

**MEMORIES FROM  
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aka Kaye Cude**

These are events that I remember. They may be different than others remember during a different period of time. I was born July 4, 1927 and am glad to share the memories.

I remember my Grandfather John Peterson and when he died. I really admired him. The story I grew up with was that he entered the U S by way of Ellis Island when he was 17 with seventy-five cents in his pocket.

His reason for coming was said to be to escape prosecution for hitting an agricultural instructor over the head with a milk stool. The story that I remember my mother, Flora Pearl Peterson Olson telling (sometimes in front of him) was that Sweden was going through lots of government and social changes. Young people were given tests to determine their best abilities. His test showed that he should be a musician. He wanted to be either a farmer or carpenter, not a musician. On his own he signed in and attended an agricultural school until the officials discovered it.

The only thing I remember that he did that was reminiscent of Sweden was to play a violin and sing Blue Eyes in Swedish. As a child, I thought that was really cool!

At Ellis Island he was put into a railroad boxcar and shipped with other immigrants to Chicago. He dug ditches for canals there. I'm sure he was glad to learn English. He said someone taught him to order peas to eat. He learned to eat them with his knife and sometimes ate them that way which we kids found very entertaining. He said he was often made fun of because he wore a suit jacket at all times. Actually it was because he ripped the lining out whenever he was paid and sewed any extra money into it to make sure he wasn't robbed. I remember the story that he borrowed the money to buy his farm from a bank run by the Moore family in Oquawka. He borrowed \$500 without any collateral except for standing tall while Mr. Moore decided if he was worth lending it to. He also paid 50% interest. He raised Polish China pigs and Greyhound dogs. Apparently greyhound dogs were very valuable for hunting and ridding the land of rabbits.

I really wasn't around him much but I remember mimicking his brogue. He would get upset and tell me "Not to do that—it just made me sound like a Swede. I should be so glad to live in America!" I also remember his pride in his Citizenship papers, which were in a frame, hanging in the front room. He did allow me to call him by his nickname, High Pockets except when I forgot and added what others said, "Old High Pockets". I didn't understand why he objected to "Old" because I admired his age.

I remember Grandpa better than Grandma Peterson. I liked her and remember taking her a paper chain that I made in Sunday school. It also hung on the front room wall. I remember her giving me some linens with fancy needlework she had done. I remember when she died. My mother said it was from having her teeth pulled and not following the instructions to use cold water to help the swelling. She insisted on using hot water. I do remember my mother and Grandmother not getting along well. My father and Grandfather were good friends. One memory I have was in a pantry in the winter at our house in Oquawka. My father and Grandpa were eating pickled herring and raw oysters. They were feeding them to me and as I remember I really did like them, which pleased them.

Grandpa liked the way my mother fried fish and she always fried lots for him to take home with him. She was sure she was his favorite child.

I also remember that my Grandma had the only organ in her area. According to my mother, the surrounding Swedish community decided to start a Lutheran Church. Since my Grandma had the only organ it was decided that they should meet at her house. Grandpa objected! So they met outside in the yard. My mother remembers how she and her siblings had to sweep the yard each Saturday. Before winter, Grandpa gave in.

I remember that a couple, Charlie Johnson and his wife lived near the beach in Oquawka. We visited them sometimes and they went with us on picnics. They probably were offspring of the people where Grandpa boarded as a young man.

My mother said that Grandpa's parents sent his two sisters over to Chicago to encourage him to come home while he was in Chicago. The streets were very muddy and the sisters had dresses that had long trains. They wanted Grandpa to carry the trains so they wouldn't get dirty. He refused. This was America and he didn't have to do such things! The sisters went back without him but came back later and I'm sure became citizens but neither ever married. I have their pictures but I haven't the slightest idea where, until I finished putting away the things I've moved. Maybe one of them or both of them moved to Rock Island. Both Jane and I are wondering about the "seamstress from Rock Island".

Now that I'm older I feel sure that my mother suffered from deep depression all the time I was at home-1927-1945. There was no help for women in those days and she would probably have been judged insane if she had complained of her symptoms. My brother, Ralph (Bunny) and I were the two children she really just couldn't like or love. My mother had a will of iron and tolerated nothing that conflicted with how she wanted to think. Bunny acted out sometimes and joined the army at 17 and was in Korea by the time he was 18.

I was very much ashamed that she didn't like me and tried to hide it from others. I tried to do anything that would please her and change her mind. Now, I realize that only made it harder for her. However, getting good grades, etc. helped me in the long run.

I honestly tried to believe that all she said about relatives was true and didn't argue with her. Due to rheumatic fever, I was on the train going to Denver (Boulder) to live with my older sister, Marie (Bert) on VE Day -1945.

It was a mystery to me why Mom didn't seem to like most of her siblings. They were always very good to her and all of us. However, in the interest of getting along, I went along with her wishes. It was very confusing to me but it must have really been confusing to her.

I'm under the impression that Grandpa met and really liked my Dad and made it worth while for him to court his daughters. Some of my mother's confusion may have been jealousy and fear of her sisters. I remember that when my father just couldn't take it any longer, he would get drunk and after a few days they would argue and he would demand that things be different. That happened about every two years + or -.

In my mother's mind, this was reason to characterize him as a drunk. Actually he drank to get courage to stand up to her. He would spend money freely during those bouts and usually gave us kids plenty. Mom usually didn't let him spend money to do things to make us comfortable. However, Christmas was really big and we had plenty of toys. Mom always saw herself as a martyr.

When WW2 got under way she went to work at the ammunition plant, near Burlington and was so much happier. I'm sorry that she left my Dad with such a bad name. Their relationship was very unfortunate and of course there was no help for them in those days.\*

What I remember about my aunts and uncles is all-positive. I remember her brother Ike and his wife, Ida and their daughter, Lillian. Mom admired Ike. Mom liked Aunt Eva McCartney and I was allowed to stay with them for a week or two each summer. Alice McCarney was very good to me. I remember Alice did my hair in Shirley Temple curls and entered me in a "Look alike" contest. We won. The prize was to sit on a political platform with Wendell Willkie. I think we also were given ice cream cones.

I remember Aunt Lois and Uncle Cal. I remember Mom having a change of mind and letting me meet Aunt Nell and her grand daughter, Pat whom I still stay in touch with. I vaguely remember Aunt Thelma and Nancy. I remember her brother, John whose nickname was Joker and his wife, Maisey and their daughters, Louise and Alice when Louise and Alice were in high school before I was old enough to go to school. Louise, Alice and my two sisters, Madeline and Marie took me along on many of their escapades. I would never tell our mothers about any thing that happened.

My mother told me that she had had four grandmothers at once when she was growing up. Of course one was Azuba, and apparently Azuba's mother and grandmother. I was fascinated by that as a child. Few people lived to "old age" in those days. I remember taking flowers to my Olson Grandparents' grave.

History has always been a favorite subject of mine. Learning and thinking about the times and circumstances that our ancestors lived and coped with sometimes tells us who we are.

I was born at the beginning of the Depression. That meant nothing to me because I hadn't experienced "good times". Before WW2 things certainly were different. Most people worked a 6 day week with Sundays off. Sunday was a day of rest. Businesses were closed on Sunday, which forced everyone to rest. We went to Sunday school and came home and changed our "good" clothes to our second 'best clothes" which we weren't allowed to really get dirty. That meant different behavior rules. I wasn't allowed to do any kind of sewing. We weren't allowed to play "tag" or other rowdy games. We went for walks close to home and sometimes walked the railroad tracks since the trains didn't run on Sunday. If you were out of anything, you just did without it. We visited with neighbors and of course the men listened to the ball games on the radio.

After supper in the summer time, my father did sometimes work in the garden. His gardens were his recreation as well as a source for food. He NEVER went fishing on Sunday, no matter how good the fish were running. He was convinced that if he made money on Sunday, he would lose twice the amount during the week.

I remember that we were thrilled when stores started being open till noon on Sunday as the War got under way. We didn't realize how much freedom we were giving up. Whether religion was right or wrong, it was a very different world.

I really do think that the world is progressing and that on the whole, people are becoming more moral and good.

Having lived 78 years, there has been more changes than I could ever imagine when I was a child. I mostly like the world as it is although I certainly don't see that things have become easier. We just have different (hard) things to accomplish.

\*Today my mother's deep depression would not have stayed hidden. I'm sure she wanted help but the few women who admitted to depression were considered weak and some-times ended up in sanitariums—in those days, sanitariums were more often called "insane asylums." Somehow my mother and her fellow sufferers managed—sometimes by secret tantrums and probably by taking some of the patent medicines that contained alcohol and now controlled drugs.

Kaye Cude