

*Hi Ed & Betty,
Linda asked that I decipher & print out this
account kept by Dad - He is into nostalgia -
thought you, or yours might like a copy.
Enjoyed your call -
Love -
R.*

FAMILY RECORD
April 29, 1935

For some time past Reta and I have threatened to keep a family record, chronicle or better--since we are enjoying our trip on the sea of matrimony...."log". So "Log" it is.

I believe we should have kept such a record from the date we were married so that we could refresh our memory from time to time as to the many many pleasant things which have made our lives rich and happy. Let me try to recall some of the things which stand out.

Reta and I were married June 28, 1922 at her home in St Louis Park, Minnesota. The minister was the Presbyterian pastor of Stillwater. He lost his way getting to St Louis Park and was late. Reta's mother did not like the looks of my firends who came to see me "embark". She had heard of the practical jokes of which they had been guilty and was naturally suspicious. The minister's tardiness did not in the least allay, but rather aggravated her suspicions. The strain became too much and the dear lady finally gave way to tears. My mother, a symapthetic soul, joined in the crying. But the minister came and other than asking Reta if she would take this WOMAN to be her husband, made no mistakes.

Our flight from the mob and the trip by canoe down the Namikagan and the St Croix Rivers from Trego, Wisconsin to Stillwater has been written in another place. It was a trip such as few are privileged to experience.

We came home to the upstairs of 822 S Second St., Stillwater, Minnesota to a kitchen table, a camp bed, and chairs to match. A starving lawyer with ideas about "paying as you go" could hardly be expected to have much to start housekeeping on. Reta was game. We enjoyed that \$15.00 per month apartment more than if it had been a king's palace. The accumulation of a second hand carpet for \$10 or \$12 dollars was an event as was the getting of any other accretions. Our families helped, wedding presents helped, and little things gave us pleasure upon pleasure. We had a Round oak stove and carried coal up the back stairs and ashes down. We had some invitations to attend formal affairs but we did not accept. We were proud and happy in our poverty.

But Reta was not feeling well. Dr Stuhr advised me to keep her out in the fresh air. Thus a few weeks one summer we lived on the Apple River just below Somerset. Our home was the little green tent of our honeymoon days. The next summer however we lived at the "Piers", on an island near Karl Neumeir's summer home. It was a fortunate thing that both summers were dry. On Sundays I sang in the Christian Scientist Church for \$2.00 per and this small weekly sum helped. Every second Sunday I sang at the Scientist's 7:00 AM services at the prison and got

my breakfast on such mornings there. My niece, Hermie Rivers, spent some time with us. My law business was nothing to write home about.

I'll never forget the night Reta came home from a lung examination at Glenn Lake. When she came in I knew something was tragically wrong. I could not believe at first she had tuberculosis. A day or two afterward she and I went over to the hospital and were assured it was true. That home coming, even though she had a nice new red coat, was not a happy one. We had a practical nurse for a week or two and then Mrs Clayton on weekdays. She went home every night. On Sundays I prepared the meals. Reta obeyed Doctor's orders with a vengeance.

Reta's investment of her money and borrowing from her father enabled our purchase of our home at 1333 S Third St. where Reta recovered on the spacious front porch. Dr. Bendes came over every 6 weeks. Reta was a bed patient for eight months. Then because of her rapid heart (her lung condition had cleared) we took her down to Rochester Mayo Clinic. We were there on a rainy Labor day. In fact it seemed to have rained almost every day we were there. I had borrowed on my insurance to pay the expenses. Reta was a beautiful patient in a wheel chair. She weighted 150 pounds, the picture of health and the center of admiring eyes where ever I wheeled her. Two impacted teeth were later removed which may have contributed to her rapid heart condition.

Then the next spring we purchased the half lot south and began eradication or pulling up of the witch grass in what is now our garden. I remember how Reta sat and shook out the roots as I spaded. I had time to enjoy the making of a flower garden with rock and the like. Got a prize from the business and professional women..a fountain pen!

I had become interested in the bridge by that time or thereafter. Had two trips down to Madison and did a lot of stirring up. Had quite a fight with the St Croix County Board. A lot of very favorable publicity. Made a lot of friends.

Then Tom Curtis Jr. and I started the Farmer's Buying Association. A wonderful business experience. A story in itself.

Prior to that I helped at the beginning of the St Croix River Improvement Association. Assembled data and prepared the brief which caused the war department to prepare new regulations governing the dam at St Croix Falls which gives a more even flow of water in the river. Was and still am chairman of executive committee. This was a wonderfully interesting experience with a lot of publicity.

Then on a Sunday morning early in November, Dr Haines called me on the telephone to tell me of the death of ~~Judge of Probate, A.E. Doe.~~ I immediately called Reuben Thoreen and asked him to help me get the governor's appointment to the vacant office. He made a trip to see the governor that day and the next morning he and Karl Neumeier beat other delegation in to Senator Sullivan's office and got his endorsement for me. He had wanted William Nolan for the office. On the morning of November 12, 1930, Reuben got my commission from Governor Christianson. He helped me prepare bond. I was sworn in by the County board which met in special session to approve my bond and I heard cases that afternoon. In July 1931 I heard cases for Judge ----? in Duluth. Reta stayed at the hotel. Had a fine rest for a week.

Edward Shepard Thelen was born [REDACTED] 1931. Drs. Stuhr and Haines officiated. That winter we still had the round oak stove. Something happened one night. The door got open. We were burning carbon coke. The draft caused intense heat causing Eddie to cry. We woke up in time to prevent the place from burning down.

1932. Election year. Frank H. Osterlind filed against me. As there were only the two of us we had no primaries. In June of that year I bought a Plymouth Coupe with leather upholstery and now I drove over the county to church suppers and meetings, etc. etc. One trip I remember. There was an ice cream social on a Sunday afternoon in the town of Denmark at a Davies family. Reta was tired so I got my mother to go and we took Eddie. I'll never forget mother sitting with the other ladies, holding the baby on that hot Sunday afternoon. I know now it was no easy task for her but she never complained. I heard people admire the dear old lady with her white hair. The night before election day Reta and I attended a joint meeting and dance at the Forest Lake Legion and Auxiliary. We drove home in the rain. The next day was rainy. Reta and I voted and then went over to her folks. We went to bed early but by arrangement between Fred Neumeier and Reta, he called her and told her the vote was running strongly in my favor. She was too excited and happy to sleep much that night. I beat Frank almost 2 to 1.

That same fall we had hot water radiation put into our house and installed an oil burner. This investment saved money from bank failure. (I think here, my father meant that he took the money out of the bank before the bank failed.)

1933. In the summer in our little coupe, on a Sunday morning, we sneaked away from Eddie and drove eastward. That night we slept in a cabin on Lake Chetek. Were there a few days then wandered north to Stone Lake and then after a few days to Bayfield on Lake Superior where we discovered the Nourses. A second trip to the same place that summer with Eddie.

I must not forget the Legislative session early in 1933. I was chairman of the Legislative committee of the Probate Judges Association and how I did work. It was my first experience as a lobbyist. We prepared a pamphlet on the work of the Probate Judge which we sent to all the probate judges and to the members of the Legislature. Despite our efforts the Legislature passed a bill cutting salaries including probate judges, however, Governor Olson vetoed the measure.

Labor Day. Reta had shingles in Duluth. On Thanksgiving day in 1933 was delivered to us our 1934 Studebaker four door sedan. We celebrated by driving over to the Shepards. My mother could not go for she was not feeling strong. On December 20, 1933, Maralu was born. Drs. Stuhr and Haines officiating. Her real full name was Reta Maralu Thelen. Maralu was a coined name. Mar for Marian and Lu for Lucy, her aunts. The "a" was put inbetween for euphony. Mother was again ill, desparately so. She rallied but without ever seeing her little granddaughter, and passed away December 30, 1933.

~~At the Judges Association meeting, 1934, I was honored~~
with the vice Presidency. Early in June 1934 we took Lucy and the two babies to Duluth and then over to Bayfield where we stayed a day or two until the weather drove us out. One night of butterness we stayed at Stone Lake and then came home through dried up country.

Later in the season, John and Lizzie Klatt went up to Bayfield with us and then on Labor Day and the preceeding Sunday and the following Tuesday, went up in the Michigan Penninsula. Saw some of the wonderful lakes of Wisconsin. Reta took the trip to the World's Fair with her mother and sister. Three days. She was televisioned.

At the Judges Convention in January 1935 I became president of the Association.

(Now in Reta's handwriting.)

1944. While there is a war waging in many parts of our earth, while many mothers and fathers are praying for ~~their children having terrifying experiences on the far~~ flung battle fronts, our family is in the home nest.

We have had a summer out on the farm which means we did a lot of work together in God's great out-of-doors. We worked to supply our needs for the coming winter. The least we could do to make possible food for those who might not have the opportunity to do that which we have done.

Now we have just had a happy Christmas vacation together, doinig little that might be exciting or startling to an onlooker, but living comfortably while enjoying the joys of this holiday season. Edward gave his Daddy a

