

NARRATIVE OF JOSEPH FRANCIS FARLEY (1885-1977)

(written circa 1974)

My father's name was Francis Joseph Farley. His father was Patrick Farley; his mother was Catherine, she was from the Duffs, a wealthy family. The family was a large one. Uncle George Farley was in the civil war, for years was in a Washington, D.C. hospital, he was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. Uncle Harry was a gardener, worked in Fairmont Park in Phila. Uncle William stayed home with the parents at 760 N. 22nd St, Phila. Uncle Jim left home when young man, was in Chicago, Ill. He had a business called Nite Watch. Francis J. (my father). Anna only daughter.

Grandfather Patrick died in the blizzard in Phila. In 1898. Grandma Catherine was already gone . What happened to Harry and William? Anna married and passed away.

I believe my grandfather Patrick and his brother came from County Meath in Ireland together. James A. Farley (U. S. Postmaster General) I was told was the offspring of this brother. Grandfather Patrick had an only sister who had a string store about 18th and Catherine (Phila.), she never married. She spelled her name Anna Farrelly. She was aged when as a small boy I saw her.

Francis J. Farley was my father. He was an entertainer in his early days, had a fine baritone voice and sang in various clubs in Phila. He married later in life, about when he was 30-31. (Note: from census records, he was about 28). He was a big man – 6' - and was born in Phila. After his marriage he lived in Camden, N.J. He told me that as a young boy his father Patrick took him to see Abraham Lincoln, whose coffin was taken around in different cities. One thing I remember, when I was a small boy he took me to see Billy Penn's statue—it was in the courtyard of City Hall with a fence around it. Now Penn is on top of City Hall, Phila., about 500 ft. or better high. Dad died in Phila. where we all lived at that time. He was stricken on the street when he went walking and riding the trolley from Bywood, Upper Darby to 69th St. He was then living with daughter Lillie. He is buried in Arlington Cemetery, Drexel Hill, in our family plot. (Note: Arlington Cam. is in Delaware Co., Penna.)

My mother's name before her marriage was Isabelle White. She was one of four children of William A. White and Henrietta White. She had a sister Madge, these two young women were called 'belles' among their friends. All these lived in Camden, NJ. Lovely pretty girls. I loved my mother very much, but refuse to say how I proved it. As a young boy I worried her, being very active, full of mischief. We lived in Camden, NJ. (Note: later addition to the story: Joe didn't do well in public school, so they put him in Catholic school. He was afraid of the building and refused to go. Finally he returned to public school but quit at age 11 to go to work, they needed money. He said he was 14 and got working permit.)

Dad worked hard. Rent was cheap, wages were low, food reasonable. You had to cook on a gasoline stove or a wood burning stove. If you had a heater in the cellar coal then was \$4.25 long ton, coke was \$1.00 cart load. Where we lived we had no cellars. Toilets were in the back yard. One thing I remember was that black stockings for me were 10 cents pair, but

when they were washed all the black dye came out, turned gray; that I did not like. Those button shoes were hard on the instep; rather go barefoot, that we did in the summer.

When Grover Cleveland was President (2nd term) we had a depression—no work, soup houses everywhere. Friends took Mother, small sister and I in their home in SW Phila. Dad went with friends. Then some better times came and we all went back and found a four room house in Camden, NJ. Got our things out of storage. This house had no cellar. \$5.00 rent a month. Water was a hydrant in back yard. Toilet also. Heat was our wood and coal burning stove. For 10 cents we bought our coal. Sure it was cold to live there, especially upstairs.

Before this time Mother had twins. Lilly, my sister, and William, who died soon after birth. Mother passed away as near as I remember about age 65. (Note: these are approximate dates): born 1861 died 1926. We then lived in W. Phila. So we buried her on a Sunday, and as Penna. Law did not allow that, the Whites had a family plot in Camden, NJ, at Evergreen Cemetery and we buried her there.

William A. White and Henrietta, her parents, had a good family. Children: William, Joseph, Madge, Ola, Isobell. Grandpa White told me how he, as a young man, worked in a foundry making cannon balls for the Civil War. This was in Camden, NJ, where all the Whites lived. He was a prominent man in Camden, interested in politics. (Note: He also was a policeman at the Centennial celebration in 1876.) Every Decoration Day he would take me out to Evergreen Cemetery where we would decorate the graves. I would find a water pump and carry it for our new plants. He and I always had a good time. On his birthday all his grandchildren would give him a 5 cent bandana handkerchief. At Christmas time he would dress as Santa Claus and present us with Christmas gifts. He died in his 70's, but don't know his birth or death dates. But I sure loved Grandpop White.

Henrietta, his wife, was a small woman; always sick as I remember. Typhoid then was common; I think she died from it. In those days the dead were put in a tin coffin. First ice was packed around the corpse. One thing I remember—my mother always stayed by that coffin all night. You could hear the drip drip of the water in a can. Grandma White came from an old family named Wible. Great grandpop Wible was a sea captain and lived with Grandpop White. He was an old man as I remember. He also was buried in Evergreen Cemetery. How well I remember these my grandparents. The date of her birth, death, I don't know, as I was a small boy, 6-7. She was buried in Evergreen Cemetery.

That about covers the Whites. Mother thought there was some relation in south NJ., Richardsons, who had charge of a lighthouse at Cohansey NJ. I never met them. Down near Bridgeton, NJ.

William her son had a very large family. He married Minnie Lach, whose parents lived on Spruce St. They made pretzels. All this was in Camden, NJ. Uncle William had a great talent as an artist. One time he had work in a store. He made a lovely drawing of every street in Camden—it was a work of art. William sometimes did door-to-door advertising in Camden. His wife Minnie was the mother of 5 children; died after her last birth. That left a large

family to care for later. The birth, death of these I don't know, but all of them took place when I was 8 or 9 years old (Note: 1893-94).

Uncle Joe (mother's brother) was a fine workman, paperhanger. He decorated in many places in NJ ad Pa., especially fine workman of the saloons. He made designs of small pieces of paper mixed with glue and water, and put these around the ceilings. His birth, death dates I don't know, I was still a young boy when he died. :Now the girl Ola (mother's sister) was a beautiful girl. She enjoyed the way of life in those days, but a good girl. She had loads of friends. In those days people had lung trouble, they called it not TB but consumption. At age 16 she passed away, probably about 1895-96.

Madge, whom I called Dadsey, married a friend of my Dad's, John R. Rice. He was a good man, kind of a lay preacher now and then. He was manager of a very large department store in Camden about one block long but not wide. He raised gold fish, sold them in the store. I often visited in their house next door to the store. I am now growing up some. I liked their small house. He and my Dad were in show business and they performed together, singing and dancing.

Madge and John had one daughter, Mazie, and a small brother who had a soft spot on his head and who lived some 30 years. He was helpless, never spoke a word. Had to be cared for like an infant. Mazie had great talent as an artist – never married, helped to care for her brother John. She was a beautiful person, large blue eyes, had great sense of humor. Her father (John R.) bought up small homes in Camden—he was in real estate business. When he died he left all these run down places in Mazie's care. (Her Mother is now dead). Taxes came every year, poor people could not pay rent, so she turned all these properties over to the city. She sold other house and one time had a large property in Cape May, NJ. They lived in Almonesson, NJ, a lovely place and home. As she grew older and sickly, she turned all these over to an Episcopal home in NJ. Helen and I visited her, found it a lovely place. We had lunch with them. Mazie played the piano, but she felt out of place, so many old people there. What a lovely cousin she was. There was 9 months between our birthdays. She was about 80 when she died. One good friend she had was a Senator of NJ. She was buried near her old home in Almonessin, this is near Woodbury, NJ. A sweet, dear person born 1886. Comes to mind when both of us would go to her house. She had her Grandmother Wible's organ. She would play the organ and I would sing 'Sweet Sixteen', was a favorite then. Her Ma would always call me Joey.

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