

PROLOGUE



Grandpa and Grandma Bahn were Pennsylvania Dutch who settled in Langhorn Pennsylvania where my mother, Edith, her brother Allen, and sister Cora who died as a child, were born. Grandma Bahn's name was Ellen and Grandpa Bahn's name was William. He was a cabinet maker, carpenter and builder who constructed many houses in Pennsylvania and later, in California. After graduating from High School my mother attended business school where she studied shorthand and stenography.

She then went to work for the great inventor, Thomas Edison, as his private secretary recording testimony for use in protecting his many patents. One time she told me that Edison was a bit absent minded, took short catnaps of a half hour several times a day and often working until 2 in the morning. She said that his favorite snack was saltine crackers and milk and that he always had cracker crumbs and spilt milk on his suits. One day while working for Edison she met the Wright Brothers, inventors of the airplane, when they stopped by to visit Edison's laboratory.

The Bahn's came to California in the 1890's and settled in Alhambra where they built a large home at 30 North Curtis Avenue. Grandpa had a parrot named 'Polly' (what else?) that he kept in his shop behind the garage. Her perch was an old highback wood chair and she would walk back and forth along the top of the

chair back saying "Polly want's a cracker." She was sure original! However she did learn to mimic a lot of people and sounded like a real person when she talked. Sometimes while playing outside I would think I heard my grandma call me only to find out when reporting in the house that it was Polly!

Grandpa had an office in their house and it was my favorite haunt whenever Grandma was taking care of me. It reeked of cigar smoke, which I truly loved, and was a rather dark room as the walls were painted with dark green calcimine and furnished with an old rolltop desk that was illuminated by a green shaded desk lamp. He sat in a captain's chair which I now have and prize very much. The rest of the walls in the house were painted with white calcimine and all the floors except for the kitchen and back porch were covered with Oriental rugs.

They had an old cabinet victrola in the living room which I loved to play when I was there. My favorite record was one of Happy Hooligan singing "Yes, We Have No Bananas." They also had an old foot pumped upright organ (not to be confused with sexual ecstasy) in the living room and I spent many happy hours trying to play it. I finally mastered it after taking piano lessons.

Thanksgivings were always spent at Grandpa and Grandma Bahn's house. After dinner, while the women cleaned up and worked in the kitchen doing the dishes, the men would all congregate in the living room to talk and smoke cigars.

Mother's brother Allen and his wife Gertrude built a house just two doors away at 33 North Curtis. Uncle Allen was a very emotional fellow possessed with a short temper. He was the accountant for Hassbaracks, a large wholesale grocery company in Los Angeles which later became Smart and Final. Aunt Gertrude was a bit of a flirt which upset my mother no end. Mother's cousin and husband, Betty and Harry Baylis built a home further up the street at 120 North

Curtis. Uncle Allen and Aunt Gertrude had two boys, Allen Jr. about my age and Charles who was several years younger. They were the cousins I played with when staying at Grandma's house. The Baylises also had two children, my second cousins, Ruth and Harry.

Later on Grandma and Grandpa adopted a son, Raymond, who served in the Navy and married a girl named Barbara when he left the Navy. She worked in a candy factory dipping chocolates and became quite heavy as a result of too much work sampling. Aunt Barbara would always bring boxes of chocolates to the Thanksgiving dinners and Christmas parties. Uncle Raymond was a finger print expert with the San Marino police department. They had a daughter, my cousin, named Evelyn who, when an adult, became a librarian in the LA County Library. They also had a younger boy whose name I can't remember and I don't know what ever happened to him.

My Grandpa Harker was also named William and also a carpenter and builder who came to the United States from Sussex England. He married my Grandma Harker, a school teacher, whose name was Grace. Her Great Grandfather had married a Cherokee Indian Squaw and that is how I claim to be one thirty second Cherokee Indian.

They eventually moved to Mitchell South Dakota where my dad, Harry Finch Harker went to school and played football on the Mitchell High School team, sometimes on frozen ground in the winter. Dad had three sisters, Mame, Lulu and Jane and two brothers, Joe and William. When Aunt Mame was about four years old the family bulldog bit off her nose. Plastic surgery was unknown in those days so she went through life without a nose just two holes where her nostrils were. Uncle Joe died in the smallpox epidemic in the 1920's and Uncle Will who was an expert trap shooter won a state championship for which he was awarded an engraved gold watch that I had for many years and then lost somewhere along the line.

Aunt Mame married a fellow named George Kelly, a Texan about six foot three who wore size twelve shoes. He was a druggist and ran the pharmacy at the Owl Drug Store in downtown Los Angeles and was always bringing my folks samples of hair tonic, soap and elixirs of various kinds. Uncle George was a rather heavy drinker but carried his liquor well. Aunt Jane married a fellow named Rubin who was a carpenter for the Union Pacific Railroad. I think he repaired box cars. Rubin was kind of a weird fellow who had funny haircuts and always wore long underwear and high button shoes. Aunt Lu married a fellow named Bert Lichty who was an insurance salesman. They had two daughters, one that died in infancy and another, my cousin named Alberta.

Grandpa and Grandma Harker had a home on Lemon Street in Alhambra of which I have little memory as Grandpa died when I was quite young and Grandma moved in with the Lichtys who had a home on Garfield Avenue just around the corner from the house my folks built on Second Street in 1910 and where I grew up. Uncle Bert had a badly misshapen right hand, wrist and forearm, the result of a Model T Ford backfiring while he was cranking it to get it started. Aunt Lu was blind in her right eye which had been cut by a shard of flying glass when she was a small girl watching my dad and his brother breaking glass bottles by throwing them against a stone wall. She adjusted to the one eyed sight, however, and drove a car and was a very good typist.

Christmas afternoons were usually spent at Grandma and Grandpa Bahn's house and Christmas evenings with the Lichty's and Grandma Harker. The only problem with this arrangement was that it took me away from my Christmas toys except for the one's I was permitted to take with me. After supper Aunt Jane, who was an accomplished pianist would accompany the adults as they all sang hymns. The one's I liked most to listen to were, "Bringing In The Sheep" and "When The

Roll Is Called Up Yonder".

After arriving in California my mother got a job as advertising manager for Hamburgers Department Store, later to become the May Company Stores. She had an office in the LA Times building in downtown Los Angeles at First and Broadway. She and my dad were in the courting stage of their relationship at that time. On the evening of October 1, 1910, around 8:00 p.m., the building was blown up with dynamite by union terrorist an hour after my dad had picked my mother up to take her to dinner. The building was completely destroyed. 20 people were killed and many more injured. Among the dead and injured were a number of my mother's co-workers and friends.

During the great air meet in 1910 at Dominguez Field, now the City of Carson, she went up in a hydrogen filled gas free flying balloon as an advertising stunt. The pilot was the famous balloonist, Dick Ferris, and they set a national distance record, landing up in Monrovia.

But, enough of this background it's time to move on and get into the real purpose of this writing, i.e. to document my life as I remember it.

MARGIN RESERVED FOR BINDING
WRITE PLAINLY WITH UNFADING INK—THIS IS A PERMANENT RECORD
READ THE INSTRUCTIONS ON BACK OF THIS CERTIFICATE

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
VITAL STATISTICS
STANDARD CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH
Local Registered No. 378

PLACE OF BIRTH, Dist. No. (To be located by Registrar)
County of Los Angeles
City or Town of Long Beach
(No. 3707 Livingston Drive, Sec. Ward) (If birth occurred in a hospital or institution, give the NAME, number of ward, and building.)
or Rural Registration District

FULL NAME OF CHILD William Allen Barker (If child is not yet named, give supplemental report as directed.)

SEX OF CHILD		Race		Color or Race		BIRTHPLACE		OCCUPATION	
Male		White		White		Iowa		Appraiser	
FATHER		MOTHER		FATHER		MOTHER		FATHER	
FULL NAME <u>Harry F. Barker</u>		FULL NAME <u>Edith Newman Rahn</u>		RESIDENCE		RESIDENCE		RESIDENCE	
1824 American Ave. City		1824 American Ave. City		Iowa		Iowa		Iowa	
BIRTHDAY <u>29</u> (Year)		BIRTHDAY <u>29</u> (Year)		BIRTHDAY <u>29</u> (Year)		BIRTHDAY <u>29</u> (Year)		BIRTHDAY <u>29</u> (Year)	
OCCUPATION (a) Trade, profession or particular kind of work <u>Appraiser</u>		OCCUPATION (a) Trade, profession or particular kind of work <u>Houswife</u>		OCCUPATION (b) General nature of industry, business, or establishment in which employed (for employee)		OCCUPATION (b) General nature of industry, business, or establishment in which employed (for employee)		OCCUPATION (b) General nature of industry, business, or establishment in which employed (for employee)	
Was a prophylactic for <u>Silver Nitrate</u> (State or country) <u>Iowa</u>		Was a prophylactic for <u>Silver Nitrate</u> (State or country) <u>Iowa</u>		Was a prophylactic for <u>Silver Nitrate</u> (State or country) <u>Iowa</u>		Was a prophylactic for <u>Silver Nitrate</u> (State or country) <u>Iowa</u>		Was a prophylactic for <u>Silver Nitrate</u> (State or country) <u>Iowa</u>	
If so, what <u>Silver Nitrate</u>		If so, what <u>Silver Nitrate</u>		If so, what <u>Silver Nitrate</u>		If so, what <u>Silver Nitrate</u>		If so, what <u>Silver Nitrate</u>	
Number of children born to this mother, including present birth <u>2</u>		Number of children born to this mother, including present birth <u>2</u>		Number of children born to this mother, including present birth <u>2</u>		Number of children born to this mother, including present birth <u>2</u>		Number of children born to this mother, including present birth <u>2</u>	
Number of children of this mother now living <u>1</u>		Number of children of this mother now living <u>1</u>		Number of children of this mother now living <u>1</u>		Number of children of this mother now living <u>1</u>		Number of children of this mother now living <u>1</u>	

CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDING PHYSICIAN OR MIDWIFE

I hereby certify that I attended the birth of this child, who was Alive on the date above stated. (State alive or stillborn)

(Signature) Walter B. Hill M. D. per C.K.
Dated 9/25 1916 (Physician, midwife, father, etc.)

Given name added from a supplemental report _____ 19____

Registered Ralph L. Taylor M. D.
Filed Sep 25 1916 (Physician or Deputy Registrar)