

Angie's Reminiscences
By Angela Hope Herrman Flory
(As narrated to Barbara Herrman Wentz)

1. Angie's early life

Angie, her sisters Harriet and Ellen, and cousin Marguerite O'Reilly Marshall were born in the lying-in hospital in Pierre that was owned by Mrs O'Neal. When Angie was born, her mother, Hazel, went to the hospital ahead of time. Angie was born on a stormy night, and Mrs O'Neal gave each of the women ready to give birth a couple of pillows that they could use to protect themselves from glass if the windows broke. Hazel was in a blue room and never liked blue rooms again! Harriet was born fifteen months later. She was named for Mrs O'Neal's daughter, Harriet Ailsa.

Angie's parents were living in the Hilland area of Haakon County in South Dakota in a two-story house when she was born. It was a cold house. About a year after Keith was born and before Angie was born her father, Roy, was injured. He stepped over a belt on a threshing machine, which chewed up his leg below the knee and above the ankle. In Philip, Dr Ramsey's nurse used a spoon to scoop out bone fragments. The doctor made a cast on his nurse's leg, then cut it off and put it on Roy's leg. He used a plain screw, which resulted in an infection. He pulled the leg apart with the intention of grafting in a bone, but decided not to perform the graft because of the infection, which never left his body. As a result, no bone was left in the three-inch section that was chewed off by the belt. He went to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN, where he stayed for several months. When it finally healed his injured leg was shorter than his other one and he wore a shoe that was elevated three inches.

Roy's family did not want him to continue farming after the accident, but he wanted to farm rather than run for office or find an office job. Sometime later Roy and Hazel rented the Slocum place near Philip, where they lived for about two years. The house had two rooms and a sod roof. They raised alfalfa seed. At the end of their time there they had a huge rain and bad flood. The ceiling of the house caved in.

Despite a bad grasshopper infestation, Roy and Hazel had a bumper alfalfa seed crop, which got them out of debt and enabled them to buy a 1930 car, the Kinney Ranch along Bad River, and some cattle. They purchased the ranch in the autumn and were to take possession in January. They paid \$11,000 for the 1000-acre ranch, which was valuable because of the water. They rented another 1100 acres.

There was a house on the property that Mrs Kinney had built in 1906. She had stolen logs from the state and many of the rest of the materials for the house from the railroad and her neighbors. She also stole horses and neighbors' cattle, which she butchered. She lived on the Haakon/Jackson County line, and when the sheriff from either Haakon or Jackson County would go to investigate, she would shoot at him from the opposite side of the line. She was making things difficult for Roy and Hazel, so they offered to give her a shed on the property plus 40 acres, which she accepted.

Angie loved the ranch, the house of which had a 30-foot-long living room and a stone fireplace. They hosted church and Farmers Union picnics. They had a swimming hole, a little grove of trees, rolling hills

and big meadows in which to play. They would crawl out the window and onto the roof to play Shakespeare. At a certain spot on the ranch one could yodel in such a way that the echo returned. On Sundays after church in Philip the boys would line up on the running board of their car, wanting to go home with them. Sometimes they would stay for a week. Many people were without food, and Roy and Hazel always had food.

Roy was a leader in the community and chairman of the school board, which held meetings in their house. The county superintendent of Jackson County would visit the school and ask the students in the first, third, and fifth grades to read to her individually. She would then determine whether the student should be passed on to the next grade. Lillian Cook was Angie's teacher for all her elementary grades. Harriet and Angie were the only girls in school and during recess they had to play football in the schoolyard, where there were clinkers on the ground. Angie skipped her first grade, Harriet her third.

When it rained the river would sometimes flash flood. Because it was dangerous, everyone was on the lookout for flood waters. The mud that was deposited came from the Badlands and was of different colors. People used it to plaster the walls of their houses. Keith, Angie, and Harriet made a raft and would float down the river. Philip was seven miles away by river, 13 miles by road. The home place in Hilland was 30 miles north.

By 1939 the family had only 14 milk cows because of the drought. Even though they had a truck garden of 18 irrigated acres they decided that they had to leave and settle in Nyssa, OR, which had just opened up to irrigated farming through the Owyhee irrigation project. Roy's brother Nelson went with them. Roy took his 14 cows to Oregon. In South Dakota he got \$10 a month for cream, while in Nyssa he sold milk for \$76 every two weeks.

A barn was needed for milking and a tractor to work the land. They had horses and an old iron tractor that wore out. The first year the milking was done in the corral, and the children helped before and after school. The building of a house was delayed to pay for other essential needs. Eventually they added onto the one-room house, parts of which remain in the present house. Roy bought an Allis Chalmers tractor to replace the old one and a baler, which Keith and Ellen used for custom work to supplement their income. Living in South Dakota was hard, but in Oregon it was exhausting.

2. *Other relatives*

Ellen Herrman, Wesley Herrman, and Mary June O'Reilly had birthdays in June. They were celebrated by going on picnics. In the summer relatives got together for picnics in the Badlands.

While in high school, Frances Burjes and two young roommates lived in an apartment in Philip. They had only crates and cardboard boxes for furniture. Once her cousin Myra Hermann Gould and her family visited, so they borrowed furniture from their neighbors for the day.

Almost all German homes had a piano. Edna Herrman O'Reilly bought a piano for the Herrman home. It eventually went to Josephine. Hazel played the piano every Sunday evening. Roy and Keith were tenors, Harriet was an alto, and Angie was a second soprano. Hazel sang along off-key.

Grandpa John Herrman was a gentle man. He believed that his children should get a solid elementary education, but beyond that they should educate themselves. He would not go to Josephine's graduation, and talked Roy out of going to high school. Reuben attended one year of high school. While the family was in Illinois John was the Sunday school superintendent for the Presbyterian Church. He gave Angie a little sewing machine. He always had juicy fruit and spearmint gum in his pocket that he gave to children. He helped build the Dowling church. Grandma Herrman was very strict about observing the Sabbath on Sundays.

Angie's Uncle Nelson Herrman had a good sense of humor and had a quip for everything. Angie thought that Nelson needed glasses, but his father, Grandpa John Herrman, thought that if one needed glasses he was weak. Angie asked Josephine why Nelson didn't get married, and she told her that he dated, but the family was never happy with whom he dated. Nelson was an artist, which was looked down upon in those days. When he moved to Oregon he didn't want plumbing in his house. He showered at Roy and Hazel's home.

3. *Angie: College and beyond*

Angie had four jobs the summer before her senior year at Oregon State College: (1) she ironed blouses in the morning; (2) she kept the books at a service station; (3) she waited tables; and (4) she kept the books at an auto parts store four hours a day, five days a week. With the money that she earned, she paid for her senior year in college, bought a letter jacket and class ring, bought a new formal, bought sweaters for each of her sisters, bought Pendleton wool material and made a skirt for each of her sisters (two yards each), bought two horses for her father (\$6.00 each), and bought her mother a six-piece set of china.

Angie graduated from Oregon State College with a degree in home economics and social sciences. (Oregon State was ranked second in the nation in home economics at that time.) Cooking and sewing were taught at a minimum. The main emphasis was on chemistry and physiology, both of which she took with premed students. She bested them in tests every time because she had observed her dad butchering, while the premed students had only dissected animals preserved in formaldehyde. Her dean was single and had spent most of her life in the Orient. She told Angie that 'you are not going to be just educated, but well-educated', so Angie had to add extra minors, one of them being art. She was honored by the National Art Society, but didn't have the necessary \$20 for the award, so she refused it. Angie and another woman took a four-credit class in economics with 100 returning military veterans. During her life Angie obtained 90 hours of graduate credits.

Angie's fiancé, Fred Flory, spent World War II in the Seabees, first in Iceland, and then in an office in Chicago. After the war he went back to Oregon and attended Oregon State in engineering and business. He trapped mink and tanned them in his dorm room. His roommate kicked him out, so Fred got a room by himself. He used the money he made from sale of the furs to buy a ring for Angie. Fred and his father went to Portland to buy a ring, which he gave to Angie during a church service so that she couldn't say no. Harriet had a nice announcement party for Angie in her dorm with about 30 in attendance. Angie

said that she did not want to get married right away. At that time she was 20 years old and a sophomore, while Fred was 24 and a senior.

After graduating, there was a teacher shortage. Angie interviewed with a school in Vancouver, WA, where she got a job. A friend, Mr Deal, had passed away, and his wife lived in Vancouver. She wanted Angie to live with her, but then Mrs Deal moved to Salem, OR. Mrs Deal still wanted Angie to stay in her home in Vancouver, but Angie didn't want to because she knew that Mrs Deal needed the money. She found a room in a boarding house where she stayed less than a month. Later Angie realized that some of the women living there were ladies of the night. A science teacher at the school invited her to stay with her, and Angie accepted. The teacher had kidney stew every Sunday. Things were going along nicely until her son in the service showed up with two other guys. Since it was a two-bedroom house, Angie's colleague had to move into the bedroom with Angie. The son was AWOL, as was one of the others, while the third wasn't even in the service. The young men were honored at her school before it was known that they were AWOL.

While Angie was teaching in Vancouver, Fred was sent by Honeywell, for whom he worked, to Minneapolis for training. In December 1948, Angie went home to Nyssa for Christmas vacation. Fred returned from Minneapolis and they decided to get married immediately. Angie jokingly told him that she would marry him because she needed a place to live. They thought that they would get married in the parsonage, but her father said that she was going to have a proper wedding. Angie had designed and made a white wool dress for the parsonage wedding. Harriet, Ellen, and Ruth went with her to Boise to get a long dress that would fit. Angie also bought a pair of white satin slippers. She asked the shop to hem the skirt so that Harriet could wear it later. Ellen's friend loaned Angie a veil.

The wedding was announced at church the Sunday after their decision. Angie hand-wrote wedding announcements and Keith delivered them to those who did not attend their church. Harriet was the maid-of-honor. Ellen wore the dress that Angie had worn in one of the other five weddings in which she had participated. Fred asked Keith to be his best man. The superintendent of school's wife insisted on arranging the reception. Inga Robbins baked the cake using 90 egg whites beaten by hand and put in a dishpan with a milk bottle in the center. The men of the church asked everyone to take an undecorated Christmas tree to the church, which they put in the basement for the reception. One hundred and twenty-five people attended the wedding, which was held on Tuesday, December 28, 1948 at 7:00 pm. Fred asked Harriet and Ellen what he should pay the minister, and they said 'whatever you think Angie is worth'. He paid \$40, twice what others had paid. The minister and his wife gave them a bible. Keith and Merle Dean Robbins said that they would protect their car from others, but they decorated it themselves.

Honeywell gave Fred two weeks off for a honeymoon. Fred and Angie went to California. On New Year's Eve they stayed at a motel in Redding. A party was being held there, and Fred and Angie were invited because they were newlyweds. From Redding they went home along the coast through the redwoods.

They returned to Vancouver on Sunday with no place to live and school starting Monday. That day they found a porch that had been converted into a furnished apartment with a living room, bedroom, bath,

and kitchen. Angie made dinner with a dessert of lemon meringue pie. Fred didn't eat the pie, and Angie came to find out that Fred didn't like lemon pie.

It was very cold that winter and the apartment was chilly. They found a two-bedroom house to rent. It was cozy and had a baby grand piano, but the floors were not level and it was filthy. They cleaned the house on the weekend before they moved in. They took the rug outside and put it on the snow. They brushed it with snow until it was clean. They lived in this apartment for about a year, when another apartment became available. Angie was supposed to teach at the high school, but it burned down so she was put in junior high. The principal of the school wrote a play each year in which every student took part. She told Angie that the students and their parents could help make the costumes, but there were no patterns and most of the parents and students did not know how to sew, so Angie made the patterns and she and the other home education teacher made 800 costumes. After the play the principal told Angie that 'now we will have a mother's tea'. In preparing for the tea Angie had students go to her home to help in the preparations. Besides teaching, helping with the play, and preparing for the tea, Angie was the pep band sponsor and had to make sixty costumes for that group. Again, the administration told her that the mothers would help, but of course that didn't work out. Angie was so exhausted by the end of the year that Fred put his foot down and said 'you won't teach anymore', so she signed up for substitute teaching.

She got a call in October that the secretary had eloped. Angie took the job. She did the ordering and payroll and was in charge of compiling and sending very complicated attendance records to the state. Then the principal became ill and resigned. The district sent in a principal from another junior high school, who eloped and was fired. The district sent an assistant from the home office, who observed Angie for two days and told her that she would be able to do the job, so Angie became the principal, along with being the secretary, all for \$160 per month. They wanted her to stay on for another year, but she was pregnant and quit.