

Excepts from the unpublished memoir, MY LIFE, by Paul Lewis Rothlisberger, Sr.

Excerpts pertinent to Beatrice Carpenter

After Beatrice Oneacre's father and mother died the children were distributed to other families. Beatrice Carpenter was placed in the home of Lewis Albert Rothlisberger and his wife, Mary Ella Mullett Rothlisberger.

Paul was born in 1914 and as of Sept 2013 is still alive and living in South Florida.

Paul on pages 14 and 15 described each room of his boyhood home and here he talks about the farm house's parlor.

"Now back to another thing the parlor was used for. When my sisters (Bea) boy friend came calling on her, they would sit on the front porch in the swing, or sit in the parlor. The front door of the house opened into the parlor from the front porch, so they would go in the parlor and sit on the sofa. A girls date in those days consisted of the young man coming to the house. They would sit on the sofa and talk until it was time for him to go home. He was only allowed to stay for a while. Of course everyone always retired to bed very early there on the farm, but my parents always, remained up until after the boy friend would leave. Shortly after darkness set in, it was bedtime and when dawn approached it was time to get up. I remember one time when my sister Bea's boy friend was coming to visit her I hid behind the sofa. I listened to them talk for about an hour, and when he finally got around to putting a kiss on her cheek, I giggled. This created quite a bit of excitement. Needless to say, I was punished and sent to bed."

Paul lists the members of his family and on page19 includes Beatrice Carpenter.

"BEATRICE CARPENTER (1900-1993) was a member of the Rothlisberger household. She came to live with our family as a little girl following the death of her parents. She was 15 years old, same age as Floyd, when I was born. She was not a blood relative, but I always have considered her to be my sister. I do not know if she walked to the high school with Floyd, or if she stayed with someone in New Martinsville. I know that she lived at the farm with us when I started going to school, and she was my first teacher. It was then, when I had to call her Miss Carpenter that I learned that she was not my blood sister. Two years later she entered nursing school and did not live with us any more."

Life on the farm also includes this tidbit on page 25 about going to church.

"I remember my Dad and Mother getting in the front seat, Bea Alma, and I in the back seat and going to church. We usually went by horse and buggy and could drive up to the church. If we went by car we had to park the car along side American Ridge Road and walk up the hill to the church. The road up to the church was too steep and narrow and dangerous for the car. Any way, how proud we all were of that car."

In his section about Going To School and Church talks about Bea being his teacher for his first two years in school. On pages 34 and 35 is the following.

"I started to school when I was seven years old. I was late getting started to school due to illness. I had some sort of birth defect and couldn't talk very plain until I had some sort of nose or mouth surgery when I was six. Then I was ill with jaundice, so I was a year or two older than the other kids in my class. I still recall some things about the first day I went to school. My mother got me dressed real pretty to go. I remember walking the mile or two around the ridge to the school with my sisters, Bea and Alma, and other kids that came past our place on their way to school. My sister, Bea was the teacher. At school, she said, "my name is Beatrice Carpenter. You must all address me as Miss Carpenter". So I called her Miss Carpenter. When we got home I called her Miss Carpenter, and she said you call me Bea at home and Miss Carpenter at school. It was at this time that I wondered why her name was Carpenter and my name and my sister Alma both had the name Rothlisberger. Everyone in our family had the name Rothlisberger but Bea. This is when I found out that Bea was not a blood sister of mind, but had come to our house to live when she was a small girl, when both her parents were deceased. So my parents had raised Bea as their own daughter, but they never did adopt her. Bea also had two sisters that two of my father's sisters took to raise. She also had brothers that I never knew. Anyway, Bea lived at our home before I was born, and lived there until she left to go to nursing school. I have always considered her to be my sister."

Life in the early 20th century was difficult at times. On page 44 Paul describes Bea teaching him the proper behavior when mourning.

"Floyd and Beatrice had come home because of mother's illness, and helped care for Alma and me. I suppose they all knew her time was short. On the day after she talked to me, July 2nd, 1924, with all her family lined up around her bed, mother breathed her last, and her soul went to be with the Lord. This was a sad and heart breaking time at the Rothlisberger farm. Alma and I were crying so very loud, and Beatrice told us we should not cry loud and taught us to cry by sobbing. Mother's body lay in state in our parlor and many came by horse and buggy and cars for her viewing. I remember the undertaker placing a wreath on our front door to indicate a death in the family. I have always objected to having

wreaths placed on our doors to celebrate holidays or special events. Seeing them would always remind me of the saddest days of my life”

Paul comments on Bea and Herb getting married on page 51

“Beatrice married Herbert "Herb" Oneacre. Herb was a pharmacist and worked in his Father's drug store (Oneacres Drug Store - which later became Harman's Drug Store) on Main Street in New Martinsville. Herb later had a small store of his own located next to Central Grade School. More about this store later when I relate about working there - my first job. Bea and Herb lived in an apartment over the store.”

This last item on pages 60 - 62 tells of Paul working in Herb Oneacre's store on North Ave next to Central Grade School.

“During my last two years at Central Grade School (7th and 8th Grade) I had a job. I worked at Herb Oneacre's store before and after school. I had to arrive at the store around 6 A.M., two hours before school started. I went early to get the store warm before opening time at 7 A.M. I do not remember how the store was heated (coal stove or gas heater), but it was always very cold in the store when I got there. The stores merchandise consisted mostly of school supplies, some novelties, and a large assortment of candy that sold for one cent each. Candy, pencils and notebook papers were the big sellers. About 7 A.M. Herb would arrive and the store would open. We both would wait on the customers mostly teachers and then children. Herb usually took care of the teachers, and I would take care of the children. I can still remember those little children coming into the store, pressing their noses against the glass show case, pointing their finger at the candy, saying, I want one of those, one of those, two of those,' and then 'er' for awhile before deciding on one of those. I would put the candy in a little bag, collect their nickel, and off to school they would go. My favorite and the most popular piece of candy was the chocolate covered maple drop. Boy, were they good? It was over a quarter of an inch thick and about one to one and a half inch in diameter. They sold for a cent. Today they would be at least fifty cents, but I have not seen any of them for years.

I worked at the store until the school bell sounded, then I would take off for the school and my classroom. I had permission to arrive there a few minutes late. One day the teacher was late and she entered the room just ahead of me. Someone had done something before she arrived that made her very angry. I do not recall just what it was -perhaps drew a picture of her on the blackboard or wrote something naughty on the board. She demanded to know who did it, but no one would admit to doing it. She then demanded that someone tell her who did it, but no one would tell. Then each student was called, one at a time, to the front of the room and was asked who did it? When they refused to tell her she took a paddle and spanked them quite hard. This was when teachers were still allowed to make their students obey and behave. She ended up spanking every student

in that room that morning but me. When she came to me she said, "Paul, you were not here so I know you didn't do it and don't know who did," so she did not spank me. Later she spanked my cousin and I was so tickled to see her get spanked that I had to hide my head to keep from laughing, because I knew if the teacher saw me even smile, I would get one harder than she did.

Back to the store - I also worked at the store for about an hour each day after school waiting on the kids that stopped in for school supplies or candy. Oh yes, I was paid one dollar and twenty-five cents a week for working at the store five days a week for three hours each day. I was lucky to have such a good job.

The candy counter was on legs and there was about a four-inch space between the counter and the floor. A fairly large boy (I will not reveal his name) came into the store with a rubber band and some paper wads, and was shooting at kids. I asked him to stop shooting at the kids, so he began shooting under the counter and hitting me on the ankles. This would sting and he would laugh when I jumped. I asked him to stop doing it, but he continued to do it. Finally I lost my cool and went after him, and we got into a big fistfight out in the middle of the street. All the kids were crowding around and were cheering us on. The town mayor had a store across the street - he came to investigate and stopped the fight. He said, "If you boys want to fight come to my store after school and I will put boxing gloves on you and we will go back in my warehouse and you can fight. This created quite a lot of interest among the kids that day at school. I couldn't be chicken so I went. The fight took place, and of course I lost and got all bruised but he never bothered me again. Father was very unhappy when he heard about it. I lost some of my privileges for the next two weeks. Father also went and had a talk with the mayor. I understand that he told the mayor, "Whenever I want my boy to fight, I will make the arrangements."

One day in school we were having a spelling contest (Spelling Bee). As usual I bowed out early. Joe Walton, Leota's brother, was in the class and when I missed my word, behind the teachers back, he taunted me. We did like to tease each other. When given a word, you would pronounce the word, spell it, then pronounce it again. Joe got the word "COUPONS". Joe said, "coupons", and spelled it, "COW-PENS", and before he could say coupons again, I said out loud, "cow pens". Of course everyone laughed. The teacher didn't think it so funny; she looked at me and said, "Paul, you remain after school tonight." She retained me for about half an hour, which made me a half hour late for my job at the store. Herb was not too happy about me being late at the store for my job waiting on the children. I told him why. Herb, sounding a lot more like my father than my boss, said, "I thought you knew how to conduct yourself in school so you would not get in trouble." I got docked ten cents from my pay."