

Woman's Touch

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Honor thy father and mother. . . .
(Ephesians 6:2)

Silas Gaither, National Director
Division of Church Ministries

ELVA HOOVER, Editor

Linda Upton, Associate Editor

Francine Danford, Editorial Assistant

Jenell Ogg, Auxiliaries Coordinator

Rosalie Pickering, Artist

A. R. Pember, Circulation Manager

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Sharon Kay Bottoms shares how a foundation for spiritual training should be laid early in a child's life.

Building Family Memories

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Marcia Randolph presents in free verse the struggle and the victory of an age-old temptation.

Creative Workshop . . .

Showers of blessing umbrella—This simple, but pretty idea can be used for a centerpiece or for favors or even for a gift.

Really my mother didn't need company or house guests or phone calls to keep her entertained. With seven children (the oldest was nine when the twins, numbers six and seven were born) the days carried themselves and time was gone before even the necessary jobs were done. Mother, being the person that she was, somehow attracted many who felt her strengths.

Mother was called when there was a baby to be born, when someone was dying, when someone needed prayer, when the neighbor's cow was sick! She was no socialite, but if there was a need or work to be done Mother never hesitated to go.

I was three years old when my father was appointed to a church in the small community of Egeland, North Dakota. Dad was also a school teacher so we were soon acquainted in our little town. Conveniences were few. There was no electricity in our house, no running water, no gas heat.

While she lived in our home Mother attempted to teach her the things most girls learn from their own mothers.

Adelaide lived with us during her four years of high school except for weekends and vacations. There wasn't an extra room for her. We only had three bedrooms in the house so my sisters moved over and Adelaide became part of the family.

After Esther and Adelaide came Elizabeth. She was with us a year during the school months.

It soon became known that Mother was adept at helping in time of sickness. I never liked to hear that a baby was about to be born for I knew someone would come for my mother. Home was never the same when she was gone and I was reluctant to share her.

But share we did. What else was there to do when someone was

This Is My

Water was pumped, carried in by the pailful, heated on the coal stove. Of course the coal for the stove also was carried in. Food was preserved through canning or drying. Clothes were made at home for the most part. So just the ordinary tasks of providing food and clean clothes for a family of nine was no small task. But Mother's work never ended with just us nine.

There were girls who had no opportunity to attend high school because they lived in the country and no school buses were around in those days. They had to find a family in town that would allow them to live in their home. First Esther lived with us. Her home was broken by sickness and poverty. She had not been taught the simple tasks of keeping house.

dying? Mother brought calmness and courage to distressed people. She tended the sick one and if the person died she closed the eyes, bathed the body, and stayed until the coroner came.

And there was Mrs. Smestad. She had been born with only one hand and she bore the emotional trauma of that all her life. She had a fine family who loved her, but she was never able to completely cope with her handicap. In middle life it troubled her so much that it became an obsession. She became so suspicious she trusted no one except Mother. Mother always went when she called and sometimes that was every day. She was able to quiet her and help her look beyond her fears.

And there was the Fleming family. Mr. Fleming came down with tuberculosis. He had a wife and two

children. He had to go away to a sanatorium for treatment. What was his family to do? Today they would be provided for through welfare, but welfare programs that many years ago were not adequate. Mrs. Fleming and the children had no place to live.

It seems incredible to me now, and like I said Mother really didn't need house guests around to have something to do, but we emptied one room downstairs and a bedroom upstairs and the Flemings moved in.

Don't imagine there was a private entrance for the Flemings. The only access to their room was through our kitchen. Their water had to be pumped and carried in too (and carried out after it was used) so it was carried in and out through our

were no finances and the girl was not able to keep them any longer. Where would they go? Mother prayed. She had no fantasies about the amount of work or the cost involved. Three more plates at the table three times a day, three more to wash for, sew for, and to tend to each day! But Mother prayed. She felt the Holy Spirit say to her, "If you don't, who will?" And so Angie and Cleo and Christine came to live with us.

I was a teenager at this time and some of the older ones from our own family were now gone from home. I remember the day the girls came. They were seven, nine, and eleven. It

mother was sick, the children were sick, there was no one to care except Mother. There was no running water; there was no automatic washing machine; and certainly there were no clothes that could be burned. But there was Mother. She washed the soiled bedding; she washed the infected clothing; she laid it all out in the sun to sterilize.

By now my parents were past middle age. Time for a bit of relaxing and easing off you'd think; time to go away in the winter. But that kind of life never found its way into my parents' home.

My father took an accounting position and along with the job, they moved to Minneapolis. They bought a modest duplex and lived in the lower story. Just the two of them? Not often.

When my sister came home from India on a missionary furlough the natural place to go was home. She came with two boys and a third was born while she was staying with my parents. About the same time my brother was a chaplain in the Army. His wife and children occupied the upstairs floor of the duplex.

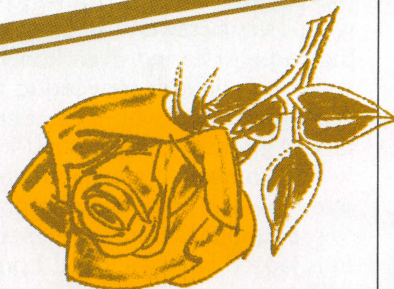
Then tragedy came to one of my sisters. Her husband was killed in a light plane accident. They had two small children and they pastored a church. Mother went immediately and stayed for two months. She didn't find out until she had returned to Minneapolis that my sister was to have a third child.

In a matter of months that sister moved to the Minneapolis home. So there were babies and preschoolers "upstairs and downstairs and in the lady's chamber"! And where did the children congregate when they lived in Grandma's house? You guessed it. Grandma's doors were always open and her heart as well.

My father dearly loved teaching, especially the Bible. When it came time to retire he was invited to teach at a small Bible school in North Dakota. (This was in the beginning days of what is now Trinity Bible Institute in Ellendale, North Dakota.) So although my parents were in their late sixties they moved back to North Dakota. I'm sure this was a hard move for Mother. I never heard her say so because my mother did not complain. But she left the modest comfort of the Minneapolis home and

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Mother



Marian Williams Brandt

kitchen! They didn't have a private bath either. They used the same bathroom we did. There was a path out through the yard. Bathing was done in the wash tub.

I never heard my mother complain about the intrusion of privacy. No doubt she had mentally forfeited that when she invited Mrs. Fleming to come. It wasn't privacy that my mother was concerned about. I think the Flemings lived with us for about a year.

Almost any visiting missionary or evangelist stayed in our home. And evangelistic meetings lasted two or three weeks in those days. Some of them ate with us, some didn't. But the most impressionable times of my life were sitting around a big table with missionaries or ministers—always at Mother's invitation.

And then we heard about Angie and Cleo and Christine. They were living with an older girl with whom we were well acquainted. Their own home had been broken. But there

was January, the coldest time in North Dakota. They had only scanty clothing. It was during the depression of the '30s. My father was teaching school for \$42 a month. How would we clothe three new members in the family? Would there be enough to eat? Mother made undershirts for the three girls from outing flannel. Somehow God provided. They lived with us for 15 months. We loved them and it was a sad day when, because of a religious difference in our background, they were taken out of our home.

Before long there was Don and a bit later Tom. Both boys were from broken homes. The welfare helped with part of their clothes and food, but the work and the care fell on Mother. I think she was the only true mother that Tom and Don ever really knew. They lived with us for five years.

The Hammonds lived up the block from us. They were poor and shunned somewhat by neighbors, but Mother was their friend. One day they all came down with a very contagious bowel infection. The

THIS IS MY MOTHER

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moved into a small house without the convenience of plumbing. They did have central heat—one stove in the center of the house! But undaunted my mother found things to do. She volunteered her help in the school kitchen, she mended clothes for the boys, and sewed on missing buttons. She accepted a Sunday school class in the local church and was a favorite teacher among the small children. She sewed quilts for missionaries in her spare time! That was Mother.

Their move to Springfield, Missouri, proved to be their last one. It was time to retire at last! Of course that didn't mean not teaching a Sunday school class or entertaining missionary guests. They were most welcome. Mother's table was often surrounded by visiting children and grandchildren and later the great-grandchildren.

Dad went to his reward six years ago at age 89. Mother at 96 lives in Springfield in the home of one of my sisters, Dorris Kingsriter. There is no

strength now for cooking and sewing. She suffered several strokes a few years ago. But her mind is clear and she can still tell you anything you want to know about the varied experiences that have colored her life and ours. She still has strength to pray as she lies on her bed and pray she does. She prays for the missionaries; she prays for all the family.

Today I give tribute to my mother, Emma Ward Williams. I would not be what I am today if it had not been for her. She is dearly loved by 7 children, 19 grandchildren, and 38 great-grandchildren.

Let me say, "Mother, we truly love you."

Editor's Note: *The seven children of Rev. and Mrs. Bruce S. Williams are well known in the Assemblies of God. They are:*

Dr. Ward R. Williams,

Ellendale, ND., ordained minister, educator, college administrator.

Miss Maxine Williams, Kirkland, WA., educator, faculty emeritus, Northwest College of the Assemblies of God, Kirkland, WA.

Harriet (Mrs. Sydney) Bryant, Springfield, MO., licensed minister, missionary to India 30 years.

Kathrine (Mrs. Elmer) Trygg, Hillsboro, OR., retired schoolteacher.

Marian (Mrs. R. L.) Brandt, Billings, MT., district Women's Ministries president, free-lance writer.

Rev. Morris Williams, Springfield, Mo., ordained minister and Assemblies of God foreign missions field director for Africa.

Dorris (Mrs. Harland) Kingsriter, Springfield, MO., secretary to Assemblies of God foreign missions field director for Latin America and the West Indies.

My Mother-in-law's Secret

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my shoulder as I pulled open a bureau drawer. She would loathe having anybody poke through her mended underwear and faded nightgowns. Old darned stockings, patched aprons, an empty talcum powder can, a broken string of beads. Just junk.

I opened the bottom drawer. There was a lace slip I had given her several years ago, the tissue paper in which it was wrapped creased and handled. There too was the white stole we had given her which she had never worn, and the bottle of perfume Judy had bought with her first baby-sitting earnings.

Underneath these items my groping fingers encountered a sheet of red construction paper with staggered blue-crayoned letters: "I luv you, Grany. from Jerry." One of Jerry's first grade epistles which she had saved all these years.

This was her drawer of precious things, taken out and fondled and enjoyed, then carefully re-wrapped and replaced. I searched further, but there was nothing there of Jeff's. Of course Jeff wasn't a bit sentimental. He'd never have written a love note.

By now it was lunchtime. I put the kettle on in the kitchen, rummaged in the cupboard for a tea bag, and sat down with my sandwich at the little kitchen table. Mother Schell's Bible was on the shelf and I reached for it and flipped through the pages. I was surprised to see that it was well marked and I began to study the underlined passages.

Here was one of my own favorites: "What time I am afraid I will trust in thee" (Psalm 56:3). The date in the margin was February 1, 1966. That was the day Judy was born—a day never clear in my own mind. I'd had a hard time and opened my eyes to find Fred bending over me. He whispered, "We have a beautiful baby girl Darling. Mother called. She said to tell you she knew all the time you'd be all right."

"A lot she knew about it," I thought wearily. I saw now she'd been afraid for Judy and me—so afraid she'd sought assurance from God.

I turned the pages and a verse in Proverbs stood out: "Train up a child in the way he should go. . . ." In her scrawl I read "Jerry, Friday's child. Jeff, Saturday's child."

Ah yes, "Friday's child is loving and giving; Saturday's child must work for his living." Jerry was popular, easygoing, lovable, whereas Jeff—! Mother Schell had sensed a need in Jeff and had reached out to help him find the way *he* should go—a different path from Jerry's.

My tea grew cold as I pondered. I had been so satisfied to achieve tolerance. Where had my sanctified imagination been which would have drawn aside a veil and allowed me a glimpse of her heart? Such a glimpse would have been like gazing into a mirror finding in another human being the same strengths and weaknesses, loves, hates, joy, and despair that are a part of all humanity. But things would be different now.

She would not lie in that rest home month after month. If we could not keep her with us all the time at least we could arrange to bring her home to us every now and then for relief and change to make her life more bearable.

I bowed my head. "Thank you Lord for letting me discover Mother Schell's secret in time." ♥