bottle, but I got the bottles mixed up and gave him our milk all day. I didn't find it out until tonight at supper when I poured out a glass of milk and it was the formula."

When Florence told me about it I said, "Yes, it is about as funny as the Little Audrey joke, 'When the baby fell into the river little Audrey laughed and laughed. She knew that baby couldn't swim'."

Dennie was sitting in his carriage in the hall next morning drinking milk from his bottle. He usually managed it very well for such a little fellow, but this time somehow the bottle flipped and struck him on the head. It was a hard blow and he cried terribly, and even Elaine was frightened and took him up and tried to quiet him, but he kept crying. Finally she became disgusted and with a "Cut that out Dennie," put him down and let him cry until Mrs. Myers left the ironing she was doing and took him up.

Mrs. Myers said that at home she clerked in a store and Elaine did the housekeeping. She had a two weeks' vacation, so they had taken this time to come to see Dennis. Well, maybe it was a vacation, but not for Mrs. Myers, only for Elaine. Every morning Elaine went out to the camp, and Mrs. Myers stayed at home, looked after Dennie and did the cooking and ironing. Elaine *did* do the washing.

Elaine ate lunch at the camp every day, and at night she and Dennis came home to a good hot supper that Mrs. Myers had prepared. One night they had steak and potatoes, hot biscuits, and a delicious looking pie. When they sat down to the table Elaine remarked, "Well, I certainly hope that tomorrow you will have some vegetables!"

The next evening they had vegetables in addition to the other things. All the time Mrs. Myers was cooking she ran back and forth to the baby, who was in his pen on the porch, and I didn't see that she ever got any rest.

When Elaine and Dennis came home from the camp one evening, my husband was sitting on the front porch. They walked along from the bus, arms around each other, and on reaching the steps, Elaine said, "Mr. Baker, don't you think we are an affectionate couple?"

"Oh, yes," he replied, no other answer seeming possible.

On Sunday Dennis did not have to go to camp, so Elaine decided to help cook dinner. Florence and I were almost through cooking our dinner and were using all the burners on the gas stove when Elaine walked in and said, "Can I get a burner?"

"We are just about through, Elaine," I said, "and we will take these things off and let you have the stove in a minute."

She placed her arms akimbo and stood glaring at me with indignation. I didn't say anything else, but we hurried our food off the stove as soon as we could. All the girls had always been so sweet and unselfish about the use of the kitchen, and I tried not to monopolize it, but I had never had anyone to demand it before.

By this time the girls, Florence, Irene, Mary, Eulah and Betty, were just about ready to do something to me because I didn't ask Elaine to leave. Florence said, "Mother, don't you see it is making everybody very unhappy to have her here?"

"Yes, Florence, I do, and it makes me unhappy too. But they have only a few more days and they have nowhere else to go," I replied.

Florence agreed that there was nothing to do but to let them stay the few more days. Meanwhile, everybody had admired and praised Dennie so much that Elaine began to open her eyes. "Was he as nice as all that?" she seemed to begin to wonder. And too, I think she noticed the tenderness and love bestowed upon Sammy

and Larry. I saw signs of a little more patience and kindness. She said to me not long before they left, "I don't know why I have such a cute baby. I don't think I deserve him."

I don't believe she had been intentionally unkind, selfish and lazy; I think she was scarcely conscious of it. Dennis did not seem to notice it, and appeared to be perfectly satisfied with things as they were, and even Mrs. Myers seemed satisfied and willing to be the family drudge. Truly, I believe Elaine's stay here brought about some improvement in her attitude toward her baby and her mother-in-law, and I surely hope it lasted.

CHAPTER XVIII
CARMELA

Earl Payne was then sent to another camp, and Eulah went home. They were a loving lovable couple, and their leaving was a sad break in what had grown to be a happy family group, and to me it was almost like losing my own children. Eulah's letters were sweet and most appreciative, and, though always bright and cheerful, they showed an undercurrent of the sufferings and inconveniences that the war brought to young wives. In her first letter, received September 6, she said:

"I arrived home Monday night at 11:00. They were all surely glad to see me. The buses were crowded all the way, and I couldn't get on the bus at Beckley, W. Va., and that made it 7:00 when I got to Gauley Bridge, and no buses until the next morning at 8:45.

"I surely do miss you all. I had stayed so long it seemed like home. I really appreciate the way I was treated and yours and Mr. Baker's kindness. I miss Earl, but I'm thankful that I have a sweet home and friends to come back to."

In December she wrote: "Earl was home from the 4th of December until the 13th. He completed his gunnery school and got his wings. They sent him to Tampa, Fla., for engineering school, and he is supposed to be there until March. I may go to see him sometime in February.

"Is Larry still with you? If he is I bet he has grown so much I wouldn't know him. I guess Florence and Sam have moved into their new home by now. I would love to see Sammy and Larry. When I first came home I missed the babies so much I could hardly stand it. I'll never forget how kind and sweet you were to us while we were there. It was just like home. The girls who are there now should count themselves lucky, for you just can't find many places like your home. I'm thankful that I had the privilege to live in a home with so many nice folks. It teaches a person a lot, and it really means a lot to find a place like that to live.

"Since the weather has gotten so cool you can bake pies and it won't be so hot for you. I do a lot of baking and they all like it. I wish I could be there to bake you a pie. We will hope and pray that

this war won't last much longer and maybe then we all can see each other again. But a person doesn't know what to do now days. If we just put our faith in God, maybe it won't last so much longer.

"Love,
Eulah.

"P. S. I certainly would like to see the babies."

Exactly a year later, December, 1944, another letter came written from her home in West Virginia. "I was with Earl in Louisiana from February until September, but he was sent overseas September 10th. He is somewhere in France with the 9th Air Force, the aerial engineer on a B-26 bomber, and has completed eleven combat missions. When he completes fifty he is supposed to get to come back to the States. We both are hoping and praying that this war will soon end so our loved ones can come back home. I am staying with my parents while Earl is overseas. It gets awfully lonesome at times, but we will just have to keep our chins up."

In that letter Eulah told me she was expecting a baby in February, but the next spring a sad letter came in which she told me she lost the baby, "but," she said, "God knows best."

Earl completed his missions and came home later in the year, (1945).

When the Paynes went away I reported to the housing desk that we had a room, and immediately they sent an Italian couple, Frank and Carmela Cenami, (the C pronounced like Ch.) As soon as Carmela began to talk I knew that we would like her. Frank was quiet and let her do the talking.

Carmela fitted in with the other girls at once. Sammy loved her from the first, and she really was a lot of help to Florence with him. She was an excellent cook and knew how to prepare delicious Italian dishes. Her spaghetti and meat balls looked so good that I asked her to show me how to prepare the dish. She offered to cook some for our dinner, and of course we invited her to eat dinner with us. It was a delicious dish, and I cooked it several times myself, but mine never was quite as good as hers. She told us that spaghetti should never be cut with a knife, and showed us how to put the fork down into it, twist it around and around, then take it up and put it into the mouth without ever cutting the spaghetti.

I really learned lots of things from the girls, and they learned from each other and from me. One girl taught the rest of us to make "porcupines." You make meat balls as Carmela had shown us and mix in some uncooked rice, then boil the balls in tomato juice until the meat and the rice are done. The rice will swell and pop out of the sides of the balls and look like the quills of a porcupine.

A Polish girl taught us to prepare a very unusual and delicious dish. Prepare balls of ground meat mixed with bread crumbs and seasoned; roll them in cabbage leaves that have been softened in boiling water and arrange these in a baking dish; cover with the contents of a can of tomato juice and bake in the oven until done.

Eulah showed us how to make all kinds of pies, and Mayme Frey taught us to cook a "boiled dinner," only I think it was a *baked* dinner. Put a piece of beef into a baking dish, surround it with pieces of potato, carrots, onions, and whatever vegetables you choose, season well, add water, cover the dish and cook in the oven until well done.

I have never considered myself much of a cook, but there were things the girls asked me that I could give some helpful suggestions about. My specialty was biscuits, and, as few of the girls made biscuits, I usually made enough to pass around the crowd. The boys especially liked them when they were hot and buttered. Mary Finney said, "I bet Mrs. Baker has given away a thousand biscuits." Some of the girls asked me to show them how to make them, and they succeeded very well. But one thing they did not like was North Carolina corn bread, old fashioned corn pone made with nothing but meal and water and not ruined with eggs, milk, salt or shortening. I think there is nothing better than collards and cornbread.

It was interesting to notice some of the differences in the dishes cooked by girls from different parts of the country. Practically all of the Southern girls made biscuits, but almost none of those from the North. The Southern girls cooked grits and rice; the Northern girls, Irish potatoes. Southern girls baked their sweet potatoes, and the Northern ones boiled theirs.

Irene Adams was the first one I ever saw roll her pie crust on the rolling pin after she had rolled it out, and then easily unroll it over the pie plate. How many times I had broken mine in an attempt to get it upon the plate! But it was not until the war was over that I learned from a North Carolina girl that it was not necessary to use a board for rolling out biscuits. She said her mother always used a cloth, and I found it an easier way, but I learned from another girl later that a piece of waxed paper is just as good and a little less trouble.

Then we lost Ed and Irene Strunk and little David. David was the first baby we ever had that stayed a long time, and everybody was sorry for him to leave. I remember how Irene looked when she left. She was wearing a pretty blue dress and a white hat, and she was beautiful. And Ed had been so fine. I felt that no one could take their places.

Ed was sent to the Aviation Cadet Center at San Antonia, Texas, and Irene and David went to her parents' home in Dayton, Ohio. The bright cheery letter that we received soon after she left, with its friendly message for each one sounded just like her. "Mrs. Baker, it was so nice living down there with you and Mr. Baker, and I want to thank you for everything you did for us while we were there. How is everyone? Everybody still around yet? Carmela, Mary, Betty and Irene? Tell Irene I'll be writing to her pretty soon.

"I hope Florence and Sam don't have to wait so long to get into their home. They probably won't know what to do with so much room after having all of us around. Hope George and Mary had a nice trip home and back. Sorry we didn't get to say good-bye to them. And Carmela, does her husband know when he'll be sent out yet! I hope he's there for a long time yet so she can be with him.

"Hope Betty hasn't had any more rats upstairs. Personally I don't care much for rats as everyone down there knows, including Ken Adams. Are you still studying typing? Probably a real speedster at it now.

"I imagine Sammy and Larry are bigger than ever now. David has grown so much they must have too. David has really taken over the household here. They think the sun rises and sets by him.

"Ed is in San Antonia, Texas at the San Antonia Aviation Cadet Center. He says its a very nice place, so I wouldn't mind if he was stationed there for awhile. I'm sure we would like Texas."

A later letter told that she and David did join Ed in Texas.

But the happy wish for Carmela that her husband would be here for a long time did not come true. Almost immediately Frank was sent overseas. Carmela's first letter began "Hello Everybody," and told of her trip home. She said the trains were so crowded that she had to wait eight hours in Wilson (only about thirty miles from Goldsboro), and didn't leave there until two o'clock in the morning. The hardships of those trips were something that I think the girls will not forget.

"I miss being there and hope all you girls will stay there for a long time with your husbands," she wrote. "Today is Friday, and I know Betty must be happy to have Ernest with her. Sunday would be my husband's day off if I were there, but I will have to spend it alone now."

Three weeks later she wrote: "I feel so much better now that I've heard from my husband. He sent me a cable that he arrived safe. I don't know where he is yet. I should receive mail from him this week. I'm not working but helping my mother, but I'm going to

get a job in a defense plant in another week. I'll do my part to help win this war."

January 13: "Dear Mrs. Baker: I have some bad news. My husband was in North Africa for one month and last week I received a telegram from the war department saying he was "missing in action" since the 26th of November. I really can't understand what could have happened. He wrote his last letter Nov. 21st and said he wasn't doing anything, and as far as I know there wasn't any action going on. I have been heart broken. I hope to God he is safe somewhere. The only thing that could have happened is that he must have been sent out somewhere and got lost, or he may be a 'prisoner of war.'

"I know you go to to church, and I hope you will say a few prayers that he may be found safe."

April 18: Received your letter and was going to write sooner, but in the meantime I received a telegram from the War Department stating that my husband "died of injuries." He was on a troop ship and they were attacked from the air by "30 German Bombers." Probably you heard in the month of February about the troop ship that sank with 1,000 American boys missing and 1,000 saved. Well, my dear husband was on it. He was on his way to India. Frank was overseas only twenty-eight days.

"It's been an awful shock to me. Guess the Lord takes all the good boys. My husband was a wonderful husband to me.

"Will close now and write when I feel better. I have been so sick; my nerves are very weak. Tell all the girls to write.

Your friend, Carmela."

CHAPTER XIX
JEANNE

More than a week before Ed and Irene Strunk left, a young man of Polish parentage, Cpl. Edward Napiwocki, applied for a room for himself, his wife, and their baby son. I told him we would have a vacancy soon, and arranged with a neighbor to take them until they could come here.

We were much pleased with the young man's appearance and manners, and in the meanwhile I was told by a friend who had had some Polish young people in her home that she liked them very much. One night the couple came over to talk with us. Mrs. Napiwocki's name was Jeanne, and the baby, who was eight months old, was Edward, Jr., a fine boy with a most attractive smile. Jeanne said she had been watching us from across the street, and that everybody seemed to be having such a good time that she was looking forward to the time she could move over.

Cpl. Napiwocki ("Ed," we called him) showed an interest in our old fashioned square piano and said that before entering the Army he was a music teacher.

"Do you play?" I asked Jeanne.

"I play on that," she said, nodding her head toward the typewriter.

When they left, Florence said, "Mother, we are going to like them," and sure enough we did. As soon as the Strunks went away they moved in. Irene Adams was missing the other Irene badly, but she found Jeanne so friendly and congenial that she didn't have much time to be lonesome. Ken and Ed became good friends too, and the babies began to take a lively interest in each other.

While Jeanne and Irene were busy with their cooking they would tie their sons in chairs in the kitchen, and I thought the little fellows were very patient, since they would have much preferred to crawl about on the floor. Sometimes they had their bottles and looked so cute, each drinking hard at the same time.

Before Edward came I had made a pet of Larry, and whenever I entered the room he would hold out his arms for me to take him. Pretty soon Edward began to hold out his arms too. I loved both and they loved each other, but they were jealous. If I took Larry, Edward would quarrel, and if I took Edward, Larry would screw up

his face to show his extreme displeasure. Sometimes I would take both, one in each arm, and Jeanne would say, "Now Mrs. Baker, you can't do that!"

"Just for a minute, Jeanne," I would say.

Our three little boys were the joy of the entire household, and Florence, Irene, and Jeanne consulted each other daily as to what kinds of food, what kinds of clothing and what kinds of training to give them. And the girls who did not have babies hovered around, helping wherever they could and showing the deepest concern over these weighty matters.

It was really wonderful to see the varieties of canned baby foods that could be bought, and I looked back to the time when *my* babies were little and when I had to prepare whatever I could for them myself, and I thought how much easier for the mothers and better for the babies things were now.

Florence kept Sammy's pen in the back yard in nice weather, and he enjoyed being it it and watching older children and Snookey and Lassie caper about. I suggested that the mothers put all the babies into the pen together. They tried it, but in a few minutes we found one baby standing on another's neck. It looked terrible, but it seemed satisfactory to them, even to the one being stood upon, who accepted it as part of the game.

During the day the back yard was a social center, with babies in pens and strollers, mothers sewing or talking, little dogs frisking about, diapers flapping gaily in the breeze, and Ken, Sam, and Ed working on their cars. Sometimes George Finney sat in a lawn chair polishing his shoes or combing his wavy red hair. I have some kodak pictures now of "the family" just like that. In some of the pictures were also Anne, our oldest grandchild, and Josephine and Dukes, children who lived next door.

At one of these times Mary went to the back door and called to George, "Come here, Darling."

"I'll be there in a minute," said Sam from where he was at work on his car.

"You know I'm not talking to you!" retorted Mary.

All of us were interested in Jeanne's story. Her parents were born in Poland and still spoke the language, though her father had learned English. Her mother refused to take the trouble to learn it. Jeanne herself did not know a word of English when she started to school at the age of six, but she must have been a very bright child and must have learned readily, for she used the most correct English of anyone in the house when she lived with us.

Her maiden name was Abremsky, and her full name was Jenina

Wanda Abremsky Napiwocki. She said she didn't like "Jenina," and called herself Jeanne, which was the nearest to it she could find. She had studied two years in Poland, where she made a specialty of folk dancing, that she might teach it to American children.

Ed's parents were also natives of Poland, and he too spoke both languages fluently. Both Jeanne and Ed, however, were born in America. Edward was a good baby in the day time, but he gave Jeanne a bad time at night. Sometimes he cried for two or three hours. Ed would rock him, and I could hear him singing or humming to him. I never hear "Merry Widow Waltz" now without thinking of Ed. Jeanne said Ed rocked Edward so she would be sure not to spank him.

"What does he want when he cries in the night?" I asked. "Does he want to get in the bed with you, or to be rocked, or what?"

"No," she said, "He wants to get up and play. He doesn't want it to be night at all!"

Jeanne had some very decided political ideas. When someone spoke of Russia as an "ally," she said, "Huh, I don't think Russia is any better than Germany!" Maybe she was right at that! She spoke French well, and sometimes she and Irene would talk in French a little, though Irene was reticent about it, as hers was a picked up French as the French Canadians speak it, and wasn't very orthodox.

Jeanne seemed really distressed over the English used by some of the girls in the house, and asked me if I thought we could say anything to help them.

"I don't know, Jeanne; you know you have to be careful about criticising anyone's grammar," I replied.

But the opportunity presented itself beautifully. One day Betty said, "She learned him how to do it," and then corrected herself and said, "I mean 'she taught him'."

"I am glad you changed that, Betty," I said. "That sounds so much better."

"I wish I had somebody to tell me when I say things wrong," she said.

"Do you really mean that?" asked Jeanne.

"Yes, I do," replied Betty.

So then and there we organized a grammar class. Everybody was to correct or criticise the grammar of anyone else, and there were to be no hard feelings. Betty and Mary came in for the most corrections, but they seemed to appreciate it and really were helped.

I had thought that my English was good, but now I found that I had been using some expressions that the girls, especially Jeanne, thought rather crude. They could overlook "you all," since that was

understood to be acceptable in the South, but not our use of the word "fix," as, "Are you fixing to wash your dishes?" or something is "out of fix." I told Jeanne that I had always heard this and had never thought of it as peculiar, but that I would try to remember not to use it any more. We never caught Jeanne but once, and that was when she said, "I feel badly."

I took her up on it at once, but she argued that "bad" was an adjective and "badly" an adverb, and that she needed an adverb to tell how she felt. My husband said I was right, and after awhile Jeanne looked it up in an English grammar and found that we were right.

A few days later I told the girls that I knew I was improving.

"Last night my husband asked me, 'Are you fixing to go to bed?'"

"'No,' I replied, 'I am preparing to retire'."

One day I had washed some doll dresses that belonged to Anne and was hanging them on the line in the back yard, when Jeanne came out. She looked at the dresses and said, "Mrs. Baker, you are too old for anything like that." I found in her a kindred spirit. In a glance a flash of understanding would pass between us over something that meant nothing to the others, and we could discuss things like sisters.

Goldsboro people were trying to plan things to help entertain the soldiers' wives and even to help them find useful things to do. Classes were held at the High School and in the Sunday School buildings. After these classes were arranged, other people were also invited to attend. Jeanne and I decided to join a French class that was held at night for beginners or for those who wanted to brush up on their French. The teacher was a native Frenchman, a soldier at the field. I had had several years of French in college, but after all the time that had passed I didn't remember much of it. Jeanne had had more and was pretty good, but thought that lessons under a real Frenchman might improve her accent.

She left Edward with Ed, and we went. The class had been going on for a few nights, but we found that we were almost the only ones in it who had ever taken French. The teacher's accent was all right, but he wasn't much of a teacher. Just being a Frenchman doesn't mean being a teacher, and this soldier didn't know how to go about it. It was so elementary and so slow that Jeanne and I decided not to go any more.

Then I heard of another course that was being offered that I knew would be much more valuable to me if they would allow me to take it. Soldiers' wives were invited to take typing at the high school. Jeanne didn't need this, as she was already an experienced typist, but

I eagerly telephoned the principal and asked if other adults were included in this invitation.

"Yes, Mrs. Baker, come on. We will be glad to have you," he said.

So I started to school again, and entered the Freshman class. In this class were many girls and boys whom I had taught in Sunday School and others I had coached in Latin. There were also soliders' wives who had come to brush up on their typing.

Florence and Jeanne would often ask me how I was doing in the class.

"I am improving in the speed tests," I said. "Today I made much nearer zero than any time before."

Soon I not only got up to "zero," but began to climb until I actually became a member of the upper section of the class. I continued with the class for several months until I could type well enough to do.

Another class, or perhaps I might call it another convenience, arranged for the girls was sewing at the USO. They could take material there and receive instructions or help in cutting, fitting and making dresses or other garments. Use of the sewing machines and instruction in sewing were free to the war wives, and several of our girls gladly availed themselves of this privilege.

CHAPTER XX
MIRIAM AND JULIA

Lieutenant and Mrs. Royce Bryant were the next applicants, and they took the room that Frank and Carmela had had. Miriam had blue eyes and fair hair and she was quiet and gentle. The fact that she was a college graduate and an officer's wife did not seem to make her conceited. The girls didn't care anything about her being a college graduate; so were some others—but *an officer's wife!* I had not even thought of that when we let them have the room, and it certainly made no difference to us. Two of my nephews were officers, and the other two were enlisted men, and it was all the same to us, but with the girls it seemed to make a great deal of difference.

One thing that made it worse was that Miriam did not take kitchen privileges and missed the social atmosphere of the kitchen, and the girls hardly knew her. She ate downtown with her husband, or when he was not here, with one or two lieutenant's wives with whom she had made friends and whom our girls did not know. When she was here she wrote letters or read in her room. Florence and I tried to get her into the crowd, but she sensed their feeling and kept to herself, though we found her sweet and friendly when we talked to her.

One night the young folks were sitting around a table playing some kind of game. Florence and Sam had gone to their room. When I entered I saw that an argument was going on. Mary and George laid the matter before me at once. They said Miriam was in her room alone, and they thought they ought to ask her to come in and play the game with them. The others disagreed, and one girl said, "My husband told me not to have anything to do with her because she thinks she is better than we are."

"I don't think so," I said. "You all were here first, and you are the ones to make the advances. I think Miriam is lonesome and homesick and not 'stuck up' at all."

With my influence added to Mary's and George's, the others gave in, and Mary was delegated to go and invite Miriam in. She found her lying on the bed, lonesome and with nothing to do. When Mary asked her to come and play with them, she gladly accepted.

The next day the girls admitted that Miriam was "real nice" and

that they liked her. One of them asked her to go down town with her, and she went. For the rest of her stay, which wasn't long, the girls were friendly, and everything went on beautifully. Miriam told me she had decided to take kitchen privileges and would like to begin the next week, but before the next week came the government had sent Royce to another field, and of course Miriam went with him. I had an appreciative letter from her after she arrived at her new destination.

There was something interesting connected with her home life that she told me while she was here. Miriam was an only child and grew up, went to college, graduated, and got married. Then her parents had another baby! There never were but these two. Miriam said, "I am nineteen years old, and my sister is not a year old yet."

Before they left, Betty and Ernest Cornelius went home for a week, and Hiram and Julia Bennett took their room for the week. Julia was small and dark haired and lovable, and we told Hiram we thought she was a fine girl.

"Yes she is, that's why I married her," he said.

As for Julia, she thought Hiram was the greatest, the most wonderful and the wisest of human beings. He was the son of an Episcopal minister and had been to college two years and planned to finish his education after the war. He was good natured, and my husband and I liked him. He would come into the living room and select books of poems to take to his room, his favorite being Shakespeare. He astounded the other young folks with the poetry he could recite.

Betty and Ernest came back about the time Miriam and Royce left, so Julia and Hiram took the room vacated by the latter couple. Then Julia became very sick, had a hot fever and was nauseated. We called our family physician, who said she had an acute kidney condition. He prescribed for her and told me what to do for her. I was quite busy preparing her meals, nursing her, and doing my housekeeping and newspaper work.

Someone called me to the telephone, and I hurried up the hall, tripped over a suit case that one of the boys had left there, and fell with almost my entire weight on one knee. I think it fractured the knee cap, as it was several months before I really recovered from it.

This made it necessary for something to be done about my patient, so I phoned the hospital at the camp and asked if Miriam could be taken there. They told me she could not, but that they would send a doctor to see her. I thought this would be a good idea, as it would save them a bill, but when the doctor arrived and learned that they had had a civilian physician, he was very angry.

"That's the way they do," he said to me. "They get a civilian doctor, and then when they get in trouble they send for one of us. It certainly isn't very complimentary."

I assured him that it was all my fault, that I didn't know the wives of soldiers could have the services of an army physician until I phoned the hospital, and that it was I who had suggested the name of a civilian doctor.

This mollified him somewhat, but I found later that every time a physician came from the camp to see anyone here, he had some reason to be angry. One reprimanded me severely because I didn't phone him in the night when one of the boys was sick. I told him I didn't know it myself until morning, and then I did call him. Then Mary had "flu," and we called a camp doctor. But Mary had her own ideas as to how a doctor should be received. When I told her he had been called, she got up, put on her best dress, curled her hair and rouged her face, and when he arrived she was in the living room waiting for him. He told her that if she was well enough to be sitting up dressed she was well enough to come out to the clinic at the hospital for treatment.

Well, Julia couldn't go to the hospital, but she was so sweet and appreciative that all of us were glad to do all we could for her.

By the time she was well, Hiram had secured an apartment at the War Housing Project. They wanted a two room furnished apartment but had to take a three room unfurnished one. In the kitchen was a cook stove and an ice box, and in the living room was a coal heater. They bought a bed and some cooking utensils, and nothing else. Hiram said he would get some orange crates and boxes and use them for tables and chairs. I didn't blame them, for the length of a soldier's stay was always uncertain, and I had known of numerous couples who furnished their apartments, then had to sell everything at a sacrifice in a short time.

They put the bed near the stove in the living room so they would not need many blankets, and piled the kindling wood in the bed room. Hiram bought a load of coal, but could not get it hauled nearer their apartment than across the street, and he had to take it over in a wheelbarrow that he borrowed. I lent them some blankets until they could buy some. These they carefully returned. Several times we lent something to some soldier or soldier's wife. and they always returned it in good condition.

Once a couple with a baby came here to ask for a room. I did not have one, but phoned around until I found a place for them. The landlady said she could not give kitchen privileges, but that if they could get an electric hot plate they might use it in their room to

heat the baby's milk. I told them I would lend them a hot plate, which they gratefully accepted. I had never seem them before and did not even know their names. Several months later, after I had forgotten all about it, I came home one day from a trip down town, and one of the roomers told me a soldier had brought home my hot plate and had left a dollar and a half to pay for the use of it. He said they were leaving Goldsboro and he wanted to thank me for letting them use it. If I had been at home I would not have let him pay for it, but he was gone when I came back.

Julia and Hiram did not stay long at the Housing Project before Hiram was ordered to another camp. I was sorry for them to go away, for my husband and I were very fond of them. When Christmas came they sent us a post card with their picture on it. It was a good picture, and I have it in my little treasure box with the many others our boys and girls have given us.

CHAPTER XXI
THE KATZENJAMMER KIDS

Time moved on, happily for the most part, for our regular "family" that fall. The school of mechanics continued until spring, and as most of our boys were instructors, and Ken was with the maintenance department, there was not much danger of their being sent away.

The babies were growing and kept us entertained with their antics. One day Irene brought Larry to the living room door and said, "Mrs. Baker, Look."

I was horrified. His face was spattered with something red—blood, I thought. But the smile on Irene's face told me it was nothing serious.

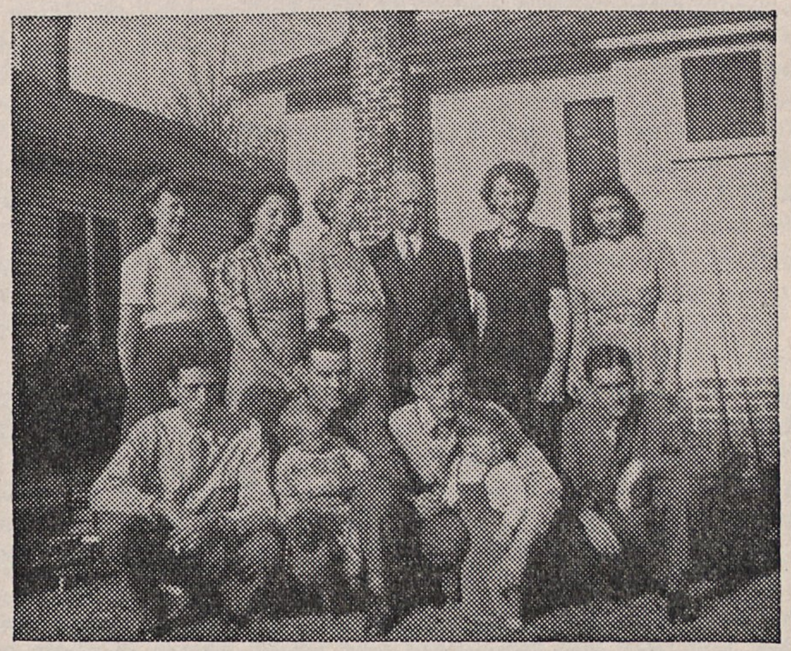
"What on earth is it?" I asked.

"Beets," replied Irene. "Just as I started to put a spoonful into his mouth he gave the spoon a slap and knocked it all over his face."

Edward began to learn to walk. We couldn't keep from laughing, but the little fellow had a hard time. He would take a few steps, then sit down hard. He sat so often and so hard that I thought I would help him. I tied a sofa pillow to the back of him in the right location for him to sit on it when he came down. But somebody suggested that it might not be a good idea, for he would expect a soft seat when he came down. Anyway he learned to walk without breaking any bones.

He would walk about the kitchen, while Larry, still tied in a chair, watched him. One day Larry was drinking milk from his bottle, and Edward walked up, took the bottle from him and turned it up to *his* mouth. Larry screwed up his face with that characteristic little expression that he used when he wished to show displeasure, but did not make a sound. Jeanne, who was busily preparing a bottle for Edward, turned around in time to see him scampering off with Larry's and Larry in great distress. A satisfactory adjustment was made as quickly as possible.

Then Larry began to walk. At first he held to chairs or his mother's finger, but finally learned to take steps alone. One warm fall day we found the kitchen sink stopped up. A plumber was called, who, upon examination of the trouble, found that he would have to dig in the ground in the back yard to unstop the pipe. He made a hole in the ground and poked a stick into the pipe, but the water



THE FAMILY

from the sink did not run off, but simply filled the hole in the yard. The plumber went off for a steel cable to run into the opening.

Meanwhile Ken was working on something in the back yard, and Larry was with him. Others were busy about different tasks or games. I don't know whether Ken forgot Larry was there or whether he left him with someone else while he went into the house for a minute, but anyway for almost the only time in his life Larry was not being watched, and he made the most of his freedom.

He ventured near the inviting looking pool of water and decided to go wading. In he went and liked it so well that he sat down. The dirty water came up to his armpits, and there he sat until someone looked around and saw him. What a shriek went up! Everybody started running, but Ken reached him first. I shall never forget how Larry looked when he was lifted out of that pond. His clothes were dripping wet and greasy from the accumulated dish water, and his shoes and seat were covered with oozy mud. Irene thought he was ruined and was sure *she* was too.

But a good bath did wonders for him. How to get his clothes clean was the hardest problem, for even his little shoes had to be immersed and scrubbed. They looked cute, though, hanging on the clothes line after they were clean.

The people who had been living in the house Sam and Florence had bought at last found a place they could move to, so Sam, Florence, and Sammy left us. It had certainly been a pleasure to us to have them with us, but they were not leaving Goldsboro, and we could see them practically every day. Their furniture had been stored in the attic of their house for months, and we knew they did want to get back into a home of their own.

Like everybody else, they rented their spare bed rooms to war couples, and they had some very nice young people in their home. One girl, Barbara, had been a member of the National Red Cross committee. Florence liked her so much that she told me she didn't want Barbara ever to go away. Another was a little country girl named Susie. Barbara was as nice to Susie as if she were her lifelong friend, and treated her like her own little sister.

Jeanne and Ed moved into the room Florence and Sam had occupied. This was an excellent arrangement, for only the little bath room separated this room from Irene's, and one girl could keep both babies while the other was busy hanging out her clothes in the yard or something else that had to be done. If the bathroom doors were open the babies could go through and visit each other, and the two were devoted friends. When someone spoke of the two little boys

playing so happily together, Jeanne said, "Yes, but no more so than those two little boys out in the yard."

I looked out of the window and saw Ed and Ken working busily and happily together on some project.

Edward and Larry finally won for themselves the name, "Katzenjammer Kids," and they were just about living up to the name. They would scamper up and down the hall, take the brass umbrella pans out of the old fashioned hat rack and roll them about. They would race back to the kitchen and try to find something to get into, and their mothers would run about distractedly after them.

Once both "kids" went into the bath room, and each mother thought they were in the other room. This gave them an opportunity to examine that interesting and mysterious piece of bath room furniture that always held water and that had a little handle that could be pulled and more water would come swooshing through in a most delightful manner. They had a great time dipping their hands and arms in until their sleeves were soaked up above the elbows. And when Irene found them they were loath to give up such a pleasant and unusual form of recreation.

The fireplace in Jeanne's room had been opened, since there had been some cool fall mornings that made a fire seem necessary, but on one warm day when there had been no fire, Jeanne stepped into the hall and left the "Katzenjammers" alone for a minute. The golden opportunity that Edward had been longing for had come, and he hurried to the grate and reached in, rubbing his hands in the soft black soot in the back of the fireplace and in the chimney throat. Larry joined him, and when Jeanne returned, not only were their hands black and smutty, but the soot was all over their faces and clothes. "Never a dull moment," said Jeanne.

Larry made a discovery in the kitchen that pleased him greatly. Somebody had a sugar bowl on one of the lower shelves, and he would stick his finger in it and come away sucking it. He carried this on for some time before anyone realized what he was doing, and if he hadn't started going to the shelf so often he might not have been caught. Sometimes he or Edward would pull the canned goods off the shelves and roll them about the floor. Their mothers placed chairs in front of the shelves, but Larry could reach through the chair rounds and stick his finger into the sugar bowl.

But there was one thing that disturbed Larry, and, though I explained it to him as well as I could, he still worried over it. It was a hole I had cut in the side of an old shoe to wear about the house because I had a corn. Larry would stoop down, put his finger on the cut place in the shoe, then look up at me and with the utmost

concern and say something like "Eh! Eh!" In vain did I explain, "Grandma's foot hurts. She cut that shoe so her foot wouldn't hurt." The expression on his face was as if he wanted to say, "Well, I think it is terrible and I can't understand it."

Edward was quite literary and wanted to be read to. I would take him on my lap and show him pictures and tell him about them, pointing at each picture as I read or explained. When I would stop he would reach out for my hand, get my finger and point it at the picture as if to say, "Go on, I want to hear the rest of it."

The babies were now saying a few words, as "Daddy," "Mother," "Bye-bye" or See!" However, they plainly understood anything that was said to them. Edward had to learn two languages, since Jeanne and Ed talked to him in Polish so he would be able to understand his grandmother when he went home, and the rest of us, of course, spoke in English, but he understood both. Larry, too, was learning Polish as well as English, and the rest of us began to learn it. If we said, "Huch, Edger, huch too," both would come running. But if we said, "Nie ruszaj," (pronounced nee-eh roosh-eye) they would stop quickly and run away from whatever they were meddling with. "Edger" was the pet name by which his parents called Edward. Jeanne said it was the Polish diminutive for "Edward," as we in English might call him "Eddie."

"Huch," by the way, should be spelled c-h-o-c, but I couldn't see how to get "huch" out of that, especially as Jeanne said every word in Polish was spelled exactly as it sounded. "Nie ruszaj" means "Do not touch. "When I said this to Edward and Larry, Ed said, "Mrs. Baker, you speak Polish with a Southern accent."

Even Mary began speaking Polish, and would say to one of the babies, "Die Boo Jee," which should be spelled d-a-j b-u-z-i, and means "Give me a kiss."

When Jeanne spoke of me to the babies, she called me "Babci," which means "Grandmother," and is pronounced "Bobchee." How "Babci" did love those little Katzenjammers!

Edward had a real "Babci" at home who sent him the most marvelous boxes of clothes. She sewed beautifully and loved to do it. I could imagine what she would have made for him if he had been a girl! One box contained a grey wood suit, coat, pants and matching cap, a black velvet suit with Eton jacket, matching hat and white silk blouse, and a Peter Pan suit of brown and white checked silk. They were lovely, but Ed wouldn't let Edward wear the brown silk suit because there were ruffles around the collar and down each side of the front pleat of the blouse.

One Sunday it was the time for my circle of the Woman's Society

of Christian Service to serve dinner to the soldiers and their wives in the dining room of the Education building of the church. This was done by some circle every Sunday after church, and there was a large crowd every time. I invited all the girls and boys at our house to come to the dinner, but Mary and George, Betty and Ernest were too shy to accept. Ed, Jeanne, Ken and Irene decided to go. Both couples were Catholic, but denomination made no difference. They took the babies, as I had told them to be sure to do.

I had a table all ready for them, and we had a really good dinner. I was the "Baker" in name and reality, for I baked one hundred and ninety biscuits that morning. Someone else made the biscuits and brought the pans to me as fast as they could, while I baked four racks at a time, two in each of the gas ranges, and burned only one pan of the whole batch.

When "my folks" came in, I was through baking, and gave them my undivided attention. I took the babies, one at a time, over to the other tables and showed them off. They behaved like little angels, and beautiful little angels at that. Larry had on a darling little blue suit, and Edward wore his new black velvet. Then I took some of the ladies to the table and introduced my young people to them. I was indeed proud of them, and I think they enjoyed the occasion. The ladies congratulated me on having such nice young people in my home.

CHAPTER XXII
DAUGHTER OF THE WHITE HOUSE

Jeanne and Ed had moved into Florence's room, and Betty and Ernest, downstairs into Barbara's, thus leaving two vacant rooms. Also the girls who had their groceries on the lower shelves in the kitchen moved up, leaving the lower shelves for the less fortunate newcomers. We now had no outsiders—only our "family."

One bright sunny day the girls called my husband and me and said they wanted to take some pictures of all of us together. We went out and, seeing a neighbor in her yard, asked her if she would snap the pictures so we could get our entire household together. They put us in the center. Around us in family groups were Ken, Irene and Larry, Ed, Jeanne and Edward, George and Mary, and Ernest and Betty. They had prints made for each couple and one for Florence and Sam. I have one now, and it is one of the best in my collection. I call it "Our Family."

This peaceful condition was not to last long, and in a few days two new couples arrived, destined, however, not to stay long. There were two more babies, a four months old boy, Timmy, and a three months old girl, Judy. My husband wanted to know why the four babies were usually kept in the back yard instead of in the front.

"If they would play in the front yard, people who passed by could see them," he said.

"Oh, you want everybody to think all of them are your grandchildren," I retorted.

Judy had dainty little handmade dresses, and Judy's mother had a knack for making things look pretty. She asked for material and made pink swiss curtains for her room, put a matching vallance around the dresser, and even ruffled the chairs. She gave Timmy several embroidered sunsuits she had made for Judy, thinking Judy was going to be a boy.

Timmy's poor little mother didn't know how to make anything or even how to prepare her baby's formula or sterilize his bottles properly, though I think she learned much from the others while she was here.

But it wasn't Timmy's mother we objected to; it was his father. He was rough and uncouth and not kind to his wife. She told the

girls that he always borrowed her allotment money as soon as she got it and gambled it away or drank it up.

"I sometimes wonder why I married him," she said, "but I thought I loved him when I married him."

But the girls were not afraid of him. They told him he ought to be ashamed to talk to his wife as he did. It must have done some good, for one night while she was cooking supper he started to criticize her, and then stopped suddenly and said, "No, I didn't mean to say anything like that again."

A beautiful girl came one day looking for a room. I was sorry we could not take her, and phoned Florence, but she, too, had all her rooms filled. I invited the girl to come in and sit with us in the living room. Perhaps she was tired or perhaps she was lonesome and wanted someone to talk to, for she came in, though I had told her in the beginning that there was "no room in the inn."

I liked her, and she must have enjoyed her visit, as she stayed an hour or more. We talked on various subjects, and, since I was interested in working on my family records when she came, the subject drifted in that direction.

She said she too was interested in family records, especially since her great grandfather was president of the United States. Of course I began to ask questions. She said that her grandfather, son of President Andrew Jackson, died young, leaving his widow and several small children. Mrs. Jackson married again, this time to a Mr. Jenson. Unfortunately they changed the children's name to Jenson. One of these children was this girl's father.*

"My maiden name was Jenson, but it ought to have been Jackson," she said.

I do not know where she found a room, but I was sorry she could not come here, not because she was the great granddaughter of a president, but because she was lovely and I liked her, and because she needed a room. The daughter of the White House and the daughter of the slums trod the same streets looking for a place to stay so they could be near their husbands.

When Timmy and his parents left I phoned the USO that we had a room, so, as usual, it wasn't long before they sent a solider's wife to see it. But *such* a soldier's wife! She wasn't the president's granddaughter, but she was a captain's wife, which she probably thought was more important. She was about forty-five years old and intro-

*According to history, President Jackson had no children, but this girl's grandfather probably was the foster son, nephew of Mrs. Jackson, whom the president and his wife are said to have reared as their own child.

duced herself as Mrs. Harrison, wife of *Captain* Harrison. She was haughty and had a superior air, (she thought) and was clearly very certain that we would be most anxious to have her.

I showed her the room, which really was quite comfortable. She looked around disdainfully and remarked in an aggrieved tone, "Not even a wash basin!"

"Oh, I'll give you a wash basin if you want it," said I, though I knew she meant running water.

Then I showed her the bathroom.

"Will others have to use this besides me?" she asked.

"Yes," I replied, "we have only two bathrooms."

This seemed to be the most unbearable thing she had ever heard of, and she looked so unhappy over it that I said, "You may not like it here. Perhaps you can find a room somewhere that you will like better."

"That's just the trouble," she said. "I can't get another room."

She then asked if she might use the telephone.

"Of course," said I, and we went back to the living room.

She called the hotel and asked if she might be allowed to keep the room she had there. They refused, saying that, as they had already told her, the room was engaged in advance by someone else, and that they had no other vacancy. She had no alternative but to take ours (she thought.) She looked at the fire, which was burning brightly in the grate, and asked. "Is that the only way my room would be heated?"

I told her it was.

"You don't mean I would have to bring in the coal and keep up the fire myself, do you?"

"Yes, unless your husband will do it for you," I said.

"I have arthritis," she began.

By this time if I didn't have arthritis I had something, and I saw that my husband couldn't stand much more.

"I don't think we could make you comfortable here, and I would rather you would get a room somewhere else," I said.

She looked at me in amazement. Could it be that she was hearing right? Could anyone hesitate to want her as a roomer?

"Do you mean that you will not let me have the room?" she asked.

"I mean that I had rather you would get one somewhere else," I replied.

She started toward the door, and I accompanied her to the outside door, politely holding it open for her. After she was on the porch, she turned back to me and said, "After all it is *our* husbands and sons who are winning the war for you!"

I did not take the trouble to tell her that I had four nephews and numerous cousins in the service, and that our own son was soon to go.

When I went back to my girls, they were looking very serious. They had seen us when I took the lady to the bed room and bathroom and feared that I had rented the room to her.

"Who was that sour puss?" demanded Mary.

Jeanne and Betty looked at me anxiously.

"She is someone who will never bother you," I said.

Then I told them the whole story and all the conversation. They thoroughly enjoyed it, especially my reply to the question about the coal.

Later I learned that the Captain's wife had found a room at a large rooming house in the city. I hope they had steam heat, "wash basins," and whatever "Mrs. Captain," as the girls called her, wanted.

Those who had come to live with us had been so appreciative and so glad to get rooms that this woman's attitude certainly was not pleasing to me, and at a time when it was so hard to find a place to stay, I didn't think she was very wise. I have wondered since then if she learned a lesson and used different tactics next time.

CHAPTER XXIII
HAZEL, MILLIE, AND GWEN

Not long before Christmas we lost part of our "family." Ernest was sent away, and Betty went home. Everybody was grieved, and Mary was heartbroken. After they drove off in the taxi, I turned to Jeanne and said, "That's the way it is. They stay here until I think they are my own children; then they go away and I will probably never see them again."

"So you can't take it, Mrs. Baker," said Jeanne.

"No, I can't take it, if you want to put it that way," I replied.

Betty wrote me a card as soon as she reached her home in Cincinnati, and immediately after Christmas we received a letter from her, in which she said that Ernest left for California on Christmas Day, and that since he expected to be there only a short time she did not go with him. Later, however, he was stationed in Washington state, and Betty went up there for several months.

As Christmas approached, the USO was so swamped with applications for rooms that they sent out requests through the paper for every available room in the city. One request said, "If you have any little nook such as the end of a hall that might be curtained off, please let us have that.

Raymond Lawrence engaged the room that Betty and Ernest had vacated for himself, his wife, and baby. The sleeping porch and the east upstairs room were engaged by other couples. Our other rooms were already occupied.

When Mrs. Lawrence arrived, she was accompanied by another young woman, who came in with the Lawrence baby in her arms. Young Lawrence introduced his wife, who in turn introduced the other girl as "my nurse girl," Mrs. Ellis.

I thought that was a joke, and took them all to the room that had been reserved for the Lawrences. Mrs. Lawrence's name was Hazel, and Mrs. Ellis' was Millie. Millie's husband, Chester Ellis, was also a soldier at the camp. I told her that I had no vacant bed except the day bed in the living room, and that she and her husband might sleep there if they could not find something better. She was glad to have it, and as soon as her husband came told him, "Mrs. Baker has a place we can stay."

Pvt. Ellis was greatly relieved, for he had not been able to find any possible place. Millie certainly had taken a risk to come here without a reservation at a time like that.

Soon after they arrived they asked about the best place to buy groceries. I told them of the stores downtown and added that there was a grocery store just two blocks down the street that they would find convenient. Hazel asked me if she might leave the baby with me while they went to get something to eat. I agreed, thinking they were going to the corner grocery and would be back in a few minutes. They left, and I didn't see them again for over three hours.

My own girls, Jeanne and Irene, never left their babies with me for more than a few minutes at a time. Even Florence didn't think I should be the nurse for Sammy, my own grandchild; but these people whom I had never seen until that day, left me their baby for nearly half a day.

As Hazel was going out she said, "If he wakes before we get back, just give him this bottle." Well, he waked! I gave him the bottle; I changed him and bathed him; I rocked him; I did everything I could think of for him, but he didn't like me very well, and too, perhaps the little fellow was tired from his long ride, and he fretted and cried.

The time dragged along. It was time for me to prepare supper; my husband got his own supper. It was time for me to eat supper; I didn't eat any. It was time for me to write my news letters; and by this time, Irene, having given her family their supper and put Larry to bed, came to my rescue. Dear sweet Irene! Wherever she was needed, she filled in. I gave the baby over to her, snatched a biscuit, and went to my writing, but I knew that was the last time Hazel was going to leave her baby with me.

The next day I noticed that Millie was caring for the baby, preparing his formulas under Hazel's preemptory directions, and waiting on her generally. Hazel had *meant* it when she said Millie was her nurse girl! I thought that made her introduction of Millie much more unkind.

Mary complained to me about Hazel's "bossing" Millie so much. She said, "Mrs. Baker, Millie waits on her just like she was her servant."

"Mary, Hazel pays Millie to help her with the baby, and I think she also buys the groceries," I told her.

"Well, she ought to!" said Mary, but she felt better about it.

Whenever a new girl arrived she would be so tired and bedraggled after her long trip on a day coach that she wanted to go right to bed. Several hours later when she got up and dressed I would be surprised to find that she was a very pretty and attractive

girl. One girl arrived looking like she was half dead. She had traveled three days and nights on a day coach, and when she got here she didn't even call her husband; she just went to bed and slept for hours. When she awaked about night, she said that nap was worth ten dollars. Then she dressed up and phoned her husband that she was here.

Gwen Arnold arrived at six o'clock in the morning. I gave her breakfast and then took her to her little room upstairs. Gwen was one of the most lovable, unselfish girls we ever had. From the time she arrived until she left, she did something for somebody. Her coming was the finest thing that could have happened for Mary, who was missing Betty sadly. Gwen brightened Mary up until she was like her old self again. The other new girls were just visitors in the house, but Gwen was one of us, and she stands out in my memory as one of our dearest girls.

Hazel Lawrence did not fail to make the most of Gwen's unselfishness, and pretty soon Gwen found herself taking care of little Ray while Hazel and Millie went to the moving pictures or anywhere they wanted to go. I told Gwen of my experience and warned her to look out for herself.

My girls, especially Mary, were very much interested in having a Christmas tree, not a tiny artificial one, but a big real Christmas tree. I told them we would pay for the tree if they would decorate it. This they were glad to do, so Mary and I went down town, selected a tree and had it sent up. We put it up in the front hall, and Jeanne, Irene, Mary and Gwen went to work on it. It was almost impossible to buy decorations that winter, but the girls made gorgeous paper chains and popped corn on the kitchen stove and made long strings of it. I got out last year's tinsel and Christmas tree decorations, and when the tree was finished it was a thing of beauty. Mary built a log cabin of sticks of candy from a box we had gotten from our sons' store. Then the presents were put on and under the tree, and I added a rattle for little Ray. I had insisted that the presents should be simple and inexpensive, and this met with general approval.

A big Christmas dinner was being planned for the boys at the camp, and each was allowed to bring his wife for a nominal price. The soldiers, of course, did not have to pay for their own dinner, and all our young folks were planning to go. As for my husband and me, we were interested in preparations for having all our children and grandchildren to take dinner with us.

A day or so before Christmas I heard Millie say to Hazel, "Don't you think we had better buy a chicken for supper Christmas night?"

Hazel replied in her usual dictatorial manner, "Certainly not. We are going to pay for a big Christmas dinner. We do not need two big meals the same day. We have to have some regard for economy."

Millie said no more. She always gave in pleasantly and with no argument. I liked her and felt sorry for her. It certainly must be unpleasant to be dependent on anybody like Hazel, I thought.

Then Gwen told me that Hazel had asked her to keep her baby on Christmas Day so she and Millie could go to the camp and have dinner with their husbands, and Gwen had told her that she would.

"Hadn't you intended to go to the dinner with Harlan?" I asked.

"Yes," she said, almost in tears, "But what could I do when she asked me?"

I was indignant: "You can tell her you had made plans to go yourself," I said.

I reminded her that she had come here to spend a short time with her husband, and that it would not be right to treat him so, besides that there was no reason for her to give up her pleasure for a girl whom she had never seen until a few days before, and who obviously was using her for her own selfish pleasure.

Gwen wanted terribly to go to that big dinner with her husband, but had thought it would be selfish. Now she felt relieved when she learned that I thought she owed it to him to go, so she told Hazel that she was sorry she couldn't keep the baby, as her husband wanted her to go with him.

Hazel then asked me to keep the baby, but I told her I had my hands full preparing dinner for all our family. I was sorry for Millie, for now I thought she would have to stay at home with Ray, but Millie fooled me. That was one time, nurse girl or not, that she showed some spunk. She went to the dinner, and Hazel and her husband stayed at home and ate bacon and eggs. They might have had chicken if she had bought it!

One morning a few days after Christmas I was in the living room with Millie, when she said, "Some people are so bossy that they make me sick."

"Who are you talking about?" I asked ungrammatically.

"You know who I am talking about," she replied.

"Well, it *is* tiresome to have someone telling you how to do everything," I said, "but I suppose Hazel feels like she can do that since she is paying you."

Millie looked at me in astonishment.

"Paying me! She is not paying me anything."

It was my turn to be astonished.

"Do you mean that Hazel does not pay you for waiting on her,

nursing her baby, and cooking for her family?" I asked incredulously.

"No, she is not paying me. I have lots more money than she has," said Millie.

"But she buys the groceries, doesn't she," I asked.

"She pays for half of them, and I pay the rest," said Millie.

I told her that everybody in the house thought she was employed by Hazel. Millie was a silly little thing, but was friendly and good-natured, and just the kind to let herself be imposed upon. She told me her father was a Greek and her mother Irish. I thought it a rather unusual combination.

As we had made other arrangements for the room beginning the first of January, Hazel found an apartment somewhere else. It had two bed rooms and a kitchen. Her family could use one bed room, and Millie and Chester the other. She said it wasn't very clean, and she and Millie would have to clean it up. Poor Millie! I knew who would have the job, or I thought I knew. But again Millie fooled me.

"I am not going with you," she told me she said to Hazel.

"You are not going?" asked Hazel. "Why?"

"Because you are so bossy I can't stand it. You are so bossy that everybody in the house thought you were paying me."

"Oh, I certainly wasn't *that* bossy," Millie told me Hazel said. Anyway Millie wouldn't go, and Hazel had to clean the apartment herself, though I doubt that anyone cleaned it. She phoned and tried again to get Millie to move in with her. She complained bitterly that she never could go anywhere, since she had no one to leave the baby with. But Millie never did go.

As the couple who had taken the sleeping porch for the holidays had gone, Millie and Chester took that, and we had the use of the living room again. But poor Millie wandered about the house like a lost child. I think she missed Hazel and really needed someone to tell her what to do. It must have been a sort of feeling of dependence that made her come here as Hazel's satellite. She would walk into the bed rooms without knocking at the doors and sit and talk until the girls complained to me that she was a nuisance.

"Millie is all right," I said to Jeanne, "There's nothing the matter with her except that she is a moron."

This seemd to please Jeanne very much, and she fully agreed with me. In a short time, however, the government sent Chester to another base, and Millie went with him. I never heard from her or Hazel again.

Harlan Arnold was then suddenly sent to a camp of embarkation. He had not expected it so soon, and it was quite a shock to Gwen. The morning after he left, when she came downstairs she said, "I

wish I had died last night." She had a funny and positive way of expressing herself sometimes. She said she thought Mary and George were a "swell couple."

Gwen went home, but her thoughtfulness continued. She sent us valentines, Easter cards, and other things, most important of which was a guest book, something I have enjoyed ever since. The book had spaces for the names, addresses, dates, and hobbies of guests. After that, each couple who stayed long enough to become a part of the household registered in it. My husband kept a business register of all comers all the time, but *this* book was to be a friendship book, and as such I still enjoy it.

CHAPTER XXIV
ELEANOR AND MADELINE

Sometime during the fall a story had appeared in our local daily paper written by Cpl. Howard R. Fisher of Findlay, Ohio, in which he had said he was located at Seymour Johnson Field here and that he wanted very much to have his wife and baby son here with him and that he especially wanted to be with his little son on the latter's first birthday. He said he had tried to find a room for them but had not succeeded.

The story appealed to me, and if possible I would have taken them, but at the time we had no vacant room. Later when there was a room, I had lost sight of this, or thought he had found a room. About the first of December I was called by the USO to know if we could take a couple and baby the first of the year. I told them we could, and the young man came to make arrangements about it. It turned out to be Cpl. Fisher.

"And have you never found a room?" I asked.

"I never have, and I have tried and tried," he said. "The baby had his birthday a month ago, and I haven't seen him yet. But now I have a furlough coming up, and I will go home and bring my wife and baby back with me after Christmas."

He paid the reservation on the room, leaving us the use of it for other guests until the first of the year.

"Would you like to see a picture of my wife?" he asked.

"I certainly would," I replied.

He showed me a photograph, one of the most beautiful faces I had even seen.

After admiring the picture enthusiastically, I asked him to let me show it to the girls. The day was warm, and Jeanne, Irene, and Mary were in the yard, so I took it out and told them I wanted to show them the girl who was coming to live with us. I should have remembered that Mary didn't expect to like Betty because her picture was so pretty, and now the same thing happened again. The girls thought Eleanor was beautiful, but they thought they would not like her—(but they did.)

This was the room that Hazel and Raymond Lawrence had used during the Christmas holidays.

Right after Christmas Ed and Jeanne and Edward went home for a visit of ten days. For some time Ed had been hoping for a furlough, and when it came they left without making any reservation for a Pullman. Travelling conditions were almost unbearable, especially for anyone with a small child, but Pullman reservations had to be made weeks in advance, and notice of furloughs didn't come weeks in advance, so a place on a day coach was all that could be hoped for.

When they tried to board the train, Jeanne told me after they came home, every seat was taken and the aisles were packed. Ed pushed Jeanne into the coach, but he himself stood on the platform outside. At first Jeanne stood and held Edward, who was now a big heavy boy. His weight was almost breaking her arms, but after a little while someone took pity on her and let her sit down on a suit case in the aisle. Finally a man gave her his seat. There was nowhere that she could put Edward down, and she had to hold him in her lap all night without having room to move or to change his clothes. When the journey was ended he was badly chafed.

Such conditions made it seem best for the boys and their wives not to try to take trips, but they had been away from home for months, and the boys thought or knew that they would go overseas and not see their parents again for months or years, if ever, and they were willing to suffer almost any inconvenience or hardship for one more visit home, and the wives wanted to go too.

Another girl once wrote me upon her return home: "We arrived home safely after a good trip back. The baby slept very well all night on the train, and the next morning in New York we were able to get an early train. On the way home we were surrounded by young mothers, with children all under two years or so. There were five in all near us. Some of the children got pretty tired and fussy. One little boy in particular would get way from his mother and race down the aisle. My baby was quiet and good though, for which I was thankful."

The return trip was not quite so bad, but I think Jeanne and Ed were glad to get back. Jeanne said her parents were astonished at how Edward had grown, and her mother especially was delighted that he really understood much of what she said to him in Polish.

Before Jeanne and Ed returned, Eleanor and little David Fisher arrived. Eleanor was as beautiful as her picture and was a fine girl. David was about fourteen months old and was as cute as he could be, and the best baby I ever saw.

Eleanor was distressed over having lost a suit case on the way. She said she and Gus (her name for her husband, and we called him that too) and David spent the night at a tourist home, and next

morning when they were ready to leave they put their baggage down near the curbing and then into the car. Somehow they overlooked a suit case and left it there.

After they had driven two hundred miles over icy mountain roads, they discovered the loss, but Gus said it would not be worth it to go back, especially as they probably would not find it if they did go. They wrote the landlady and sent an advertisement to a newspaper in that town, but never did get the suit case—and to make it worse, the paper charged them eight dollars for the advertisement.

Eleanor told me that among other things in it that she hated to lose was a plastic heart that Gus had made for her, and this was on a gold chain. It was too bad, but it was characteristic of many of the things that happened to the soldiers' wives on their trips.

From the first I loved little David, and he liked me fine. He had not learned to walk, and Eleanor was afraid he would take cold if he crawled on the floor, so he stayed in his crib or pen and played with his toys all the time except when his mother fed or dressed him or took him out of doors. He never cried or fretted and seemed perfectly satisfied.

Eleanor was another girl who was full of energy and always busy. She liked to sew, and pretty soon we moved my sewing machine into her room. Of course I went in there whenever I wanted to use it. The minute I would enter the room, David would throw down his toy and stand up in his pen. He was ready for a frolic.

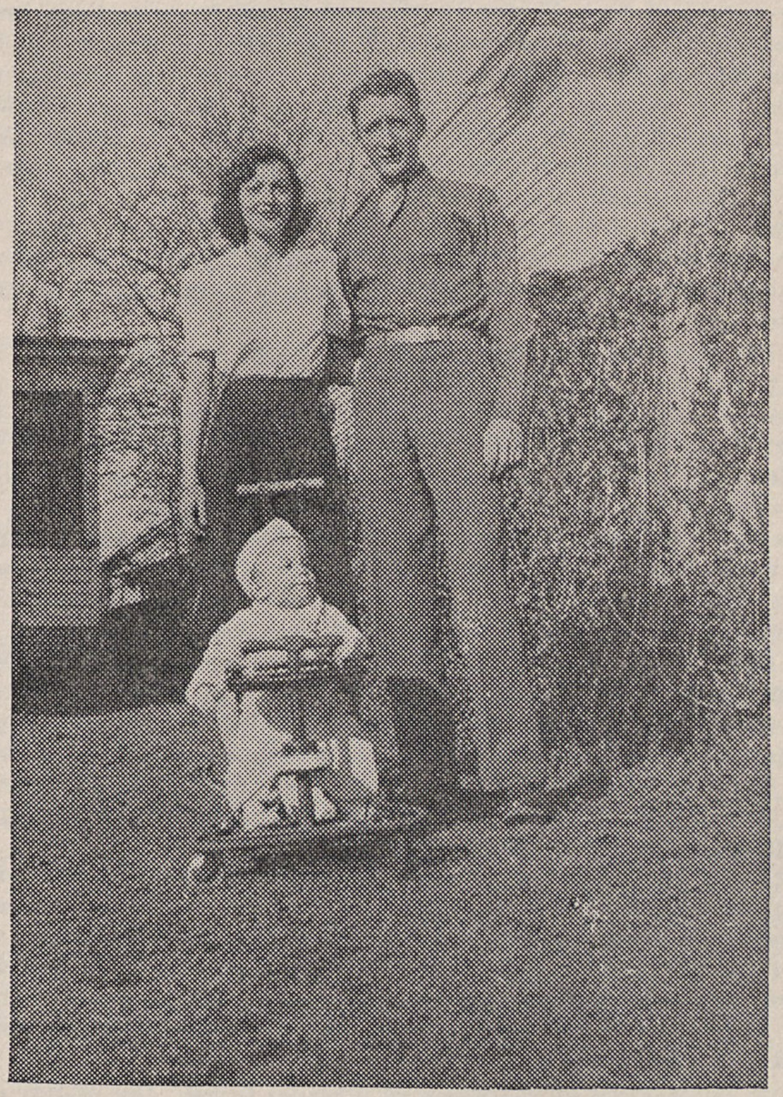
Sometimes I would say, "Eleanor, I wonder if you realize what a good baby you have. He is the best baby in the world."

David learned to jiggle his crib so it would make a little creak-creak sound. If he waked in the night he did not cry but juggled the crib. I have heard that little sound in the wee small hours of the night. Then he began to walk around inside his pen, and Eleanor would take him out and walk up and down the hall or out of doors with him. He set his legs far apart and took funny little steps at first.

When all the Christmas guests were gone, Pvt. and Mrs. Harold Rohring of Niagara Falls and their three year old son, Mikey, took the room next to that occupied by the Fishers. Mrs. Rohring, Margaret, had left her two small daughters, Judy and Sharon, with their grandmother, while she came here for a visit to her husband. Margaret had a book of poems she had written, which showed some talent. The rythm was good, and her thoughts were very good.

Mikey was an attractive child and very affectionate. He would sidle up to me and ask, "Do you like me?" Anybody would have liked him.

They were here only about ten days, and then the USO sent a



MADELINE, GEORGE, AND ROBERT TRAVER

young man, Cpl. George Traver of New York, who wished to engage a room for himself, his wife, and their baby son.

We now had four babies in the house, all boys and all bright attractive children. At a banquet of some kind of conference held at the Hotel Goldsboro, I remarked to someone sitting near me that we had four couples with babies at our house. Mr. J. Arthur Best, Wayne County superintendent of welfare, who was seated across the table from me, heard me and asked, "Mrs. Baker, did you say you had four babies at your house?"

"Yes," I replied, "we have."

"Well, I think that is wonderful," he said, and had a good deal to say about it and about the fact that many people would not take couples with children.

He asked where they were from, and I told him New York, New Jersey, Vermont, and Ohio. I didn't know he was going to put it in the paper, but in a few days a blocked story written by Mr. Best appeared in the Goldsboro News-Argus telling that we had four couples with babies in our home, and naming the states from which they came. There was a good deal of comment on it.

One day my husband was sitting on the front porch and two little girls were walking along the sidewalk. One of them glanced toward the house and said, "Nobody but babies can live in that house."

Madeline was a careful mother. The weather was cold, but she took Robby out of doors every day, but sometimes I wondered whether enough of him was uncovered for him to realize that he was out of doors. Over his clothes, Madeline would put a wool sweater and trunks, then his coat and mittens, and last, a white wool cap that was made like a visor. She pulled it down over his head, and it had a little opening for his face, but fitted snugly all around his neck and up to his chin.

But with all Robby's good care, he was terribly sick one night. Traver, as Madeline and everybody else called Cpl. Traver, was at the camp. Eleanor came to my door and told me Robby was very sick. I hurried to Madeline's room and found the baby in convulsions. I never had seen anybody have a convulsion, but somehow I knew what it was. I ran to the telephone, called a doctor, and described the child's symptoms.

"That is not such an alarming or unusual thing," the doctor said. Give him a fourth of a grain of aspirin and sponge him off with cool water."

Madeline, Eleanor and I worked with the baby a long time, and the convulsion wore off and little Robby fell asleep. The next day he seemed almost all right, but Madeline did not leave him a minute.

She had taken his clothes to the back porch to wash them, and left them there. When she came back they were washed and hanging on the line in the sunshine. Irene had done it.

After the baby was well, Madeline told me she thought she would buy a pair of stockings for Eleanor and one for Irene to show them her appreciation.

"Don't do it, Madeline," I advised. "They don't want you to pay them for what they did. They just want to be friendly."

All the girls were good friends, but as Jeanne and Irene had been together so long and were such chums, it was natural for Eleanor and Madeline to pair off together, and they were very happy. Both had now really become part of "The Family."

CHAPTER XXV
"THE FAMILY" BREAKS UP

Though the call for overseas duty was always expected, when it did come it came as a shock. Mary was called to the phone one morning, and George told her he was alerted and would not be allowed to leave the camp again before being sent to a port of embarkation and then overseas. The phone was in the living room, and I was in there at the time. Mary began to cry, and I knew what it meant. I put my arm around her, which seemed to comfort her some.

After that she was allowed to go to see George at the camp at certain times. Every day the summons to leave was expected, and every day postponed. Mary was kept in a state of suspense that was more than a fifteen year old girl ought to have had to bear, but these girls often had to assume the responsibilities of older women. Finally when her nerves reached the breaking point, she said, "I wish they would send George on." But when the time really came her heart was broken.

She talked to me about her plans. There seemed nothing to do but to go back to her parents, but she said she was happier here than she had ever been before. I begged her not to go home at all, but to stay with us.

"I am great mind to do it," she said, but of course she went home and later she wrote me that she was back in school.

Her letters were characteristic. The first one began: "Hello Everybody, (Irene, Larry, Ken, Jeanne, Ed, Edward, Eleanor, Gus, David, and Mr. and Mrs. Baker.) I arrived here Saturday morning at 4:00. It's good to be home, but believe me I miss all of you so terrible much. You'll never know how much I appreciate everything anyone of you did for us.

"I haven't gotten but that one letter from George, but he called last night. All he could tell me was he was on the East coast. It sure was good to hear his voice again. He didn't have much to say except that I couldn't see him. At least I know he's safe. I'm staying at George's folks, and they are sure good to me. If any of you ever get this way please come to see me.

"I sure do miss the babies something awful. I bet Larry is walking good now. Kiss the babies for me. I love them so much.

"When I got here they had around four inches of snow and I haven't gotten warm since I got here. You really have ideal weather out there." (She was in Caney, Kansas.)

On January 30, 1944 she wrote, "Dear Mr. and Mrs. Baker and all, How is everybody? I sure wish I had taken your offer and stayed with you. It was good to see the folks, but that soon wears off. I don't believe I would have gotten as lonesome out there as I do here. I haven't heard from George for about a week and a half. You sure can think of awful things when you don't hear from them. In his last letter he said he had been to New York. I bet if I had followed him I could have seen him several times, but maybe not.

"Is Irene still there? Boy! do I miss Larry and Edward! Gosh! They seemed just like my own or something. They both were so darn sweet. I bet they are cuter than ever now.

"I got a card from Betty the other day, I sure do miss her. Boy! You just can't imagine how I miss all of you. I felt more at home there than I ever have any place else. I guess everybody was too good to me. You just aren't treated like that out here. I've told several people that if I was rich I would make a trip out there just to see everyone.

Well, I guess I'll close and write to Betty.

Lots of love,
Mary.

I sure miss Goldsboro."

In her next letter, written nearly a month later, she acknowledged the receipt of a letter from me. "Boy! did I love that letter. I get so lonesome to see all of you that I can hardly stand it. Believe me, if I had a little extra money I would come out and stay for a long time, and I would want my same little room, too. I sure hope the people who rent it keep it clean. I sure loved that little room. I'll never get done thanking everybody for treating me so good. I dreamed that everyone of you came here to see me. Boy! was I happy. I'm so glad that the other girls are still there. I hope they get to stay with their husbands forever, because it sure is awful to be separated from them. I get so lonesome. Gosh! I bet the babies are cute. Kiss them all for me. I loved everyone of them like my own.

"I got a letter from George, and he is in England. I thought that was where he was going. I wish I could have seen Sammy and Florence before I left. I would like to see Sammy walk. I loved him so much.

"Boy! Oh, boy! do I wish George and I were still out there. Mrs. Baker, your home is the nearest thing I ever had for a home. I was so happy out there. Everybody was just perfect. I never realized

I liked everyone so terrible much till I got home. This old war is so terrible, but I guess all I can do is hope and trust God. It has been two months now since I saw George. It's so hard to live without him.

"Jeanne and Irene, please write to me and send some pictures. If you just knew how I want to see you. Several times I have almost started, but I'm trying to save all I can for our future. When the war is over, George and I plan to take a trip to see all the swell people we have met. I never dreamed that such people ever lived. Around here everyone looks out for themselves and none else. Believe me, I love Goldsboro and everyone and everything connected with it.

"Mrs. Baker, I am going to send your letter on to George, and he will surely love it. He is an airplane mechanic and moves every few days.

"I bet that Larry, Edward, and David are really sweet now, and I bet the new baby (Robby Traver) is sweet too. Kiss Sammy for me. He is terrible sweet too.

"It sure was terrible about Carmela's husband. He was such a nice fellow. Maybe it is a mistake. I intend to write to Carmela. I know how she must feel. The war is such a terrible thing. I had better close and write to George, but it is so hard to write him a cheerful letter. I think of all of you constantly."

And in November: "George is now in France, probably Germany by now. It has been ten months now. He writes that he is terrible homesick.

"How are Florence, Sam, little Sammy, Emma Hall, and all the rest? I bet Sammy has really grown. Have you heard from Jeanne, or Irene lately? I wonder so often where they are now and if they are still with their husbands, which I hope very much they are. Dear sweet little Larry and Edward. Boy! would I like to see them. I hear quite often from Betty. She is going to have a baby soon, and is she happy! I'm so happy for her. A day hardly goes by that I don't get out that group picture and look at it, and I never can help the tears that come. Some day I pray that we can come back. I often wonder what the couples are like that have our little room. That little room holds so many precious memories. George mentions it quite often in his letters.

"I am going to school now. I'm taking typing, shorthand and other required subjects. I like it very much. Mrs. Baker, how are you getting on with your typing? Swell, I bet."

Then came a birthday card for me, a Christmas card for both of us, and several months later this card: "I'm so homesick today that I just had to write and see how you are. I haven't heard from you for so long. Goldsboro is just like a dream to me. Nothing as nice

as that ever could have happened. Do you have many roomers now? Remember, keep my little room, and some day George and I will be back. George is somewhere in Belgium now."

To use Mary's own words—Boy! How I did love that little girl. She was so darn sweet!

If Mary wanted her room kept clean, the next girl who used it certainly carried out her wishes. Ned and Martha Harris of Pennsylvania were the next couple. Martha had gone to the USO and told them she must have a room for about two weeks, and that it must be as inexpensive as possible, since she had very little money. Mrs. Palmer called me and asked if we had one of the little upstairs rooms, and we did.

Martha was a pleasant faced young woman of around thirty. She had come here to marry a soldier, after having gone from her home in Pennsylvania to a middle western state and arrived there just as he had been sent here. She took the next train for Goldsboro, and they were married after she arrived here. The long trip had cost her so much more than she had expected that her funds were well nigh exhausted. She was perfectly frank about it and asked my advice about getting some sort of job, but I told her I was afraid she would have a hard time to get a job if it were known that she meant to stay here only two weeks.

She tried, but since she was too honest and straightforward to conceal the fact that she would soon leave, she never did find a job. She took it calmly, but things were getting serious, so I told her she could do some house cleaning for me if she wanted to, and told her the price I had been paying per hour. She was glad to do it, and vastly relieved. She went to work and gave our house a thorough cleaning. After the first morning I raised her pay, for she accomplished more in an hour than some others did in two. She made her expenses while she was here.

Martha had been married before and had a son about ten years old. Her parents were Pennsylvania Dutch, and her father had been a member of a religious sect called the Amish, but had joined her mother's church, which I believe she said was Baptist. She told me some queer things about the Amish, among other things that the women wore long black dresses and the men, long black coats, and that they thought it a sin to use buttons, and their clothing was fastened with little strings sewed on at the necessary places.

Martha was so likable and good that everyone in the house was sorry when the time came for her to leave.

At about this time the School of Airplane Mechanics closed or was transferred somewhere else, and the government began send-

ing boys to other camps, most of them to Greensboro. In one week we lost Ed and Jeanne, George and Madeline Traver, and Gus and Eleanor Fisher, and their dear little boys. Only Ken and Irene and Larry were left of "The Family," and they were soon to go. We had had a happy time together, but the war was like that. Nothing could last.

After Ed and Jeanne and little Edward went away, Larry would wander around the house, peering into each room, looking for Edward. Once I said, "Larry, where is Edward?" He drew his face up into that characteristic look of distress, the little face usually covered with smiles, and I thought he was going to cry. I was sorry I had asked the question, and certainly never repeated it. Even the babies had to suffer the heartbreaks of separation, the pangs of loneliness.

Two new couples moved in at once, Sgt. and Eunice White of Flint, Michigan, and their baby daughter, Sherry, who took the large front room, the one just vacated by Ed and Jeanne, and Willis and Grace Lewis of Indiana, and their baby son, Freddy.

Freddy was sick with a cold when he arrived, and Irene and Eunice prudently kept their babies entirely away from him. It was a good thing they did, for one morning Grace asked me to go to her room and look at her baby, and I found him broken out all over.

"Maybe he has chicken pox. I have heard it is all over town," I said.

"No, it isn't chicken pox," she replied. "He has measles. The children had it where we were staying before we came here."

This certainly was disturbing news. She knew it when she came, and she moved into the house with two other babies and did not say anything about it. But then, what could she have done? She had to go somewhere, and some people wouldn't take couples with children, and those with children in the house wouldn't take one with measles if they knew it, so I do not know that she was much to blame—but it cost us plenty!

Well, it couldn't be helped, and we had to do the best we could about it. We decided to call a doctor from the camp. I did the phoning. When I called the hospital, a nurse answered, and I told her the circumstances.

"Tell her to bring the baby out to the hospital," she said.

"Why, she can't take a baby sick with measles on the bus with all those people," I said.

"Tell her to take a taxi," said the nurse.

"It is raining, and the baby is too sick to be taken anywhere," I insisted.

I didn't know whether the doctor would come or not, and Grace

said that if he did not she would call a civilian doctor. But after awhile he came.

A few days later Ken was ordered to the camp at Greensboro, so he, Irene, and my darling little Larry went away. Ken had his own car, and they went in that. Willis Lewis was sent to the same camp on the same day, and they went on the train and took their baby, all broken out with measles. After they left, I called a physician and told him about it. He laughed and said, "They have strewed it up and down the state."

He said that the period of contagion was from fourteen to twenty-one days. He told me what to use to fumigate the room, so we closed it up and fumigated it. Then we sent the crib mattress to the mattress factory and had it renovated, fumigated, and re-covered. We didn't rent that room to anyone in three weeks, and Eunice didn't take Sherry out of the yard in three weeks. Sherry did not take measles, and neither did Larry, so Irene wrote me.

Jeanne, who had been the first of the group to leave, wrote to me and Irene the same day. She and Ed had gone to Scott Field, Belleville, Illinois.

"Dear Mr. and Mrs. Baker: Hello Babci! Have finally become a bit organized in this new strange country, and so have a few minutes to spend with you. Most outstanding in my mind and heart is that I miss you all very much, and Edward misses his Babci. It was like leaving home, and we hated to go. Thanks a lot for making it so pleasant for us. We shall remember it always.

"The trip here wasn't too bad. The first train was quite empty and I managed fine. From Asheville to Danville, however, it was very crowded and after standing a while some soldier offered me his seat. Ed met us in Belleville and took us to our new home. We now have a two-room apartment—kitchen and bed room. It's very private, but I'd give it up in a second for another Baker residence. Wouldn't you like to move out here and establish such a place? M-m, that would be nice!

"Yesterday Ed took us on a 'Cook's Tour' of the camp, and it really is beautiful. A town all by itself in red and white. Especially pretty are the Sgts' and officers' homes. The PX looks like a department store. But Belleville itself is just another town. Give me Goldsboro!"

To Irene she wrote: "To just say we miss you would be putting it mildly. Edward has been crying continually for his playmate. Everytime I say, 'Where's Larry?' he runs to the door, and then cries even harder 'cause there is no Larry. I miss our adjoining rooms.

It was fun to work and chatter away, and have the children run in and out, always getting into mischief.

"My home now is a two-room affair of kitchen and bed room. I have an icebox of my own, and a combination coal and gas stove, also a washing machine at my disposal. One terrible feature, however, is that there is no tub, and the bathroom is in the cellar. This seems to be true of most of the houses here, which amazed me, as the homes are all so nice and modern in every other way. If it wasn't for the tub and it being so lonesome this place would be ideal.

"Just as I started writing to you, your letter came, so I'll answer it immediately. While you're sitting sweltering in the sun, we are cooling our heels in the rain. Since I've been here, all but two days have been cloudy or rainy.

"Gracious! Madeline gone already! Poor girl. Her break wasn't such a good one. I'll drop her a line in New York. How is Eleanor doing? It gets lonesome being by yourself—especially after the fun we had evenings in the kitchen. What are the new folks like? Who is in my room?

"Today is the first day Edward has amused himself. Up until now I've had to play with him constantly, he's been so lonesome for Larry. He's suddenly started picking up words and now says 'Choo choo' for train, 'bow-bow' for dog,' 'birzee' for birdie and *'buty'* (Polish for shoes). Bet Larry's new navy out-fit will look cute on him. Wish I could see him in it. Just gave Edward half an orange with the skin on, and he's making more noise sucking the juice out. You should see the front of him!

"So Ken is still uncertain. Wish you and he were coming out here, then I would like Belleville. Ed likes his work fine. Thursday one of the pilots gave him a half-hour jaunt, and his head is still in the clouds. He threatens to buy a plane after the war.

"I have no supper to prepare tonight as Ed will eat at the Camp, therefore I will devote the rest of the day to my shnoops. He's sending Larry a big hug.

"Best of luck to you all,

The Naps.

"Oh dear! Edward is wiping the floor up with his orange. This morning he dumped the diaper pail over the floor. Never a dull moment!"

In a letter Jeanne wrote me a month later she said, "A couple of weeks ago I received letters from Irene and Madeline. I was surprised to learn of their quick departure. Now only you and Mr. Baker remain of 'The Family' that I knew and enjoyed being with so much. But by now there must be another 'Baker Family' well

organized. I would like to hear about it. Better still, I would like to join it once again. Life here continues to be very lonely for Edward and me. Otherwise everything is fine. Edward is more mischievous than ever."

When Irene reached Greensboro, she wrote: "We arrived here around 3:30 P.M.; had a flat tire before we reached Raleigh, which delayed us a bit. Rooms and apartments are scarce now, as there are a lot of soldiers coming in each day. We have an apartment in view and we'll probably move in tomorrow night. Larry is fine. We certainly miss your home. Ken was saying the other day that he wished it was down here. We both felt as if we were at home there."

Two weeks later a letter showed that they were very well situated. "We have been in our apartment about a week and a half and have everything pretty well under control. This house has five apartments, and all of the couples seem to be very nice. Three of the apartments are rented by soldiers, one by a navy man's wife with her baby, and the other by a civilian and his wife and son. Last night the girl gave her husband a surprise birthday party, so we got a chance to get acquainted with the other folks.

"Ken met Traver the other day. He was expecting to be shipped out the following week, and Ken hasn't seen him since, so he must have left. Madeline wrote that she misses him terribly. I certainly feel sorry for her.

"Ken is working for his old commander that was at Seymour Johnson Field, whom he likes, so he will probably have it pretty nice, although this field is really in an uproar."

In July she wrote that she and Larry had gone back to the home of her parents in Milton, Vermont, and that Ken was in California. "Ken was sent to Camp Luna, New Mexico, where he attended a rifle school for a month, then he was sent to San Bernardino, California, where he is now. He's going to an airplane mechanic school till October. He seems to like it in California, for he says it's a beautiful state. Although it's nice to be home with my folks and Ken's, I wish it were possible to be with Ken. It seems too far for me to travel with Larry, and Ken is kept so busy and restricted to camp most of the time, so I think it's best for us to stay here.

"Received your letter which was forwarded from Greensboro, and I certainly was pleased to hear about everyone we knew. I sent the letter to Ken, for I knew he would enjoy reading it.

"Larry is getting to be quite a boy. He says quite a few words now, tries to repeat what I say and he's succeeding pretty well. He still talks about his daddy.

"Best regards to all the family, also to Larry, Eunice, and Sherry. So glad they are still together."

Irene wrote Christmas: "Ken is now somewhere overseas—in England I believe. He came home on furlough the last part of October and reported back to Washington, D. C., the tenth of November, and flew over from there. Am sending you a picture of Larry. Do you think he has grown?"

Madeline Traver wrote from the home of her parents in New York City that her husband was shipped overseas in April, and was "of all places—in Assam, India." In December we had a good long letter from her, in which she said:

"In May I went out to the Lake for the summer and returned in September. It did a world of good for both of us, as we could go to the beach each day, and Robby just loved the water.

"I've heard from Jeanne quite a few times, and she's kept me posted on the various events that have taken place in Goldsboro. She and Ed are supposed to be home on furlough after January 1st, and I hope she can get over to see me while they are here.

"Irene said Ken was in England, so Jeanne must be the only lucky one out of the crowd. Don't know anything about Eleanor and Gus, as my letters to her were returned. Today we have our first good snow fall and it's really beautiful, but probably doesn't compare with the snow Irene has in Vermont.

"Guess I'll never get over the fun we all had at your house, and I'd gladly give up all my possessions to be there now with George. Many times, when writing to George and referring to Goldsboro, I say, 'or was it Heaven, N. C.?'

"When I left, you wanted a snap taken in the back yard for your book. It's late, but here it is. The other snap was taken this summer and since then Robby has grown an awful lot. Runs wild all over the house, and I need six eyes at a time, instead of two."

The pictures she sent were among the most attractive I have. One was a picture of Madeline, George (or Traver, as we called him) and Robby taken together in our back yard with the ivy covered fence as a background; one was Robby holding to a little tree, and in the background were Jeanne and Edward; and the other, Robby taken at the Lake, summer home of Madeline's parents.

Ernest Cornelius, who had been sent away long before the others, remained in the western states through the entire remainder of the war. Betty spent the summer with him in Washington state, then, when he was transferred to some camp where it was not practicable for her to go, she went to her parents' home in Waynesburg, Kentucky. Their baby was born in February, and Betty sent us an announcement of the arrival of Jerome Ernest, Jr., and later a picture of him. He was a very attractive looking baby.

In June Betty wrote: "Jerry is a big baby now. He is four months old and can sit alone a few minutes at a time. Ernest is still on this side. He has been in the western states since he left North Carolina, and is in California at present. He hasn't been home since last September, and he is almost crazy from wanting to see the baby. If nothing happens, he will be home on a furlough the last of August or September.

"I have done *some* traveling since I left there. I spent last summer in the state of Washington. I like the west all right, but I will take the eastern and southern states any time. I have two brothers in the service now. One has finished his training and is ready for overseas duty. The only thing we can do is pray for our boys to come back. I sure hated to hear about Carmela's husband.

"I hear from Mary Finney often. She is a nice girl. All often write about living in your house and the nice times we had and the nice people we met. I sure would like for us to be together again. Tell everybody hello for me.

With love, Betty."

Our "Family" was gone—every member, and they were separated, husband from wife, father from son, and scattered over the face of the earth. It seemed to me that their places could never be filled, and really they could not, but we found that other soldiers needed homes for their wives and babies, and we opened our hearts and homes to them, and we were not lonely.

CHAPTER XXVI
EUNICE

But back to the coming of Eunice. As soon as Ed and Jeanne left, their room was reserved by a young sergeant, Lawrence White of Flint, Michigan, who expected his wife and baby daughter in a few days.

"They will not be here until Thursday," he said, "but may I rent the room beginning Tuesday?"

"Certainly, if you want it," I replied, though I wondered why he wanted to pay rent on it for two extra days. But I found out.

On Tuesday morning he came in and arranged pictures of his wife and baby on the mantel and dresser. He sat in the room and enjoyed knowing that it was his and that they would soon be there to enjoy it with him. Wednesday he came back and rearranged his pictures and some other things and again enjoyed the room. He said Eunice's mother and a friend would come with her to help her with the baby and would be here for a few days, and he wanted to know if we had a room for them. We did, so he reserved another room. He told us he was having a cake made for Eunice and would come over Thursday morning and bring it, and would then go to the station to meet Eunice and the others.

But before he arrived Thursday the door bell rang, and there was Eunice with her mother, another lady and a beautiful little ten months old baby girl, Sherry. Things were always happening like that. Either a soldier would wait at the station for hours or all night for his wife, whose train had somehow been delayed, or else the wife would come in several hours before she was expected, and there would be no one to meet her. Fortunately, however, Larry, as everyone called him, had wired Eunice our address, so she came right to the house. She told me if Larry came, not to tell him she was here, but to let him just walk in and be surprised.

After awhile he came, bringing a large box that I knew held the cake. I said "Good morning," or something equally informative, but my husband couldn't stand it and, just as Larry was opening the door, said, "Don't drop the cake."

Then the shouts and laughter after he entered the room! Of course we did not see the greeting, but we could hear it and we were an

interested audience on the outside. Later we took Eunice's mother, Mrs. Larson, and her friend, Mrs. Brown, to their room. Their plan was to stay here until the next day, then go to Greensboro to visit Mrs. Brown's son for a few days, and come back here before returning home. They were using our room, and we, the sleeping porch, but it would be less trouble not to move back until after their little visit, so we left the room just as it was. Two or three mornings later, however, I started into the room to get something from the closet, and saw that someone was in the bed. Startled, I closed the door quickly. For an instant I didn't understand it, but then realized that the visitors had come back and we had not heard them. They told me they got back in the night and did not want to disturb anyone, so went quietly to bed.

"Suppose when you opened the door someone had been in bed. What would you have done?" I asked.

"Then we would have gone out right quick," was Mrs. Brown's reply.

"Just like I did when *I* opened the door," I said.

Eunice invited me in to see her cake. It was big and truly beautiful. It was iced in white and decorated in pink and green and bore the words, "Welcome, Eunice," in pink frosting. Larry had had it made by a friend of his, a soldier who was a professional baker. Larry took a kodak picture of Eunice holding the cake. Later when they cut the cake, they gave us a piece, and it was very good.

Mrs. Larson and Mrs. Brown went home after a few days, and Larry, Eunice, and Sherry became fixtures in the home, staying with us all the spring and summer and until the fall.

Eunice was tall and blonde, having inherited her flaxen hair and blue eyes from her Scandinavian father, and certainly not from her mother, who was part Indian and had dark brown eyes and black hair. Sherry was blonde and cute and pretty. She was always beautifully dressed and wore a tiny bow of ribbon on her hair to match the color of her dress.

Irene and Eunice liked each other, and I thought I was going to see another good friendship, but in a few days, Ken was sent to Greensboro, and we lost him and his family.

Larry and Eunice were probably the most congenial couple we ever had. They were entirely interested in each other and the baby, and each thought that whatever the other did was perfect. And Sherry was the center of their universe. Larry rose early each morning and left for the camp, where he ate breakfast and dinner, leaving Eunice and the baby to sleep as late as they wanted to. He came home about the middle of the afternoon, and was off duty until next

morning. Lucky Eunice! Larry helped her with her dishes and housework, and then they spent the rest of the day in glorious fun.

Though occasionally they went to the movies or somewhere, they seemed really to have more fun right here than anywhere else, and our big back yard was their regular play ground. The children in the neighborhood adored them, and they were usually surrounded by an admiring and interested crowd. I gave them some old quilts to spread down on the grass, and on one of these Sherry and some of the children would sit as spectators while a circus was in progress. Larry and Eunice could really put on a creditable performance. Eunice, dressed in shorts, could, while Larry held her hands, spring to his shoulders and stand and then have someone pass Sherry up to her. She could turn cartwheels and walk on her hands, feet up in the air. Larry was so strong it was nothing for him to lift her or swing her up above his head, or hold her and Sherry at the same time.

Our granddaughter, Anne, Joan, who was visiting her grandmother across the street, and Josephine and Dukes, who lived next door, would watch in wonder and delight and would try to do some circus tricks themselves. Joan said she had a costume at home that would be nice for a circus, so she hurried home and came back dressed in a grass skirt and a garland over her body, and gave a hula hula dance. She was a perfect little South Sea islander. She said her father had sent her the costume from one of the islands in the Pacific where he was stationed as an Army officer.

The little girls admired Sherry tremendously, and when Eunice would bathe her and dress her they would stand around and try to help. Eunice told me that one of them said, "Oh, Eunice, Sherry is such a sweet baby! I do wish I had one. Do you have to wait 'til you are married to have a baby?"

"Well, it's a good idea," Eunice said she replied.

I learned the secret of the beautiful dresses that Sherry wore. About once in every month or two, Eunice received a box from her mother, in which were the most adorable clothes, some for herself and more for Sherry. There were dainty little sheer smocked dresses in pink, blue, and yellow, little pleated skirts and lace trimmed blouses, a pale blue silk jumper with dotted swiss blouse, and little prints and sunsuits for morning wear. Eunice herself said Sherry was the "best dressed baby in the world." Still, I used to tell her in the hot weather that I thought she was the *less* dressed baby I had ever seen.

Our clothes lines hanging in the sun were a delight to Eunice, who said that at her home in Flint the clothes always had to be

dried on lines in the basement. There was so much smoke and soot in the air that it was impossible to use out of door lines, and also in winter it was too cold to hang the clothes outside, as they would freeze, and the one hanging them would just about freeze too.

Eunice didn't know much about sewing, but she was willing to try. At that time it was stylish for girls to wear very full print skirts with white blouses, and Eunice decided to try her hand on a skirt. She had white blouses. She bought some material printed with red strawberries and green leaves, enough for a skirt for herself and one for Sherry, and made them. There was enough material left for a skirt for Sherry's doll, so she made that too. It was a striking picture when Eunice walked down the street pushing Sherry in her stroller, while Sherry held the doll, and all three were dressed in the full strawberry print skirts and white blouses.

As to religion, Eunice was vague. She was industrious and helped me a good deal with my housework. One Saturday she said, "Tomorrow I shall give this kitchen a big cleaning. I will scrub the linoleum and wash the windows."

"That's fine, Eunice," I said, "But don't you think it would be better to do it some other day than Sunday?"

She looked surprised, but answered, "Yes, if you want me to."

In a few minutes she said thoughtfully, "I knew another woman like that. What is it? Superstition?"

"No, it isn't superstition," and I tried to make some explanation about the fourth commandment. "Do you belong to the church?" I asked her. "Well, not in particular," was the unexpected and unexplained reply.

Eunice was not by herself as to religion. Another girl once asked me, "Mrs. Baker, have you a Bible?"

"Yes," I replied, "I have several. Would you like to borrow one?"

"Yes, I would. The reason I want it is because I found a contest in a magazine, and Nellie and I want to try to work it out. The answers are in the Bible."

Some of the girls were very devout, especially some of those who were Catholic. One told me that what she dreaded most was going to confession. I asked her what would happen if she went to confession and held back something—didn't confess all.

"Oh, that would be a mortal sin!" she replied.

Sherry, whose real name was Charmagne Lynne, was now almost one year old, and Eunice began to make preparations for a birthday celebration. She bought a flowered tablecloth, a birthday cake with one candle on it, and ice cream, and made lemonade. The guests were a few of the neighborhood children and our four grandchildren.

Larry came home in time for the party and put a table in the shade in the back yard. Each guest brought a gift, and these were placed on the table until the exciting time when Sherry should open them. Larry took pictures of Sherry with the packages both before and after she had opened them. Then he tried to take some of the guests with Sherry in the center of the group. The girls were glad to be in the picture, but Frankie and Sammy suddenly became camera shy and positively refused to come anywhere near. The pictures were made without them. They were beautiful pictures made with colored films, and I was sorry our grandsons weren't in them.

Sherry was rather small for her age, but she was smart. She was beginning to say some words and said "Hello," as plainly as if she had been ten years old. Often in the afternoon she would play in the front yard while Eunice sat on the porch. Every time anyone passed, Sherry said "Hello." The passers would be surprised and would stop and talk to her. She looked so tiny that it was surprising for her to say anything, and especially to say it voluntarily as they passed. Eunice tried to teach her to say "Hello, you all," so when she went home she would talk like a Southerner, but Sherry was a true daughter of Michigan and never would add the "you all."

At about this time our oldest son, Egerton, was called into the service. We had been expecting it. He was sent to Camp Jackson, near Columbia, South Carolina, to take his basic training. Sam was also called and was sent to Camp Lee, Virginia. We were very thankful that both were near enough to come home almost every week end. It was a blessing that George did not have to go, but could stay here and run the business, in which all three were partners and which was supporting the three families.

Sam had bought a new car not long before this, and they also kept the old one. This was fine, as he could take one with him and Florence could keep the other. She and I both liked the old car best, as we were accustomed to driving it. They were generous with it—that is, generous to me—and I really used the car more than Florence did.

Egerton's wife, Ruth, and their three year old son, Frankie, moved into one of the Edgewood apartments, since Ruth did not want to live in a house with no one but a baby son. Florence and Sammy continued to live in their home, as Florence had some soldier couples in the house with her. Both Florence and Ruth had good servants.

I asked Frankie one day, "Where is your Daddy?"

"He's in camp. Do you know him?" said Frankie.

"Yes, I know him. He is my little boy," I replied.

"He is *not* your little boy! He is my Daddy!" said Frankie indignantly.

We thought we would send Egerton a box of good things to eat. In it we put fried chicken, a chocolate layer cake, a caramel layer cake, a box of home-made fudge, a jar of strawberry preserves, home-made biscuits, and other things. We mailed it on Wednesday and sent it special delivery, but it was late Saturday afternoon when he received it, just fifteen minutes before he was leaving with some other boys by automobile to come home for the week end!

"I opened the box, grabbed some chicken and a hunk of cake, put the candy in my locker, and told the fellows to eat the rest," he told us when he reached home.

After the School of Mechanics was removed from Seymour Johnson Field, various schools were held here, few of them lasting very long. We had a fighter group, an aviation school, a POW (Prisoner of War) group guarding German prisoners, and others. Larry and Eunice were the only couple who stayed with us more than a few weeks during that whole summer. They were allowed to stay because Larry was mess hall sergeant with the quartermaster division. The others belonged to the various groups that were sent from one place to another.

The first couples who came after Larry and Eunice were Charles and Frances Kunkler of Okmulgee, Oklahoma, and Bill and Lorraine Berg of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. They came at the same time and left at about the same time a month later. Each couple had a beautiful baby son, near the same age. Roger Berg was five months old, and Gary Kunkler was only a month or so older.

Those two girls loved each other like sisters, though they had never seen each other before and were together only a month. Frances wrote me two or three years later that she and Lorraine still corresponded. A friendship could be very real in a short time when both had gone through much the same thing and when they really were congenial anyway. And, too, their babies were a common bond of sympathy. Frances and Lorraine reminded me of Jeanne and Irene with their plans together and their conferences over feeding, dressing and caring for their babies.

Lorraine's room adjoined one of the bathrooms, and several times when I started into the bathroom I would find the door locked on the inside while no one was in the room. I would have to call Lorraine to open it. She was always distressed over having forgotten to unfasten it. I was amused one day to find a little note in Lorraine's handwriting on the door leading into her room, which

read, "Lorraine, have you unlocked the door?" Really, she had been much more disturbed over it than anyone else.

We enjoyed having these two families with us, and the end of their stay came all too soon, but the time was to come when the Kunklers would again be a part of our household.

Bob and Eileen Gemmill of Blufton, Indiana, took one of the rooms and were here about two months. They had a fine little four months old son, Selby. Eileen was one of the most interested young mothers I ever saw, and Selby certainly showed the effects of his good care. The weather was warm, and every day Selby took a thorough sun bath. Eileen would take him into the back yard in his carriage, and there he would lie on his stomach in the sun an exact number of minutes. Then she would turn him over, and he lay an exact number of minutes on his back. He had a fine coat of tan.

The other room was taken by Lieutenant and Mrs. Robert Hunter of Birmingham, Alabama, and their little son, Bobby. Another Bob and Bobby! Almost every family for awhile had those names. The Hunters were here for only a short time before they were sent away, and someone else was ready for their room as soon as it was vacated.

It did not seem to matter to anybody now whether the boys were officers or enlisted men. Everybody was looking for a place to live, and usually did not live there long. Many were being sent overseas, and their wives were going back home, and everything was in such a turmoil that the girls, at least, seemed to pay no attention to the ranks of their husbands. One soldier told us that during the past twelve months he had been stationed in twenty-four different location, and that his wife had gone to most of the places with him.

"I have no idea that I will be allowed to stay in this town more than two weeks," he said. And sure enough, at the end of two weeks he was sent away. One day a soldier's mother and sister came to the house, paid a reservation of two dollars and a half on a room and then went down town and never came back. We did not know their address or the name of the soldier they were visiting, so there was nothing to do but keep the money.

Larry, Eunice, and Sherry stayed until late in the fall, when Larry was transferred to the camp at Wilmington, N. C. Mrs. Larson paid them another little visit before they left. We had letters from Eunice while they were in Wilmington and also after she went to her home in Flint.

In a letter written on May 23, 1945, she said that Larry had been sent over, and that she had had an airmail letter from somewhere in the South Pacific. She said: "Sherry misses her daddy. She won't

go to bed at night without taking his picture with her. She calls him 'her Daddy Boy.' She can talk just as good as I can now, Mrs. Baker. She amazes me. She puts whole sentences together so easily. Whenever someone comes she surprises them by the way she talks to them. I am sending you a picture of her the way she looks now. Do you think she's changed? How do you like her hair? I can't believe myself that she is as big as she is. It seems no time since we were down in Goldsboro with her, and she was so small. She will be 22 months old tomorrow. Pretty soon she's going to be two years old. Remember the party we had last year when she was one year old?

"We really had a wonderful time in your home. We'll never forget it. I wish it could have lasted longer, us being all there together. Take a picture of all of the children together and send me one, won't you please? How are they all! I always think of little Florence when she would fall down and jump right back up, saying, 'It didn't hurt!' That was cute.

"I'd like to see all the girls that I knew at your house and their babies, Roger, and Selby, Gary and Larry, Bobby Hunter and the rest. They're all over a year old now. Do you have a house full now? I've been wondering about Seymour Johnson Field that if it is still there and going like it was, or have they sent all of the boys away?"

I am glad to say that after the war was over we learned that Larry came home safe.

CHAPTER XXVII
FORDYCE

A Goldsboro woman called one day to ask if we could take a couple and their baby. She said they had spent the week-end in her home, but that she did not have suitable arrangements for a baby, so the girl found a room somewhere else, but that it was very unsatisfactory. She said she was sure we would like them, and that the baby was adorable. We did have a room, and they came. They were Staff Sgt. A. W. Capron, Jr., of Denver, Colorado, his wife, Fordyce, and nine months old Susan. Fordyce was a refined ladylike girl with every evidence of gentle birth and background. The baby was precious and was the image of her father.

Fordyce told me of the trouble about the room. She said that when she went to the housing desk she was told that they did not have a vacancy. While she stood there, a man, who gave his name as Mr. Gunley, approached her and said he had a housekeeping room for rent, that it was not furnished, but that he would furnish it for her. He offered to take her to see the room. She went, but since there was no furniture in it, she could not tell much about it except that the walls and floor looked very dirty. However, Mr. Gunley said he would have the room cleaned, and, as the house and neighborhood were nice looking, she decided to take the room.

Mr. Gunley told her the house was steam heated, that she would have a gas range in her room, and that he would furnish cooking utensils. She was to pay ten dollars a week for the room and to pay for the cooking gas. Gunley would have a private meter installed for the stove. He would have everything ready by the next afternoon. She paid him ten dollars, and he was to come back and collect a down payment for the gas.

The next afternoon Fordyce and Susan moved in. Sgt. Capron was at the camp and had not seen the room. When she arrived the house was perfectly cold. It was not the home of the Gunley family, but a house that he had bought or rented for subrenting. A roomer, who had just come in, told Fordyce there was a furnace in the basement and some coal, but that all the roomers worked downtown and did not care enough about the heat to make a fire. One of them had a son who was supposed to fire the furnace, but he hardly ever did.

The room had not been cleaned, but some furniture had been put into it. The "cooking utensils" consisted of one old frying pan with a hole in it. There was no separate meter. It was so cold that Fordyce decided to fire the furnace. The only entrance she could find was through a window, and then she had to walk over ashes and piles of clinkers to reach the furnace. Entirely unaccustomed to such a proceeding, it was with the utmost difficulty that she finally succeeded in making a fire. From the time she entered the house until her room began to warm up, two or three hours had passed, and by this time Susan had begun to sniffle and sneeze. When Sgt. Capron came home that night, the room was comfortable, and he did not realize how much Fordyce had gone through to make it so. However, he was not pleased with the arrangement. The next morning he had to go to the camp early and could not take time to make a fire in the furnace.

Susan waked sick with a cold, and Fordyce could not leave her to try again to make a fire, so she decided to light the gas oven and warm the room that way. She began to feel very sleepy and, sitting down in a chair, began to doze stupidly, when suddenly she was roused by the sound of footsteps hurrying down the hall, and her door was thrown open. A roomer shouted, "Your room is full of gas. I could smell it from my room."

The gas stove was old and it was leaking. The roomer turned off the gas and opened the window, which was necessary, though it let in the cold air, and Susan's cold became worse. The next day she was so sick that Fordyce called a doctor, who, after learning of the conditions, told Fordyce to take the baby at once and go to the hotel and stay there until she could find a room somewhere else. She went to the hotel, where she stayed two days and nights, paying daily rates for her room, until she moved to our home. Susan became better in a few days.

Fordyce was apprehensive, expecting that Mr. Gunley would come for the money for the gas. I assured her that he owed her money instead, but she said, "I know he will make me pay it."

Finally he telephoned that he would be around after supper that night to see her on business.

"Don't worry," I told her, "I will stay with you, and you will certainly not pay him anything." I asked Mr. Baker to stay in the room too, for though I wouldn't admit it, I was a little scared myself.

Mr. Gunley arrived. He was big and formidable looking. Fordyce introduced him to us, and we gave him a seat. He told her he had come for the money she owed him for the gas. Fordyce explained that there was no separate meter, and that she stayed there only two

days, and had paid him for a whole week. The man said he had applied to the gas company for a meter, and that they promised to install it, but that until they did there was nothing she could do but pay a flat rate, and as for her not staying there but two days, she had rented the room for a week and could have stayed there if she wanted to.

Fordyce showed more spunk than I had expected. She talked right up to him and told him it *was* his fault that she had to leave in two days, since he had told her the house would be heated, and it was cold and made her baby sick. She told him she thought he ought to refund part of the ten dollars she had paid him. It was very evident that he had no intention of refunding anything, and my husband suggested that the best way to get it settled would be to take the matter to the rents administrator and let him decide it.

"No, I don't want to bother him," said Mr. Gunley.

We knew he didn't want to bother him! The last thing he *would* want would be an investigation by the rents administrator.

"Well, if it is to be settled here," I said, "suppose we write down the various points and see how they balance."

I took a pencil and a sheet of paper and said, "Now on this side let's write what was promised, and on that side, what she got. We'll write, 'Have room cleaned,' and opposite, 'Didn't clean room.' Then, 'Separate gas meter' and 'didn't have it'! Then, 'Gas stove,' and 'leaked badly.' 'Kitchen utensils,' and 'didn't have any.' 'Steam heat,' and 'no heat'."

"Look a here, lady," Mr. Gunley began.

"Be careful what you say," said my husband.

"I am careful," murmered Mr. Gunley, but he came back again, "How do you know so much about what the room was like? Did you ever see it?" he asked me.

"I know because Fordyce told me," I said.

"Humph! Some other folks can tell the truth besides her," he said.

"I also know because Mrs. Herbert Bizzell told me she saw the room, and that it wasn't fit for Fordyce and Susan to live in," I said.

He wilted like an old lettuce leaf at that, for he had not known that Mrs. Bizzell had seen it.

I told him then that Fordyce certainly was due to get back all she had paid him except two days' rent, and that that would not nearly cover the extra expense she had had in the hotel bill and doctor's bill, and that I still thought the rent administrator was the one to decide whether Fordyce owed him, or how much he owed her.

He arose suddenly, took out his bill fold, drew out a ten dollar bill and handed it to Fordyce.

"Here," he said, "and I hope I never see either one of you again."

"Thank you," said Fordyce sweetly, and Mr. Gunley took his departure.

In thinking of this afterwards, I was sure the ten dollar bill was far too little for him to pay her. She really could have entered suit for a large amount of money for her baby's illness caused by the cold house and leaky gas stove.

Fordyce stayed with us only a few weeks before her husband was sent to another camp. She decided to go home and then visit her great grandmother.

"Your great grandmother!" I exclaimed. "Then she is Susan's great great grandmother."

"Yes," said Fordyce, and added that the five generations on her maternal side were living—that is, Susan, Fordyce, Fordyce's mother, grandmother, and great grandmother. I suggested that when she went out there the five have their picture made together. Later she wrote me that they did this, and added, "Susan is a big girl now."

CHAPTER XXVIII
DOROTHY SEXTON

Straight from the hills of Tennessee came Dorothy Sexton with her two year old son, Lowell, to be with her husband, Pvt. Harlin Sexton, who was in camp here. Harlin had been sent back to the states after suffering a serious leg injury while in line of duty overseas, and could now be only a guard for German prisoners, since this would allow him to sit in a chair most of the time and hold a gun.

Dorothy had beautiful big grey eyes with long black lashes and a peach and cream complexion that only God had given her. Lowell was a bright interesting little fellow, who was already talking and saying the most unexpected things.

They were a musical family, and theirs was the music of the hills. Harlin picked a banjo; Dorothy sang Hill Billy songs; and Lowell picked his banjo, which was a fire shovel, and patted his foot and sang. He was so cute with it that I would have loved to show him off to visitors, but he was shy before strangers. He didn't pick his banjo for *us* until he had been here at least a week.

When they first came from their home in Chucky, Tennessee, Lowell was pitifully homesick. He would say, "Go home. Go home," until I almost cried, but I found toys for him and did all I could to help Dorothy keep him entertained. The brightest spot in the day for him, as well as for Dorothy, was when Harlin came home at night. They were indeed a devoted family and *so* proud of Lowell!

But Lowell soon recovered from his homesickness and was ready for fun. We had to watch him to keep him from picking up a smutty shovel for a banjo. I found a wooden paddle, the kind you buy in a dime store with a rubber come-back ball attached. It was shaped near enough like a banjo—or like a fire shovel—but Lowell would have none of it.

"Where is my old banjo?" he would ask, accenting the second syllable as much as the first. Dorothy would have to wash a fire shovel for him.

Lowell liked to follow me around, and he liked to try to do just what he saw me do. If I took up a broom to sweep, he would get a broom and begin to sweep. Sometimes he and I would sweep the front porch together. When I would move a porch chair, he would

move one. When I would reach over the railing with my broom to sweep the outer edge of the porch, Lowell would reach over with his broom and try to sweep. I wonder if people realize how much influence they exert just by example.

Most of the young mothers had modern and scientific ideas about training their children, but not Dorothy. Others might put their babies to bed in a dark room to cry themselves to sleep, but Dorothy rocked hers to sleep and sang to him, even if he was two years old. And I couldn't help sympathizing with her, for did I not rock and sing to mine?

The songs she sang were always the Hill Billy kind, and pretty loud at that. I asked her, "Dorothy, where on earth did you learn those songs?"

"From the radio," she said.

Her favorite bedtime song for Lowell was one in which almost every line ended cheerfully, "with tears in my eyes."

One day while she was rocking and singing, "I love you and I can prove—" Lowell interrupted her with, "Ma, I want some cake."

"You have eat cake and eat cake, and now you are going to sleep," she said, and resumed the song loudly, "I love you, and I can prove—."

Harlin told me about his injury. He was on an army truck carrying supplies for the Infantry, when the truck was wrecked and he was thrown out and his leg was broken above the ankle. It was a compound fracture, and he was hospitalized for months, then sent back to the States, where he was in a hospital in a western state for many more months. Dorothy took Lowell, then a baby, and went out there so they could be near him. I have a snapshot of the three taken together at the hospital. Harlin was on crutches. He had the Good Conduct medal, the overseas Medal, or something like that, and was promoted to Pfc. after he came here, but he never could have the Purple Heart because, though wounded while on duty in essential work and at the order of his officer, he was not wounded in combat.

But though he never received the Purple Heart, he had a heart of gold, and Dorothy did too. They stayed with us from October until February, except for a month that Dorothy went home, and they made for themselves a place with our best loved young folks.

Dorothy's mother, Mrs. Baskette, came for a visit of a few days, and we found her just the kind of mother we might have thought Dorothy would have—just my idea of what the mother of a large family in the hills of Tennessee ought to be. She was smaller and daintier than Dorothy, and I could see that she had been a pretty girl. It was easy to see where Dorothy got her big grey eyes. They

told me about a younger daughter in the family, a girl about thirteen years old.

"Harlin thinks she is the prettiest thing in the world," said Dorothy, "and I do too."

Shortly after the Sextons came, Bill and Frances Price of Union Star, Missouri, and their delightful baby daughter, Barbara Jo, came for just a few weeks. Frances was so pleasant in the home that we would have been glad to have had them much longer. And Barbara Jo was *so* cute! She had not learned to walk, but could crawl so fast that she could almost keep up with Lowell, even out in the yard. She ran (it ought not to be called "crawled") around the corner of the house and before Frances could reach her had started up the stairs. But she didn't always try to go fast. With great diplomacy she walked on hands and knees in the house one day until she reached the chair where my husband was sitting. Then she pulled up, placed one hand on his knee and looked up into his face with the most engaging smile. His heart was won. He told Frances, "Your baby certainly is pretty and attractive."

"She's a nosey little thing," was Frances' reply.

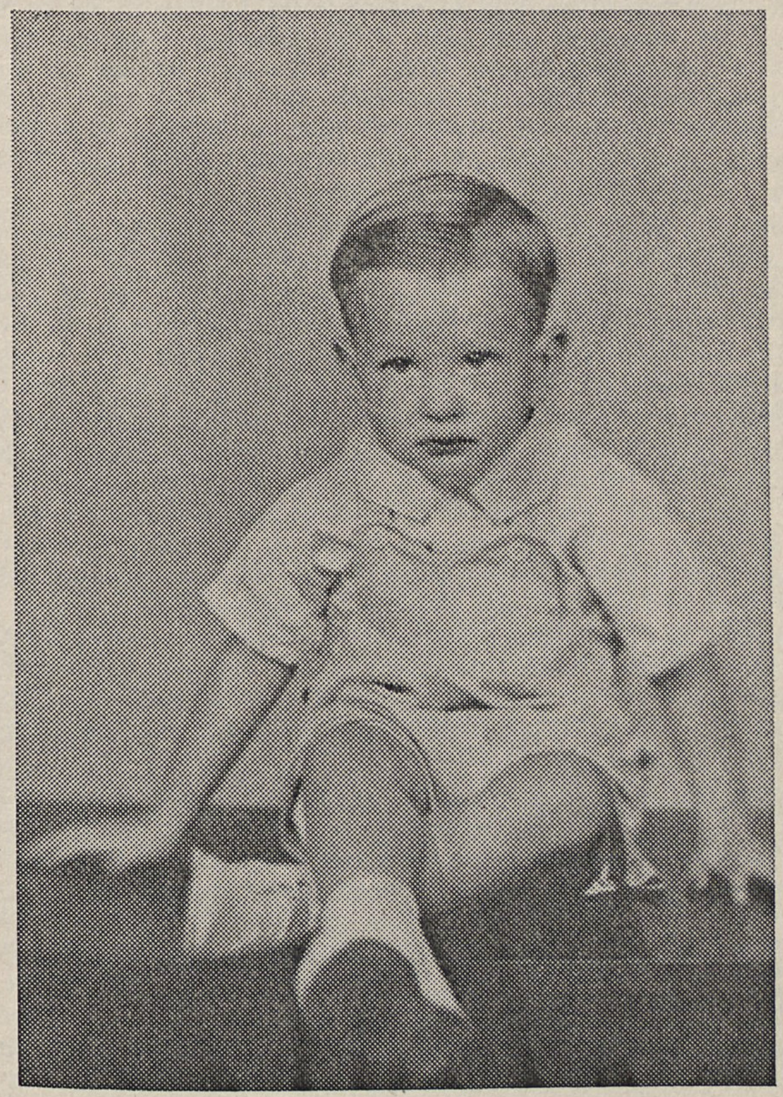
Lowell and Barbara Jo were so constantly in their play yard—the back yard—that Mr. Baker decided to put up a swing for them. It was a safe little baby swing, one of the kind made in the shape of a chair with a wooden seat and arms and crosspieces strung on ropes. Both children watched every step of the work with interest, and as soon as it was finished each wanted to sit in it and swing. Here was another problem in teaching "turn about is fair play," and the two mothers worked it out as well as could have been expected.

One morning I was in the kitchen talking to Dorothy when the postman came, bringing a special delivery letter addressed in Egerton's handwriting and postmarked New York City. I knew what it meant, but I opened it with trembling hands. Yes, he had been sent to a camp of Embarkation and would soon leave for overseas service. He said he couldn't tell us when they would sail, but that he would write every day, and if we didn't get any more letters we could know he had sailed.

I began to cry, and Dorothy ran to me and asked, "Oh, Mrs. Baker, did I say something that hurt your feelings?"

"No, Dorothy, you are a comfort to me, but my boy has gone," I replied.

She was full of sympathy and so was Frances, who came out of her room about that time, but there was nothing to do about it. My son had to go like the rest.



LOWELL

After that we had a letter every day for more than a week. Then —silence. We knew he had gone. Later we heard from him in England. He wrote often, and in every letter he begged us to write. Every day we wrote, and Ruth wrote sometimes twice a day, but in every letter from him he said, "I don't see why you don't write to me. I haven't had a letter from anybody since we left New York."

Then he became afraid—afraid that something dreadful had happened to Ruth, and that we were keeping it from him. He wrote, "Has my little baby come, and is Ruth all right?"

Then the baby did come, a beautiful little girl, and Ruth named her Joan. I went to the telegraph office and cabled him that he had a dear little daughter and that Ruth was fine. I wrote to him and sent it air-mail. Everybody in the family, including Ruth herself, wrote to him, but in his letters he continued to beg us to write him about his wife and Frankie and to tell him if the baby had come.

Finally the pastor of our church advised us to go to the Red Cross and see if they could do anything, but the next mail brought a jubilant letter. He had gotten our letters, dozens of them all at once. The "bottleneck" was broken. One Goldsboro woman told me that her husband received ninety-five letters at one time. Egerton said he had a big time reading all those letters, but most of all he enjoyed those that told of Ruth and Frankie and little Joan.

Dorothy and Frances had come here at almost the same time, and now they left within two days of each other. Bill was sent to another camp. Frances wrote in my guest book, "We've been so happy the short time we've been here." She wrote me a card after she reached her home in Missouri.

Harlin was granted a furlough, and Dorothy decided not to come back with him, but to stay at home with her mother. But after about six weeks she decided to come back and was with us until February.

Immediately Dorothy's and Frances' rooms were filled, each by a Lieutenant and Mrs. Anderson and baby, but in about a week Lt. and Mrs. James Anderson moved to the War Housing Project. Lt. and Mrs. W. A. Anderson and Bobby were with us as long as they were in Goldsboro, which was about a month.

Carol was a fine girl, a college graduate, and a former assistant supervisor of schools in one of the counties of South Dakota. Her position must have been difficult, as she said most of the schools were one and two teacher schools and far apart, which required much traveling.

Bobby was a dear good baby, and was so cute with his red hair and blue eyes that I asked Carol, "Where did he get his red hair?"

"Oh, Mrs. Baker! she exclaimed. "Haven't you ever looked at Wallace?"

Well, of course I had, but I didn't take time to notice what color hair the boys had.

Bobby came in for almost more than his share of care. Carol had a sort of mania for cleanliness, and Bobby and all his clothes and everything else that belonged to her got a giant share of washing. She was very much interested in having some pictures made of Bobby, and I went to the photographer's with her to help him pose to show off his beauty to the best advantage. But before the pictures came back Bill was sent on to Selfridge Field, Michigan. Carol left the money for the pictures with me, and I mailed them to her. They were excellent. Several times it happened just that way about photographs for other young folks, and I would send them on. There was so much uncertainty about the moves and changes that would be made, that it was a wonder any of their photographs ever reached the proper destination, but all that were ever left for me to send were delivered, and I had appreciative letters telling me so. Before they left, Carol gave me snapshots of the three together and of Bobby alone.

As soon as they went away their room was taken by Norwood and Alice Creech and their eighteen months old daughter, Carolyn. Norwood had been in the army, but had been discharged and was now working in Goldsboro. He was the first "veteran" we had, though there were others later.

Carolyn was a bright little thing, smart as a briar, and Alice was the gentlest of mothers. She never raised her voice, and if Carolyn meddled with things on the kitchen shelves, the worst punishment she ever received was such an easy little tap on the hand that it was no more than the brush of a butterfly's wing. I laughed at the little spank.

"That's all it takes to make her stop," said Alice.

"I think it is fine," I said to her. "If you spanked her hard, you would always have to spank hard, but since this is all she ever gets, it is enough. I wish other mothers could learn that from you."

Carolyn, like all the babies, loved to come into our living room and explore. When they first came, she examined everything in their bedroom for a day or two, but now she longed for new worlds to conquer. One day she became interested in some books lying on a low stand in the living room. She took the top book from the pile and handed it to Mr. Baker, who was seated near. He took it and thanked her very much. So she took the next one and gave it to him, and the next and next, each time receiving gracious thanks.

Finally she gave him the last book, and I thought she was through. But no—she picked up the little table and handed him that!

When she was in the room and heard her mother coming, she would get excited over the idea of having to leave, and would rise on her tiptoes and teeter up and down, while watching the door.

One morning I was in the kitchen cooking dinner and looked for a certain paring knife.

"Have you seen that smallest kitchen knife?" I asked Alice.

"Yes, I believe it is in my room. I'll get it for you," she replied.

A few days later I wanted another little knife and couldn't find it. Alice said she thought it was in her room, and brought it to me. I didn't care if she kept a knife in her room, but would look for one without thinking of its being there. Finally she explained.

"I keep a knife sticking above the windows so nobody can open them from the outside when Norwood is away," she said.

"Why Alice, nobody can get in your windows. The screens are hooked on the inside," I said.

"I am afraid they will cut the wire and reach through and unhook them."

"By the time anyone could cut the wires, unhook the screens and get them open and raise the window you could be up and call a policeman on the phone or tell us, and we could call one," I said.

"Well, Mrs. Baker, if you had ever had anybody to scare you as badly as I was scared while we were living in Wilmington, you would understand," said Alice, and then she told me the following fantastic story.

She said they had an apartment in Wilmington while Norwood was stationed at the camp there. One night in very warm weather she and her husband had retired but were not asleep. The bed was right by the open window, but even there it was too warm to have a sheet over them. Alice said she was almost asleep, when suddenly someone grabbed her around the ankle. She screamed, but was so frightened that she did not move. Norwood jumped up, but the intruder had disappeared.

The next night before bed time, a soldier's wife, who lived upstairs in the same house, heard a knock at her bed room door. She was alone at the time, but was not frightened, as she thought it was one of the girls in the house. She unlocked the door and opened it, and a man standing there threw a sheet over her head. The girl screamed, and the man ran away.

"Now, Mrs. Baker," said Alice, "do you blame me for being afraid?"

One morning early in December the postman brought a letter postmarked, "Chucky, Tennessee." A letter from Dorothy was good

news in itself, but this one was too good to be true. Dorothy said she missed us (was it *us*?) so badly that she wanted to come back, and wanted to know if we had a room, and if we would take her.

Would we! I wrote her to come, and told her that was the best news we had had. Alice was using the large front room, the one Dorothy had had, but there was another she could have. In fact, after the School of Mechanics closed, we were not crowded except occasionally when a new group would come in.

Dorothy and Lowell came back, and everybody was happy. Dorothy and Alice, now the only girls in the house, had much in common and were congenial. Each had a little child to care for, and each was expecting another. Their children were good, and there was practically no friction between them.

Christmas was almost here again. There were comparatively few soldiers in the camp now, and the prospects were for a quiet Christmas, quite different from the one of a year ago. Norwood, Alice, and Carolyn went home for the holidays, and only the Sextons were with us. Lowell was the center of interest in the household, as Christmas has to center around a child. Harlin and Dorothy had their presents all ready for his stocking, and Dorothy and I were decorating a tree in the hall for just her family and us. We had presents on it for each of them, and they had presents for my husband and me, and in addition I had "Baby Ruths" for everybody.

Christmas came on Monday that year. Saturday night the USO phoned to ask us to take a soldier and his wife and child for a week, Pfc. and Mrs. Migioli of Chicago and four year old Rena, who was very pretty and lovable except when she showed temper. Almost as soon as they arrived, I was shocked to hear Mrs. Migioli talk to Rena. It was, "You are going to get a licking," and "Shut up. I'll slap you." And slap her she did, right in the face!

I was so sorry for the poor child that pretty soon I took her to our living room and got out my doll, one that I kept for grandchildren, and other toys. I let her take these to her room when she went back. On Sunday afternoon Pfc. Migioli came in, and Rena ran to him joyfully. He did show her some affection. I asked her, "Rena, who is coming down the chimney to see you tonight?"

"Oh, we are not bothering about Santa Claus, are we Rena?" Pfc. Migioli said.

"No," answered the child slowly.

Mrs. Migioli explained to me, "When we go back home our people will have some presents for her, so we didn't think we would bother about it. She is not going to hang up a stocking."

I felt as if I couldn't stand it! But what could I do? It was Sunday

and the stores were closed, and we couldn't buy anything, and I couldn't give her the presents we had for Lowell or for our grandchildren. I telephoned to Florine, our son's wife, and asked if she had any extra toy that she could spare or anything that I could give Rena.

"I have an illustrated picture book that came from the dime store," she said.

"Please let me buy it from you," said I, and she or George brought it to me. I put the book on the tree and fixed a bag of fruit and candy for Rena, and that was absolutely everything she got from anywhere.

The next morning Dorothy was full of excitement and wanted everybody to come to the Christmas tree. Everybody, including the Migiolis, gathered around. Harlin gave out the presents, and I gave everybody a "Baby Ruth." That was all Pfc. and Mrs. Migioli got, but they beamed with pleasure over what we gave Rena.

Then it was time for breakfast. Lowell was busy with his presents in his room; the Migiolis were eating breakfast in the kitchen; and my husband and I were eating in the back hall, which had been improvised into a dining room. The door was open between, and we could see and hear what went on in the kitchen.

"I want an egg," said Rena.

"You can't have an egg. We only had two, and I have put them on Daddy's plate. You eat your oatmeal," said her mother.

Then Rena asked for milk, "No, you can't have milk."

She wouldn't eat the oatmeal, and Mrs. Migioli took a spoonful and poked it into her mouth. Rena spit it out, and her mother slapped her in the face. My husband and I were getting madder every minute. But that wasn't all. Mrs. Migioli said, "Now you go into the bed room and sit in a chair and you can't play with those toys all day."

I was simply furious. It was Christmas Day! They had not done a single thing for the child themselves, and now they were not going to let her play with the toys I had let her take to her room. But I might have known that anyone who knew no more than that woman did about the proper way to treat a child would not keep her word. She *did* let her play with the toys.

Rena had had no training except the worst, and she was high tempered and disobedient. She got the slaps and knocks regardless of her behavior, so she did not know that punishments were connected with or were the result of bad behavior. She played badly with Lowell, and did not hesitate to snatch things away from him. Her mother said, "You must not hit Lowell. He is little and can't take hard knocks like you can."

Hard knocks! Who said a four year old child could take hard knocks?

I was present on one occasion when Mrs. Migioli struck the child in the face. Without waiting to think whether it was any of my business, I said, "If it is necessary to punish a child, don't ever strike her on the face or head."

She looked surprised. I really do not believe the woman knew that she was treating her child badly. She had probably been knocked around all her life herself, and didn't know there was any different way. She did not seem to resent my interference, but she told me one time that when she went back home she thought she would have to stop living with her mother because she spoiled Rena so. Poor little Rena! I thought it would be a pity to take her away from the one person who was kind to her.

Pfc. Migioli did some better, but not too well. I saw him swinging Rena in the little swing in the back yard, and another time he took her in his lap and was playing with her, but Rena was jumping about and accidently struck him under the chin with the top of her head. He uttered an oath and put her down roughly.

I might have thought that the lack of milk, eggs, and Christmas presents was the result of poverty, but they had money and bought whatever they wanted to, and both Mrs. Migioli and Rena wore good clothes. She bought a nice little pair of gloves for Rena and they went downtown, and Rena lost them. Mrs. Migioli was distressed over it. She told me that Rena put them down on a counter in the dime store and that when they started away the gloves could not be found. Evidently someone had picked them up.

Later I heard Rena crying in the bedroom. Mrs. Migioli was in the kitchen, which opened into the room. She would open the door and say, "Shut up." She told me that she had told Rena that she could not play because she lost her gloves. "I am going to make her sit in that chair all day," she said.

"Why, she couldn't help it. She is nothing but a baby!" I said.

"She is old enough to know better than that," said Mrs. Migioli.

"If you make her sit there and cry all day, you will make me and everybody else in the house very unhappy. It was your fault that she lost the gloves, and not hers. You should have watched her and not let her put them down on the counter."

This seemed a very new idea, and she did not reply, but soon the child was out of the room and playing again.

Dorothy was affectionate with Lowell and called him "Honey," and such names, and Rena evidently caught it. She really seemed to

love her mother, though I didn't see why, and spoke to her and called her "Honey."

"Where'd you get that 'Honey' business?" demanded Mrs. Migioli.

Like many parents who like to think of their own children as superlative in something, Mrs. Migioli told me with pride that Rena had suffered concussion of the brain more times than any child she had ever known.

"Why, I would be afraid to strike her on the head!" I said.

She really looked ashamed this time.

We told Pfc. and Mrs. Migioli that it would not be convenient for them to keep the room longer than the week they had engaged it, so they found an apartment at the War Housing Project. When the day came on which they were to leave, I told my husband I would never feel right unless we talked to Pfc Migioli about the situation. Mr. Baker had already said it was a case for the police.

"Don't you know Dr. Jones would have done something about it?" I asked.

Dr. Jones was a dear old lady whom both of us loved and admired. She was the gentlest of women except when aroused by some wrong, and then she *did* "do something about it."

"He can't do anything to me, and it may help, and it certainly can't make anything worse," I said.

My husband agreed, and I called Pfc. Migioli. Mrs. Migioli came to her door and asked if I called her.

"No," said I, "I want to speak to Mr. Migioli."

She seemed rather surprised, but told him, and he came to the living room door. We invited him in and gave him a chair. It was a difficult thing we were about to do, and we got through with it better than I expected.

"Mr. Migioli," I began, "there is something we want to speak to you about. We feel that we cannot let you go away without telling you. You have a dear sweet little girl, and you love her. I have seen enough to know that. But this little child is slapped, knocked, and scolded all day every day. She is treated very unkindly by her mother, and you are rough with her yourself sometimes."

He did not look angry, but began to speak calmly. I wondered what he would say.

"Well," he began slowly, "I know she hits her, and I have said something to her about it, but there is nothing I can do."

"She is your child," said my husband, "and I *would* do something about it if I were you."

He said he would talk to his wife about it, and try to make things better. He thanked us and said he appreciated our interest. He went

back to his room, and I don't know whether he told her about it then or not. In about an hour they left for the Housing Project. We discussed it and decided that we might have done some good and certainly no harm. A few days later Mrs. Migioli came back for something she had left, and brought Rena with her. They came into the living room and sat for a little visit, and everything was quite pleasant. Of course no reference was made to the thing that was uppermost in my mind. Rena seemed happy, which she usually did when her mother would let her.

After the Christmas holidays were over Alice and Carolyn came back for a short time, and then went home to stay. About the first of February we heard that Alice had a little boy. We sent him a present.

When Norwood and Alice gave up their room, Harlin and Dorothy moved into it. It was the one they had occupied on their first visit. The room next to this one, with the connecting bath between, was taken by Lt. and Mrs. Ralph Poe and their two year old daughter, Janet. I liked Mrs. Pope, (Myrtle) very well except for one thing. She would put her child to bed and then announce to Dorothy or me, mostly Dorothy, that she was going to the movies or a dance or somewhere, and would say she didn't think Janet would wake, and then without asking whether we were willing to listen for her, she would go away and sometimes stay until one o'clock. I believe that if she had had an apartment at the War Housing Project she would have left her baby there alone. Janet slept in a sort of harness with only her head out, and Myrtle would say she couldn't get up even if she waked, which was true, and as a matter of fact she did not wake a single time.

Finally Dorothy decided to go home. The night before she was to leave she told me Myrtle had told her she was going out.

"I am sorry, Myrtle," Dorothy told me she said to her, "but I can't listen for Janet tonight. I have been packing to go home tomorrow, and I am tired and sick and am going to bed early."

"Oh, I don't think she will wake," said Myrtle, and walked out.

Dorothy came to me and told me about it.

"You just go on to bed, Dorothy, and don't listen. I will leave my door open and I'll hear her if she wakes," said I.

I retired at my usual bed time, but was afraid I might not hear the child, and so did not go to sleep. Myrtle and her husband came home after one o'clock. As they were here for only one week, we made out without saying anything about it.

Dorothy had said to me, "My baby is going to be a girl, and I know I never will be satisfied about her name because I want to

name her Brenda Kay, and Harlin says he is going to name her Lois, and Mamma says she is going to call her Judy no matter what we name her."

"Don't worry about it, Dorothy," I said. "If Harlin wants to name her Lois, you may be glad if you name her that. There are so many Brenda Kays and Linda Fays that you might get tired of it."

In February Dorothy went home, and in April we received a dainty little card announcing the birth of a seven pound, seven ounce daughter, *Nancy Imogene*.

That summer Dorothy came back and they took an apartment at the Housing Project. This was her third stay in Goldsboro. She and Harlin came over to see us, and brought the children. Lowell had grown a lot, but he remembered us and was glad to see us, and Nancy was a beautiful baby. Florence was here that day with Sammy and the baby, Betty, who was about two weeks older than Nancy.

During the visit Dorothy said, "Mrs. Baker, I have something to tell you that will make you feel good. You know what you told the Migiolis when they were here. We live near them at the project, and Maria is just as good to Rena as she can be. She said you told her she ought not to hit Rena and ought to treat her better, and that she has been trying ever since she left your house."

After Harlin received his discharge, they went home, and we had many letters and cards from Dorothy. In one soon after she went home, Dorothy said: "I have been thinking about you all day, and I just decided I would write to you this afternoon. I hope you and Mr. Baker are well. We made the trip ok. I am mighty lonesome since I came home; Lowell and I miss you so much. Lowell said today he would like to see Grandma Baker. I hated to come home and leave you so bad; I was so happy over there in your home. I will never forget you and Mr. Baker, you all were so nice to me and Harlin and Lowell."

Later she wrote: "I sure was glad to get your letter, we have missed you all so much. Lowell said thanks for the dollar. He wrote his Daddy and told him about your sending him a dollar. He has grown a lot since he came home. He loves the baby to death. Mother is sending you all some ham tomorrow, and she is also writing you a letter. Mother liked you. She said you were so good to Lowell and me."

CHAPTER XXIX
A BULL FIGHT

Egerton served with the Army in England for a time, then in France, later in the Philippines, and finally in Japan. He liked to write, and his letters were frequent and interesting. The letters about his experiences in the war may have been somewhat like those of other soldiers, but he seemed to have a knack for seeing interesting sidelights. In a letter to Ruth he wrote: "We really have some characters in this outfit. Want to hear about some of them? Of course you know about Pop, so we'll skip him. Next is *Words*. He forgets things—what few he ever knew. He could play the part of either of the two drunks; one said to the other, 'Say, do you know John Smith?' The other replied, 'No! What's his name?' The first said, 'Who?'

"He knows but few of the company—yet, and can't think of their names most of the time. His section leader trys to keep an extra hat and mess kit for him, but he misplaces them too fast for that. They tell him to work with Corporal So and So today, and he asks, 'Which one is that?' They show him, and a little later (the first time they move and the Corporal doesn't say, 'Come on Words'), he is back. On being asked what he is doing back, he answers, 'They went off somewhere and I couldn't find them.' They call certain items by serial numbers. He doesn't remember his, so they call his name instead. Some officer asked him his name, rank and serial number once. He answered, 'Private Words,' and laid his dog tags on the officer's desk with, 'There it is, right on there.'

"The officer looked up and said, "Don't you know your serial number, Soldier?' Words said, 'Naw sir, I can't remember the dad gum thing.'

"He now has a stationary job—beautiful in its simplicity. He isn't required to go far enough to get lost, and it doesn't require his knowing his corporal's name. Trust the Army; they do the best with what they have. I'll tell you about another character in the next letter, and this one will be different.

"I was so glad to get the pictures, and, of course, just as everyone wrote me, Joan is lovely. I would surely love to hold her in my arms."

He wrote Frankie: "There are a little boy and a little girl who live about a block from where we do. And guess what! I can't understand a word they say, and they can't understand a word I say. They say 'Toot sweet' when they mean 'quick' and 'lavey' when they mean 'laundry,' and 'samedi,' when they mean Saturday.' They are French children and everybody except soldiers in France talk that way. I'll surely be glad when I can get back home where everybody talks the same way I do."

Everybody enjoyed the letter he wrote about the bull fights in Southern France except me, who, being his mother and remembering that he used to climb over the fence into the bull pen on a farm near Goldsboro when he was a small boy, couldn't help being afraid he might try to get into one of the fights himself. He said:

"I have been seeing some bull fighting, as a spectator of course. The latter phrase is not out of order, as anyone can participate in certain phases of the fights, and the only reason I haven't done so is that I don't have any tennis shoes—but let me begin at the beginning.

"You know that I always wanted to see a bull fight—ever since I saw Rudolph Valentino in "Blood and Sand" way back in silent picture days. Well, to see them, or even to participate in them, these days is a very simple matter.

"The first one that I saw was what the French call a clandestine bull fight. It takes place in an amphitheatre. There is a small fence about five feet high completely encircling the space in which the fight occurs. Running around and about six feet back of this fence is another, which is some eight to ten feet high. Both are made of heavy boards. Encircling the second fence are spectators' seats built up similarly to a football stadium.

"The affair starts with some hundred or more French youths and young men waiting for the bull. They don't have long to wait, as he comes rushing out of a gate in the end as mad as a wet hornet. His horns are padded with hard leather, just enough to keep from sticking into his victims, but not enough to keep them from breaking a person up like a blow from a sledge hammer.

"As the bull rushes out of the gate, the participants scatter like a flock of sparrows before a hungry cat. He selects a likely looking victim and charges him, and there's a race for the fence. At this point I wish to commend the Frenchmen on their speed. They are the fastest things on two feet, and the bull is seldom successful. They can get over that five foot fence in nothing flat.

"The bull is plenty angry and plenty dangerous. As the first guy he charges beats him to the fence, he rushes the next one. Maybe this

fellow runs in a circle, and, before he has time to make the fence, the bull changes his attention to someone else who is moving in another direction. There is a lot in knowing what a bull will do under various circumstances, and the participants are thoroughly familiar with this knowledge.

"A bull will charge movements before anything else. He will rush right by a man standing still or walking slowly, to attack a fellow farther off, who is waving his arms or running fast. He is easily confused, and everything going on about him competes for his attention. I have seen two of the best participants waving red flags at him from opposite sides. One waves and the other keeps still. Then the other waves while the first keeps still. This is perfectly timed, and the bull turns from one to another without attacking either. He just swings his head from left to right. An extra long or big wave of the flag on the part of either would bring the bull on him like a ton of bricks.

"I also notice that you can't depend 100 percent on what the bull will do. His attention for a while may be attracted from first one thing to another. He may be a perfect tornado of confusion. Then those who can read his moods will see a change come over him. He will establish a set for a certain direction, pick out a logical looking victim, and rush him all the way to the fence in spite of anybody or anything else that would normally turn him aside. Most of the participants read these moods like a book.

"Occasionally somebody's timing is bad, or maybe he misreads the mood of the moment. Anyhow, there are a few accidents. The first one was caused by the fact that the bull just plain outran one guy to the fence. He hit him squarely in the middle of the back and knocked him sprawling. Luckily the bull's attention was attracted to someone else before he could follow up.

"A half drunk soldier (American) was the next victim. He thought he could sidestep a rush, but although it can be done, he didn't even come close. He just turned a little sideways, and the bull turned him every which-a-way. He was thrown over the little fence, but not seriously hurt. In fact, he came right back in again, but didn't compete very actively for the bull's attention after that.

"There are, of course, various degrees of efficiency in bull fighting. There are always a few of the most efficient of the participants who are on the verge of becoming professionals. Some of them are really good and really fast. Occasionally one is actually fast enough on his feet to outrun the bull on a long straight stretch. In case the bull is too fast for him, he knows enough to take advantage of some split second opportunity to escape.

"At this point I was interrupted to attend a class on malaria control. It wasn't much fun, but an hour of it didn't kill me. Let's see, where was I?

"Oh yes, the expert is being overtaken by the bull before he can make the fence. He reaches back of him with one hand, puts it on the bull's head while running at full speed. As the bull's head contacts the runner's hand, the beast tosses his head up. The expert knows the bull will do this, so stiffens his arm and leans to right or left. He is literally butted out of the bull's path without being hurt. I even saw one fellow, on being overtaken when practically at the fence, just throw his feet up and let the bull's toss vault him right over the fence by the contact of his hand on the bull's head.

"Of course these are rare instances, but they do happen several times during the fight. The bull chases hundreds over the fence without touching them, and they climb right back in for more. Many of them with less skill or nerve just hang around the fence—often in position to vault right over. Sometimes the bull will gallop or trot around the edge, seemingly just to make these hangers on take to the other side. They do it all right—the bolder of them waiting to the last split second to move. Sometimes an expert will just throw his feet back and up while holding on the fence. He almost does a handstand as the bull rushes by, then flops himself back down behind the bull. It's all one motion, and if the bull pauses instead of rushing by he's in a pickle. They really go into a scuffle when they get themselves into a tight. A pause at such a time would be their last pause.

"The whole object is to come as close to getting killed as possible, and still come out alive. The crowd cheers all close calls. It cheers anything anyone does to make the bull look ridiculous, and even cheers the bull when he succeeds in catching anyone or putting anyone in a tough spot.

"Sometimes the bull jumps over the low fence, and you should see the guys on the back side take off to the inside. Sometimes they let in two bulls, and the participants have to be doubly careful. I've seen one bull inside the arena while one ran around between the two fences. The inside bull chased some guys over the fence directly into the path of the bull on the outside. There was a merry scuffle back and forth over the fence in avoiding both bulls.

"Many and peculiar highlights of the event turn up unexpectedly. One fellow caught the bull by the tail, and around and around they went. He turned loose and jumped over the fence, and the bull was so mad he just bawled. Anything you do to a bull makes him just that much madder, and if he can't get at the guy who did it he'll try

all the harder to mess up somebody else. Even after he's about whipped down, he'll dig up energy from somewhere if anyone does anything to him.

"One thing the experts do a lot is to run by in front of him after he's just slightly winded. The tireder he gets, the closer they go. He always takes off after them, and sometimes faster than they had anticipated. I've seen them have to suck in their hips as they passed to keep from getting tossed. I've even seen them slap him on the nose as they passed, and once one had to put his hand out quickly and vault himself out of the way with a push on the charging bull's head.

"Another high light is the chicken deal. A chicken will be brought into the center of the arena with it's legs tied about three inches apart. The bull rushes up and tosses the chicken up into the air, and continues tossing it until somebody grabs it and takes off. Then there is a split second race between the bull and the runner with the chicken for the fence. One guy was so fast he'd grab the chicken on the ground or in the air just a few feet in front of the bull, and then outrun him to the fence. Sometimes it was a fair sized run too, as the arena is (strickly a guess) about half the size of Duke Stadium.

"All this is taking place at top speed. The chances the participants take are very real, and the bulls used are meaner and faster than any in the States. I guess the reason that some of the guys can keep right on taking such close calls is that they've been doing it all along as they grew up. It's a national pastime here, and they grow better with time and experience. I imagine they didn't take such close calls when they first started. It's an art the way they work it here, and if the same chances were taken by the same number of people without their years of experience the accidents and deaths would be plenty.

"I'll mention here that there's little chance of my getting in there, and if I did, I wouldn't take any real chances. So don't be expecting to read any death notices of my being killed by a bull. It just ain't going to happen here.

"All the fights are not platonic, or "Clandestine," I believe the word is. We saw a real one Sunday in which Spanish professionals only participated. They killed four bulls, and really know their business. This is pretty cruel, and if I were an artist at description I could probably give you nightmares for the next few nights.

"It starts with the picadors, I believe they call them, being stationed at four sides of the arena. Each has a red cloth about the size of a table cloth. There are four of them, and each is stationed

by an upright extra section of fence which is about four feet wide and juts out a foot or so in front of the regular fences. The nearest one to the gate through which the bull enters attracts his attention by waving his cloth. The bull charges, and the picador removes himself and his cloth behind his "gate." As he disappears, the next one attracts the bull's attention, and disappears at his arrival. This continues around the arena for a lap or so. This is done to wear the keen edge off the bull, as the next step would be impossible with an absolutely fresh bull.

"Then one of the fighters steps forward with a couple of banderillos (sticks about a yard long) wrapped in colored paper, and with metal barbs on the ends. He stands directly in front of the bull with one banderillo in each hand, and, as the bull charges, he aims them one each at each side of the bull's shoulders. He doesn't move from in the direct path of the charging bull until he is close enough to have stuck them into the bull's shoulders. Then he sidesteps so swiftly that the bull misses him. It's plenty dangerous, and even the most skilled are not always missed. I was slightly late for one fight, and even as I approached, I could tell from the noise of the crowd that something out of the ordinary was happening. As I entered the stand, I was told that one of the picadors hadn't been swift enough in sidestepping after placing the banderillos. The bull had caught him under the belt and tossed him up in the air, then followed up and gored and pawed him on the ground some before the others could attract his attention. I didn't see him and don't know just how badly he was hurt, but they said he had to be taken from the arena and was unconscious.

"After the banderillos are stuck in the bull's neck, he swings his head from side to side trying to dislodge them; when he finds he can't he's plenty mad and takes off after the nearest fighter. This is expected and a fighter is waiting with a cloth to take him on.

"As the bull charges, the picador sidesteps and turns, and is waiting for the next charge. Every move is as perfectly timed as a dancer's step, and the closer the picador allows the bull's horns to come to him, the more the crowd cheers.

"This goes on for a time, and a fighter comes out with another set of banderillos. They are placed, and the fight nears the final stage, which consists of manipulating the bull into a standstill, and then killing him by sticking a sword almost up to the hilt in a little spot about as big as a silver dollar where his neck joins his shoulders. It's the most dangerous stage. If the picador does it exactly right, the bull drops in his tracks. If he does it almost right, the bull will charge his tormentor not fast, and drop a few seconds later. If he doesn't do it well at all he'd better be fast on his feet or the bull will get him. I've seen all three of them happen. In the latter instance the picador stood on his tiptoes with sword pointed to the spot. As he lunged forward, the bull met him. His shot wasn't accurate, and the bull's plunge flipped it out of his hand. He was thrown into the air, but got up as another fighter attracted the bull's attention."

CHAPTER XXX
BELLE

We were now alone for the first time in about two years, but instead of feeling relieved, I missed the young folks and was really glad after a week or so when the next couple came, and was especially glad that they had an attractive little boy. They were Lt. and Mrs. Bruce Strayhorn of Durham and their sixteen months old son, Larry.

Larry was good and pretty and unbelievably bright. He could talk better right then than most two year old children—not just words but whole sentences—and he had ideas of his own. When I came into the room one morning in a bright flowered housecoat, he said, "Pretty." He would put his hands in his pockets and draw them out and say, "Hard times. No money!" When introduced to a stranger he would walk up and offer his hand and say, "Good morning." I delighted in introducing him, and then watching the astonishment of the other person. One day he was playing alone in the back yard and came walking into the house with a four leaf clover, which he handed to his mother. That is a mystery to me yet. Why did he pick the four leaf clover rather than one of those with three leaves? I thought perhaps most of them had four leaves and went out to investigate, but none that I found had more than three.

Thelma was a wonderful housekeeper, and had excellent taste in arranging furniture and draperies, hanging curtains, et cetera. A colored woman, Penny, was doing some house cleaning for us. She wasn't too efficient, but Thelma took over the directing of the work and saw to it that it was done properly, which was a great relief to me.

Penny was honest but didn't mind begging. "Mrs. Baker," she said, "please give me some of them medalias and some of your ferbenias to plant in my flower garden."

I gave them to her but wasn't very enthusiastic a few days later when she announced that all the "ferbenias" had died and that she wanted some more. She was proud of her honesty and told me, "I ain't never been innercent of stealing nothing. None of my folks ain't never been accused of being innercent of stealing nothing." Once she remarked, "Some folks ain't never dissatisfied 'less they got somebody to talk about."

Thelma said one day, "I wonder if Larry should have some orange juice."

"Miss Thelma," said Penny, "that ain't necessary. He ought to have orange juice."

Well, between them, Thelma and Penny really put the house into beautiful order, though we had to watch Penny to keep her from throwing the empty washing powder boxes and used rags into the front yard after she had washed the railings in the porch until they were a gleaming white. I was glad we had the spring cleaning done and everything in order before the next important event in the household took place.

Pfc. Hadley Dotson, a rather shy and very earnest young man, came to engage a room.

"Is it for you and your wife?" I asked.

He hesitated. "I'm not married yet. We are going to get married when she comes."

Ah! Romance again. He paid his reservation for the room to begin about a week later.

After Lois arrived, the wedding had to be delayed for a day or two on account of some legal technicality about getting the license. Sitting with us in our living room one night, they were discussing plans for the ceremony and asked my advice about where to have it. I don't know whether they had hoped we would offer them our home or whether the idea had even occurred to them, but when I asked if they would like to be married here they seemed very much pleased. The next question was the preacher, and I was generous again and offered them ours. That pleased them too, and they wanted me to phone and ask him, which I did. The wedding was set for 3:30 Sunday afternoon.

The living room had to be arranged and decorated for the occasion. Thelma certainly was a blessing! She had already put up fresh curtains for me, but now she and I took out all the surplus articles, such as typewriters, newspapers, and other extras, and arranged vases of beautiful pink spirea and pink hyacinths that I bought from the curb market.

The preacher came, and we had the wedding. The bride wore a pretty dress of black and white crepe and trembled like a leaf all during the ceremony. The next day I wrote up the wedding for them and put it in our local paper and gave Lois a copy to send her home paper.

Lois stayed here about a week and then went back home to her job. The next August she and her sister came back to visit Hadley and, since it happened that we had two vacant rooms at the time,

stayed with us. I had not seen Hadley since Lois left, and we were really glad to see both of them again.

A few days after the wedding, Charles Kunkler came to see us and said he had been sent back to this field and that Frances and Gary were coming back and wanted to know if we could take them. We certainly could, for Frances was one of our dearest girls, and I was delighted to have her again.

How Gary had grown! When he left he was a little baby only about five months old, and now he was a big boy almost a year old, running around in his stroller and almost able to walk without it. He was a darling child, good as he could be, not a bit spoiled, and with one of the sweetest little mothers I ever saw. I love to look back now and think of what good mothers most of our babies had.

In the latter part of April both Bruce and Charles were sent to other fields, and of course Thelma and Frances and their little boys went away. The next Christmas we had a card from Thelma signed, "Bruce, Thelma, Larry and *Janie*."

In March the next year, Charles and Frances sent us an announcement of the birth of a daughter, Connie Frances.

Just before these couples went away, Cpl. and Mrs. Earl H. Douglas and their baby son, Roy Earl, took a room with us. They were from a Texas ranch near Aspermont.

Cpl. Douglas, who for some reason was called "Jack" by his wife and also by us, was located at a camp near Kinston, but either because he couldn't find a place for his wife and son in Kinston or because he liked Goldsboro better, he had engaged the room for them here. Whatever the cause, we were the more fortunate that they chose Goldsboro, and that they stayed with us for many months.

Mrs. Douglas had the very unusual name of Rutha Belle, but we called her Belle. Roy Earl was about nine months old and had not learned to walk, though he could crawl pretty well. He was a fine healthy boy, and Belle told me Jack said he thought he was the prettiest baby he had ever seen in his life.

When they came, Roy Earl, like most of the other babies, cried and fretted for the first few days. The first night, I was awakened by the sound of his crying, since they were in the room adjoining ours. Belle took him out of the room and closed the door, and I went back to sleep. But as I dozed off, I remember thinking that I was sorry she went to the kitchen, for then he would wake Frances and Gary, but the next day I found out that she did not go to the kitchen, but took the baby in one arm, a rocking chair in the other hand, and went into the bathroom, which adjoined her room and was beyond it, and rocked him there until he went to sleep. If I had known her

ROY EARL

then as I did later I would have known that she would devise some way not to disturb anyone. After a day or two, Roy Earl was all right and as happy a little fellow as I ever saw.

During the months that followed, there were many changes in the household, but Belle was the leader, helper, friend of all, the soothing spirit, where soothing was needed. If anybody made a cake or selected a book to read, or had a real trouble, Belle was consulted, and her advice was usually taken, and was always found good. In spite of the fact that she was younger than my youngest child, I did not hesitate to go to her for advice, help and comfort, and at the same time she kept us laughing with her comical remarks.

I was bad about losing things, but usually Belle could find them for me. After one search when I was particularly worried over something I had lost, she brought it to me with the words, "Here it is, Mrs. Baker. I don't know what you would do without me!"

"No, Belle," I said, "I don't either."

I had a white rayon dress that I decided to dye blue. Belle told me what kind of dye to get, how to use it, etc. The dress had about twenty pretty white buttons down the front, and as I was afraid the dye would ruin them. I cut them off and put them in a pill box as a safe place until I was ready to sew them back on the dress. The dyeing was quite a success, and then I went to get the buttons, but they were not in the little box. After a search I found them where my very helpful and sometimes over-zealous husband had poured them into a big box of buttons of every color, kind and size. I saw that I had to pick out my buttons one by one, and it was no easy job. I was exasperated, but I didn't say anything to him; I just went to Belle.

"Doesn't it beat anything you ever heard of?" I complained.

"Now, Mrs. Baker, you know he was just trying to help," she said.

I was picking out the buttons and fussing along when he came out on the porch where we were and started down the steps.

"Don't you think," I asked him," that it would be a good idea if we would take all those little boxes of tacks in your tool chest and pour them into one big box together?"

"Now Mrs. Baker, now Mrs. Baker!" warned Belle, but smiling at the same time.

My husband had gone too far to hear her, but he didn't understand why I had suggested such a silly thing and said, "No, they are separated according to the different kinds, and if we mixed them I could not find the kind I wanted."

I didn't say anything else, and never did say anything to him about mixing up the buttons.

Jack was a college graduate; had graduated from the Agricultural department of his own state college. He had a wonderful store of information about plants and things, which often came in good, or at least was a matter of interest to the rest of us.

Roy Earl was growing and trying harder to walk. As the weather grew warmer, he shed most of his clothes and spent much time out in the sunshine until he had a fine coat of tan such as many a girl who spends a week at the seashore trying to get sunburned would envy. He was healthy and lived in a healthful mental atmosphere—that of being loved by two kind and sensible parents, who knew how to take care of him, and yet knew how not to spoil him. But as he began to walk he gave his mother a hard time, for he climbed up on every chair, stool, or anything else he could reach, and fell off every time unless she got to him first. And falling didn't stop him from trying it again the next minute. If she took him into the yard, he wanted to spend the entire time crawling up and down the steps.

When Belle had to be in the house, Roy Earl played in the hall. We kept the front and back doors open to get all the breeze we could, and screen doors hooked to keep the flies out and Roy Earl in. One day I happened to look toward the front door and saw Jack getting out of his car. Belle, who did not know he was in town, was in the kitchen cooking dinner. I called Roy Earl softly and said, "Come here Roy Earl. Look!"

Jack came quietly up the steps, but Roy Earl gave such a squeal of delight and started running toward the door that Belle knew exactly what was happening.

Another time Belle had left her pocket book, which was very large, lying on a chair in the hall. Roy Earl, dressed only in a diaper, his usual at home costume, took up the pocket book, which was almost as large as he was, and started along to the front door. He looked back at us, waved his hand, and said, "Bye-bye." If the screen had not been hooked he probably would have gone shopping. ,

When Thelma went away Belle moved into her room, the front one, and for a short time she and Jack and Roy Earl were our only roomers. Belle missed Thelma, for the two had become good friends in the little while they were here together, but she had plenty of resources of her own, and besides that, she and I were such good friends that she wasn't *so* lonesome. But the next girl who came was not only Belle's intimate friend but her protege. This was Albina Heaslip of New York City, whose husband, Tech. Sgt. William (Bill) Heaslip, was sent here from another camp.

Al, as she liked to be called, was a little Polish girl; at least her parents were Polish, and Al called herself a "Polak," a word I had

never heard before. She had just lost her baby and was very pitiful. Mrs. Palmer had phoned me from the USO that Al did not want to go to a home where there was a small baby, as it made her sad, but she did not mind a big boy like Roy Earl. It was well for her that she did come here, for Belle's cheerfulness and good sense did more to bring her back to normal than a doctor or a course in psychology could have done. Soon she was going about her duties happily, but would quickly lapse into grief again when something reminded her of her sorrow. I probably should not have let her read Eulah's letter telling of the loss of her little one and of her disappointment. Al said, "I wonder why a girl like that would be the one to lose her baby, while some others who don't even want a baby should keep theirs." Al's baby, Barbara, had lived two or three months, I believe. Al even brought some of her toys here with her.

She was happiest when busy, and as she had a knack for making things pretty she began fixing things up, beginning where Thelma had left off. Lucky me! She was especially interested in making the kitchen attractive looking, and covered all the shelves with bright red paper, washed and ironed the curtains, and kept everything sparklingly clean.

We three, Belle, Al, and I, had a problem every time Al received a letter from her mother in trying to discipher or translate it. I never worked harder over a lesson in Virgil. Her mother had picked up a broken English and wrote as it sounded to her. Al couldn't read it any better than the rest of us. Whenever we found out what one of her words meant we would write that down and refer to it when we came to that word again. Usually we would finally succeed in getting the meaning of most of the letter.

Pretty soon Al had the house fixed to suit her and then she decided to get out and find a job. Her method of procedure was very different from that of most of the others. Instead of waiting in the employment office or applying at dime stores or eating places she went with assurance to the largest department store in town, asked for a position and got it. She was put in the linen department and was so successful in her sales that she soon received a raise in salary.

Bill was then transferred to a camp in Georgia, but as he did not think it a suitable place for Al, she stayed with us and kept her job until July, when she decided to go home. Later in the summer Bill was sent back here, and Al came too, and they were with us three more months. She went right back to her job and found it waiting for her. Belle was glad to have her little protege here again, and so were the rest of us. There was never a dearer sweeter girl than

Al, and I was so glad to see that much of the sadness that surrounded her at first seemed to have vanished, and that she now entered into the fun of the household like the others. She and Bill were with us from April until October except for the six weeks after Bill was transferred temporarily to another camp. During this time many others came and went, but Al was always a favorite with everybody.

The time came for them to go. We were sorry, but some months later rejoiced to receive the announcement of the birth of a daughter, Gail. I never had an announcement that gave me more pleasure. We sent her a present, and both Albina and Bill wrote and thanked us.

CHAPTER XXXI
RUBY

About the middle of that summer a call came from the USO for a room for a soldier's wife and baby. The soldier was located in a camp in a far away state, a place that was unsuitable for his wife and baby.

When the young woman arrived and I met her at the door, I could not help being surprised. She was a very pretty girl with an unmistakably Southern accent, and in her arms was a beautiful Italian baby. She gave her name as Mrs. Arthur Sabatina. I told my husband, "The baby is the very image of his father."

"Why, how do you know?" he asked. "I didn't know you had ever seen his father."

"No, I haven't," I said, "but the baby is just like him."

Ruby had wanted an apartment, but since she couldn't find one, she was pleased with the arrangement here, since her room adjoined the bath on one side and the kitchen on the other.

"It is just like an apartment," she said.

Artie was about eighteen months old, could walk and was learning to talk. He had brown eyes and his mother's beautiful red gold hair and was altogether lovely. He looked like a painting of a child by Raphael or one of the old masters.

He was absolutely a "Mommy's boy." I never saw a child so devoted to his mother. He would hide behind her skirts and peep around at me, but pretty soon he began to make a game of it and would try to make me pretend that I was going to get him. In a few days he and I were the best of friends. He soon learned about the box of toys on the sleeping porch, and nothing pleased him better than getting in there to play with them. He was altogether one of the cutest children I ever saw.

One day Ruby asked if she might leave Artie with me for a little while and go down town. I agreed and, knowing how he loved to play with the toys, anticipated no trouble. But somehow he realized that Ruby was gone and was very unhappy. He didn't cry, but asked over and over with trembling lips, "Where's Mommy? Where's Mommy?"

He didn't want the toys, and I couldn't please him. In a little while Ruby came back, and Artie rejoiced at seeing her, but after he was

fully satisfied that she was in the house he wanted to go into the sleeping porch and play with the toys!

Ruby, whose parents lived in an Eastern town, had held a secretarial position in a city in New Jersey. She said that one day she was standing waiting for a bus, when Arthur Sabatina first saw her. He got a mutual friend to introduce them. It was a long time after that before she married him. After they were engaged he took her to see his parents, and his mother loved and hugged her and cried over her because she was going to marry her son. Arthur said that was just what he had told his mother not to do.

Ruby said Arthur's people were nice to her, but that "My trouble is that everytime I say a word about wanting anything they go right straight and buy it for me. I said I wanted a fur coat, and I meant for Art to buy it, but they bought it. They say they are going to give us a car as soon as Art is out of service, and then they are going to build us a home." Beside that, she said they were very nice and sweet to her.

"I think I could stand that sort of trouble," I told her.

One day Ruby and Artie went down town and when they came home Artie marched into the house pulling by a string the most fantastic toy imaginable. It was a pink cow on a platform on wheels. As the platform moved the cow turned round and round. She turned her head about and switched her tail, and two white stars perched on the ends of her horns whirled around.

"Well, did anybody ever!" I exclaimed. "That beats anything I have ever seen in my life."

Elsie made an interesting addition to Artie's already plentiful supply of wheeling toys, and I think was his favorite. Ruby said that as soon as he saw her in the store he wanted her so badly that she didn't have the heart to refuse to buy her. Artie hardly ever appeared without two toys on wheels. He held one string in each hand and pulled the doggies, cows, or whatever they were behind him. Money was another favorite toy with him, and any stray quarters and half dollars picked up about the house were always turned over to Ruby or Artie, as we knew they belonged to them.

It was about the middle of July that Sgt. Preston Crawford of Little Rock, Ark., his wife and their two year old son, Donnie, came to live with us. Anne was tall, dark and attractive. Donnie was the most beautifully built child I ever saw, which was easy to see, as, in the hot weather we were having, none of the babies wore anything but their little underpants.

Little Florence had left a rather dilapidated doll here, and the first time Donnie saw it he held out his arms and exclaimed, "Baby!"

I gave it to him, and he rocked and loved that old doll, and went to sleep with it, saying softly, "Baby, Baby."

"Doesn't he have a doll?" I asked Anne.

"No, we never thought of buying a doll for a boy," she said.

Donnie played with that old doll until Preston and Anne went down town and bought him a new one.

Later in the month Roy Earl reached the first milestone in his life. He was one year old. Belle decided to have a birthday party for him. This was to be entirely a stag affair—no girls to be invited except the ladies in the house. Invitations were sent to Frankie, Sammy, Donnie, and Artie. These, with Roy Earl himself and the ladies, made quite a party.

We set two tables under the mimosa tree in the yard, one for the presents and one for the refreshments. The presents came first, as everybody brought one and everybody was anxious to see his opened. Roy Earl sat in a high chair at the table and with much help from the guests opened the gifts. There were stuffed doggies on wheels, an airplane that could be rolled about on wheels, little carts of blocks and lots of other things. As soon as one present was opened and admired and Roy Earl started on the next, one of the little boys would take the first one and begin to roll it about the yard or make it do whatever such a wonderful toy was supposed to do. I noticed that neither Belle nor Roy Earl made any objection or warned anyone to be careful and not break the toy. It seemed just what they expected that the guests should play with the toys as much as they wanted to.

Then came the birthday cake—big and white, decorated with pink icing and centered with one little pink candle. It was placed in the center of the table, which had been covered with a most beautiful birthday tablecloth made of pink and white tissue paper and decorated all around with pictures of birthday cakes and candles. On the table were cups of pink ice cream and decorated cakes. It was a beautiful sight. Every little boy wanted to be the one to blow out the candle, but the mothers held them back and wouldn't let Roy Earl be *that* unselfish. So Roy Earl blew out his candle, and Belle sliced the cake, and everybody ate. It was altogether delightful.

Then it was time for pictures. We arranged the little boys in a group, Roy Earl and Artie sitting on the grass, and the other three, who were a little older, standing back of them. This time Frankie and Sammy, being a whole year older than they were when Sherry had her party, had overcome their camera shyness and didn't run away. Belle took some really good pictures of the group, though in one of them she caught Anne and me anxiously trying to arrange the children and not knowing that we would show, as I was off at one

side and Anne at the other. Some of the pictures were of Roy Earl alone with his presents.

After this part of the program was over, Anne, deciding that Donnie was too warm, took his suit off, leaving him in only his little underpants. Sammy looked around at him and in surprise and asked, "Donnie, who took your suit off of you?"

Donnie did not reply, and Sammy persisted, "Donnie, did you take your suit off?"

Still no reply, and Sammy exclaimed in exasperation, "Donnie, *can't* you talk?"

The time came for the guests to say they had "had a good time" and to go home, and it was "the end of a perfect day."

Ruby had long been impatient at being away from Arthur, and he was just as anxious to have her with him, but the Army kept him moving about and she could not go until he was settled. Finally the postman brought a letter in which Arthur said he had arrived at a camp in Washington state, and that Ruby and Artie could come. Ruby jumped up on one foot and then on the other and behaved liked a child with his first toy balloon. The funniest thing about it was the puzzled little smile on Artie's face as he, pleased but not understanding, watched her.

Arthur told her in the letter not to come until she could get a Pullman reservation, and that if she couldn't get it he wanted her to buy an automobile and get someone to come out there with her. She tried for weeks to get the reservation, but finally, with money Arthur had sent her for the purpose, bought an automobile, and when she found someone who wanted to go to the west coast they made the trip.

After Ruby got there, she wrote us that, since Arthur never had been satisfied because they were not married by a Catholic priest, they were going to be married. She bought a wedding dress, and they had a church wedding!

Often I cut out pictures from the society pages of newspapers of girls that look like some of our girls, and Ruby had seen these. In a letter, she sent me a picture of an elderly woman leaning over a table with several small children who seemed interested in some handwork, and wrote that she thought the woman looked like me. She said she remembered how I had cut out pictures of the others, and thought I would like this. Well, I wasn't flattered, because I thought the woman was too old, but the more I looked at it the more I decided that Ruby was right, and that she wasn't any older than I was, though her hair was grey and waved artificially, but,

oh yes, so is mine, and I believe it is a good picture of me with my Sunday School class, so I have it with the pictures of the girls.

Later Arthur was sent back east, and they came to see us. Arthur was tall and handsome, and Ruby and Artie looked lovely, but Artie was shy and wouldn't talk to us. After Arthur received his discharge from the Army, they moved to Elizabeth, New Jersey, his home city. I heard sometime later that they had a little girl named Sherry.

CHAPTER XXXII
MARGE

As soon as Ruby went away her room was taken by Staff Sgt. Lawrence West of California and his wife and child. Marge was so much like Irene Adams (one of the finest girls we ever had) that I felt like Irene had come back. Larry looked very much like Mr. Charles West who was with us during the construction of the camp. He was really so much like him, though younger, that I decided that they must be related. However, when I asked him, he said he had never heard of him, and I suppose the resemblance, plus the fact that they had the same name, was merely a coincidence. Tommy was a beautiful baby with brown eyes and brown hair and reminded me of little Larry Adams. At least both had brown eyes, both loved me, and I loved them.

Since Belle had lost her best friend, Al Heaslip, I was glad to see that she liked Marge. They were good friends from the first. We still had three little boys in the house, as we had had most of the time for the two previous years, though not the same little boys. I had attractive pictures sent me of some of the first ones, now grown big, Larry Adams, Edward Napiwocki, Sammy of course, Lowell Sexton, and others. I almost felt as if babies couldn't be girls any more. They were just always boys. I wonder if there is any truth in a saying that I have heard—that in war years most of the babies that are born are boys.

Our three little boys now were pretty good, but sometimes the little fellows got spankings. The older I get the less I believe in spanking, and I really believe that if I could raise my own children again I could do it without any. Something like that I suppose is the reason grandparents get the reputation for spoiling their grandchildren. Well, those who lived in our house were almost the same as my own grandchildren.

The three mothers, Belle, Anne, and Marge, were in the kitchen together one morning when I came in and said, "I am going to offer a prize. I don't know what it will be, but it will be a prize."

They looked at me expectantly, wondering what on earth I was going to say.

"The prize is for the mother who does the least spanking and scolding," I said.

"Oh!" they said laughing, and each said she was going to try for it.

Later in the day I heard Anne speaking to Donnie in endearing tones, calling him "Darling," or something like it.

"Just listen at Anne trying to get that prize!" said Belle.

Two days later I bought three watermelons, which I presented to the three girls. I told them it was impossible for me to decide which of the three good mothers had been the best, and that I was sure each deserved a prize. This was watermelon season,. and we were on the lookout for good melons and often cut and ate them in the back yard late in the afternoon after the boys came home from camp, so these were quite acceptable as prizes.

Marge was an attractive girl with dark hair and eyes. She had a rather serious manner, but I found her congenial and enjoyed her very much in the following months. The entire personnel of our household changed during that time except Larry and Marge, who were with us until November. I thought Tommy belonged to me, and he certainly thought so. I will never forget how he loved my biscuits. I usually had a plate of cold ones on the refrigerator, and Tommy, although he could not talk, would go to the refrigerator, look up and begin to squeal, and all of us came to recognize that little squeal as a request for a biscuit. Sometimes Marge remonstrated, but when she realized that it was just as much pleasure for me to give Tommy a biscuit as it was for him to get it she let us alone.

About that time George needed a stenographer at the store, and phoned and asked if we had any one who could fill the place. I told him I thought so, and presented the matter to Marge. I had heard her speak of some of the positions she had held, and was sure she was experienced and capable. George said he could make out with part time work.

Marge wanted to do it, but said she didn't see how she could on account of Tommy, but two young girls who had moved into an upstairs room agreed to keep him a few hours a day for a remuneration, and Marge took the job. Indeed she was capable. The boys were delighted at having her in the office.

I kept Tommy the first morning, and after that he was to stay with the others, but he meant to stay with me regardless of what the girls tried to do. I began to wonder whether I really had a baby on my hands, but when he found that the others would take him out of doors, even down town in his stroller, he gave in and went with them.

Belle came into the living room one day and told us she and Jack had decided to take an apartment at the War Housing Project. She said they hated to go, that they liked it here and loved us and the others, but that it would cost less and they thought it best to go. They had not yet found an apartment, but wanted to let us know before they made any plans. That was like them—good, honest, straightforward and open in all they did and said. I certainly hated for them to leave. Belle had been such a help and comfort to everybody that I knew how we would miss her. She promised to come back to see us, and kept her promise. Jack had his own car, and they came over often, which was a great pleasure to us and to the other girls, every one of whom loved them.

Preston, Anne and Donnie left soon after the Douglases did, and this left Marge as the nucleus for the new group of young folks who inevitably flocked in as soon as there were available rooms. The two girls using the upstairs room were Gladys and Dell, who had grown tired of farm life and wanted to come to town and live. They were nice girls and were a pleasant addition to the family.

The next couples were Pfc. and Mrs. Wesley Ninemire of Kansas City, Kansas, and Lt. and Mrs. Joe Latacki of Windham, Ohio, who took the middle and south bed rooms. I hesitated about Lt. Latacki because he was an officer, and I spoke to him about it when he applied for the room.

"I have been an enlisted man myself," he said. "I know how they feel, and I think you will have no trouble."

He also told me that his wife was very friendly, and added with a smile, "We have a baby girl about this long," holding his hands about sixteen inches apart.

"Why, all my best friends have been enlisted men's wives everywhere I've been," said Esther when she came. "Joe was a private when I married him."

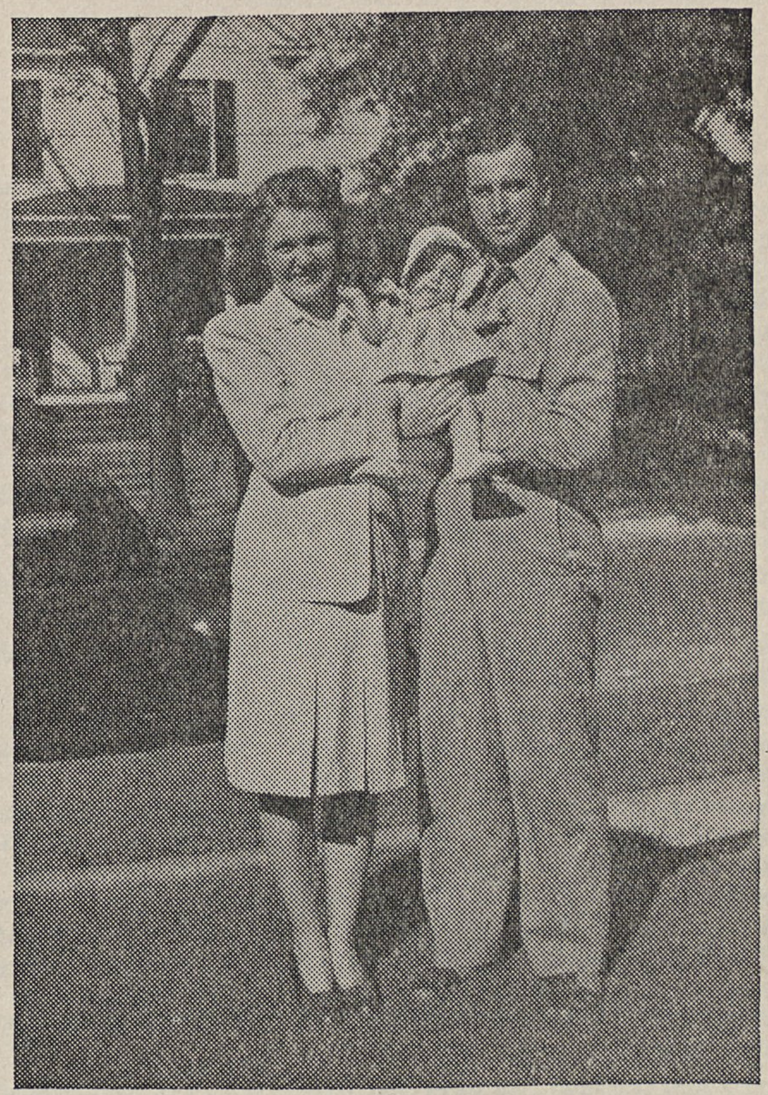
The Ninemires came too, and the two girls were devoted friends, and were also congenial with Marge, Gladys and Dell. These girls enjoyed being together, and all except Dell were here until nearly Christmas, and Gladys stayed long after that. Marge said after they had been here for some time, "We have had such a nice time since the Latackis and the Ninemires came."

Wesley was an unusually tall man and well built. Donna, who was only seventeen, had a sweet Madonna-like face. Wesley, Jr., was a great big fat baby, and as cute and good as could be, and his parents were *so* proud of him.

Joe and Esther Latacki were not more than medium height, and their little girl, Jo Anne, six months old, was indeed tiny. Esther

played with her, dressed her up, took her about, and enjoyed her just as Anne or Little Florence would a beautiful doll. She dressed her in her christening robe and took her to a studio and had her picture taken. Donna and Esther took pictures of the two babies together in our yard. They tried to get some affectionate poses, which was rather difficult for two little folks only six months old. Donna's mother and aunt came for a visit, and we found them pleasant and nice like Donna. One afternoon we took them and Donna and Wesley, Jr., to ride around the city and out to the State Hospital where recent rains had caused the Neuse and Little Rivers to rise until the water had surrounded some of the agricultural buildings and even some dormitories. Dr. Whelpley, superintendent of the hospital, was taking moving pictures of the water and of some people in boats on the water, which had come almost up to the dairy barns.

But all too soon this happy group was broken up, as Joe and Wesley were sent on to other camps, and Donna and Esther and the babies of course went too. They gave us kodak pictures before they left and wrote us nice letters. Larry, Marge, and Tommy were here longer, but they too had to go. Marge wrote us many letters. The pleasant memories linger.



JOE, ESTHER, AND JOANNE

CHAPTER XXXIII
NANCY

Staff Sgt. Al Pearson, a pleasant faced young man, came to the house one evening and asked for a room for his wife, himself and their month old baby for one week. The room Joe and Esther had occupied was vacant, and we were glad to let him have it.

When they walked up on the front porch, I saw a tall girl with a pleasant face. Nancy was pure Irish—not Irish by descent, but born in Ireland, and not yet quite free of her Irish brogue. She was a staunch Catholic and she was good and good natured, and everybody liked her. Billy was a good little fellow but not yet old enough to have developed any decided personality.

Nancy was glad to be with Al, but something kept her from being quite happy. She had come for a visit of only one week to show Billy to his father, who had not seen him since he was three days old, but she had left their thirteen months old daughter, Nancy at home.

"Nancy is so bad I have to beat her," (which I knew she didn't mean) "but I do want to see her."

I suggested that she bring Nancy with her next time and stay while her husband was in camp. It did not occur to me that she would take me at my word, but that is what she did.

One morning about two months later, with no warning whatever, Nancy walked in with Billy, now three months old, in one arm and leading fifteen months old Nancy with the other hand. The taxi driver followed with two big suit cases. I was non-plussed. True, I had a room, the one Larry and Marge had left, but this was Saturday, and I had promised the room to a soldier and his wife, beginning Tuesday. I explained that to Nancy, but told her we would be glad for her to use the room until Tuesday. So we put the little crib and the big crib into the room, and they moved in.

Nancy had traveled two days and nights with the two babies and had not taken a sleeper, and she was exhausted. First, she said she would call Al on the phone and then take a nap.

She called the camp and succeeded in locating his building, but he was out and not expected back in several hours, she was informed.

Little Nancy, Big Nancy, and Billy

So Big Nancy, Little Nancy, and Billy retired for the rest of the morning, all three dead for sleep.

When she waked, Nancy phoned again for Al, but could not locate him. Again and again during the afternoon she sought to find him, but in vain. Finally when bed time came, she and her little brood retired, but she was worried. So was I, but we went to bed, thinking that on the morrow he would be found.

About midnight the phone rang, and I got up and answered it. A voice said, "Mrs. Baker, this is Al Pearson. Is Nancy at your house?"

I was so relieved that I wanted to shout.

"Yes," I said, "she and the children are here. We have tried all day to get you. Can you come on over now and spend the night?"

"I am afraid I can't get there tonight," he replied.

"All right, I'll call Nancy,' said I.

In a minute Nancy was at the phone, and I went back to bed, but I could hear what she said. After she had said, "This is Nancy," and waited for him to speak, she exclaimed, "My God!"

I listened, my heart in my mouth. What could be the trouble?

Then I caught on. Al had gone to their home in New Jersey on a furlough, leaving here the same day Nancy left home. He was calling from their home in New Jersey. Nancy had told her mother she was coming to our house, so he called here for her.

There was nothing she could do but wait, and Al started back the next day and spent his furlough in Goldsboro.

"I never mean to surprise anybody again in my life," Nancy said to me later.

After Al arrived Monday, they went out on a search for a room and found a nice one with kitchen privileges and moved in. An hour or two later the phone rang, and Nancy said, "Mrs. Baker, may we come back and stay tonight? We'll get another room tomorow."

"Yes Nancy, I'll come for you with the car," I said, "but what is the trouble."

"I'll tell you when I see you," she said, "and we are at the USO now."

I went to the USO and found the family waiting for me, and brought them home.

Nancy said the room they rented was infested with bed bugs, that she discovered them almost as soon as she entered the room, and that she and Al took the babies and suit cases and hurried out. They explained it to the landlady, who assured them with tears in her eyes that she did not know there was any such condition, and said she would have the room fumigated.

Al knew the soldier who had just moved out of the room, and told

him of it. "Yes, she did know it," said the soldier, "she knew it all the time. We moved out for the same reason."

On Tuesday the man who had rented the room at our house came with the news that his wife was ill and couldn't come at all. I was delighted, though I couldn't say so, because now Nancy could stay with us. But Nancy, who was sitting on the porch with me at the time, was so distressed over the far away lady's illness and so sympathetic that I was ashamed of myself and almost believed she was sorry.

The Pearsons then became a regular part of our family, and everybody was glad. Little Nancy wasn't bad; she was very good indeed, and gave no trouble to anyone. She was beautiful, cute and smart. And Nancy didn't "beat" her. She was a kind, gentle mother, and the children were well cared for. Billy was still good, and now, at the advanced age of three months, had developed a very attractive personality.

One day I asked, "Nancy how on earth did you manage to make that trip all the way from New Jersey with two babies and two suit cases?"

"Well," she said, "people are nice. They will help you when you need it."

She said every time she had to change cars someone took Nancy and someone else the suit cases, and that they always seemed glad to do it, except once. That time there was no one to take Nancy except a very dressed up young lady, who plainly did not want to do it.

She gingerly took the child up, the said disgustedly, "She is wet!"

"Of course she's wet," replied the mother. "All babies get wet."

"And then,' said Nancy, "she took my child up and took her off the train, holding her from her like she was a little piece of dirt!"

Nancy frequently punctuated her conversation with exclamations that seemed dreadful to me, who had been taught that even "Dog gone" was cursing, and that "I declare" was swearing.

"Don't, Nancy!" I said.

"Don't what?" she asked puzzled.

"Don't use such words."

"Why, Mrs. Baker, dont you know Irish people swear worse than anybody in the world? But I'll try to remember not to do it if you don't like it," she said—and she remembered.

Florence brought Sammy over for a little visit one morning while she did some shopping. I introduced him to Big Nancy and Little Nancy, who happened to be in the hall.

Sammy dismissed "Mrs. Pearson" with a glance, but his eyes lingered on Little Nancy.

"I like Nancy," he said, and then suddenly and tempestuously exclaimed, "Grandma, I haven't got any little sister named Nancy! I wish she was my cousin."

"But you have a nice little sister named Betty," I reminded him.

"But I haven't got one named Nancy."

He hurried to the sleeping porch where he knew I kept the toys, and selecting the best, presented them to Nancy. He fed her with cookies and crackers and paid her such homage that all the household came to look. But to Nancy it seemed her just right, and she accepted it contentedly and without comment. In fact, she couldn't comment since the only words in her vocabulary were "Daddy," and "Mamma," and "Bye-bye."

CHAPTER XXXIV
GLADYS AND DELL

Gladys and Dell were two pretty attractive young farm girls, who wanted to try their fortunes in the city. I knew Dell's mother, and it was she who asked me if we could take them into our home. I told her we had only a little upstairs room, but this seemed satisfactory, and they came.

The girls had little trouble in finding positions in stores. They had evidently been instructed by their mothers as to their responsibility toward me, for they told me whenever and wherever they were going out at night, and were careful to come in at reasonable hours.

Dell was little with black curly hair and blue eyes. She was delicate and a little spoiled, evidently having been the family pet. Gladys Letchworth was blonde and larger than Dell. I thought she was pretty and sweet looking, but I was not prepared for the appearance she could make. She knew how to wear her clothes and appeared at times as glamorous as a movie star. I had a little party for the girls and a few neighbors, and when Gladys entered the room, I could almost hear the neighbors gasp. She wore a yellow silk dress and had her hair upswept, and was so beautiful and sophisticated in appearance that I hardly recognized her as the little blond curly haired girl who ran about in knee length dresses. And as for photographs—she knew so well how to pose that I believe if some of her pictures had been sent to Hollywood a talent scout might have come to investigate.

She was so sweet that she soon became a general favorite in the home. Her attitude toward Dell was almost that of a mother toward her child. Anything was all right. If Dell didn't feel like doing her share of the cleaning up, Gladys did it for her. If Dell wanted to wear Glady's dress, she wore it. They were devoted to each other, and easily fitted into the household.

The fall weather was warm and pleasant, and one day Little Florence and Frankie were playing in the yard. They noticed that the door on the upstairs porch was open, and although they knew that they were not supposed to go up alone, they went. It evidently did not occur to them that anyone might be up there. When they entered the door, Gladys and Dell, who were in their room at the

end of the hall with their door open, saw them and called, "Come in and talk to us."

Startled, the children ran out, closed the door, locked it on the outside, (the girls had left the key in the lock outside,) and hurried downstairs. The girls couldn't get out, and the only thing they could do was to call through the window until somebody heard and went up and unlocked the door.

The days went by, and I began to notice that a certain good looking soldier often accompanied them home. Sometimes he came alone and asked for Gladys. Dell's sweetheart was overseas, but I suppose Gladys was fancy free, for we soon saw that the attentions of Robert Cease were not unwelcome. A romance was budding. After awhile Gladys told me that she and Bob were engaged, but that they did not plan to be married until he was out of the service and had a position.

When she went home she told her parents, about it, and they invited Bob to come out to the farm with Gladys and spend a week-end. Poor Bob! He was scared to death. Suppose Gladys' people didn't like him. Suppose anything!

When they returned, Gladys was jubilant. "Mrs. Baker, my folks *do* like Bob," she said.

"Of course they do," I replied, "I knew they would."

"Like who wouldn't!" said Gladys.

As soon as there was a vacant room, Dell and Gladys moved downstairs. Soon afterwards there was a call from the USO for rooms for two couples who were to be here just for the week end. Each couple had a child. We had the sleeping porch and another room, but I had been using the sleeping porch for a place just to put things to get them out of the way, so this room had to be put in order.

I do not remember much about Cpl. and Mrs. Sanderson except that she was pretty and that their child was a little boy about two years old, but I have plenty of reason to remember Cpl. and Mrs. Denver.

Before I had their room ready, the young folks came. I told Cpl. and Mrs. Denver I would have the sleeping porch ready in a few minutes. Mrs. Denver said it would be all right as she wanted to give her baby a bath the first thing. They put their suit cases in, opened one and took out some clothing for the baby. Mrs. Denver also put some toilet articles on the dresser before taking the baby to the bathroom.

While she was out, Dell came to the door and told me that she and Gladys would be glad to sleep upstairs the short time the Denvers would be here, and let them have their room where they could have a

fire in the grate for the baby. She said, however, that they couldn't move their things out until the next morning as they were going out that night, and didn't have time to move them.

"I think that is sweet of you and Gladys," I told her. "And I don't think you need move very many things. Just leave your clothes in the bureau drawers; you can go in there and get them when you want them."

When Mrs. Denver came back I told her what the girls had said, and she seemed to appreciate it. She then put the baby on the bed and turned to the dresser. Suddenly she exclaimed, "My watch is gone!"

As I looked up startled, she said, "Maybe I took it off in the bathroom when I bathed the baby."

She ran to the bathroom, then hurried back excitedly.

"It is not there. I left it in here on the dresser. Who's been in my room?"

"I have been here all the time," I said, "and no one else has been here except Dell, who came to the door to speak to me."

"Who's Dell?" she demanded.

"She is one of our girls who has lived with us for months, and I know she didn't touch your watch. I would know it anyway, but I was looking at her all the time we were talking. Perhaps the watch fell into one of the dresser drawers."

My husband, who heard the commotion, came in and began to help us look for it. Cpl. Denver helped too. I was really getting worried. We took out every drawer, moved the dresser and looked under and behind it. Mrs. Denver suddenly left the room, and rushing into the hall where Dell, Gladys, and Bob were sitting, said, "My watch is gone. Where is it?"

They looked at her in astonishment, and the girls said, "We don't know anything about it."

"I left it on the dresser in my room while I bathed the baby, and when I came back someone had taken it."

Her husband asked her to tell him just where she had been, and when she mentioned the bathroom he said he would go there and look.

"Well, you needn't, for it isn't there," she answered.

But he went to the bathroom and found the watch on the shelf directly over the lavatory where she had bathed the baby. It was in an open soap box and had slipped down by the side of a cake of soap.

"I didn't put it here, and I certainly wouldn't have put it in a soap box," she snapped.

"The shelf is higher than your head," I said. "If you took it off

and put it up on the shelf you wouldn't have seen the soap box, and wouldn't know that you dropped it into it."

She rushed back to the girls in the hall and, facing Dell, shrieked, "Somebody put my watch in a soap box on the bathroom shelf!"

"I can't help it," said Dell.

Gladys told me later that Bob was so mad that she was afraid he was going to start a fight. My husband was angry too, and so was I.

The next morning it had really turned cool, and the girls moved some of their things upstairs and the Denvers moved into their room. Mrs. Denver came to the living room door and asked for a key, saying she wanted to lock her door when she went down town.

"You can't lock the door because it is Gladys' and Dell's room, and they might want something while you are away. You know they moved out only to make you more comfortable; they are not being paid to do it. We do not lock the doors when we go out. No one lives here except those who are just like members of our family, and if you are afraid to leave your things in there you had better get another room," said I.

"What do you mean, another room?" she asked.

"I mean a room somewhere else," I said. "This is not a public boarding house. It is our home, and everybody that lives here is honest. As for your watch being lost last night, it is better for you to be accused of carelessness than for you to accuse someone else of stealing."

"Well, just put that down to my carelessness," she snapped.

But she might as well have locked her door, as Dell and Gladys didn't go into the room for anything. They said they wouldn't have dared go in, as she might accuse them of taking something else.

Cpl. Denver told me his wife often got so angry with him that she wouldn't speak to him for days.

During the day, Gladys came into the kitchen and told me she wanted to explain why she and Dell didn't come home earlier the night before. She said they went to a party at a girl's house, and everybody stayed until twelve o'clock, and they hated to break up the party.

"I think that was all right," I said. "I wouldn't want you to break up the party. That is not like being out somewhere alone with a man until twelve o'clock."

"Humph!" Mrs. Denver, who was in the room at the time, said sarcastically. "Wasn't that a late hour!"

Gladys looked at her in surprise, but said nothing. Later she asked me what I thought about it.

"Don't worry about what she says, Gladys," I told her. "You and

Dell are doing right. Mrs. Denver probably thinks it is all right for young girls to stay out until all hours of the night or morning, but I don't think nice girls do that. You are doing like your mother would want you to do."

After a few days the Denvers went away. My husband said they did one thing he liked—they left.

Dell, never strong, began to break under the strain of standing behind a counter all day, and her mother persuaded her to give up her work and come home. Gladys missed her, but she made friends so easily that she didn't get really lonesome. She and I enjoyed being together, but best of all, she had Bob, and no girl gets lonesome if she has her sweetheart.

The next applicant was a young mother just out of the hospital with a brand new baby. An elderly woman whom I knew phoned me that this young woman was not pleasantly situated and wanted to move. Her husband was in some distant camp, and his sister was with her. They wanted a room together, and the sister would stay here and wait on the mother and baby.

They came, and I thought they were very sweet, but imagine my consternation when in about two days the sister announced that she was going home. She said her husband wanted her to come home.

"Who is going to look after the patient?" I asked.

"Oh, she will be all right. She is getting on very well," she replied.

Then I saw through the "unpleasant situation" they had had at the former rooming house. The sister wanted to leave me to wait on the mother and baby.

I remonstrated, "She isn't even out of bed yet. You told me you would stay and wait on her. Someone will have to cook for her, wash for her and the baby, keep her fire up, and take care of them. I am going to ask you not to go away and leave her here."

All this time the mother said not a word. The sister looked displeased, to say the least. Of course I knew that I was within my rights, but I was quaking in my boots for fear she would go anyway, and that I couldn't help myself, but the next day she packed up, bundled the mother and her week old baby into a taxi and left.

The next folks had a tiny baby too, but the circumstances were very different. These were Pfc. and Mrs. Shelbert Sawyer and their month old son, Shelbert, Jr., who were here for about two months.

The baby was the best little fellow! He seldom cried and seemed happy and content to lie in his carriage. My husband thought he was too good, and that something ought to be done about it, but I think he was well and well fed and had not been accustomed to being held, and was happy in his own quiet little way. His mother

worried some over his name. "Shelbert" seemed such a big name for such a little fellow. She thought of calling him "Bert," and I suggested "Shelly," but when she went away she had never decided what to call him, though his father was calling him "Butch."

As for Mrs. Sawyer herself, her name was *Gladys*. There were only two girls in the house, and both were named Gladys. Little Florence, who was a frequent visitor, had a way of her own to designate them, "the Gladys that has a baby," and "the Gladys that hasn't got a baby."

Florence had always loved Gladys Letchworth, and now she was so enraptured over the Sawyer baby that she wanted to come over every day. She was so devoted to him that I was sorry for her when the Sawyers went away.

Changes now came rapidly. The war in Japan was over, but many of the boys remained in service for months after, especially those overseas. The camp remained in operation for a long time, and we still had soldiers and their wives with us. Bob received his discharge from the army and went home. He had written his mother about Gladys, and she had written a letter welcoming Gladys into their family.

In one week after Bob went home he was back, and brought a lovely diamond ring for Gladys. He came directly to us and wanted to know if we had a room that he could rent. Yes, we had a room, and Bob moved in. Of all the neat and careful and orderly roomers we ever had Bob was the most so. I changed his bed linen and gave his fresh towels, but that was all I had to do for him. Every day his bed was carefully made and every garment was put in place before he left the room.

His father had offered him an excellent position in his business in Rochester, New York, but Bob wasn't ever going home without Gladys. He secured a position in a local store and went to work. Although Gladys' parents like him, her mother could not bear the thought of having her marry and go so far away, so the wedding was postponed.

Christmas came, and with it a box of lovely gifts from Bob's mother for him and Gladys. There was even a present for me, a beautiful handmade handkerchief trimmed with tatting. When I wrote and thanked her for it, I told her about Gladys' sweet disposition and that I knew she would love her, and of course I told her what a fine young man we thought Bob was and how much we thought of him. Later Bob told me his mother wrote him that she had a nice letter from me.

Time moved on, and Bob and Gladys kept hoping.

CHAPTER XXXV
ETHEL, RUTH, AND A WEDDING

Lieutenant John S. Wallace, who had reenlisted and was expecting to be sent to Germany, and his wife, Ethel, were our next couple. They said they thought they would be here for only two or three weeks. The large front bed room was vacant, and they seemed pleased with it.

When the arrangements were practically completed and they had all but taken the room, Ethel said, "We have a little dog. She is good and quiet and clean. You wouldn't mind her, would you?"

I hesitated. I really didn't want a dog here, but I remembered one couple that had a little white dog that slept in their car and gave us no trouble. Also considering the fact that the dog was small and well trained and that they were going to be here only a short time, I agreed.

Sure enough Cindy was just as good as Ethel said she was. She never barked in the house, and if she even started to growl Ethel would say, "Shut up, Cindy," and Cindy would shut up. But—in about two weeks Cindy had nine puppies, and then we had *ten* dogs.

Ten dogs! What should we do? Lieut. Wallace said he would take them to the camp, which he did, but he couldn't bear to leave them, so every time he took them there he brought them back again. They were cute though, and Cindy was *so* proud of them. She was a Scotch terrier, I believe, and black all over. The puppies weren't pure blood and were brindled. One day John put them in socks and hung them on the clothes line and took kodak pictures of them, and it made a very attractive picture. But we made out with the puppies until the Wallaces left, which was in only a few weeks.

A few days after the arrival of John and Ethel, Lt. Floyd Hibdon, a friend of John's, came with him to ask for a room for himself and his wife ,who was expected to arrive soon. I was always glad to have couples who were friends, so we gave them the middle room, the one Shelbert and Gladys Sawyer had recently vacated.

In a few days Ruth came. She was wondrously beautiful, and as sweet and attractive as she was pretty. She told me that they had been married only three weeks, but I did not know then that she had not seen Floyd since the day after their wedding.

One night there was an officer's dance at the camp, and both couples were going. The boys sent orchids, and the girls dressed up and came to the living room for us to look them over. They were truly beautiful, Ethel in a lavender evening gown, and Ruth in pale green.

As Gladys worked down town, the other girls and I were together here a good deal, and we talked and talked—that is, Ethel talked, and Ruth and I sometimes joined in. Ethel said her father was half Indian, and it certainly wasn't hard to believe when she showed me his picture in Indian costume. His name was Jones, though she said her mother had said that one thing certain she never was going to marry a man named Jones.

They lived in New Mexico, but for a time had lived in California. Ethel said there were very few Negroes where she lived, and that they attended the public schools with white students. In her class her senior year was a colored girl named Ethel Jones. When the roll was called, one answered to the name, "Ethel D. Jones," and the other, "Ethel B. Jones." When commencement came, all of the graduates sat on the platform in alphabetical order, so Ethel sat next to the colored Ethel Jones. She said she had gone to the principal and asked to have her name called way down at the end of the list, and not where it belonged alphabetically. The principal refused to make any exceptions, so when the diplomas were presented, the names were called, "Ethel B. Jones," "Ethel D. Jones, etc.

Ruth was indignant. "I wouldn't have gone to that school," she said.

"Oh yes, you would if you had lived there," said Ethel.

"Well, I wouldn't live there then," said Ruth.

One afternoon Ethel dashed into the living room wild with excitement. "I left my pocket book in the car last night, and Johnny drove the car to the camp this morning, and it's been sitting out there all day. I had two hundred and seventeen dollars in it," she said.

She called the camp on the phone and began a search for Lieut. Wallace, but it was sometime before he could be located, as he was somewhere out on the field. After what seemed to her a very long time, he did come to the phone, and she told him about it. He went to the car and found the pocket book in a flap of the lining where she told him she had left it, and there was the money all safe and sound!

Late in January Gladys told me that she and Bob had decided to be married right away. They wanted to be married here in our living room with only the members of the household present.

How interested and excited all of us were! Ethel and Ruth helped me get things ready. We bought wedding gifts, and I bought flowers from the Curb Market and a chocolate layer cake and ice cream.

Gladys' wedding outfit was ready, and I had a new dress, for I

RUTH

was to be matron of honor. Mr. Baker bought a new suit, (he needed it anyway) and was best man.

The time came, and the preacher was here. The guests assembled in the living room, which was decorated with spring flowers, and where a bright cheery fire was burning in the grate. When Bob and Gladys entered the room together, a handsomer couple could not have been found anywhere. Gladys wore a spring suit of light blue wool, a white silk blouse, black shoes, and a beautiful corsage of red rose buds that Bob had bought for her. Bob was *so* handsome in his dark grey business suit. I stood with Gladys, and my husband stood with Bob, while the minister intoned the wedding vows, and then pronounced them "man and wife."

We kissed the bride and shook hands with the bridegroom, and then Ethel and I slipped out and sliced the ice cream and put it on the plates that were all ready for it on the dining table. I was using my wedding silver spoons, the beautiful china plates that had belonged to my husband's mother, and monogrammed table napkins that had been given me for a Christmas present.

The bride and groom, preacher, and wedding guests were invited into the dining room, and a jolly time we had around the table. Then Bob called the preacher into the hall, and gave him some money, I suppose.

Later Gladys put on her pretty black hat and took her new black bag, which matched her shoes, and they went to the home of a friend, where they were guests of honor at a wedding supper. The next day I wrote up the wedding in fine style and had it published in the local and state papers.

Soon after this, Johnny Wallace received orders to go to a Camp of Embarkation to be ready to leave for Germany. He had signed up for reenlistment in the standing army. Floyd had also reenlisted, but was not to go until later. Both of the girls were planning to go to Germany, traveling expenses paid by the government, but they could not go until after the boys were there and located.

Johnny went on with the company, and Ethel took the car and drove alone to the home of her parents in New Mexico. She had Cindy for protection and company, and three of the puppies. Two of them had died, and they had given away the rest. I heard later that before Ethel sailed for Germany, Cindy got lost. I was sorry to hear this, for Ethel loved her like a baby and had planned to take her on her trip to Germany. I had a letter after she reached Germany, and I wrote to her, but never knew whether she received it, as I never heard from her again.

Meanwhile Ruth and Gladys were with us for about two months

longer, and we had a happy time together. Gladys kept her position in the store, but Ruth was here with me most of the time. I had the car, and she and I would go shopping, riding, and to church. She was a member of the Methodist church, and seemed to enjoy going to church meetings with me.

Ruth and Floyd were much in love, and when he was at home they went happily about their affairs, sometimes attending social functions given for officers and their wives. Sometimes when he was at the camp, Ruth would attend classes held for officers' wives. Once she gave me a very attractive pin or brooch that she had made at one of these classes by gluing on tiny shells.

My husband had been thinking about buying a record player so he could have the music he liked instead of so much jazz and blues, etc., that came over the radio. He located one in a music store, one of the kind that is attached to the radio, and bought it. Then came the selection of records. Ruth went with us and we would sit in the little enclosed conservatory in the music store and try the records, buying those that we found we liked. Ruth was so pleased with one album of waltzes that she said, "When I hear you playing these I'll come a-running."

But she didn't stay long enough after we bought the record player to enjoy it much, as the government interrupted our happy life together and sent Floyd to Germany. Ruth gave me a kodak picture of herself wearing a very full skirt that Floyd had sent her from some place in his travels overseas. I think it is one of the prettiest pictures in my collection. She went home, and we had a few letters and cards from her before she sailed. I wrote to her at her address in Germany, but she did not receive my letter, and we did not hear from her again until more than a year later when she was back in the States.

About this time I began to notice signs of uneasiness and unrest with Gladys and Bob. Something was wrong. Gladys explained it to me, saying that Bob wanted to go home, that he wasn't satisfied here, and had never felt that his stay was anything more than temporary. I advised Gladys not to do anything to stand in his way, and told her of a couple that came here once looking for a room, and what a mistake I thought they made.

Their story was this: The man, a veteran, whose name I do not remember, had a good position in a Northern city. He had a six year priority, which was not broken by his being called into service, but would be broken if he left it now. After his discharge from the Army, he and his wife, who had come from near Goldsboro, and their baby went to his home in the North, so he could go back to his work.

They could not find an apartment or house and had to live with his family, where they were crowded and unwelcome. He secured a month's leave of absence and came with his wife to visit her parents. The girl's mother was urging them to stay here, since she knew her daughter had not been happy with his people. But this home was also too crowded for them, and the man and his wife were looking for a room in town, while the man looked for a job. He still thought he ought to go back to his good position at home, but wife and her mother were using every bit of influence they could to get him to get a job here.

I advised him to go back to his work in the North when his leave was over, and advised her to stay here with her mother until he could find a place for them there, and then to go at once.

I learned later that he did get a job here at about a third of the salary he had been getting, and that he had lost his priority in his position at home. "He will probably blame his wife for the rest of his life for making his life a failure," I said.

Gladys listened with intense interest, and then said, "I am going with Bob."

They made their plans and told Gladys' parents about it. Her mother took it better than I had expected. But Gladys was frightened. She knew Bob was his mother's only child, the apple of her eye, and she knew she would have to go to her home to live. But they went. I had a letter from Gladys in which she wrote, "Bob's mother and I get on all right." After awhile they succeeded in getting an apartment near his home.

With Christmas came a tiny announcement—a daughter, June Frances. We sent the baby a little pair of crocheted booties.

One Sunday afternoon about the middle of the next summer, I heard the doorbell ring. There were Bob, Gladys, and little June! How glad we were to see them!" The baby was cute and friendly and seemed to like me. Gladys said Bob's mother thought she was the only baby on earth. "And as for my mother and father and brothers and sisters, they don't let her alone a minute."

"This is the first time they have ever seen the baby, isn't it?" I asked.

"Yes, it is the first time they ever have seen *us* since we left," Gladys replied. It had been a year and three months since they went away. It must have been hard for her at first, but I knew Gladys would have nothing to regret, and that she would always have her husband's love and admiration.

CHAPTER XXXVI
MERRIE

Merrie Brooks was the very appropriate name of the new girl who moved into our home late that summer. And such a name would also have been appropriate for the handsome young flight officers who was her husband, but he had to be content with the prosaic cognomen, "Bill."

This couple and their three and a half year old daughter, Sandra, were with us most of the fall. We loved them—anybody would—but they gave us a hectic time.

Merrie was small, had black curly hair and brown eyes. She was delicate, but full of energy and animation. Bill was tall, red-headed and had the jolliest laugh—not loud or boisterous, but absolutely contagious, and anyone who heard it just forgot his troubles and wanted to laugh too. Sandra was an attractive little girl with long straight yellow hair and big blue eyes. Usually she wore her hair in two pigtails tied with ribbon, but "for Sunday" Merrie rolled it up, and then she had pretty curls. She was as bright as a dollar and wonderfully good—sometimes. Curiosity was the outstanding trait in her character, and her most frequently used words were, "What for?"

The following conversation that I heard in the hall is typical:

Sandra: "Where are you going?"
Other Person: "To the bathroom."
Sandra: "What for?"
Other Person: "To take a bath."
Sandra: "What for?"
Other Person: "So I'll be clean."
Sandra: "What for?"

By this time the Other Person could think of no more reasons and hastened on to take the bath.

Bill loved and admired Merrie extravagantly and kept every possible hardship from her. He seemed to realize that she was not strong and never allowed her to lift anything heavy. He brought the groceries home, helped with the dishes, swept their room, and helped look after Sandra. He was a model husband, but a queer person in many ways.

Having come from a Northern state, Bill and Merrie had formed their opinion of the South even before they arrived, and somehow they seemed to encourage each other in believing that Southerners were people to be pitied. While he was here, Bill wrote an article about the Southern farmer and had it printed in a local newspaper, in which he told a pitiful tale of a poor farmer and his wife, who brought their tobacco into town—seventy-five pounds—which he said represented their entire year's crop— and took it to a warehouse, where they slept on it all night, waiting and hoping that in the morning they could sell it and buy a little food for their half starved children. With much pride he pointed out to me the story in the paper. I was too astonished to say anything at first, but finally managed to tell him that I didn't think the farmers around here were that bad off.

"Oh, you just don't know!" he said. "You should ride out into the country as I have, and see the conditions in which they live. And they are the worst looking people I ever saw."

"Don't you remember, Dear," interrupted Merrie, "that when we drove through the mining sections of Pennsylvania the people looked almost as bad?"

All this time one of our couples, Milton and Edith Overton, both of whom were born and reared on North Carolina farms, were in the room and were listening. Milton had recently been released from the Army, and had located in Goldsboro. He was a handsome well dressed young man, and Edith was a stylish looking girl. I caught a twinkle in Milton's eye, but neither of us said anything.

After Bill and Merrie went to their room, Milton asked me, "Don't you suppose he knew that we came from the farm?"

"I don't think he thought about it," I replied, "or that it occurred to him that my parents might have been reared on the farm, or that I had lived in North Carolina all my life and might have seen as much in that time as he could see in a few weeks."

Some days later Milton said to me that although he was working in Goldsboro now, his ambition was to buy a farm and go back to the country to live. I couldn't help saying: "You had better not. You would look worse than a Pennsylvania miner," and both of us laughed.

Merrie used excellent English, in fact she had a college education, and she was most careful in training Sandra to use correct grammar, but she was exceedingly careless as to the condition of her room or any part of the house that she used. I was obliged to remonstrate with her over the condition in which she left the kitchen or bathroom, but could not be mad with her when she smiled sweetly and

said, "Well, Mrs. Baker, you know I told you I was just a spoiled child."

When Sandra first came, she had many questions to ask before she could get everybody straight. Glancing at my husband and then at me, she asked, "Is that your daddy?"

"Now, she's got you," said Mr. Baker.

"She's *fixed* you," I said.

"I have not,' said Sandra indignantly.

"Mamma, may I have a cookie?" she asked one morning.

"Yes, if you will be a good girl. You will have to earn it."

"Mamma, you didn't have to say 'Dern it'!" said Sandra reproachfully.

When Florence's maid came over with the children one day, I introduced her to Sandra.

"Sandra, this is Mattie," I said.

"What can you do with her?" was Sandra's unexpected reply.

"Merrie said to her one night, "Sandra, I have asked you sweetly to lie down in your bed."

"That's not sweet," said Sandra.

Though Sandra was usually good, she had a high temper, and I was astonished and troubled when she suddenly went into a tantrum over not having her way about some trivial matter. She stamped her foot and shrieked at her parents, "I am going to love somebody else! I am going to kill both of you."

They looked at her helplessly and neither said a word. Merrie told me later that she didn't know what to do, that she had tried punishing her, and that it only seemed to make it worse. I couldn't do anything about it then, but I found out that Sandra could control herself if she wanted to. Like all the other children, she liked to come into our living room. She lost her temper once because I wouldn't let her meddle with the typewriter, and began to stamp her foot.

"I never let anybody stay in my living room who isn't nice," I told her. "If you do like that you will have to go right out." And she stopped.

I used the same argument, or rather threat, with effect on another occasion. Frankie and Little Florence came over to spend an afternoon. They were older than Sandra, which made her more anxious to play with them. The weather was bad, so I got out some toys, and the three were playing with them in my bed room, when Sandra took up one of a set of paper dolls and tore the head off.

"Don't tear the dolls, Sandra," I said.

She caught up another and took the head between her fingers, at the same time looking sideways at me.

"If you tear that doll's head off you cannot stay in here. You will have to go back to your room," I said.

She hesitated a moment, then put the doll down and did not try it again. Merrie and Bill had not been firm enough with her, but she saw that I meant what I said.

She did not hesitate to refuse positively to do what Merrie told her, and Merrie was helpless. I didn't much blame Sandra, for I don't think any child is obedient who doesn't have to be. One day I heard Merrie tell her to pick up her toys.

"I ain't going to do it," said Sandra.

"Sandra!" exclaimed Merrie reproachfully. "You should say, 'I'm not going to do it!' " and *Merrie* picked up the toys.

"It's funny that her hair is straight and blonde," said Merrie, "when mine in curly and black. My mother had six children, and everyone of us has curly black hair and dark eyes except Helen. Her hair is straight and blonde, and her eyes are blue. She is quiet and serious, and the rest of us are talkative. Mother says she always *has* believed Helen got mixed up at the hospital. But Mother seems to love her better than any of the rest of us."

Merrie told the truth when she said she was talkative. She remarked to me after they had been here only a short time, "Bill is so good to me, I love him now."

"You love him *now!* Didn't you love him when you married him? I asked.

"I certainly did not," she replied emphatically. "I couldn't get the man I wanted, so I took Bill."

Then she proceeded to tell me the following story: "I had a position in a large city when I met Bill. I dated him a number of times, and he persuaded me to marry him. He bought a license, and one afternoon we went to a justice of the peace and were married. Bill said something about getting a room in a hotel, but I said, 'I am not going to a hotel. I am going back to my room in the boarding house'."

"'But you have married me, and you ought to go and live with me,' said Bill.

"'I'll live with you sometime, but not now,' I told him.

"I went back to my room and cried and cried. My roommate told me I could have the marriage annulled if I wanted to, but I didn't know what to do. The next day Bill came for me and suggested that we go to the home of his parents, who lived in a suburb of the city. We went, and his folks were real sweet to me. That night his

mother took me to my room. She didn't know that I didn't stay with Bill the night before.

"After she left the room, I looked all around and wondered, 'How can I get out? How can I get away?' There just wasn't any way to escape, and I had to stay. After that I lived with Bill, and he has been so good to me that now I think I love him more than he loves me."

Then fall came, and Jack Frost was just around the corner. The pecans began to drop in the back yard. As soon as Bill noticed this, he asked me to sell him about ten pounds, saying that he wanted to send them home to his people.

"We never sell any," I said, "But you are welcome to pick up some to eat, and perhaps later there will be enough for us to give you some to send home."

I didn't mean by that for him to eat *all* that fell, but that is what he proceeded to do. Every day, while Merrie was busy preparing their supper, Bill and Sandra picked up every nut that fell, and cracked and ate it. We didn't say anything, but one morning after a rain and wind, I went out and picked up several pounds before Bill came back from the camp, and put them away. He didn't know I had them.

On Sunday morning, after I had gone to Sunday School, Bill decided, I suppose, that he was not getting enough pecans, and something must be done about it, so he climbed up on the fence and then to the top of a neighbor's garage and began to gather pecans from the neighbor's tree. An old woman who lived near and was accustomed to working about the neighbor's yard, walked up to the garage and stared at him.

Looking down at her from his lofty perch, Bill said, " I believe all the folks over there have gone to church."

"That's what I thought when I saw you up there," said the old woman.

A young girl who lived in the house on the opposite side of ours came to the fence and sang, "Somebody's going to get in trouble." But Bill didn't care. When I came home Edith told me about it. Of course I was sorry it happened, but I couldn't help it.

Sometime before the Brookses came, a girl name Rita had asked me if we had a coffee maker.

"Oh, yes, several," I replied. "Here are two percolators, and if you prefer, you can use this dripolator."

"I don't know how to use those. I have always used a glass coffee maker," she said.

I didn't have a glass coffee maker and didn't know anything about

it, but was willing to buy one for her. I went to several stores, and finally found a little one, just right for two cups.

Rita was pleased with it and used it regularly as long as she was here. Sometimes I saw it over the burner with the water boiling briskly in the lower part, and sometimes I saw it where she had set it aside, the coffee dripping from the upper to the lower section, but unfortunately I did not ask her to show me just how to use it.

I did not try it until after Rita had left us. One night I wanted to make coffee and Merrie and Edith were using the percolators, so I got out the coffee maker. I filled the lower part with hot water, put coffee in the upper, and set it over the burner. In a minute the water was boiling merrily, but nothing else was happening.

Milton and Bill, who were in the kitchen helping by being entertaining, became interested in the operation. Pretty soon we decided that nothing was being accomplished, and everybody began making suggestions. Bill especially was sure the steam could never pentrate to the upper section because it was escaping through the lip of the lower part.

"Are you sure there wasn't a little rubber that fitted over this," he asked.

"No, I am not sure, but I never saw one," I said.

"I didn't either," said Edith, "and I was in here lots of times when Rita used it."

Merrie and Milton also had suggestions, and I tried to carry out all of them. Sandra wanted to help too.

"I can make it work if you will get me a little rag to stop up this place," said Bill.

I brought some sterilized gauze, and Bill cut a strip and wrapped it around the top of the little pitcher shaped section.

"Keep Sandra out of the way," he kept telling Merrie, but Sandra didn't want to be kept away, and tried to get right under the hot thing Bill was working on.

Finally it was ready, and while everybody watched intently, Bill set it over the burner. Still no result except that the clear water began to boil again.

"I know what it is," said Bill. "You have to pour this hot water over the coffee and let it drip down into the lower part."

"When you pour it in, what is it going to drip into?" asked Milton.

"Back into this," said Bill.

"I'd like to see you pour it out of the pitcher and catch it in the pitcher at the same time," said Milton.

"Give me one of those little bowls," I said, "and we will let it drip into that."

I set the part that had the coffee in it in the bowl and poured the boiling water into it.

"Now how are you going to get it out?" asked Bill. "I was going to pour the water into the bowl, put this part over the pitcher and pour the water over the coffee."

"I guess you are right," said I, and I tried to take hold of the cup shaped glass, which was full of scalding liquid, to lift it out of the bowl, but there was no handle, and I couldn't do it.

"I'll take it out if it scalds me," said Bill, and he lifted it out and set it in its proper place over the glass pitcher.

So intently had we watched all this that I had completely lost sight of some toast that I had in the oven until the odor of burning bread began to fill the room.

"Now I have burnt up Mr. Baker's toast," I said, as I disgustedly pulled it out of the oven.

While I made more, the coffee was dripping nicely and really looked good. Everything was going well, and Bill looked around and said, "I really had forgotten to drink my cup of coffee."

"Well, I have poured it into the sink," said Merrie, who had been washing her dishes.

Just at that time my husband came to supper, and I told him that while Bill was helping me make coffee Merrie had poured his out.

"Give him a cup of ours," said Mr. Baker.

"There is only one cup left after all the pouring back and forth that we have done," said I.

"Just make another cup for him. It will take you only a minute," said my kind and considerate husband.

"That's what you think!" said I. "You ought to have been in here."

After supper I looked in the box the coffee maker came in, and found printed directions for making coffee by dripping it just like we had finally done after all the experimenting.

After a few weeks Bill was ordered to another camp. In spite of many things, we were sorry for them to leave. I bought a pretty little doll for Sandra, gave Merrie a box of candy, and—gave Bill the bag of pecans that I had hidden in the closet! Bill and Merrie gave me something that in those days of rationing was a real treasure—a five pound bag of sugar.

CHAPTER XXXVII
THE VETERANS

Though soldiers were now returning from overseas, our own son and many others were kept in occupied countries for many months. It began to look as if they never would come home. After serving in England and France, Egerton was sent with a large group to the Philippines. Three ships sailed from France toward America with the intention of going through the Panama Canal and on across the Pacific. Egerton was in the first ship, and this had passed through the locks when news came of the American victory in Japan. This ship went on toward its destination, the Philippines, but the others were ordered to turn about and return to the States, where the boys soon received their discharges from the Army.

Someone had given my husband a record called "A Tiny Little Voice." Whenever I heard it I thought of Frankie with his "Daddy" "over there," and even yet, though Egerton has long been safe at home with his family, I cannot hear this record without a feeling of sadness. I quote the words, though the tune is needed to give the full meaning.

"God bless my Daddy, who's over there,"
Said a tiny little voice in a tiny little prayer.
"Please tell my Daddy he must take care,"
Said a tiny little voice in a tiny little prayer.
"When the sandman is near, Mommy turns out the light.
Oh, I wish he were here, he could kiss me goodnight.
I hope in dreamland we'll meet somewhere,"
Said a tiny little voice in a tiny little prayer.

From the Philippines Egerton sent Ruth several boxes of interesting things, a pair of wooden shoes with elaborate carving on the sides of the heels, queer knives, and a luncheon set woven of some kind of grass. After he had been in the Philippines for several months his group was sent to Japan, where they remained for a long time. He sent Ruth the most beautiful laquered bowls and vases, jewelry boxes, luncheon sets, a lovely kimona, and many other things.

Time wore on, and we had no idea when he would come home, but one night after my husband and I had retired, we heard the front door open, then a step in the hall and a tap at our door.

"That's Egerton," said my husband.

The door opened, and he came in and quickly to the side of the bed, and in an instant I was in my son's arms.

Now that the war was over and continuation of the camp was doubtful, we thought that our rooms would not be needed, and we considered arranging two or three of them into a little apartment for a couple or a couple and baby so we wouldn't be lonesome, and of keeping the rest of the house for ourselves. But we had not reckoned on the veterans.

Men were being rapidly discharged from the Army, and veterans and their wives were looking for jobs in town and for apartments or rooms in which to live. Though Goldsboro was not as badly overcrowded as some other cities in the state since the Johnson Field Homes housed nearly three thousand people, yet there was a great demand for rooms, and we had a number of these couples in our home.

Local and state papers were full of want advertisements in which veterans begged for rooms. One read: "Veteran will gladly drown three year old daughter if some kind soul will rent apartment or house."

The others were not sarcastic, but the large number that appeared showed a drastic picture of the most critical housing shortage in the history of our country.

Many of the veterans who came to Goldsboro had worked on the farm before entering the service, but somehow going back to the farm didn't appeal to them. Life in the city seemed much more attractive. Some of the wives had held jobs in town too, and felt no inclination to go back to farm life and its accompanying inconveniences. These boys had no experience in office work, clerking, or anything they could do in town, and with few exceptions after a few months of small or no salaries, failure at this or that, they decided to go home and live in tenant houses on their fathers' farms.

One of these couples was Howard and Annie Evans. Annie was a tall goodlooking blond about eighteen years old. Howard was older and was rather small and delicate looking. He secured a job as an unskilled laborer in a foundry. Hour after hour he stood and worked over steaming hot metal, while a door at his back stood open to keep down the blistering heat. Into this door blew a wintry wind. As a consequence Howard soon fell sick and narrowely escaped pneumonia. He could not return to this work, and there was only one thing to do—go back to the farm.

Back they went, cured of town life. Some months later, I saw an announcement in a paper of the birth of their daughter.

Another couple was Elwood and Pattie Johnson. They were young

and nice looking. Pattie had worked in town all the time Elwood was in service and had kept and used their car. Now Elwood felt that it was his place to support the family, and he wasn't going to have his wife working. Pattie begged and cried, but Elwood was firm—she should *not* work, though he had no job and couldn't find one.

They had the car and enough money to pay a week's rent in advance and buy a few groceries, and that was all, Elwood wanted to clerk in a store, but the only work the employment office had to offer was manual labor. I asked him if he were drawing unemployment compensation from the government.

"No," he replied. "I can't do that, for if I do, I will have to take any kind of work they give me."

"You would not," I said. "As I understand the G. I. Bill of Rights, you take 'suitable work.' And twenty dollars a week is a whole lot better than nothing."

"He began to look interested, and Pattie was enthusiastic. I asked a veteran, who I knew had drawn this compensation, to explain it to him. Elwood then applied for and received the twenty a week, and this gave them shelter and food for the remainder of their stay in town. Finally, however, Elwood despaired of ever finding work here, and they went back to his father's farm where a little house near his parents' home was waiting for them.

Next came Tommy and Sarah Burroughs. Tommy had secured a job as a painter, and Sarah, a place in a local store. After they had been here a week or two, one morning Sarah blew in.

"What are you doing home this time of day?" someone asked.

"Tommy has lost his job, and so I quit," she replied.

"You quit because Tommy lost his job? That sounds like a funny reason," said the other girl.

"Well, if he isn't going to work I don't see any use for me to work either," she replied.

It seemed to me that it was more necessary than ever for Sarah to work, but she knew what she was doing. Before the day was over they had packed up and had gone back to the farm.

But not all had to give up and go home. We had a successful insurance man and his wife, a telephone company employee, baseball players and others. Among the veterans wives were three who were happily married to their second husbands. Two of the first had been killed in combat, one of them in an air battle. The third girl lost her husband through the changes that came over him in the war and improper readjustment after the war, which ended in divorce.

I rejoiced to see her happy with the kind young man she afterwards married.

One day a young woman, accompanied by a small girl, asked for a room here just for the week end. She gave her name as Mrs. Terry Smith, and said the little girl's name was Rosemary.

This was just at the time that newspapers all over the country were filled with stories of the disappearance of little Terry Taylor of Charlotte and her nurse, Rosemary Johnson. "Could this be the missing child and her nurse?" I asked my husband.

True, in the kidnaping case the child's name was Terry and the nurse's Rosemary, but perhaps they had changed around just for a blind. We were almost believing that we had found the missing pair. Still, they did not look like the pictures in the papers, and this woman was every bit of thirty-five years old, while the papers said the nurse was nineteen.

They were sitting with us in the living room when the evening paper was brought in. The story was again on the front page, and Mrs. Smith laughed and said, "It is strange that they have the same names as my little girl and I have. I have wondered if anyone would think she was the lost child and that I had kidnaped her."

Not just because she said that, but by putting two and two together and comparing the pictures and detailed descriptions in the papers, we realized that these could not be the people.

The end of the war was by no means the end of experiences!

CHAPTER XXXVIII
THE BALL PLAYERS

In April the baseball season opened for the first time since the beginning of the war, and most of the players were veterans. Some were married and had their wives and babies with them. Two couples, Dan and Mildred Seiler and Norman and Aline Naccari, came to live with us. The Seilers had a little boy, Danny, who was almost three years old, and the Naccaris, a son, Wayne, who was about a year and a half old. These were two of the most attractive children we ever had in the house, and we had lots of fun with them.

Mildred had big grey eyes like Dorothy Sexton, and looked like the movie actress, Vivian Leigh. Aline was blond, and both of the girls were pretty. The boys were good natured and pleasant to have around. But the children! They were the outstanding members of the household.

The first morning after they arrived, when my husband came out of his room, Danny said, "Good morning, Mr. Baker, I was just waiting for you." From that minute he was Mr. Baker's boy. Naturally Wayne didn't say anything like that, but he was so sweet and winsome anybody would have loved him. He and I were pals from the very first. He had just learned to walk and was improving fast; and whenever I entered the room he began running around in circles. Aline said he never did it at any other time—that it was an accomplishment he saved just for me. Another unusual thing he liked to do was to get into the lint and dust when anyone was sweeping a room. To keep him from rolling around in the dust in front of a broom, we had to put the little fellow in his room and close the door. You might think he would cry at this, but not Wayne! If he could get what he wanted or do what he wanted to he was pleased, but if he could not he turned his attention to something else and uttered no complaint.

The girls went to the ball games almost every night and took the babies. Of course this kept the children up late at night, but they were well adjusted to the hours, sleeping late in the morning and taking naps in the afternoon. Aline said Wayne played contentedly between the seats in the grandstand.

As for Danny, he wouldn't have missed a game for anything! He

was wild with enthusiasm over baseball and lived for the day to come when he would be old enough to get out there and play ball himself. Whenever Dan went to the bat, Danny was beside himself with excitement and would jump up and shout, "Hit that ball, Dan Seiler!" And the fans seated nearby would be as much interested in Danny as in Dan.

And Dan would hit the ball! He was one of the best players on the team, and his name was one of those most frequently heard on the radio or seen in newspapers.

At home next day Danny would go into the back yard and play a whole game of ball alone. He would hold a bat (some stick he had picked up) all ready for the ball. Then he would strike hard, throw the stick down and race to some point that he had decided upon for first base. His efforts to steal a base or run to second when an imaginary batter struck the ball were worthy of any ball player's emulation. Sometimes he would knock a home run and make the entire circuit and then come up to the home base with as triumphant a look on his face as if he were Babe Ruth himself. Sometimes Dan went out and played with him.

But baseball was only *one* of his accomplishments. His adoring father spent hours teaching him songs, which Danny had not the slightest hesitation to sing for anyone who asked him. One of his favorite songs was the following:

I went to the animal fair.
The birds and the beasts were there.
The monkey he got drunk
And sat on the elephant's trunk.
The elephant sneezed and fell on his knees,
And that was the end of the monk-ty monk.

One day Florence phoned and asked me to bring her the car. I took Danny, who was playing in the front yard, with me. Florence and one of her neighbor's, Mrs. Jeffrey, were going down town. I asked Danny to sing for Mrs. Jeffrey, which he promptly did. She was so pleased that she gave him a toy balloon that she happened to have in her pocket book. It was not inflated, but Danny knew how to manage it.

After we got home Danny asked me, "Who was that lady who gave me this balloon?"

"That was Mrs. Jeffrey," I said. "She gave it to you because you sang so nicely for her."

"I'm not bashful," said Danny.

Then Dan hurt his leg. I do not remember whether it was hurt in one of the games or not, but he couldn't walk. While sitting or

DANNY

lying on his bed, he and Danny would play imaginary games of ball. They didn't use any bat or ball, but Dan would be the pitcher, and Danny would do all the batting and running.

While Dan was still laid up, Danny's birthday came around. Mildred wanted him to have a little party, but as she did not want Dan to be left out she had it in their bed room. The only guests were those who lived in the house. All of us brought presents. Mildred had decorated the table and had arranged cups of ice cream and cakes on it. We stood around, since it wasn't possible for everybody to sit down.

Danny dropped his spoon on the floor, but not disturbed over it, picked it up and resumed his eating.

"Look at you, eating with a spoon that you dropped on the floor. You are three years old now. You are old enough to know better," said Dan.

"Oh, shut up, you old grouch!" said Mildred.

This struck Danny as something very delightful to say, so he turned to Dan and shouted, "Shut up, you old grouch!"

There was nothing anybody could do but laugh, though Mildred looked like maybe we expected her to do something about it. But, relieved at the way the guests took it, she laughed too and let it go.

The time came for the Naccaris to leave. Norman had been released to another league. We were sorry to lose them, and I remember that when they drove away Mildred was sitting on the porch crying.

Bob DeCamp, one of the outstanding pitchers of the local team, hearing that the Naccaris were leaving, came at once and engaged their room. He had not been able to find a place for his wife and child, and they had not yet come to Goldsboro.

Mrs. DeCamp's name was Arliss, and they had an eighteen months old daughter named Karen. They were to arrive on a night train, so I had the room ready and told Bob to come on in, as I knew we would be in bed at that time. Around one or two o'clock in the morning, I heard the front door open and a spritely little voice saying, "Da, da, da, da."

I knew their baby was a girl, but somehow in my sleep I suppose I thought all babies were boys, since they had been so predominant here, and I murmured sleepily, "I like that little fellow." And the next day I found that I surely did "like that little fellow."

Karen was a beautiful baby with big brown eyes like her mother. She was a little shy at first, but in a few days was at home with everybody and soon became the pet of the household.

I thought Mildred and Arliss would enjoy each other and go to

the games together like Mildred and Aline had, and I am sure they would have, but in a week after the DeCamps arrived it became a certainty that Dan could play no more ball that season on account of his injured leg, so they went home. I heard, however, that the next year Dan went to a higher league. But just before they left, a new companion for Arliss came and stayed with us most of the remainder of the summer.

For some months the camp had been so inactive that we had had no soldiers in the house and did not expect to have any more, but about the first of July a young lieutenant, a student pilot, who had signed up for the standing army and was located at Seymour Johnson Field, and his wife came to live with us. They were Graham and Sue Montgomery, a very lovable couple.

Sue was small and blonde and "expecting." She was intensely interested in her layette and worked on it most of the time. In fact, the entire household was called in to make suggestions and give advice as to how long the night gowns should be, which was the most suitable kind of lace for each little slip, etc. Arliss and I felt a personal interest in each little garment. Sue showed us some dainty little articles that some friends had given her at a "stork shower" before she came here.

Sue had a big beautiful cat named "Boots." He was white with dark brown markings. He was thin, not having fared well at the last place they had lived, but we gave him excellent fare and he began to show signs of improvement. A big black and white cat that frequented the neighborhood considered Boots an intruder and resented his presence here. The first time he entered the yard he must have given Boots the cold shoulder or worse, but I was rather chagrined that Boots fled in dismay and ran up the back steps crying to be let in. Sue opened the screen door, and Boots, once safe on the inside, peered out while the big bully walked away in triumph.

Meanwhile Boots made friends with a little black cat that lived next door. But that was just the trouble! Tom didn't want Blackie to like Boots, and was determined to keep him away from her and in the ranks of an outsider. But in a few days, as good food and a feeling of belonging came over him, Boots begans to stand up for himself when Tom came around.

One morning Boots and Blackie were in our back yard when Tom appeared in the adjoining yard. Boots went to the fence and stood his ground. Tom began to make a yowling sound and Boots became bolder and climbed up in the fence. Blackie crept up behind him and gave him a slap on his rear end, which knocked him through the fence into the other yard. He made a leap for Tom, and one of

the biggest cat fights followed that I ever saw. Boots came out victorious, though he suffered a cut over his eye and was minus some of his fur. After that when Tom came into the neighborhood he watched for Boots fearfully and ran away at the first sign of a threat from the latter. We now not only loved Boots but we were proud of him.

The long summer days passed happily with Arliss, Karen and Sue here with us. Arliss and Sue planned their meals and worked together, and Karen played contentedly with her toys or with some of those that I always had on hand. She loved to play in our rooms, and would run into the living room and through the door into our bed room and out into the hall and back into the living room, making the circuit again and again. She was lively, pretty, and at the same time obedient.

Day in and day out we watched with interest the successes of our boys, Graham's air plane flights and his increasing number of hours in the air, and Bob's baseball victories. Bob was an outstanding pitcher, and showed such real prowess that before the end of the season he was signed up with the New Orleans league. He was the idol of the small boys of the town, and some of them would say to me breathlessly, "Does *Bob DeCamp* really live at your house?" It was as though they asked if the President of the United States lived at my house, and it added several notches to my importance in their estimation. Well, we really were proud of our boys.

Sue, in a talkative mood one day, told me about her wedding trip. She said Graham had engaged the bridal suite in a hotel for the night following the wedding. They were delayed and did not reach the hotel until after midnight, and the suite had been given to someone else.

At the desk Graham contended that he had reserved it and wanted it. The clerk explained that if a room reserved was not taken by midnight they cancelled the reservation. By this time onlookers realized the situation and gathered around with interest and amusement. Graham and Sue became very much embarrassed and, anxious to get away from the curious crowd, took another room.

In the night Sue said she awoke and found that she was alone. Graham was not on the bed. Frightened, she reached for the bed lamp and snapped on the light. Graham was asleep on the floor!

"Graham," she called, "what is the matter? What are you doing on the floor?"

"Oh, you know we don't sleep on beds like this in the barracks. I just couldn't go to sleep," he said.

About the middle of August Graham and Sue left us. We had had

a happy time together and were sorry for it to end. It was the end of more things than we knew of. Graham was the last soldier we ever had in our home. A handful of soldiers were kept at the camp for the next several months, and then the camp with its millions of dollars worth of buildings was declared surplus. The great airport with its miles of concrete runways remains, and it is yet to be seen what will become of it.

We gave Sue a present for the little expected member of the family. In October came a tiny card announcing the birth of a son.

Bob, Arliss, and Karen were with us until the baseball season closed in September. On the morning that they left I said, "Arliss, you never did get me the kodak pictures, and I haven't a picture of any of you except one of Bob that I cut out of a newspaper. I have some films in my kodak, and I want to take some pictures now."

"I don't know whether there will be time, she said. "We have already called a taxi."

"Maybe we can get them," I said.

They posed in a group in front of the house, and I snapped them. Then I took Karen alone, standing in the walk. The taxi still had not arrived, so I went into the house for a little chair that Anne had had when she was a baby, and Arliss placed Karen in it. Just then the taxi drove up, and Karen and the chair fell over on the grass together, and I snapped the picture. It turned out to be the best one of all.

CHAPTER XXXIX
MARA

This chapter I can hardly bear to write, and yet, if I did not, my story would be neither true nor complete.

A young couple and their nine months old baby daughter came to live with us for a few weeks. The young man was handsome, educated, and *so* enthusiastic about his work. His wife was beautiful, accomplished, and had the sweetest disposition of almost anyone I ever knew. The baby was too dear for words.

All day long this girl sang while at her tasks. She accompanied gaily every song of the radio with her beautiful voice or crooned softly as she rocked her baby to sleep. The baby was friendly and loved everybody. She gladly showed her little accomplishments—"pat-a-cake" or "rock-a-bye"—when prompted by her adoring mother. She played happily in her crib or in her pen in the yard.

On one particular day I watched her through the window as she laughed and crowed in her pen. A black and white kitten drew near, then narrowed its slender body until it slipped through the bars into the pen. The baby reached out and touched its furry back, then drew back. Again she reached out, this time grasping a handful of fur. The kitten ran out, and the baby watched until it disappeared through a neighbor's fence. A big yellow butterfly flew down, poised for a moment on the baby's hand, then flew away when the baby raised her hand to gaze in wonder and delight.

That night the little girl fell asleep happily in her mother's loving arms. The next morning her spirit had flown away like the beautiful yellow butterfly. The physician said she died of a gland affection of the throat.

In a few days the young couple returned to their home in a far away city. The memory of that morning is bitter, but the memory of the baby is sweet. And her name was Mara.

CHAPTER XL
THE ENGLISH WAR BRIDES

Thousands of American soldiers who were located in other countries during the war had married there, and had then been sent back to America, leaving their wives in the foreign countries. The United States government began making arrangements for these girls to come to this country and be with their husbands. A vast majority of these wives, "war brides," they were called, were from England. Practically every day there were stories and pictures in the papers about some English war bride who had come to North Carolina. People welcomed them, gave them parties, and did all they could to make them feel at home.

We had one such couple in our own home for a few weeks until they could find a house. The girl, who was very attractive and smart, had served in the Army herself before her marriage. They had two little children, both of whom were born before the mother left England. The man, taking advantage of government benefits for soldiers, was studying law at the University of North Carolina six months in the year, and working as a skilled carpenter the other six to take care of his wife and children.

But it seemed that at least one man didn't approve of the English brides, and a letter appeared in the "Peoples' Forum" of the News and Observer on January 13, 1947, written by William I. Turner of Magnolia, which brought a storm of protest, especially from the brides themselves.

Mr. Turner's letter was headed "English Brides." He wrote: "To the Editor: Listening to a news broadcast, I was told how English brides were complaining how they were treated in the USA. I suppose they think we over here are going to hang out signs just to recognize them only. Well, I for one would like to emphasize to these "limey parasites" that the poorest family here in the USA has more comfort, more freedom than 75 per cent of all the limeys. Just because Roosevelt gave them everything but our country, they seem to have the idea that if they come over here we will give it to them. The English seem under the impression that their women have something the American women don't have. Well, they have, and that is the gift of make believe. We over here don't pretend to have that

we do not have, and pretending is only for the ignorant, of which the English are very much in abundance of—that is, ignorance.

"Why doesn't the American soldiers wake up to the fact that ten English women all put together wouldn't ever hold a light to the intelligence of a small town American girl, and I mean one from the God-beloved South at that."

Then came the replies, which I copied from the files of the News & Observer. The first one, dated January 19, said: "I am an English girl. I have learned to love America. I think the Southern hospitality great.

"I found the stores here in Wilmington, N. C., where I live, full of lovely things quite different from England after six years of war. I love each and every one I have met, and they seem to love me in return.

"Talking about putting out signs to recognize the English girls, there was a sign put out for me, but it was a sign of welcome.

"Now, Mr. Turner, have you ever had bombs to fall on your home; did you ever spend sleepless and hungry nights in an air raid shelter? No! You didn't! Now, perhaps you will understand why the poor people in England haven't as much comfort as you.

"I am sorry you have the wrong impression of the English girls. It's a pity you didn't see some of your boys in England; but thank God I found one good and true G. I.

"I want you to know that I am not a parasite. I always do my share of the work willingly and I hope I have the opportunity of meeting you some day so I can change your very cruel impression of English girls."

This letter was signed "Sheelah J. Sawyer."

The next was not quite so mild. It was dated January 22, and was from Nancy E. Murray of Middlesex.

"To the Editor; Being an 'English bride,' I felt I couldn't let Mr. Turner's letter under that heading, in your January 13 issue, pass without a few comments.

"I have often read Mr. Turner's numerous letters to your paper and thought of him as a harmless old gentleman without much else to do but write to the press. But now—well, I wouldn't like to state my opinion.

"I am glad that, as yet, I have not met any Americans such as he is. I have always been treated very kindly and found people friendly and willing to help. I would like to inform Mr. Turner that we don't expect any 'Welcome' signs hung out, nor anything else but just to be left in peace to live with the men we love. But we don't consider ourselves any better (or worse) than American women.

"I don't know anything about Mr. Turner, but his letter gives the impression that he hasn't traveled much further than his own back yard, and displays quite a lot of ignorance, which he dumps on everyone English. When he says 'the poorest families in USA have more freedom and comfort than 75 per cent of all the limeys' he is just talking through his hat. Both countries have their restrictions on 'freedom.' Electricity and telephone services, housing schemes, roads and drainage, health, etc., are just a few of the many things I could quote in which England is far ahead of America, and all go for making more comfort.

"The last paragraph of Mr. Turner's letter isn't worthy of comment, but just a plain case of 'sour grapes'."

But the third letter, which was from Pamela Ivey of Pinetops and was dated January 27, touched me more than the others, and I felt after reading it that I must write to her. Mrs. Ivey wrote;

"I want to answer William Turner's letter in your January 13 issue.

"As one of the 50,000 odd English brides in the United States, I want to put Mr. Turner straight; he has his statistics slightly mixed. I didn't know Roosevelt gave us anything that any soldier's wife wasn't entitled to, and don't try to tell one of the bulldog breed that they have the habit of pretending or being ignorant. I'm sorry, but it's Mr. Turner that is ignorant. I have traveled all over the British Isles, and I know 90 per cent of English folk have more comfort and freedom than the average family here.

"Do you realize that almost every family in Great Britain has running water and modern plumbing, cook and work by electricity, and has a telephone? I read in my London paper only a few weeks ago that the horse is almost a thing of the past on farms, and that over 95 per cent of farms are mechanical. We don't have to run health schemes even after years in and out of air raid shelters; our health and infant mortality rate are the finest in the world. We don't even have to arm our police. We don't have swanky cars, but we have comfort, and we are free to do and say as we please. We just don't shout about our golden isle.

"Right now my countrymen are living under terrible conditions, but then we had cities burnt to the ground, and we have a gigantic task of rebuilding. Maybe the 'limey parisites' that, like myself, came just because we fell in love with Americans will help to bring the New World up to the standard of the Old World, where 'ain't' is not part of the language, where the poorest citizen has full medical attention free, where every child has a pint of milk free daily, where

parents get a government grant for every child, and where everyone receives a pension at 65.

"Most of the wives that have returned to Britian, and those doing the complaining find they cannot live under conditions their husbands seem quite content with—their intelligence is far above that. Were they your ancestors that threw the tea overboard at Boston, Mr. Turner?"

I did not think it fair for this girl to have to feel so bitter toward all America because one man had written a letter against the English brides, so I wrote to her.

"Dear Mrs. Ivey," I said, "I do not blame you for resenting Mr. Turner's letter in the "Open Forum of the News and Observer about the English brides. I think it was inhospitable and evidently based on some isolated cases. But Mr. Turner is only one individual, he is not a chosen representative of the American people, and I think it is a pity that you have let his letter give you a bitter feeling towards America and Americans in general.

"England is our mother country, and the American people are proud of their English ancestry and are glad to have the English people as their allies. President Roosevelt, who was chosen by the people of the United States as their leader and representative, welcomed the English brides, and I feel sure that in this he voiced the sentiments of the American people.

"It is fine that England has free medical attention for her people, a pint of milk for every child and the other advantages you mentioned, but do you not think that by comparing the ages of the two countries the United States has made pretty good progress? The United States is a new country. She has been independant only about 170 years, while England is hundreds of years old.

"You decided, on account of your love for a young American soldier, to leave your home and come here and become an American citizen. You, no doubt, found many things that you did not like as well as you did those in England, but would it not be well for you to try to help this country of your adoption to become more like you think it ought to be instead of criticizing it so severely?

"When the early settlers came to America from England, they had to cut down trees and build log cabins to live in. They left comfortable homes in England, but for love, or religion, or some principle, they thought it worth the hardships. The women had a hard time of it, but they helped their husbands develop a new country that was needed because there were too many people in the other half of the world.

"How glad would those pilgrim women have been for anything

like the little four or five room house that one English bride some months ago scorned, and left her husband after one look at the house, saying that all she wanted was to go away! The house was without lights and running water and was located on a little farm. The young man had not doubted that his bride would be glad to share his home with him, and she would if she had really loved him.

"Suppose all the people of the United States (except the American Indians) should find that 'their intelligence is far above,' as you expressed it, living in America, and would return to the homes of their ancestors, and leave this country to the Indians, don't you think the Europeans would be a little overcrowded and would have a hard time furnishing free medical attention, a pint of milk a day and a government grant for every child and a pension for all over sixty-five?

"No, it is necessary for the people to stay here and help make this a better land for our children and grandchildren.

"And as for the 'ain't' that is so freely used in the United States, is the grammar used in England always free from errors?

"I am an elderly woman, have four children, and eight grandchildren. We are happy in our country, and would like for you to be happy with us here. I would be glad to hear from you, and since Pinetops is not so far from Goldsboro, perhaps you will come over some time, and if you do I would be glad to have you come to see me. We would be good friends, I think."

In a few days the following reply came:

"Dear Mrs. Baker, I want to thank you for your kind letter that I received yesterday. I have had many letters from every corner of the state, but your offer of friendship touches me deeply. I did something I had never thought of before and never intend doing again—writing to a newspaper, for I am happy and contented in this my new country, but I guess Mr. Turner's letter hurt me, and I felt that I had to hit back. I know I would never have written it had I known that he was an elderly man and had never traveled. Britain's back is quite broad enough to stand the knocks, but then I did write, and by the looks of my mail a great many people felt the same way as I did.

"Don't think I haven't a love for this country, Mrs. Baker. I served Uncle Sam throughout the war as a flight nurse, and I brought nearly 2000 boys wearing 'U.S.A.' on their lapels out of Germany, France, and Austria. That is how I met my husband, and of course I never regret it. He told me we would have a hard time as he enlisted straight from school, but we both felt we could take the bad as well as the good, and neither of us minded how hard we had to

work. Now in a couple of weeks we are leaving my in-laws to go to a small farm we have rented. My husband is working at night now, putting new floors in the house and sheet-rocking the walls. We are both excited like a couple of school children, and my baby daughter will be ours alone for the first time. Selfish, I know!

"Please, Mrs. Baker, will you come and visit our first little home after two years and more of trying to be together? It will be humble, but we saved hard to have comfort, and I know we will be happy. I wish we had a car that we might visit Goldsboro, and we might one day. I will write to you as soon as we are straight if you will allow me to, and then maybe you and some of your family will visit us. I would like it so much.

"I have many girl friends now in the U.S.A., but they are scattered over the forty-eight states, and traveling takes time, and with a baby it's trying, as I discovered crossing the Atlantic.

"Two English girls who came to live near here have had to go back home, and not because they were afraid of work. One of them the doctor warned that she hadn't long to live. She was unhappy and losing weight, and her husband refused to allow her to leave the house. She didn't even see our nearest town, Rocky Mount, in the nine months she was here. I believe difference in religion caused the rift. The other girl found herself married to a man who was in and out of jail, and when he was on the outside, he was usually too drunk to care. Of course I know these are exceptions, but they are the girls who have returned, and I'm sorry to say will give a wrong impression of America. I hope girls like myself, who married wonderful, thoughtful and understanding men, can go back and put them wise.

"Thanking you once again for writing, I am

Yours,

Pamela E. Ivey."

Our friendship continued, and two years later, though I had still never seen her, Mrs. Ivey wrote me: "I was almost a stranger in this country at that time, and spiteful remarks like that letter hurt deep, but now I am completely settled, and it would take a lot to worry me. I only hope I didn't go off the deep end too bad in my reply to you, you were so kind and understanding. Up to now we have no way of going anywhere, but we still have hopes and plenty of faith in the future, and I assure you when we do start on a few trips we will look you up."

CHAPTER XLI
CONNIE AND RALPH

Our son, George, and his wife, Florine, lived in a pretty little white house with five rooms, situated in one of the best residential sections of the city. They could not well spare any part of their house, but at the peak of the camp when the crowding was worst, they arranged their dining room as a bed room and offered it to the USO. A young couple, Ralph and Connie Monroe of Indianapolis, moved in. Ralph's rank was that of Private First Class, and he was connected with the School of Airplane Mechanics. Connie was grateful for the room and was so lovable and helpful that Florine felt fully recompensed for giving up her dining room. The two girls cooked together, worked together, ate in the kitchen, and were the best of friends.

"When the war is over, we want you and George to come out to Indiana to visit us at our home," Connie often said and Florine promised to come.

After the war, George became interested in flying, and after taking lessons at the civilian airport, bought a small airplane. Of course I was uneasy; what mother wouldn't be? I would run out into the yard when I heard a plane, and if the plane was a yellow one, I knew George was in it. After receiving several kinds of licenses, he began taking Florine and the children to ride, and finally, would you believe it? I went up with him.

Somehow I felt not the slightest uneasiness as we sailed over and around the city, looking down and picking out different locations—the business district, the housing projects, the small farms nearby.

Then George and Florine took long trips, once going to Florida, Texas, and Mexico. At another time, George said he wanted to go to a big airplane convention that was to be held in a middle western state.

"Let's go to see Connie and Ralph while we are there," said Florine.

"That's just what we'll do," said George, and they wrote that they were planning to come. Their letter brought a prompt and enthusiastic reply. Connie told them how she and Ralph had missed them and how glad they would be to see them again.

"Wire us when to expect you, and we will meet you at the airport," she wrote.

After the convention, George called Ralph and gave him the expected hour of their arrival at the Indianapolis airport. Their friends were waiting for them when they landed, and took them at once to their car. Car? No, it was a limousine fit for a king and driven by a uniformed chauffeur.

Florine was quiet at first, but Connie chattered away so pleasantly that in a few minutes she too was talking over old times. The chauffer drove until they reached a beautiful part of the city, then turned into a driveway and took them through spacious grounds until they reached the house—a stately and most beautiful mansion. Ralph and Connie were millionaires!

Not once had they intimated while in Goldsboro that they were rich. Never had Connie hesitated at doing her part of the housework, or seemed to mind living in one little room and eating in the kitchen.

George and Florine enjoyed the luxuries of the beautiful home, but far more did they enjoy finding that their old friends were the same jolly good fellows that they had known in the old days in Goldsboro.

CHAPTER XLII
AND NOW

Time rolls on, and we have at last realized our dream of a little apartment across the hall and one dear young couple to live with us and keep us from getting old or being lonesome. But we think too and dream of those days when the house teamed with boys and girls, the brave boys who were willing to give their all for their country, and the brave girls who left their all to come to be with their husbands.

Nor do they forget us, for we frequently hear from them, especially at Christmas and when their families increase. With my collection of kodak pictures is an ever increasing stack of announcement cards, and bless their hearts, I feel sure that these sons and daughters will some day be fine men and women like their parents, who have meant so much to their country.

The girls write us that their husbands are in College or in business, and tell us of the children. The letters are usually from the girls, but Earl Payne wrote and thanked us for the present we sent him and Eulah for their little girl, Peggy who weighed three pounds and eleven ounces at birth, but a month later, according to Earl's letter "weighs 5 lb. 10 oz. She is doing wonderful, and the mother is fine too and tickled pink."

Dorothy Sexton wrote: "Harlin is going to school under the G. I. Bill. Lowell and Nancy are real big now. They are very sweet little ones, and I think they love each other. Lowell goes to school and is doing fine. We hope to get to come to see you all. We love you very much."

From Ruth Hibdon after she returned from her stay in Germany: "I hope you haven't forgotten me." (as if we could) "We lived with you the first few months of 1946. We had just been married when we were sent to Goldsboro. We got back from Germany in August of 1947. Then we were stationed in Austin, Texas. Last October Floyd was sent back overseas. This time he is in England. If he doesn't get to come home soon I will go to him. While we were in Texas we became the proud parents of a big baby boy. He looks like his Daddy, and we named him Floyd, Jr. Floyd is still Lt. in the Air Force."

Donna Ninemire wrote that "Wes" had enrolled in College. "He wants to be an Electrical Engineer. He is a radio announcer and engineer now, but isn't satisfied. Wesley, Jr., is taking his nap."

A letter from Jeanne Napiwocki was always a delight. I had written her a letter in which I used some of the Polish words she and Ed had taught us, though I spelled them exactly as they sounded to me without the slightest idea of the correct way. Jean said:

"I marvel at your memory—your Polish is fine. Perhaps a little off in the spelling, but I can just hear you pronouncing every word as we taught it to you. Edward, too, would enjoy your Polish, but now he would answer you fully like a grown up. He speaks it as fluently as English, and it makes me feel quite proud. He's a cute little tyke—and more impish them ever. Gives my Mother plenty of daily exercise.

"Ed is now attending Julliard Music School in New York, and I am doing secretarial work. Ed is a busy fellow. Besides going to school five days a week, he teaches piano and violin. I see so little of him—much less than in the good 'ole' Goldsboro days. How often we speak of them and wish we could return to them—but as you once said—'they would never be the same.' At least we could have some wonderful memories.

A year later, when my circle of the Woman's Society of Christian Service had sent a box of clothing to a needy family in Poland and had received a reply written in Polish, I sent the letter to Jeanne, and she translated it for me, and sent it back with another of her characteristic letters.

"It makes me feel good inside that others are helping the poor Poles. From letters from my aunt and cousin, we have learned of the terrible misfortunes they have had to cope with. We too are constantly sending them packages of clothing, food and medicine. Theirs is a terrible situation, and from the radio news, it seems there is still more to come. I burn inside every time I read such letters as the one your friend has received.

"At present Ed is giving lessons in piano and violin and also attending Montclair State Teachers College—working for a degree."

She signed her name: "Just me, Jeanne."

This message came from Irene Adams: "I'll be going home from the hospital tomorrow with my 8 lb 15½ oz daughter, Annette Carol. We now have a boy and a girl, and we're proud of them. Ken has been back from overseas a year this coming January. He was sent to Europe and was in Scotland, France, Germany, Austria and several other places. He was happy when he got home to stay."

Mary and George Finney sent us a snapshot of themselves when

PEGGY SUE PAYNE

they had been married four years, and Mary wrote: "George has gotten on at the post office. He was very lucky because it is considered one of the best jobs in town. We are going to keep our apartment for another year then we hope to build us a home. We have bought all new furniture for our three rooms. Maybe some day God will bless us with a child; then everything will be complete."

A later letter told us that they had bought a home and that the other wish was also coming true. Then came the announcement of the arrival of Gwendora Avon and a lovely picture of Mary and her baby.

A letter from Carol Anderson contained the sad news that Wallace had been killed in an air plane accident. He was working with an agricultural group spraying fields from the air when the accident occurred. Carol and her two sons, Bobby and Jimmy, went back to her parents, but were planning to move into a home of their own next door. Carol is a brave girl. She plans to go back to her teaching.

An account published in a paper in Kennebec, South Dakota, said, that after Wallace left Seymour Johnson Field, Goldsboro, "he was sent to Selfridge Field, Mich. for overseas training. His flight group then went to Bluthenthal Field, Wilmington, North Carolina, and then overseas.

"He spent six months in the Pacific theater on Guam, Tinan, and Iwo Jima. He took part as fighter escort to bombing planes in several air raids and was awarded the Air Medal. He returned to the United States and spent another year in service. He was discharged with the rank of Captain and remained in the air corps reserve with that rank.

"Hundreds of people, many unable to get into the church, attended the funeral of this popular young man."

Irene Strunk wrote: "You should see Ed playing ball in the yard with our three little boys." When I remembered Ed's devoted attentions to David when they lived here, I thought, "Three lucky little boys!"

Ernest and Betty Cornelius sent the announcement of the birth of a son, Jerome Ernest, and two years later, of James Michael. Madeline Traver sent a lovely picture of their family group, George and Madeline, their son, Robby, and daughter, Cynthia. From Eunice and Larry White came a picture of Sherry, now grown big, and from Bob and Arliss DeCamp, a picture of Karen, grown big. Little Mara's parents announced the birth of a daughter, Rahni.

Among others who sent announcements were Larry and Marge West, a son, David; Charles and Frances Kunkler, a daughter, Connie; Norman and Aline Naccari, a son, Ronald Lee; Gus and Eleanor

MARY AND GWENDORA

Fisher, a son, Todd; and Arthur and Ruby Sabatina, a daughter, Sherry. Most of these sent kodak pictures of the new babies and also of the older children who were babies when they lived here. I never grow tired of looking through my box of pictures and announcements and invitations to birthday parties.

I also do not grow tired of thinking of the fine young men and women who were with us during those days of anxiety mingled with happiness, and to them I dedicate my one and only poem.

When skies are blue and love is true
And sunny is the weather
Hand in hand across the strand
We'll stroll away together.

We'll bend our oars to other shores
Across the briny ocean,
And spend our days in joyful ways
With love and true devotion.

When skies are grey and dark the way,
And cloudy is the weather,
Then hand in hand we'll take our stand
And face the hour together.

THE END

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