



1984

Remembrances of Eva Foster Robinson: 1903-1984

Elwyn B. Robinson
University of North Dakota

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.und.edu/und-books>

Recommended Citation

Robinson, Elwyn B., "Remembrances of Eva Foster Robinson: 1903-1984" (1984). *UND Publications*. 23.
<https://commons.und.edu/und-books/23>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections at UND Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in UND Publications by an authorized administrator of UND Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact zeinebyousif@library.und.edu.

Remembrances
of
**EVA FOSTER
ROBINSON**

1903 - 1984



by

Elwyn B. Robinson

Remembrances of
Eva Foster Robinson, 1903 - 1984

by

Elwyn B. Robinson

Grand Forks, North Dakota

1984

Copyright by Elwyn B. Robinson, 1984

Printed by Century Creations Printing
Grand Forks, North Dakota

Growing Up

Evangeline Sophia Foster was born on May 23, 1903, in Springhill, Nova Scotia. She was the third child of the Reverend Mr. George I. Foster, the rector of All Saints (Anglican) in Springhill, and his wife Annie Day Foster. They had been married on June 1, 1898, in Lockeport, when he was vicar there. A native of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, born on August 31, 1871, he held a B.A. and an M.A. from King's College, Windsor, Nova Scotia. Annie had been born on July 13, 1874, and was a daughter of a family active in the Lockeport parish. Her father was in trade with the West Indies as well as in farming.

George and Annie's first child, Dorothy Frances ("Do" or "Dodo"), had been born on May 21, 1899; their second child, Marian Agnes ("Nanny"), had been born on May 21, 1901. Their fourth child, George William ("Georgie"), was to be born on July 30, 1905. After serving churches in Aylesford, Lockeport, and Springhill, Mr. Foster took his family to Cleveland, Ohio, in the late summer of 1905. There he became the rector of the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd at 1106 Addison Road. In the rectory beside the church one more child was born—Gladys Gordon on June 27, 1907. Her Papa called her the Yankee of the family.

Eva did not like her name, probably suggested by her Papa. He was a poet and had once served a church in the Annapolis Valley (Nova Scotia), the setting of Longfellow's famous poem "Evangeline." Sometimes her sisters teased by calling her "Evangeline Sophia."

Eva and her sisters and brother grew up in the rectory, a commodious house with two white marble fireplaces. Next door was East Madison Elementary School which they attended. Eva, a bright, conscientious pupil, had happy memories of her school days. She liked to recall how one teacher, an ardent Episcopalian, would take her classes to see the flying buttresses of Trinity Cathedral on Euclid Avenue. The school gave classes in German until the First World War ended the practice. Talented in language, Eva enjoyed learning German.

Christmas was an exciting time for the Foster children. On Christmas Eve, Papa would put up a large tree after the children were in bed. One Christmas their presents were school desks except for Gladys who was too small. She fussed until her Papa made her one. Playing school became a favorite pastime. Another was reading together. Eva remembered and years later bought a picture for her living room of three little girls reading a book.

Birthdays were big events. Because Do's and Nanny's came two days before Eva's, they got their presents first. Eva used to recall how one time she had cried until she was given her present early. As a little girl Eva loved to dress nicely, especially for Easter. She had to have white gloves. (Her Mama, a handsome woman, had a sense of style.) Gladys remembers that she and Eva would go into the church the day before Easter to arrange the plants to be given to the children. They also polished the brass and the Communion silver.

The event of the year was the Shrine picnic at Silver Lake. After a train ride, the children ate a sumptuous dinner at the hotel and were given lots of goodies. Then there were races and other competitions. Papa, wearing his Shrine costume, would play cornet solos from the hotel balcony. A member of the Al Koran Shrine, he played in its band and published a small volume, *Masonic and Other Poems*.

He also composed church music, some of which was published by a Boston firm in its *Parish Choir* series. He wrote two unpublished cantatas, "The Manger Throne" and "The Resurrection," and a children's operetta, "Cinderella." One of its songs was "Someone Has to Do the Dirty Work." Putting it on in the parish house was good fun for the Foster children and their friends.

At one time Mr. Foster even had a church band. Gladys remembers that on the day of the church picnic, it would march down Addison Road with the children trailing after to take the interurban to Willow Beach.

Eva learned to play the piano and organ when she was quite young. She played the organ for services in her Papa's church with Georgie pumping the bellows. Gladys remembers pumping when Eva practiced hymns. Grace McNickle Schneider, who grew up across the street, remembers how they used to gather around Eva at the piano to sing.

Grace also remembers that Eva made her a pretty dress when she did not have many. Gladys recalls that a Miss Shed, their Sunday School teacher, taught them to sew at an early age. She and Eva, sports-minded, would get up early to play tennis in Gordon Park. In winter it was a treat for Mama to make taffy and cool it on snow before the children pulled it. Marge Paelke, a close friend and a teenager with a good voice, used to sing "My Hero" from "The Chocolate Soldier." They all knew she was singing to her own hero, Frank Roberts, a friend of Georgie's.

Such recollections show that there was much fun in the rectory, not a pious place, and much loving care between the children and their Papa and Mama. There are memories of picnics at Gordon Park, of automobile rides with many flat tires, of an aristocratic neighbor, a Miss Varian. She lived near the rectory in an old Victorian house filled with treasures and gave Eva a *Book of Common Prayer* in French. With a gold-embossed leather binding and gold-tipped leaves, it had been published in 1846.

When Eva finished East High School, her Papa, short of funds and proud of his talented daughter, persuaded Samuel Mather to pay her expenses at Women's College of Western Reserve University. A philanthropist who had made a fortune in the iron trade, Mather was an Episcopalian interested in Trinity Cathedral where Eva's Papa had become acquainted with him. Later Western Reserve recognized his gifts by renaming Women's College for his wife, Flora Stone Mather. Majoring in French and mathematics, Eva made top grades in those subjects and graduated in 1925.

Courtship

After graduating, Eva taught for a year at a one-room school in Richland County, Ohio, southwest of Cleveland. The next four years she taught at the New Lyme consolidated township school in Ashtabula County, east of Cleveland. The school, eight grades and three years of high school, was in an old brick building put up years earlier for New Lyme Academy. There was no plumbing; the central heating system no longer worked; coal stoves stood in each class room; some rooms were no longer used. There were five teachers—three for the grades and two for the high school. In the high school Eva taught the English and mathematics and directed the school play. She stayed at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ted Grand, but usually took a Greyhound bus back to Cleveland for the weekends.

After graduating from Oberlin College in 1928, I got a job teaching at New Lyme and, like Eva, stayed at the Grand's. Eva's small, unheated room was off the parlor. In winter she spread her fur coat on the bed to keep warm. My small room, also unheated, was upstairs. A space-heater was in the combined living room and dining room. We used an outdoor privy.

After dinner, Eva and I would work at the table, preparing for next day's classes. We would usually take a break with a walk, getting privacy for talk away from the Grands and becoming acquainted. Conscientious, even-tempered, intelligent, Eva was an excellent teacher who never had any problems with student discipline. With good taste in clothes, she was a pretty girl—refined, modest, and witty. Everyone liked her.

In the winter of 1929-30, unaware of the disaster beginning to overtake the American economy, we decided that we would not return for another year. Freed from fear of rural opinion about proper conduct for teachers, we began to go to the weekly dances at the Swan, a dance hall near the Grand's. By the spring of 1930 we were engaged.

I began to bring Eva to Chagrin Falls to visit my parents and for parties and picnics with my friends. The next year, 1930-31, Eva taught at Jefferson, Ohio. For the first semester I was at Old Trail School in a suburb of Akron and then began graduate work in history at Western Reserve University. Because her Mama was not well, Eva gave up her job at Jefferson after a year and was at home while I was at Reserve. I was living with my parents and commuting to the campus fifteen miles away.

After class on Saturday, I would often walk to the rectory, about three miles away, to spend the weekend. With no income in the Great Depression, we found things to do that cost nothing. We took walks, sometimes to a branch of the Cleveland Public Library to draw out books. We read together. I remember our reading George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*. Some of the books questioned laissez-faire capitalism. With millions unemployed, I adopted liberal views. I had voted for Herbert Hoover in 1928. Eva sympathized and defended liberal ideas against the Republicanism of her Mama and sister Dodo. Eva and I were becoming Franklin Roosevelt Democrats.

I came to know the Foster family. Georgie and Dodo, unmarried, were living at home. I played chess with Mr. Foster, and Eva and I played bridge with her parents. Sometimes when her Papa was out of the room, we would rig his hand with high cards. He always caught on. For Saturday night's supper there would be Boston baked beans and brown bread. Eva's Mama was a fine cook. Sometimes I would pump the organ when Eva played for a service. Eva's Papa, often sitting at a card table under a tree, was writing an epic in Byronic style during this period.

Eva helped me with German which I was studying on my own for the Ph.D. language requirement. Mr. Foster gave me a German-English dictionary published in the 1850's, and Eva put a cloth cover on the old book. We went over my research papers together, improving the style. There were square-dance parties for graduate students in history organized by Dr. Arthur C. Cole, my principal professor. Once the Coles had Eva and me to dinner.

Ours was a long engagement—five and a half years. Sometimes it seemed as though I would never get my Ph.D., never get a college teaching job, and never get married. Then, in August 1935 with a draft of most of my dissertation written, course work and examinations over, I secured an appointment as an instructor of American history at the University of North Dakota. My salary was to be \$1,400 a year. Delighted, we looked up North Dakota in the *Britannica*.

At once Eva and I were busy with preparations. We were married by her Papa before our families and a few friends in the Church of the Good Shepherd at 8:00 A.M. on Labor Day, September 2, 1935. A sweet, dear girl, Eva wore a fur-trimmed brown suit. Our families took us to the Greyhound Station, and by ten we were on our way to Grand Forks. Marrying Eva was the best thing I ever did.

Grand Forks

Looking back on that warm Labor Day, I think that Eva must have been courageous to leave family and friends for far-away North Dakota and the uncertainties surrounding my job at the University. The trip took three days. Full of curiosity, we rode into Grand Forks on Belmont Road, admiring the elms. We told ourselves that we were going to like our new home. (Many years later we were still telling people that we had come to Grand Forks on our honeymoon and were still on it.)

Next morning Henry Doak, an associate professor of English, rented us a furnished apartment in the University Apartments on Cambridge Street. It had a small living room with an in-a-door bed, a small kitchen, and a bathroom. With Eva's savings and wedding-present money we bought bedding, cooking utensils, and dishes. It was fun setting up housekeeping. Later we bought a Montgomery Ward radio, a secondhand portable Singer sewing machine, and, when dust gave Eva's nose trouble, a vacuum cleaner. Riding the city bus, we explored the downtown shopping district. We walked around the campus. Happy to be married, we gave each other support and comfort in our new surroundings.

After I had settled into my teaching duties, I began to work on the completion of my doctoral dissertation. Dr. Orin G. Libby, head of the American history department, made it clear that it was important for me to get my Ph.D. by the end of the school year: it would insure my job, bring me a promotion to assistant professor, and increase my salary. On December 9 Eva's Papa died of a heart attack at age sixty-four, and she returned to Cleveland by train for the funeral.

During the coldest North Dakota winter on record, I wrote the final chapter of the dissertation. Then Eva and I worked hard at revision of the whole manuscript. We rented a typewriter so that Eva could teach herself typing and type the final copy. She did an excellent job, a significant saving. In June Western Reserve gave me a Ph.D.

During our first years in Grand Forks, Eva made many friends. Some were wives of new faculty members in University Apartments or next door: Madeline MacGregor, Isabelle Matterson, Pen Thompson, and others. Susan Heidenreich, wife of a federal meteorologist, became especially close. Others were older women: Mrs. Henry (Mary Ellis) Doak, Mrs. William (Polly) Budge, Mrs. George (Ruth) Abbott, Mrs. John (Olive) Hundley, Mrs. David (Katie) Jenkins, Mrs. Harley (Mabel) French, and Mrs. William (Ada) Bek. All were connected with the University, the last two wives of deans. With a faculty of only about a hundred, the University community was a small and friendly one. There was visiting, bridge, and faculty wives' teas.

Eva enrolled in a University ceramics class and took swimming at the "Y". She drew books from the public library and played golf with Pen Thompson, free on the University nine-hole course near the railroad tracks. Eva and I went to the President's receptions, to lectures and concerts, to St. Paul's Episcopal Church, to the Winter Sports Building to skate, and to football and basketball games. Naturally sociable and with modest ways, Eva was becoming well liked.

In the summers of 1936, 1937, and 1938, we stored our household goods in the attic of the apartment building and took the train to Cleveland to live with Eva's Mama and Do and with my parents in Chagrin Falls. We swam at Gordon Park and the town pool at Chagrin, visited relatives, read, and played bridge with my father. In the summer of 1937 I taught the American history survey for six weeks at Western Reserve. Sorry for our poverty, Dr. Cole had gotten me the job.

In the fall of 1937, I developed ulcers in my colon, chronic ulcerative colitis, with eight or ten stools a day. The frequent stools, an elevated white corpuscle count, and a persistent low fever made me weak. Under the care of Dr. Reinhold Goehl, I tried many treatments with some improvement but no permanent success. Nevertheless, I managed to meet my classes. For a time I would lie down on a cot in Dr. Libby's inner office between classes.

It was an anxious time. The urgency of the stools made me fearful of being far from a toilet. Eva must have worried a good deal, but she was uncomplaining and supportive. I have memories of her reading my textbooks to me as I lay in bed, preparing for next day's classes. When we returned to Cleveland in the summer of 1938, I was a patient in a ward at Lakeside Hospital, a teaching hospital of Western Reserve School of Medicine. A psychiatrist talked to me, helping me understand the anxieties that were a cause of my psychosomatic illness. Upon his advice I took up photography, an absorbing hobby.

I did improve, but the colitis persisted until I had ileostomy surgery in 1950. Eva's courage, helpfulness, and good spirits through these thirteen years were wonderful. It may seem unbelievable, but we enjoyed life and were happy. Loving each other, we overcame a desperate situation, a tribute to Eva and to human resilience.

Stephen and Gordon

Pregnant in January 1939, Eva went every month to Dr. Harry Benwell, a general practitioner, and took good care of herself. We prepared for the coming baby by moving into a larger furnished apartment in the Ellis Apartments next door and having a telephone installed.

Early on the morning of October 19, Eva began to have labor pains, and at about seven a taxi took us to old St. Michael's Hospital. Labor pains continued through the day with Eva under sedation. Having her first baby at thirty-six was not easy. About 4:00 P.M. Stevie was born, a healthy baby weighing eight pounds and two ounces. After two weeks Eva and Stevie came home and we fell into the routine of caring for him, guided by *Infant Care*, a booklet published by the Children's Bureau. A conscientious mother, Eva was determined to give Stevie the best of care. Later she would laugh ruefully about the way we would let him cry in his crib because it was not time for his bottle according to the schedule in *Infant Care*.

But Stevie flourished. At seven months he weighed 21 pounds and measured 29 inches. On May 19, 1940, I wrote in the family diary:

He is husky, happy, very good-natured, very active, interested in everything about him, smiles at friends and neighbors who stop to look at him when his buggy is outdoors in front of the house. He is gentle and affectionate and we love him very much. He wakes up between 5 and 6 A.M. and laughs and plays and shouts.

At his birth Eva's womb had been torn, and an operation was necessary. On April 10, 1940, Dr. V. S. Quale assisted by Dr. J. E. Hetherington performed the operation (1 hr. 45 min.) in Deaconess Hospital. When she came out of surgery, Eva looked terrible and was in great pain. In the afternoon Dr. Hetherington told me that they must operate again because they were not certain they had tied the incision where they had removed the appendix. The second operation took forty minutes. Eva had been through an ordeal.

While she was in the hospital and then recuperating at home, a Mrs. Laski cared for Stevie and our apartment for a dollar a day. A cheerful, gentle woman, she worked for us for a month. Eva came home on April 19 in an ambulance (\$3.00) and stayed in bed for eleven days.

In the fall of 1940, she was taking Stevie out in his stroller every day, often walking to University Park. For his first birthday we gave him *Story and Verse for Children*, an 856-page anthology edited by Miriam Huber with a chapter on children's books and how to select them. We loved to say nursery rhymes to Stevie. Eva read to him often. Early favorites were *Johnny Crow's Garden* and Beatrix Potter's *Tailor of Gloucester*. In April 1984, Stevie sent me a list of twenty-one books in his library that had been given to him as a young child.

On January 31, 1941, we moved to a duplex at 423-425 Princeton Street. The day after his second birthday Eva and I made diary entries. I wrote: "Stevie is truly a delightful little boy . . . very active and sturdy. Good-natured and sweet-tempered, he is a happy child."

Eva described his typical day. He would wake up between six-thirty and seven and talk in his crib until we came to get him. Breakfast of Pablum, a poached egg on toast, and sometimes bacon followed. Then he would play with his toys, help Eva with the dishes, and go outdoors with her while she hung up a wash to dry. They might walk over to Finnie's farm to see the kittens, the haystack, and the cows. Dinner would be meat (liver, lamb, or beef), two vegetables, and potatoes or rice with a pudding or jello dessert. After a nap, Eva and Stevie might go outdoors. He liked to help Eva make pies and to play with the dough. He had lots of toys, a swing, and a sandbox. After his bath and a supper of Pablum, fruit, milk, and toast, he liked to lie on our bed before he crawled into his little one. We would say "Goodnight, Big Boy," and he would keep repeating it as we went downstairs.

Eva loved him dearly with his little back so straight, his little legs so sturdy, and his hair still curly. She wrote: "Sometimes he brings his book to me and says 'one more story.'"

In the spring of 1942 Eva was pregnant again and under Dr. Benwell's care. In preparation for the coming baby, we arranged to have a sophomore university student, Elizabeth Lawson, stay with us for the school year to help out for her room and board. A red-headed farm girl and a brilliant student, she would have to share Stevie's room, not an ideal arrangement.

On November 14, 1942, about 2:00 A.M., Eva began to have labor pains. We got to St. Michael's Hospital by taxi about 3:30 A.M., and Gordon was born at 4:10 A.M. Two weeks early, he weighed 7 pounds, 3 ounces. He was named after Eva's great grandmother, Mary Elizabeth Gordon (1816-1893). Eva stayed at the hospital for two weeks (bill \$85, Dr. Benwell's fee \$35), and Gordon stayed another week. At first the hospital had trouble finding a formula that agreed with him. After ten days, they found one (cow's milk, water, and Dextrin Maltose), and he began to gain weight.

With lots of brown hair and blue eyes, he was a pretty, good-natured baby, crying little. Eva wrote in the diary: "Stevie is crazy about him, wants to touch him all the time. Stevie said, 'He is the nicest baby I ever saw.'" When Eva came home from the hospital, Stevie jumped up and down for joy and hugged her. Stevie's earliest memory is of her coming home after Gordon's birth. "The prolonged absence of Mom was a memorable happening for a three-year-old," he wrote in 1984, "and I particularly recall lingering near the front door awaiting Mom's return."

Stevie especially remembers Eva reading to him and Gordon after they were tucked in bed. In March 1984 Gordon wrote: "I can almost still hear Mom's voice reading aloud as I lay in bed." Steve concluded: "Mother's dedication to reading to us no doubt contributed much to our love of books." Eva also told them stories of her own childhood, great favorites that they did not tire of hearing again and again: of the cars her Papa owned, of Christmases at the rectory, of the sinking of the *Titanic*, of playing the organ and the piano.

Gordon remembers his Mom playing the piano:

An oft-played piece, perhaps one of her favorites, was "Paderewski's Minuet." As a young boy, I would often stand beside the piano, singing to her accompaniment. She introduced me to the music of Gilbert and Sullivan, which became a great favorite of mine. . . . It is clear I owe to Mom my life-long love of music.

Eva had a splendid influence on the family. For years she had a reminder hanging in the kitchen: "Don't Nag. Don't Scold. Don't Shame or Frighten. Be Patient. Be Responsive. Give Encouragement. Keep Voice Quiet."

Through the years Eva did many things for Stevie and Gordon. She saw to it that they had proper food and clothing and immunizations. She drove them to Riverside Pool for swimming lessons, to children's concerts by the Grand Forks Symphony, to the public library, and to junior choir practice at St. Paul's. She took a handicraft course at the Y to get ideas for Cub Scouts. She played games with them, but above all she read to them. At appropriate ages they had coaster wagons, tricycles, a

sand box, a swing, a teeter-totter, an outdoors fireplace, bicycles, sleds, guinea pigs, skates, cameras, tennis racquets, and records. Stevie had a knapsack, a pup tent, a hunting knife, a microscope, and even a .22 Mossberg bolt-action rifle. Gordon had a violin, a baseball mitt, and to our regret a BSA motorcycle.

Their activities and interests enriched our lives. Eva and I went to many of Central High School's football games to watch Gordon play. Because of him, we purchased a combination radio-record player, a ping-pong table, and a TV. Because of Steve's wishes, we subscribed to Music Appreciation Records and acquired the components for a high-fidelity record player.

The boys helped in many ways—carrying out ashes from our lignite-burning furnace, cleaning the basement, painting the house, cutting down or trimming trees, washing and putting on storm windows and doors, building a brick compost heap, making flower beds, building a picket fence, planting grass seed, and caring for the vegetable garden. They were willing workers.

Some of Gordon's fondest memories of his Mom are of their downtown shopping trips when he was five to ten. At his insistence, they would finish off each outing with a visit to the lunch counter at Woolworth's or Kresge's. He would invariably order a ham salad sandwich, and he remembers clearly how they would sit together with their packages. When Eva was dying, Gordon reminded her of the ham salad sandwiches. She remembered, smiled, and nodded in agreement.

Times of being alone with his Mom come first to his mind. When she was dying in the intensive care unit of United Hospital, the times that Gordon was alone with her were especially precious. He wrote:

On one such visit I spent a long time gently stroking Mom's head, as she drifted in and out of sleep. Each time she awoke I assured her that I was still there, and she smiled and nodded her appreciation. It is easy now to think that there is a special bond between a mother and son, because I have clearly felt this during my times together alone with Mom, both at the beginning of my life and at the end of hers.

There was also a close bond between Eva and Stevie. In 1984 he remembers that his mother walked with him down to the Arleigh Lincolns for a ride to Winship School for his first day, of helping his mother decorate the Christmas tree in 1944, and of a major blizzard in 1947 when his mother took the city bus to Winship to bring him home.

After getting off the bus at Wesley College we had what seemed like an interminable walk directly into the fierce north wind to get home. At that time I was especially thankful to have a wonderful Mother to bring me safely home in the blizzard.

He remembers how, when he was in the fifth grade, a weasel killed his guinea pigs, and his mother buried them across the coulee before he came home from school to spare him the pain of seeing them. He wrote:

I loved to watch Mother cook, and it was a special treat when she would let me help her make cookies (my favorite was gingerbread cookies) or donuts. . . . It was wonderful to listen to Mother play the piano. I occasionally hear a piano piece on the radio and recognize it as one she used to play, although I don't know the names. I was always after Mother to help me make puppets. I remember her spending hours showing me how to make the papier-maché heads and to sew the bodies. I liked to watch Mother sewing on the old Singer sewing machine that was set up at the top of the stairs. She knew I especially liked to see the thread wound onto the bobbin and would call me so I could help when it was necessary.

I was in the habit of awakening in the middle of the night either thirsty or afraid of the dark, and Mother never failed to come when I called to her.

When I was sick and stayed home from school, Mother was always able to keep me entertained, either by reading to me or by letting me listen to the Arthur Godfrey Show. When I had a cold she would rub Vick's Vaporub on my throat and put a flannel rag around my neck.

In September 1945 Stevie had begun what was to become twenty-one years of formal schooling. From the start he loved school. On the first day he wanted to go back in the evening. In the fourth

grade he was first on a standardized test and the best reader. He devoured books, drawing many from the public library. At Central High School he played on the tennis team, taking second place in doubles with his partner Jerry Koons in the state tournament in 1957, the year he graduated. In 1955 he won the state junior chess championship and had one of three draws against George Koltanowski, an international chess master, when he played 30 persons simultaneously at the University Student Union.

At the University he majored in chemistry and took delight in the activities of Tau Kappa Epsilon, his social fraternity. His excellent academic record won him offers of graduate assistantships in physics from the universities of Minnesota, Missouri, and Indiana. He accepted Indiana University's offer, enrolled in the fall of 1961, and completed the requirements for the Ph.D. in December 1966.

Not all of Steve's and Gordon's education was in school. After we bought our first car, a two-door Studebaker Champion, in 1949, we took frequent summer trips—to Yellowstone National Park, to Washington, D.C., and often to visit relatives in Michigan, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. On such trips we saw art and natural history museums, historic sites, cathedrals, Henry Ford's Greenfield Village, zoos, and college campuses. On one trip to please Gordon we visited football stadia in Minneapolis, Madison, Chicago, South Bend, Ann Arbor, and Columbus, and to please Steve we visited prehistoric earth mounds in many places including the famous Serpent Mound in southern Ohio.

Quite early Steve had an interest in archeology, and in 1955 he and Robert Barr, though only fifteen, spent the summer working on an archeological dig at Fort Yates for the State Historical Society. For Steve it was the first of six consecutive summers on digs, four in western North Dakota, one in Missouri, and one in Oregon.

Just as summer experiences were important for Steve, so they were for Gordon. He went to Holiday House, the Episcopal camp at Pelican Lake, Minnesota, played park softball and American Legion baseball (B squad), did janitorial work at St. Paul's, was an assistant groundskeeper under Frank Zazula for the Grand Forks Chiefs baseball team, spent a summer on an archeological dig (the Huff site south of Bismarck), one with the University buildings and grounds department, one with the U.S. Forest Service at Cle Elum Ranger Station, Washington, and one with the Shell Oil Company at Billings, Montana.

Eva and I followed his experiences with great interest, as we did his schooling. Entering the first grade in 1948, he did well through the years. In the sixth grade he was tied for third on a standardized test. He played violin in the school orchestra. He was a tackle on the Central football team that lost the state championship to St. Mary's of Bismarck, 12-0, in November 1959. Gordon was selected on the All-East team. Although greatly interested in sports, he loved to study. On October 9, 1958, Eva wrote in the family diary: "Gordon studies like a trooper." Often getting all A's on his report card, he graduated ninth in his class of 265 in 1960.

At the University of North Dakota, Gordon earned all A's several semesters, though carrying a heavy load in mechanical engineering. In 1964 he graduated second in his engineering class of 90, a record that secured him a graduate fellowship at the University of Michigan. There he earned an M.S. in 1965 and then a Ph.D. from Northwestern in 1974.

After Steve and Gordon left home to do graduate work, Eva and I followed their careers with much pride. Their achievements were in a sense hers. A month after Eva died, Steve wrote from Denver where he was attending a scientific meeting: "On trips like this I am most thankful to you and Mom for preparing me for such a career."

In March 1984, Gordon likewise paid a tribute to Eva:

These are just a few memories of a dear Mom who loved her sons very, very much. In all the years of our life together, there was not a single moment in which I did not feel her love for me. She was always there caring for me, cheering me up, comforting me, encouraging me, and praising me whether I deserved it or not. She was always one I could turn to for a helpful word, and I knew that I would always feel better afterwards. . . . In the



1930



George I. and Annie Day Foster, 1898



High School Graduation, 1921



Wedding Day, September 2, 1935



1944



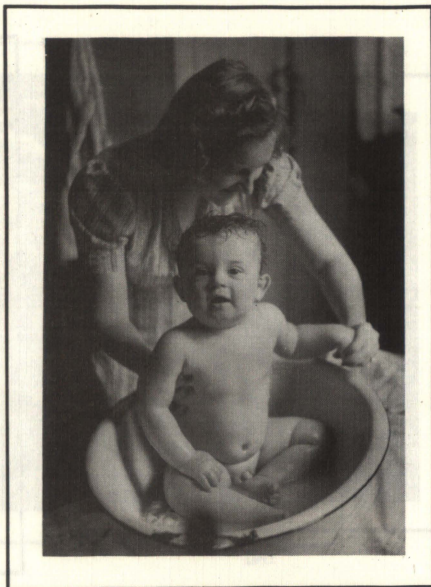
1941



1930



1941



With Steve, 1940



With Steve, 1940



1938



1946



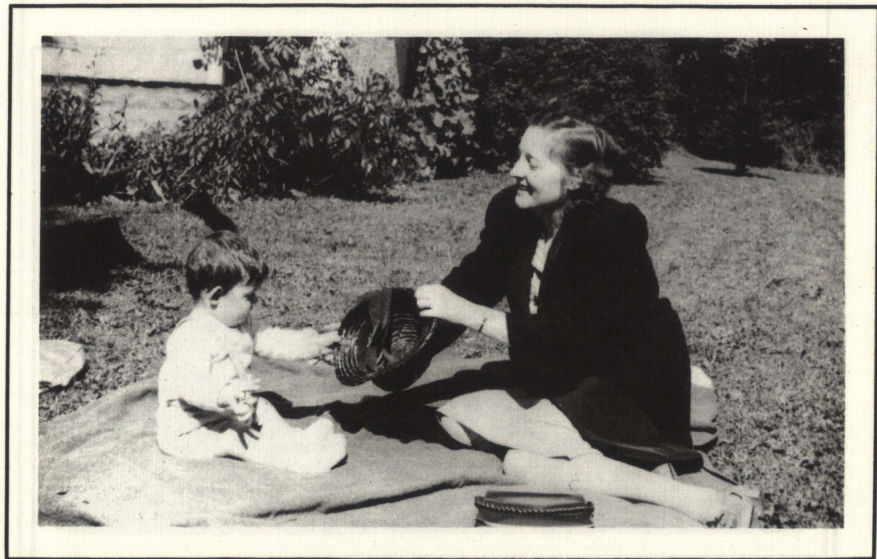
1947



With Elwyn and Steve, 1941



With Elwyn and Gordon, 1949



With Steve, 1940



With Gordon, 1945



With Gordon, 1947



425 Princeton St., 1963



With Steve and Gordon, 1947



With Gordon and Steve, 1947



1954



With Steve, 1974



1977



Gordon and Ginny, 1973



With Rachel and Paul Thureen, October 13, 1981



Christmas, 1983



1982



1980

last two weeks of her life, I was privileged to be with her frequently, at her bedside, and to be able to tell her again and again of my love for her. Equally importantly, I was then able to thank her for loving me so much, a message that brought a big smile to her face each time. Two days before she died, she remarkably recovered her strength and seemed almost her normal self once again. As she raised her hand to caress my face, she succeeded one more time in giving me great comfort and encouragement. To the very end she was the dearest and most loving mother that any son could have.

Homemaker

The poverty of our first years at the University forced us to live in furnished apartments. In six years (1935-1941), I had one increase in salary—\$100 in 1937. We shared the poverty of a state where, because of the drought and depression, almost a half of the population was getting government assistance. In 1938 the per capita income in North Dakota was \$278 compared with \$527 in the United States.

In May 1940 I made an inventory of our property other than clothing, pots and pans, and books. The total was \$516. Most of the property had come before marriage or as wedding presents. We ourselves had bought an old Singer sewing machine (\$48.10), a mattress (\$11.17), an Argus camera and enlarger (\$27.50), an Eureka vacuum cleaner (\$56.93), a crib (\$13.95), 2 trunks (\$26.00), 7 pieces of Chantilly sterling (\$15.81), and 35 pieces of Spode (\$26.25). In five years we had been able to put only \$226.75 into property.

In January 1941 we moved into an apartment of a duplex at 423-425 Princeton Street. We bought some secondhand furniture, an old refrigerator and an old washing machine from the vacating tenants, and also a new bed and springs, spending \$157. The money came from the \$457 Eva received when she withdrew her contributions to the Ohio teachers retirement fund. We were delighted with our light and spacious new home—five rooms plus a bath, closets, and a basement.

Less than a year later the United States was in World War II. The war brought prosperity to North Dakota; the state enjoyed good rains and big crops that sold for good prices. In 1945 the state's per capita income was \$1,009. We shared the prosperity. In the seven years from 1941-42 to 1947-48 I had six raises totaling \$2,326. My salary had more than doubled, and I had extra income from teaching the four summer sessions. We bought U.S. War Bonds regularly. When the opportunity came in February 1946 to buy the duplex in partnership with Marion and George Richards, tenants in the other apartment, we had \$1,100 towards our share (\$1,400) of the down payment. (We borrowed the other \$300 from the University credit union.) The mortgage for \$4,200 was paid off in 1953.

Improving the property became a theme of our lives. Eva took the lead. In the summer of 1946, we removed the bookcases separating the living room and dining room, making one large room, twelve by twenty-six feet. Eva gave the brown-stained woodwork three coats of white paint; a paperhanger put on fresh wallpaper; we rented a sander and refinished the floors. In the summer of 1947 we put a new sink, new curtains, and new linoleum in the kitchen. Eva painted it and also the stairs and the two bedrooms. She papered the bedrooms and the downstairs hall. George Richards and I built a fireplace in the backyard and made a picnic table.

In 1949 Eva and I bought our first automobile, a Studebaker Champion (\$2,087.32), and Eva learned to drive. That year we also bought a Chickering piano (\$1,055). In 1951 we installed an automatic gas hot-water heater. In 1953 Eva painted the upstairs hall and painted and papered the boys' bedroom a second time. The wallpaper had horses, cattle, and chuckwagons.

In 1954 on his own time Ralph Lee, the University head carpenter, built floor-to-ceiling bookcases and cabinets on the south wall of the living room on both sides of the double window. A seat covered the radiator beneath the windows. Eva's dream, a picture torn from a magazine years before, had made the room over. She painted the bookcase white and also the woodwork, and hung wallpaper. The same summer Princeton Street was paved.

In 1956 Eva again papered and painted the bedrooms, and we put in an oil furnace. In 1957 we enlarged the kitchen, putting in a stainless steel sink, more cabinets, and new linoleum. Eva painted the kitchen yellow. In 1958 we bought a new car—a German-made, front-wheel-drive DKW. In 1959 we put wall-to-wall carpeting in the living room, built a double garage, and had thirty-three loads of fill and topsoil hauled in for the hill in back, greatly enlarging the lawn and making an ideal place for two large flower beds.

Money for these and later improvements came from promotions and generous salary increases. In my twenty-two years of teaching after 1947-48, I received three promotions—to associate professor (1948), to professor (1951), to university professor (1967)—and nineteen increases in salary totaling \$11,574. As a result my salary in 1969-70, my last year, was 400 percent more than in 1947-48, or over 1,000 percent more than in my first year, 1935-36. Of course the increase was partly due to inflation, but in dollars of equal purchasing power my salary had increased 270 percent in thirty-five years. The money enabled us to spend some \$7,000 on improvements from 1959 to 1964.

More money and Eva's planning meant a more comfortable, attractive home. Gardening added much. Our first garden, in 1941, was across Princeton Street on Wesley College land where six families had plots. Eva planted flowers along with my vegetables. Watching their growth was great fun. In 1946 George Richards plowed the land on the portion of our lot west of the English Coulee, and for years several families had gardens there, a sociable arrangement. With gardening went canning; one summer we canned a hundred quarts of tomatoes.

Eva planted a flower bed near the house, and when the garage was built had two large beds sheltered from the wind south of the garage and picket fence. She had a great variety of annuals and perennials—petunias, snapdragons, marigolds, hollyhocks, day lilies, and others. We also planted a flowering crab, a spruce, and a honeysuckle to make the grounds attractive.

In 1961 we made the porch into a panelled room useful the year round. With one wall of book shelves and another with a big window overlooking lawn, flower beds, and trees along the coulee, it had a good view and was a good place for bird-watching, reading, Eva's house plants, and the TV. Each improvement was a source of delight and self-congratulation, but this one especially. Eva had wanted to make such a room for a long time, but I thought it would be impossible to heat in winter. I was wrong.

Eva spent much time in the new room. Binoculars and her bird books were there and a bird feeder just outside the window. Later we would take trays there and eat as we watched the "Today Show" or the news. Watching "Masterpiece Theatre" was a Sunday evening ritual. Both of us were Anglophiles, so "Upstairs, Downstairs" and "The Duchess of Duke Street" were favorites. Eva was addicted to the soap opera "As the World Turns."

It was a good place to read. Eva liked English history, books like Cecil Woodham-Smith's *Queen Victoria* (1972), Antonia Fraser's *Mary, Queen of Scots* (1969), and David Cecil's *The Cecils of Hatfield House* (1973). In the early 1980's Gordon and Steve would give us seventeen or eighteen books each Christmas.

In 1963 we bought a Dodge Dart and in 1964 had new fixtures and ceramic tile put in the bathroom. In 1965 we bought the Richard's interest in the duplex, paying off the remainder of the \$7,000 mortgage in 1967 with the first royalty check from *History of North Dakota*. In 1967 we rewired the duplex and in 1973 put in a concrete driveway.

Besides these improvements there were many others. Not afraid of work, Eva refinished second-hand furniture, painted pictures, made pottery and copper enamel plates, and braided a large wool rug. Her love of fine things was seen in her Chantilly silver, Spode, pottery, colored glass, Royal Doulton figurine, teacups, antique silver teapot, cherry hutch, colonial maple chairs, tables, and bedroom pictures, pictures, decorative plates, Chickering piano, and antique chairs, the last-named with needlepoint she had worked. She had a feel for color, harmony, and proportion and loved old things. Our home, full of family treasures, was her creation; a reflection of herself.

Friends

Eva made our home a cheerful place for visitors. There were many. Marie Thormodsgard, a neighbor, dropped in often in her gardening clothes. For years Olaf, her husband and dean of the Law School, would come on Saturday afternoons to exchange his copies of *Life* and *Saturday Evening Post* for our Sunday *New York Times*. Eva would serve tea. He would talk about his youth as the son of a Lutheran pastor in North Dakota, about being a soldier in France, about his years as a student at the University of Chicago. For a time Paul Hart, a boy of five living in the other half of the duplex, would come to play with Eva's puppets.

Through the years Robert and Wynona Wilkins were frequent visitors, as were Mary Margaret and Richard Frank. Later Faythe Dyrud Thureen became a regular. After Eva's death Mabel Julian wrote: "One of my delightful memories will always be our visits . . . when we talked books to politics, capping it all with 'tea parties.' "

Vonnie Somerville wrote of Eva's welcoming smile:

She always seemed so glad to see me, so interested in what I am doing, in how the children are. Of course, she insists I have tea and soon this frail little person has me seated with a steaming cup in my hand and a plate of cookies, fruit cake, or bars close by.

Margaret Libby Barr, a dear friend, wrote:

I think Eva was one of the most courageous persons I have ever known. Besides that she was always smiling, gentle, loving and caring. She constantly hid her pain so that others would not be bothered.

Her social life was enriched by our being a part of the University community, people with common backgrounds, interests, and concerns. Now and then she would have some of them to dinner. Once the guests were President and Mrs. George W. Starcher, the Thormodsgards, and Eldred and Elizabeth Murdoch, but more often they would be from the history department. A tradition was to have the Thormodsgards and Wilkins for Christmas. After dinner Wynona would show slides of a recent trip to Europe. Marie, a French woman, especially enjoyed the ones from France.

Much socializing was with neighbors—exchanging little Christmas gifts with Ruth Gustafson, Cora Petrich, Mary Ellen Caldwell, the Playford Thorsons, and the Glenn Smiths, playing piano duets with Doris Butler, having picnics with Homer and Alice Miller and the Thormodsgards, celebrating the Fourth with the George Richardses or the Paul Owensens. Janet Richards Sausker remembers how Eva introduced her and Stevie to sewing by helping them make aprons and how Eva would play the piano for the children to sing.

Living close to the campus, we found it easy to attend lectures, concerts, and plays. For years we had season tickets to the plays put on by students. We enjoyed the President's Reception in the fall, the Faculty Christmas Party, and the Founders' Day dinner in February. In 1961 Dean and Mrs. R. B. Witmer took us to the dinner because I was being honored for twenty-five years on the faculty.

In April 1942 Eva had been one of six women who organized the Thursday Book Club. She liked to read and enjoyed preparing and giving her reviews. I remember many of them—on Tolstoy, the Soong sisters, and Mozart. Others were reviews of *Advice to My Granddaughter: Letters of Queen Victoria*, *The Unnatural History of the Nanny*, and *Hans Christian Anderson and His World*. In 1984 Eva was the only charter member of the twelve then in the club.

In our early years at the University, Eva was active in the Grand Forks chapter of the American Association of University Women. One fall she spent much time at the schools, promoting a series of movies sponsored by the chapter at a local theater. In 1953-54 she was president of the Faculty Wives and Women, an organization that automatically included a large number. It held monthly teas.

In 1953 we were invited to join Franklin Club. Founded in 1906, it was a group with half of its seventy-five members from the University and half from among the business and professional people of Grand Forks. Its meetings were held in the homes of members with large houses like the John

Norbys, the Robert Vaalers, and the Edward Landers. Franklin Club enlarged our circle of friends outside the University.

Also in 1953 Eva accepted an invitation to become a member of Chapter AI of the P.E.O. sisterhood. Except for the summer, it met twice a month in the homes of members. By 1984 the chapter had grown to forty-eight women. In recent years, Eva had been its historian, clipping from the *Herald* items that mentioned a member or her family. In 1954 Eva began to work on our precinct election board, a regular activity for several years. In November 1960, the election in which John F. Kennedy won the presidency, she did not get home until 5:30 A.M. the next day. Before voting machines, counting ballots was an exhausting process.

In the fall of 1954 she gave a friendly welcome to Mrs. Ibrahim Noshy, wife of a visiting history professor from Egypt, by taking her shopping and by lending her blankets and kitchen utensils. For years afterward we had Christmas greetings from the Moslem Noshys.

In 1960 Eva accepted an invitation to become a member of Round Table, a group of twenty wives of University faculty. The University president's wife was a member of Round Table and also of Dames, a similar group, and entertained the two clubs once a year at a joint meeting.

As long as she was able, Eva took her turn in entertaining the Thursday Book Club, her P.E.O. chapter, and Round Table in our home. Gordon has memories of returning from school before Eva's guests had left and being introduced to them and of later feasting on the left-over goodies. There was not much overlapping of membership, so Eva sometimes gave the same program to two clubs.

Excepting only St. Paul's and Faculty Wives and Women, Eva was a member of organizations with a combined membership of over 150. Altogether the organizations had more than fifty meetings a year. Although she did not get to all of them, she enjoyed attending regularly. Modest, sociable, cheerful, interested in others, she made many friends. Friends made her life richer.

St. Paul's

Eva, the daughter of an Episcopal clergyman, was for over forty-eight years a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Grand Forks. She took the lead in making our family a part of the larger parish family.

Faithful in attendance, she saw friends weekly at the Sunday service. For years she was in charge of the apron booth at the bazaar. When in 1954 the church had a thrift shop in the old Clifford Building, she worked one day a week. She attended special Lenten services. She helped label marmalade made for sale in the church kitchen.

We gave a pew as a memorial for her Papa, and when the new pews came, Eva helped to wax them. We went to church suppers, to Shrove Tuesday pancake luncheons, to annual parish meetings. Some summers when the organist was on vacation, Eva played for the services, using some of her Papa's music. She was long in charge of devotions for her guild group and enjoyed preparing them. When Eva could no longer drive, Kathleen Hurning gave her a ride to guild meetings. In Eva's last years Marge Gillette took her to the meetings.

When Stevie and Gordon were old enough, she took them to Sunday School. Later they sang in the junior choir and after confirmation were acolytes, serving at the altar and carrying the cross or flag in the processional. They went to Holiday House, the church camp at Pelican Lake, Minnesota. One summer Gordon helped out when the janitor quit, washing windows, cutting grass, moving chairs. I ushered, gave talks to the men's club, served on the vestry and as chairman of the Every Member Canvass, and conducted services as a licensed lay reader when the rector was on vacation. In 1963 I was the lay delegate from North Dakota to the Anglican Congress in Toronto. We gave generously for the new education building. In the early seventies, I thought that I knew everyone in the parish.

In February 1981, Eva gave me a leather-bound copy of the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*. We had ordered it for her in red leather, but when it came in black, she gave it to me. Still it was hers. Thereafter she used it at St. Paul's. Lighter than the pew copies, it was easier for her crippled hands to hold. In 1951 I had given her a leather-bound copy of the 1928 *Book of Common Prayer* for her birthday.

The church gave us support in family crises. When in 1950 I underwent a five-hour operation, the Reverend Mr. Homer Harrington, the rector, spent the anxious hours with Eva. When in 1978 I had a series of heart attacks the Reverend Mr. Fred Gillette gave comfort. When in 1984 Eva was dying, Fathers Ronald Michel and Robert Woodard were often at her bedside, offering prayers for her recovery. Mr. Gillette planned and conducted her memorial service with quiet dignity.

Giving and accepting rides to St. Paul's strengthened friendships. Without a car until 1949, we were recipients of such rides, indebted to Ruth and Gordon Brandes, to Alice and Alfred Boyd, and to others. Then for years we gave rides—to Marian (Mrs. Bruce) Layman, to Ruth and George Abbott, to Mrs. Emery Felt, to Mabel Julian, to Margaret Barr. When heart problems ended my driving, Margaret gave us rides. So did Mary Ellen Caldwell and Elizabeth and Max Souby. When we moved to Tuftes Manor, Dean and Mrs. A. William Johnson saw to it that we got to the services.

As we became less able to do for ourselves, Mary Jean Baltisberger, a staunch member of St. Paul's, sort of adopted us, taking us grocery shopping, to the doctor, the dentist, and other places. She and her sons Jay and Rick helped us on the day we moved to Tuftes Manor in August 1981. Tuftes is far from the Baltisberger house, so Ann Rogers and Charlene Woodard, St. Paul members living nearby, took over, graciously giving us a helping hand with rides to doctor, dentist, and hospital.

So St. Paul's and our friends there meant much to us. Probably the most rewarding aspect, however, was Eva's career as a teacher of four- and five-year-olds in the Sunday School. With a love for young children and a talent for dealing with them, she taught from 1944 to 1966, the last three years being after the onset of her arthritis. It was a satisfying experience, with close associations with many children, their parents, and fellow teachers such as Rosemary Lamont, Denise Peabody (now Mrs. James Leigh), and Lorraine Ettl. She treasured the sterling cross that Frank Brown, superintendent of the Sunday School, gave her when she retired.

After Eva died Barbara and Edward Lander wrote:

Our warm and fond memories of Eva are many and extend over a long period. We have always been amazed at the continued interest she showed in all the Sunday School youngsters who passed through her charge—never failing to ask about them—even in recent years when these "children" are parents of a new crop of Sunday schoolers!

One event had far-reaching consequences. In 1946 or 1947 she began to take little Harriet Wilkins, four or five and the daughter of our friends, to Sunday School. Eventually not only Harriet but also her father and mother were confirmed. Robert and Wynona became close friends of the Reverend Mr. Homer Harrington; they wrote histories of the parish for its seventy-fifth and hundredth anniversaries. Upon the invitation of Bishop Richard Emery, they wrote *God Giveth the Increase: The History of the Episcopal Church in North Dakota* (1959), an excellent account. Now in 1984 Harriet and her husband, Fred Eslinger, are active at the Anglican Cathedral in Brandon, Manitoba. Wynona is an organist at St. Paul's.

Helper

Eva's loyalty to St. Paul's enriched our family life by tying it to the church. I am grateful. And I am proud of her for winning many friends, for making our home comfortable and attractive, and for nurturing Stephen and Gordon so lovingly.

I am also grateful for her help with writing. During the winter of 1935-36, Eva had helped me make stylistic improvements in my doctoral dissertation, "The Public Press of Philadelphia During the Civil War." She typed it. She helped in 1947-49 when I gave forty radio talks on *Heroes of Dakota*. The series was on such historical personages as Meriwether Lewis, Sitting Bull, and Theodore Roosevelt. Suggested by my friends Wilson Cape and Arleigh Lincoln, each talk was 13.5 minutes. They originated at KFJM, the University station, and were also carried by stations in Fargo and Bismarck. Sunday evening, when I had a draft of the next day's talk ready, Eva and I would go over it together, making stylistic changes.

The series attracted attention over the state. That pleased President John C. West and Dean R. B. Witmer and brought me a promotion to associate professor. The wide reading I did for the talks was preparation for writing a history of the state. The series led the board of directors of the State Historical Society to elect me a director. So Eva had a hand in my first success beyond the campus.

Throughout the 1950's Eva helped me make improvements in my articles on the state's history. They were published in *North Dakota Teacher*, *North Dakota Quarterly*, and *North Dakota History*, the publication of the State Historical Society. A high point of her help was "The Themes of North Dakota History." I read it on November 6, 1958, to the convocation that opened the celebration of the University's seventy-fifth anniversary.

The themes were to run through and unify my *History of North Dakota*. It was published by the University of Nebraska Press in October 1966. In the summer of 1964 Eva and I did a final revision and retyping of the thousand-page manuscript. Sitting on the lawn, each with a copy in our laps, we went over it sentence by sentence. Scrutinizing what I had written, I would ask Eva questions about style. Sherman Kent's book *Writing History* (1941), a text for my course Introduction to Research, had made me sensitive to the importance of transitions. Good writing, he insisted, was a continuous flow of clearly stated ideas. I would ask Eva if she understood what I meant? Were the transitions good enough? Eva brought an outsider's view to the manuscript. If what I had written was not clear to her, it would not be to others.

Besides heeding Kent's advice, I was trying to apply the maxims of William Strunk, Jr., and E. B. White in *The Elements of Style* (1959), another text for Introduction to Research. They gave commands: "Use the active voice"; "Do not overwrite"; "Do not overstate"; "Use definite, specific, concrete language"; "Be clear"; "Avoid fancy words"; "Write with nouns and verbs"; "Prefer the standard to the offbeat"; "Omit needless words."

Eva and I obeyed. We crossed out needless words, found plain for fancy ones, cut adjectives and adverbs, toned down overstatements, and changed sentences from passive to active voice.

I had also read Rudolph Flesch's *The Art of Readable Writing* (1949). His arguments for short sentences and for verbs expressing bodily movements to state abstract ideas impressed me. I even pasted a list of his verbs in my *Webster-Merriam Collegiate Dictionary*. Responding to Flesch, we made long sentences into two or three and used his Anglo-Saxon verbs.

Following such advice, we made many small changes quickly. The cumulative effect was large. As soon as we finished with a chapter, we would take turns retyping it. Eva's arthritis in her hands was bad, but she typed on in spite of the pain.

In the summer of 1965, while Herbert H. Hyde of the University of Nebraska Press was copy editing our manuscript, Eva and I made a preliminary index. In March 1966, proofs began to come in batches with orders to mail it back in five days. Under pressure we read the proofs steadily. It was an exhausting time. On April 8 we mailed back the last of the corrected proofs and a few days later the final index. Grateful, I dedicated the book to Eva.

The product of twenty years of labor, it is my most important achievement, bringing recognition over the state and beyond. If my name is to be remembered, it will be for my *History of North Dakota*. Writing it would have been beyond my powers without Eva's help.

Sickness

I also owe Eva much for the courage and cheerfulness with which she bore my sicknesses and hers. My debilitating colitis was a burden from the fall of 1937 until my ileostomy surgery in the summer of 1950. In April 1940 Eva underwent surgery to repair damage to her womb when Stevie was born. Because we were worried about her weight (only 102 pounds), she was drinking a quart of milk a day and taking cod-liver oil in 1945. On July 18, 1955, she had a hysterectomy and became stronger than she had been for a long time.

More serious, however, was the onset of her rheumatoid arthritis in May 1963. Hands, neck, knees, and ankles were painful. For years I took her to Dr. Walter C. Dailey every two weeks. He tried gold shots, cortisone, hot paraffin, ascriptin, and other treatments. Ascriptin was the best. At one time she was taking twelve tablets a day. When her hearing was affected, she cut back to six and recovered her hearing. She was still taking six tablets in 1984.

Gradually she had to give up many things—driving, gardening, teaching Sunday school, and much of the housework. I took over the washing and cleaning and helped her with meals. Later I helped her dress, combed her hair, drew her bath, and washed her stockings and lingerie every morning. By 1970 she needed much help in getting down the stairs in the morning.

As arthritis limited Eva's activities, she began to spend more time on a diary. We had started a family diary in 1940. Both of us made infrequent entries. Then in 1965 Eva began keeping her own diary with virtually daily entries. By February 1984 she had filled seven large, 300-page volumes and started an eighth. Her diaries are a valuable record of our family life. Often her full entries summarized letters from Steve and Gordon. They show the pain she suffered.

In spite of pain, Eva put on a smiling face and seldom complained. She told her diary, not me, how she hurt. A friendly, sociable person, she still got out to church, her church group, P.E.O., Thursday Book Club, Round Table, and Franklin Club. Although long auto trips were painful, she went with me to Toronto (1963), Richardton (1965), Kulm (1967), Epping (1968), Jamestown (1972), and Winnipeg many times. There, on Rainbow Stage in Kildonan Park, we liked to see musicals such as "Fiddler on the Roof."

Eva did not lose her sense of humor. When we went to a reception at the Faculty Club to celebrate the publication of *History of North Dakota*, she joked that there would probably be pickets with signs: "Robinson's book is NO GOOD! Don't buy it." At the Franklin Club annual dinner, April 27, 1973, Eva's table put on a skit "The First Day of School." Donning a sunbonnet, Eva made a hit as a little girl who kept saying "I want to go home."

In January 1973 Dr. Dailey made an appointment for her with Dr. Donald E. Barcome at the Medical Center Rehabilitation Hospital. After treating her as an outpatient for several months, Dr. Barcome advised knee replacement surgery. On June 26, 1973, Dr. R. A. Klassen of the Mayo Clinic did her left knee at St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester. A few days later I wrote in my diary: "Eva is really an ideal patient, so bright, cheerful, and optimistic." Because of her rapid recovery, Dr. Klassen did her right knee on July 13.

The day he discharged her from St. Mary's, she told him that she had won the Battle of Wounded Knee. That day, July 28, we started driving home. We had been away forty days. While in St. Mary's, Eva received 102 letters and cards—a wonderful outpouring of love for a gallant lady. The knee surgery was a success, certainly in part because of Eva's faithfulness in doing the exercises taught her at St. Mary's. Her hands, however, became increasingly crippled.

Eva had not only her arthritis to worry about but also my heart. In the summer of 1969 and again in April 1975, I had been hospitalized with chest pains. Fortunately there was no damage to my heart. Nevertheless, I feared I would not live long. On May 2, 1975, I wrote in my diary: "My great goal is to take care of Eva and outlive her because she could not manage alone and would have to go to a nursing home if I die or become disabled." Other sicknesses followed. On November 23,

1976, Eva was diagnosed as having diverticulitis. On April 23, 1977, she went to United Hospital very sick with pneumonia.

Then I had a series of heart attacks. I was hospitalized, each time with damage to my heart, from January 20 to February 7, from February 10 to 24, and from July 14 to August 3, 1978. On February 13, lying in the intensive care unit, I got to thinking that the next day might be my last chance to send a valentine to Eva. A nurse telephoned Dulci Hill, a friend at the University Bookstore, and she had a lacy valentine delivered to Eva the next day. Marilyn Hagerty, a friend, wrote a story about Eva's valentine for the *Herald*.

I may have suffered a fourth attack in the hospital on July 24. The next day Dr. Daniel W. Goodwin had me taken by ambulance to St. Luke's Hospital, Fargo. There I was under the care of Dr. Jack Crary, a cardiologist.

To show appreciation for Eva's courage during this anxious time, I gave her a Bulova Accutron wrist watch on September 2, 1978, our forty-third wedding anniversary. The next spring I was hospitalized with chest pains from April 22 to 26 and from May 8 to 10, but with no additional heart damage.

In these crises many friends gave support. Harriet Thorson or Wynona Wilkins would bring Eva to see me. Harriet or Jerome Lamont would take me home when I was discharged. One night Playford Thorson took our car home after I had driven to the emergency room and was unexpectedly hospitalized. The concern of friends was helpful in a frightening time.

On January 22, 1978, Eva had written in her diary: "If Elwyn has to give up many activities, we might have to move into Tufte Manor." For July 23 her diary reads: "I can't concentrate on reading or watching TV—I end up thinking about Elwyn and his heart." Each time I came home from the hospital, I was filled with gloomy thoughts. On September 23 I wrote: "I love Eva very much. The idea of dying and leaving her alone makes me very sad."

Each time I came home very weak, but would slowly gain strength and become more hopeful. On May 11, 1979, I wrote: "I worry much about myself, about the care of the house, and about how we are going to get along." On May 13 Eva wrote: "Got up early because I had been lying awake for hours—thinking about having to leave our home." Although she had recognized that possibility when I had the first heart attack, Eva became upset when I talked about it in March 1979.

I set about getting things in order. That spring and summer I sent my collection of chess books, my collection of photographs, and a mass of correspondence to the Chester Fritz Library. I made albums of family pictures for Steve and Gordon, gave Steve my photographic equipment and Gordon our 1976 Dodge Aspen. Then and later we gave many of our books to friends. In 1981 I assigned my royalties from *History of North Dakota* to Steve and Gordon and put our certificates of deposit in joint tenancy with them.

My last hospitalization with chest pains was in May 1979, but then a new threat appeared. I was hospitalized with pancreatitis from July 21 to 26, 1979, from August 21 to September 13, 1979, from January 28 to February 5, 1981, and from August 13 to 18, 1981. My frequent hospitalizations made it plain we must make a change. We sold our duplex on Princeton Street to the University of North Dakota and moved to Tufte Manor on August 3, 1981.

Eva recorded her feelings in her diary. On July 2 she had written: "I am getting more reconciled to leaving here too. If we could take care of the yard and house it would be harder to leave." On July 10: "This is a hard break for me leaving things that have become so dear . . . our little sun porch filled with all my plants, where I could watch the birds. . . ." On July 13: "Every once in a while I have doubts about going to Tufte Manor and wonder if I will be happy in such cramped quarters." On July 20: "We aren't sleeping so well with all the excitement of moving—a big change in our lives."

Eva loved our home. In spite of her doubts she shed no tears in those trying days. She sold her beautiful Chickering piano, gave away some of her pretty things, sold unneeded furniture, and filled boxes with odds and ends for the Salvation Army. We were pleased that Steve was interested in hav-

ing Eva's Spode and Romantic England dishes and some of the furniture. Gordon Iseminger and Mary Jean Baltisberger and her sons Jay and Rick were a great help in that hectic time.

Once settled, Eva and I adjusted easily to our new home. Eva made our two-room suite attractive with pictures and furniture from our old home. At Tufte Manor I often told Eva that she was a pretty girl, that I was lucky to have gotten her in the marriage lottery, and that I thought she was wonderful. She did not feel wonderful—frail and crippled with arthritis and dependent on me. Her diary entry for February 8, 1984, the last one she made, reads: "He has to do so many things for me."



For a long time we had been seeing Dr. Goodwin every two or three months. He was treating her for high blood pressure. Diary entries on these visits first mention Eva's shortness of breath on February 9, 1981. That day he gave her a prescription for bronchitis for the first time. Her cough and breathing problem persisted. In February 1984 her condition grew worse with edema in her legs and ankles. On February 7 Ann Rogers took Eva to see Dr. Goodwin. An X ray showed fluid on her lungs. That night Eva wrote: "I would certainly like to feel better."

On February 12 an ambulance took her, semicomatose, to United Hospital. Dr. Goodwin told me at once that she might not live. Gordon and Steve flew from Connecticut and California to tell her of their love. Dr. David R. Flatt, a cardiologist, put her on a respirator to help her breathe. After two weeks in intensive care her condition had not improved. When the respirator was removed on February 25, she shook her head to show she did not want it replaced. The next day with Steve by her bedside, she slipped into a coma and died about 4:30 P.M.

The Reverend Mr. Frederick T. Gillette helped Steve and me plan her memorial service at St. Paul's on February 28. He and the Reverend Dr. Robert L. Woodard conducted it. Wynona Wilkins played the organ. Robert Wilkins sat with Steve and me in a front pew. In all 132 persons came, 139 sent condolences, and over 75 gave money to the \$5,000 Eva Foster Robinson Memorial Trust at St. Paul's.

Many people liked Eva. A modest, refined lady, she was interested in other people. She appreciated pretty things. She was gentle and generous. She had a special feeling for young children. A Democrat, she took the liberal side on public issues. She liked to read, especially biographies of personages like Elizabeth I and Peter the Great. She was an enthusiastic gardener. She was a devoted mother, lavishing care upon Stephen and Gordon and teaching them to love books. She made our home a comforting place. She had a wonderful smile. Honest and sympathetic, she lived by Christian precepts. Courageous, cheerful, uncomplaining, she faced life's difficulties bravely. She made the good things large, the bad things small. I loved her.





Eva Foster Robinson

by Mary Margaret Frank

Eva. Little Eva. Poor little Eva. We grieved for her as we tried to imagine how she was hurting so much of the time.

But she did not ask us to grieve. She did not talk about her crippling arthritis. She showed us over and over again that she was truly a great soul. She was an example to us in our own times of trouble, one to be admired, one to be loved.

I cherish the two dainty aprons that she made for me of organdy and crisp, fine gingham, with cross-stitch designs. It could not have been easy for her to force those tiny hands to do such fine work.

At one lively party some years ago, when both men and women were confronted with a table full of costumes and told to give an impromptu playlet, Eva put on a bonnet and played the part of a naughty little school girl to perfection. And when we praised her, she said, "Oh, well, I'm such a nut!" Such a nut? Eva? If that is a less pedantic way of saying that she had a delightful sense of humor, yes, of course.

It was always a pleasure to call on the Robinsons at their charming, book-filled home on Princeton Street. "Would you like a cup of tea?" she would ask. And out would come the tea and the treat to go with it, delicious, but a small part of the joy of a good visit with Eva and Elwyn. And our pleasure continued when they moved to Tufte Manor and made of their two small rooms another charming, book-filled home. "Would you like a glass of orange juice?" We went there, perhaps, with the idea that we could cheer them up. But it was we who were cheered.

Eva was a great reader, and when she gave a Round Table program, we knew that she would tell us about something unusual—about British nannies, for instance—and tell her story in a refreshing way. We are glad that she could continue to find enrichment in books when it became more and more difficult for her to move about freely.

Elwyn, scholar and writer that he is, declared that he could not have written his *History of North Dakota* without Eva's active help and encouragement. We are happy about the simple dedication of the book: "To Eva."

We enjoyed her quiet presence at our January Round Table meeting. We missed her in February. Two weeks later we went to St. Paul's Episcopal Church to say good-bye.

We are glad she is not hurting any more. We shall continue to miss her, but we have been ennobled by her example. Poor little Eva? No. Eva, great in spirit! Eva, our lovely friend!

(Prepared for Round Table, March 13, 1984.)

