

Remembrances of Hannah Lindeman Schwarz

Daughter of Gus and Etta Lindeman

April 5, 1875. I was born--my mother told me so--my daddy said so, too. They wanted to name me "Helen" but my Grandpa's mother's name was "Hannah" and I was the first girl born after Grandpa's mother died and he begged my parents to call me "Hannah" because his mother was such a noble woman and, as Grandpa said, "Name her Hannah and she will be a great blessing to you"--so I'm Hannah. I've often wondered if I am anything like the other "Hannah."

I was born in Cincinnati on Richmond Street, just a short distance from where my mother was born. When I was a little girl, it interested me very much to pass the house where Mother was born and then walk about five blocks and look at the two-story red brick house that fairly squatted on the red brick pavement where I was born.



Hannah and her brother
Sidney Oaks Lindeman

I was the "only girl" for a long time--two older brothers and five younger brothers all born in Cincy. I wasn't spoiled. I was just like my brothers and could play marbles, jump fences, and climb trees, play ball, and skate and play mumblepeg. My aunts were horrified. My mother and dad enjoyed me. My grandparents worried I might never become a "lady."

The first sorrow I remember was when I was five years old. Mother's father, who had a very bad case of dropsy, fell from the second story window on July 4th at 5 A.M. and died that night. Dad always had lots of fireworks for our 4th and we had lemonade and cookies. It was loads of fun and we always could stay up till 10 P.M. Of course, that 4th we gave the fireworks away. They brought my grandma to our home and we had to be very quiet and stay in the kitchen or back yard. But we did have our ice-cold lemonade and cookies.

We lived on Court Street then. Three times a week there was "street market" on Court Street. We all loved that, we kids, for at noon when the farmers packed up to go home it was so exciting. Mother would turn on the big faucet in the side yard and sweep and scrub the walk and gutter and we could take off our shoes and stockings and help. Then the two oldest boys whitened the four stone steps and polished the brass rail and brass doorknob and "bricked" the side-walk. Then we had dinner and if it was vacation time we had to rest quietly during the heat of the day. Was it hot--brick house...brick yard...brick sidewalk...no trees and cobbled street.



A Market on Court Street in
Cincinnati in the 1860s

Nearly every noon an organ grinder with his monkey visited our street. We each got a penny every Saturday and many of our pennies went to the monkey who'd dance for us and when we gave him the penny he'd squeak and tip his hat.

In the evening, a young boy came down the street carrying a small, light ladder and a lighted wick on a long stick. The wick was very thin, covered with wax. It fitted into a groove in the stick and could be pushed up as it burned. The boy was the lamplighter for our section. He had many lamps to light and looked very poor. Very early in the morning, just before dawn, he came around to turn the gas lamps off.

The blocks in Cincy were long. There were only three lamps to the block. We had a lamp right in front of our house for we lived in the middle of the block. In the winter Mother often gave the lamplighter a cup of hot coffee when he came to light the lamp. All of us children drank coffee from the time we were three years old, half milk and half coffee. She didn't like to give us milk, saying it was unclean.

The milkman came every day with horse and wagon. The open wagon carried about a dozen very large cans. The driver stood on a step at the back of the wagon. We only got two quarts a day at 6¢ a quart, just enough for coffee. With a big ladle the milkman dished out the milk into your pitcher. The ladle just held one quart. We always had to pick a few flies out of the milk and we weren't supposed to use the milk until it was boiled.

The waffle man often came right after the milkman. You could buy a waffle with sugar for a penny. He cooked them while you waited. We often had a hard time deciding what to do with our penny a week: see the monkey dance, buy a waffle or a pretzel, or a big fat pickle. Sidney and I used to divide--if one of us bought a pickle or waffle, we'd each get half then the other one would pay for the monkey.

We had many books and games and although they all called me "tomboy" I had lovely dolls and how I loved them. To me they were real babies. My first large doll I received for my sixth birthday, and this brings me to sorrow #2. To me it was much worse than when Grandpa fell out of the window.

Daddy came home on my birthday with a big box tied with a big white satin ribbon. I remember how I trembled when I opened it and my heart jumped when I saw that beautiful big doll. It had a wax face so pink and white, blue eyes that really opened and closed, and gold curls. For days I kept it in the box. Then Mother said it would be more fun if I took the doll out of the box and played with it, putting it back in the box when I put it to bed. But she warned me "be sure not to let her in the sun too long; her face will get out of shape for the wax will get soft."

I loved that doll and as rough as I was playing with the boys that's how gentle I was with my doll. One day I went upstairs to get "Mary" to show her to a little girl. Sydney, he was 18 months younger than me, was sitting on the floor with my beautiful Mary across his knees. He never had touched any of my dolls. We often played "Mama and Papa" but his job was to go to work and buy groceries and mine was to take care of all the children. Sydney had pulled the wig off to see how the eyes worked and the eyes dropped out. He fooled with it so long the nose got bent and one cheek pushed in. Mother tried to console me, promising me a bisque doll and real hair. All I remember is saying to Mother, "No, I don't want any; you don't understand." and Mother saying, "You poor darling."

Mother was expecting another baby (I didn't know it). Grandma had come to live with us so we had to move to a larger house. We moved farther down on Court Street near Baymiller. It was a large two-story brick with a real yard with grass and a fig tree.

There's where little David was born, Mother's 7th son. David, named after Grandpa Oaks who died, had blue eyes and light hair just like Grandpa and like my doll "Mary." I was only a little past 8 when David was born--he died when he was three months old. As a child I believed a shooting star was a baby coming straight from heaven to its mother. The night David was born three of us were sitting in the front yard with our maid watching for shooting stars. I remember saying, "There are so many stars coming down tonight but none come near us." In the morning when Daddy told me we had a new little brother, I was sure he was mistaken. So he took me into Mother's room and proved to me I must have missed seeing this one for he knew David came straight from heaven. Daddy said, "When you look up into the sky you do not see the whole of heaven, you only see the part you are looking at," and I was satisfied. David came from heaven and for some reason God wanted him back again. How different sorrow #3.

Daddy bought me a baby lamb. I was overjoyed; it was a live plaything. The two older boys had a Billy goat they would hitch to a wagon and have loads of fun. The goat didn't like me and knocked me down every chance he got. So Daddy bought me a lamb. I couldn't understand why Mother said, "Gus, you shouldn't have done that; it will only be something else she will some day grieve about." That day came when baby lamb was almost full grown. Winter was at hand. Dad had to take the sheep to the butcher. They didn't tell me that. Dad said someone must have gotten it. We had a piano box in the back yard, 1/2 for the lamb and 1/2 for the goat. A few weeks later the goat was gone, but we had a dog. We called him "Keiser" but I couldn't forget my lamb. Just another sorrow.

Dad bought me a new pair of skates. The wooden wheels on my old ones were full of flat places and I couldn't do a figure 8 to save my soul. Across the street from us was a broad smooth stone pavement almost a block long. All the children nearby came to skate there. Sometimes I went over to Music Hall to skate. It was wonderful. Mother wouldn't let me go to the rink unless Dad or the boys went with me. No steel skates or ball bearings in those days. Dad bought a velocipede for Milton and Ben. It too was all wood. We had our pictures taken with Ben sitting on it.

I had a little playmate who lived across the street from us. She was very quiet and seldom laughed. One day while walking to school she said, "How many Mamas have you had, Hannah?" "Only my one Mama," I said and laughed. She looked at me then and said, "I've had three and I'm afraid I'm going to have to have another. They have been good to me but they don't keep me for keeps." When I told this to Mother, she explained to me how children without homes are given foster parents, etc. It was then that I made up my mind to have a home for children for keeps when I grew up.

Dad had an offer to come to Rochester, NY and cater for a club--wedding parties, etc. So we moved to Rochester, a beautiful clean city. We all loved it. Dad was doing well in spite of so many people to feed and clothe. He was still paying his parents and sisters' expenses in Cincy. Mother was expecting her 9th child (but I didn't know it). It was in Rochester that Claudia was born and I no longer was the only girl. When Dad told me "we have a new baby, Hannah, guess what it is," I answered, "a boy of course." When he told me I had a sister I didn't believe him but when Mother said, "Yes, this time it is a little sister," what did I do? I cried for joy.

The club Dad was working for had financial troubles and they closed up so we moved back to Cincy after four years in beautiful Rochester. Daddy's mother, who had been sick for years, died. His one sister got a job: the other one kept house. The following year both got married and Dad didn't have to take care of them.

Dad was working for St. Nicholas Hotel in Cincy. We lived on Mound Street near Clark, an eight room, three story house. Six months after our return to Cincy the hotel burned out. Jobs were very scarce at that time, rents were high, food was high and things seemed to be going from bad to worse. Sydney took typhoid fever. We could only afford a laundress 1-1/2 days a week at \$1.10 a day. I had to give up school. Claudia was three years old; Lou, eight; Harry nine and a half and Seeley 11. During Sydney's six-week illness Grandma and I kept house, cooking, sewing, etc. Dad marketed on his way home in the evening.

He was working for the White sewing machine co. making \$15 a week. Milton and Ben both left school to go to work. Ben earned \$3.50 a week in dry goods store and Milton \$8 as accountant for Almes & Deptke Co. They went to work at 7 A.M. and quit at 6 P.M. I got up every morning at 5 to get breakfast for the boys and start the fires. We always had the fires in the kitchen stove and dining room grate before we went to bed. The base burner in the hall burned all night but had to be coaxed every morning for nearly an hour before it would throw out heat. The mornings were very cold. We had rosin wood to start the kitchen stove. Rosin wood was very expensive but Mother wouldn't let me use coal oil.

Breakfast wasn't hard or much trouble to get in those days. We each had one or two cups of coffee and two rolls--sometimes with butter and sometimes with molasses. After Milton and Ben left for work I carried a hot cup of coffee to Mother and brought Claudia downstairs to the fire in the dining room to dress. One by one the others came down to dress either in the kitchen or dining room. With the boys off to school the day's work started.

Mother nursed Sydney through his illness day and night. I even took her meals up to her. About two weeks after Sydney was out of bed, Harry took down with typhoid and I had an abscessed ear. It was a bitter cold winter; we had a coal grate in every room and a base burner in the hall. Milton, Ben, and I had the job of keeping the fires going and carrying out ashes. Grandma and I slept in the front room on the 3rd floor. Milton and Ben and Seeley slept in the back room. Harry and Mother in the front room on the 2nd floor. Dad and Sydney in the middle room and Lou and Claudia in the back bedroom.

We had a small but nice living room. It seemed away from the house; it was so separated from the dining room and kitchen. I loved to go in there and read or have a friend in for quiet conversation. I always felt I had taken a little trip, but we had to rent the living room. Expenses with the sick and such a severe winter burning coal like paper. Mother felt very badly about it for she knew there would be no place for me to have company or be alone.

In the evening, the boys studied at the big dining room table. Grandma read. Claudia played. And usually I darned or sewed. The lady who had the living room at \$6 a month was a student at the medical college in Cincy. When she wasn't too busy studying she would ask me in her room. She knew I was very much interested in her work.

It was the first house we lived in that had a real bathroom with running water in the bathtub and all you had to do was pull a plug and the water ran out. The other houses had tubs, but you filled them by carrying water and one place the tub was on high legs and had a hose attached to drain the water out. We kids made such a mess of it, Mother bathed us in a wooden wash tub by the kitchen stove.

I used to love to see that stove top get a fiery red. The kitchen smelled so good and was so comfy Sydney and I used to keep the stove polished every Tuesday after ironing day and every Friday after baking day.

On Fridays Mother baked coffee cake, cookies, bread, and pies. Sunday afternoon we kids made popcorn balls and taffy during winter. Summer took us to Eden Park to the band concerts. Most Sundays we walked, each carrying a shoe box with lunch. It took us several hours as it was uphill and very very far, probably 7 miles. Coming home it was easy.

I don't remember much about the concerts but the beautiful grass, trees and flowers and the fresh smell of good earth, away from brick houses and yards and cobblestone streets. Eden Park to me was where the fairies lived. Many times I filled my shoe box with grass and took it home.

We were always a very happy bunch and all more or less musical. Milton was a better musician than any of us. He won two scholarships at the college of music. He was a fine violinist. Ben played by ear, any string instrument. He wouldn't study music but did love to play and also paint. Sydney had a good voice, only had to hear a song twice to get the tune. The words seemed to come just as easy. Seeley and Harry played the mandolin, guitar and banjo and Lou, Claudia and I played the piano. I too played the guitar, banjo and piano. My piano lessons started when I was 21.

Dad had an offer to cater for the Dayton & Buzz Fuzz Club. We moved to Dayton in 1895. Harry and I came here with Dad to look for a house and get it ready for Mother and the family. We found a nine-room frame house on Hydraulic Street, a nice house, large yard and barn. Grandma could have a room to herself and Claudia and I have our own room. We moved on May 6th, Mother's birthday. Ben and Milton both found work in Dayton. Sydney went with his boss to Sedalia. There he met and fell in love and married Mae Elliott although she was still in high school and he only 18. They came home a few months later and we all loved Mae. They lived in Cincinnati and we saw each other often.

Seeley had a job with Krug Grocery. Harry and Lou at Davis Sewing Machine Co., and Dad, with his good job made life run a bit smoother.

Then came the break in the levee and our nice house was flooded and many more nice houses too. The boys had gone to work. Only Mother, Claudia, Grandma, Dad, and I were home when the cry came from house to house. The levee has broken; the river is coming like mad. People on the street started to run. We called; all our neighbors called, "You won't make it, come in here." Some ran up on porches, some tried to get to their own homes, but that was impossible for half an hour after the first alarm the water came bubbling up through our registers. Dad and I pulled up the carpets as fast as we could. They were tacked from corner to corner. We only got two up on the couch after putting the couch on three chairs. Our hands were bleeding. We had sent Mother, Grandma and Claudia upstairs. Mother called down,

"Please try to save my books. Let everything else go. Do come up here." Well, we were soon knee-deep in water, dirty muddy water and cold. Dad made me go partway upstairs and he handed books to me. Then I gave them to Mother: Longfellow, Shakespeare, Byron, etc. As Dad was handing me the two big Bibles we heard a crash -- the bookcase and all the small sets of books were face down in the water. The water was up to the piano keys. Dad waded to the kitchen thinking he might get some food. It was raining and sleeting -- of course no furnace fire, no food, so we sat at the front room window upstairs and watched things float by.

By four in the afternoon the water found its level as boats and rafts came to take people from their homes. We all climbed out of the stair landing window onto a raft. Dad's cook lived on Helena Street. No water there and they asked us to stay with them, which we did for one week. The boys and Dad stayed at the Dayton Club sleeping on chairs and couches.

Three days after the flood the fire department pumped water out of all the cellars and turned the hose on the houses inside and out as high as the mud or water line was. Next day Harry and I built a furnace fire. The house steamed from attic to cellar in spite of all windows open. The wood and coal were so wet we had to use coal oil to get it going. It worried me. Harry said, "don't worry, the house won't burn; it will only fizz."



It was a mess. The paper that hadn't peeled off, we scraped off. Mud in every crack. After ten days of hard work, all the boys helping each evening after their work, the house was dry enough for Mother, Claudia, and Grandma to move in again. Six months later we had the floors and walls done over. The piano went back to the factory; cost \$100 to refelt and string and clean it.

Two years after Sid and Mae married, Edith was born. When she was three months old, they visited us for the summer. We had wonderful times together--barn dances, hikes and going to Lakeside. Joe Schwarz as always with us -- he had his good eye on me and I had both mine on him.

My days were full, helping with the work at home, giving mandolin and piano lessons, working, or rather helping Mrs. Kinaler with the Young Women's League and teaching Sunday School, giving lessons in sewing at the Community Center, gardening, and taking piano lessons -- also helping once a week at hospital.

We had lovely neighbors and had many watermelon parties and picnics together. All the homes had beautiful gardens and lawns. We had the largest barn so all the barn dances were at our place.

Harland's house caught fire. Mr. Harland had his best books in the attic and it grieved him terribly for none were saved. We took Byron and his sister to our house and Mr. & Mrs. went to another neighbors for a few days. Wonder if Byron remembers?

Dewalds lived across the street from us. Mrs. fainted whenever she got frightened. One summer day I heard her scream, "Hannah, Hannah." I ran just in time to see Mrs. DeWald faint in the gutter. Running across the street I grabbed her up. She opened her eyes, pointed toward the backyard, and said, "Brother." Another neighbor by that time came running out. I ran to the backyard to see what happened to "Brother" the four-year-old. He was in the Chick Sales house screaming to beat the band. His head stuck into one of the holes, and he couldn't get it out (because of his big ears). I nearly pulled an ear off getting his head out. He said, "I only wanted to look to see where it went."

Two days later their little girl, 7, fell off the barn roof. It was Sunday. We were on the porch reading our paper when the scream, "Hannah, Hannah." It was Mr. DeWald. Mrs. had fainted. Mr. was half shaved carrying Ethel in the house. Her nose and mouth were bleeding. She was "out." One of the neighbors ran four blocks for the doctor -- Dr. King. Until the doctor came all I thought of doing was cold to the head. Mrs. D was still in her faint. Doctor arrived. Mrs. came to. Ethel came to only to vomit blood. Mrs. fainted again. Doctor gave me instructions and I stayed there until midnight. Ethel was OK in a few days.

Dr. King came to see Mother just to tell her I'd miss my vocation if I didn't study to be a nurse. He met me several times at homes and at the hospital and wanted me to study under him at Deaconess Hospital, now the Miami Valley Hospital. I was needed at home so was to wait a few more years and then take up nursing if I wanted to.



Hannah and Joe Schwarz in Later Years, 1950s

A few more years saw me married to Joe Schwarz and I started nursing a year after I was married -- nursing Hermene.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

Court Street -- Brother Sydney fell in a tub of hot water. Badly scalded. Mrs. O'Hara, our neighbor, a dear old Irish Catholic, loved Mother very much. She brought holy water from her church and said prayers for Sydney every day until he was out of danger.

Daddy had many ups and downs and of course they were Mother's too. '84 flood in Cincy put him out of business. By '88 he was on his feet again, opened a lovely little restaurant. '88 flood swept everything away. I remember standing at the edge of the water and saw my Dad row into his second story. He always whistled low soft opera tunes; he whistled beautifully. Mother never complained; she looked tired and careworn at times but was most patient with us and very understanding. Mother made all our clothes -- her own and Grandma's and helped Dad's sisters with theirs.

We moved to Chicago. Lou was a baby. 7 children in all. We lived on Levitt Street in a stone front house. Daddy was having a tough time making a living for all of us and helping to support his mother and father and two sisters.

Chicago didn't seem to agree with me. Uncle Joe was leaving for Lacross, Wisc., where Mother's sister lived and where Grandma was visiting so it was decided to take me to Lacross and Grandma bring me home in the spring. Several tribes of Indians camped in Lacross. One day an Indian killed a white man. The night riders caught the Indian and lynched him. The Indians then set the whole downtown on fire. The fires burned for two nights and a day. Uncle's store was ashes.

Mother and Dad had moved back to Cincy. We all went to Cincy. Aunt Rose, her two children, Grandma, and me. Uncle Henry stayed in Lacross to clean up the mess. So Dad had more trouble; it was the beginning of getting poor.

The man Dad went in business with cheated Dad out of all his money and ran away leaving only debts behind. We had to sell all our furniture to buy tickets to go back to Cincy where Dad had a job promised as caterer in a big hotel. Aunt Rose and her family were with us all summer. Our house was on Eighth near Mound St. A two-story brick, no yard.

[Ed. Note.- Susanne Lindeman Lange typed the original manuscript. Her precise effort made scanning and formatting for the web site and easy task.]