

Hope Salway



Hope & Carl Swendsen and Family



Hope Salway, Eva Salway

A brief account of my life during the years from 1932 to 1934.

Mother had a nervous breakdown while I was attending grade 10. We didn't have money to hire help so I was pulled out of school to look after Mother, the house and my three younger brothers. My father didn't have much time to help, he had all he could do to keep us fed and clothed.

In my youth I probably felt more sorry for myself than my Mother. I didn't understand my Mother's condition. Adults have a difficult time understanding nervous breakdowns and I was a young 16. I never complained to others but often at night I cried. I had, had great hopes of going on to university and this dream seemed to be lost forever. (I went to U of C when I was 52 years old.) I missed my friends and the school life. I had one good friend, Belle Searle, who used to come to see me but we soon had nothing to talk about because I was away from what was going on in school.

I did my best at home but it was difficult. Mother in her nervous condition was quite upsetting to me and I found it difficult to understand. For example, one day Belle Searle came for lunch, after lunch I walked to Hansen's Corner (one block away) with her. I didn't tell Mother I had gone. I felt it would only be a minute. Mother called for me while I was out and when I came in she was hysterical. She grabbed me by the arm and squeezed so hard that I had a sore, black and blue arm for weeks. I am sure that Mother felt terrible about it after. I was quite unhappy because I had been trying to please.

Time in the past seems to get hazy but I believe it was about this time that Mother went into a nursing home for a while. I don't remember for how long.

A story my brothers tell about me at this time seems funny now but perhaps not so funny at the time:

One Saturday I had cleaned the house and gone out. When I got back the kitchen floor was almost knee deep in newspapers. Dad used to keep old newspapers to wrap plants in when they were sold. The boys had got these and had them all over the floor and were running and jumping into them. I viewed this with dismay from the doorway and putting my hands on my hips I said, "I am sick and tired of housework and kids." I probably was, so what did I do to get away from all this? I got married and soon started looking after my own housework and kids. I was married Oct. 3, 1934 at age 18.