

## Remembering

The house I was born in sits off Garner Street in Chesley. Across the road on the south side, which is in the country, lived my paternal grandmother and grandfather. They had five acres of land, a small barn with a big brown cow that my father milked every evening. If I promised to be very quiet, I could join him. Grandma was born in 1874 so she knew how to make her own butter and cottage cheese etc. There was also a hay loft with a ladder to climb up into it. The barn cat would have her kittens there so my brother and I had to climb up and visit them.

Attached to the barn was a carpenter's shop with many interesting tools. Attached to it was the chicken house with enough room for my brother to keep his rabbits at the far end.

Besides all this, my grandma had a big vegetable and herb garden. When I was three years old, I was allowed to go and visit her. In the spring and summer, I usually found her there. She gave me my first stem of parsley and said "eat it, it is good for you." A gesture such as this seems small, but over the years it grows dearer in memory.

In May I was given a big garden basket and went down to the lower meadow and picked dandelion blossoms until the basket was full. Grandma made a dandelion wine that I didn't taste for many years.

There was also an apple orchard. Walking under all those blossoms was like walking in another world. As Shakespeare says in *The Tempest*, "Merrily, merrily shall I live now under blossoms that hangs on the bough." I can still taste the Snow apples as well as the Yellow Harvest which were always the first of the season.

Sometimes Grandma would take me to her perennial flower garden. She showed me a Jack in the Pulpit and let me smell the Lily of the Valley. There were many red Peonies and rows of Monks Head and the Hollyhocks were taller than I was. The flowers I love most are the ones shown to me when I was very young..... my senses were very acute.

Is it any wonder that I loved to visit her and soak in the many things she taught me? The most important of all as I now look back are the blessings of family joy. God gave us memories and that place never fades from mine.

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