The Dale Family History

An Honors Thesis (ID 499)

by

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Stories are wonderful things, especially when they are about your family and its past. The purpose of this paper is to tell part of the story of my family. I will begin with my great-grandparents and move forward to the present. My family has lived in rural Decatur and Shelby counties in Indiana for approximately the last 100 years. Many changes have taken place in the United States in those 100 years that have had an effect on my family and people in all parts of the country. Some of the changes that had an effect on my family were brought on by immigration, advancing technology, World Wars I and II, and the Great Depression. Other things effecting these people were sickness and changing social attitudes. I will attempt to show how my ancestors met the challenges of a changing world.

My great-grandparents were all from basically the same background. Their families were all landowners and farmers. Most of them had lived in the Midwest all their lives. Only my great-grandpa Dale's parents were immigrants. Samuel and Elizabeth Dale came to the United States from England in 1852. They bought land in Decatur County where they settled later that same year.

The turn of the century marked the approximate wedding dates of my great-grandparents. On October 24, 1897 Victoria Maze and John Hatton were married by a Reverend Hawkins.
Beatrice Robbins and Alvin Scripture were wed on January 1, 1899 in the Mapleton United Brethren Church. 1903 saw the marriages of Missouri Bentley and Roy Bayless on January 14, and Nancy Boger and George Dale on March 1.

After their marriages each couple began housekeeping and making a living. Great-Grandpa Bayless had begun working as a hired hand at age 14. He continued to farm on his own land after his marriage until the mid-1940's. Also a farmer, Great-Grandpa Dale owned his own farms, and tended them until the 1950's. Great-Grandpa Hatton was a stock dealer and butcher, and Great-Grandpa Scripture farmed until the 1920's. Great-Grandpa Scripture gave up his farm after being frightened by other farmers losing their land. After this, he had no desire to own anything else.

Soon after beginning married life these couples started families. The Scriptures were the parents of five children: Ethel, Bernice, Edith, Goldie, and my grandfather Harold. Seven children were born to George and Nancy Dale. They were Forrest, Frank, my grandfather Glenn, Thelma, Evelyn, Virginia, and George Wayne. The ten children of Roy and Missouri Bayless were: Zelma, John, Paul, my grandmother Elizabeth, Bob, Martha, Edwin, Lois, and twins Dick and Harry. The largest family was that of the Hattons. They had twelve children of which ten survived infancy. Those surviving were: Goldie, Sylvia, Alvester, Norman, Eva, my grandmother Genevieve, Russell, Lowell, Pauline, and Martha.
With each family having this many children, my great-grandmothers were kept busy taking care of the house and the children. Two of my great-grandmothers did, however, find time for another job. Great-Grandma Bayless was a cook at the Manila School. The other great-grandmother to hold a job was Great-Grandma Hatton. She worked for her husband. She mixed sausage when Great-Grandpa Hatton was butchering. He paid her one dollar for each hog he butchered. She would save the money until she had enough to buy a new coat-suit. Great-Grandma Hatton also found time to practice the art of charming warts. She performed this task mainly for family members and friends. This art was to be passed on, but Great-Grandma Hatton never did tell anyone how charming warts was done.

While their parents worked, the children had certain chores that they were expected to do. This work was either housework or farm-related work. When Great-Grandma Hatton was working my grandmother, Genevieve, would make her sisters angry because she could get her share of the kitchen work done before they could, and she had more time to play. This is an example of the type of work the children did. Other chores included milking the cows, doing the laundry, and other jobs of that type.

The children did, however, have time to play. They played with things that were around the house. The girls had homemade dolls, and the boys and girls both played games like
"cops and robbers." Some of the children also had bicycles, but they had to make do with what they had. My Grandpa Scripture, Harold, learned to ride on a bicycle with a flat tire that had been stuffed with corn cobs so that it would roll.

When World War I ended, my grandparents ranged in age from six to ten. The effect of the war on these families was varied. My Grandpa Scripture said that he knew there was a war going on, but he did not really pay much attention to what was happening. He remembers saving his money and ordering a bronze bust of President Wilson from the Sears and Roebuck catalog. Both the Hattons and Dales lived with the knowledge that my great-grandfather's numbers were about to be called to serve in the armed forces. The only reason neither of them had to go to war was that the war ended before they were called. The Baylesses handled the war in much the same way as the Scriptures.

A major part of my grandparents' childhoods was education. All of my grandparents went to different grade schools. All of these schools, however, were small schoolhouses. Grandpa Scripture went to school at Lett's Corner for two years, and then to the Wood School for the next four years. To get to the Wood School, Grandpa had to walk one and a half miles both ways through the woods. Grandpa Scripture attended sixth grade at St. Paul. His Aunt Grace Scripture was the teacher. He thought it would be nice to have his aunt as a teacher, but she was harder on him because he was her nephew.
Grandpa Dale spent all of his grade school years at the Red School. Grandma Dale, Elizabeth Bayless, attended a four-room school. This school had three grades per room, and no water. The children had to drink from a well, and if that went dry, they had to walk down to a spring. In order to get to school, Grandma had to walk a quarter of a mile both ways. Grandma Scripture, Genevieve Hatton, went to grammar school in Geneva.


Transportation to and from school took many forms. Grandpa Dale drove a horse and wagon the four years he attended high school. The horse he took was the same horse that his brother had taken the four years previous to Grandpa's first year in high school. Grandma Dale walked a mile to the Vandalia Road to catch what they called a school "hack". Both Grandma and Grandpa Scripture rode busses to school. Grandpa said the bus he rode was a Model T bus.

My Grandma and Grandpa Dale began dating while Grandma was still in high school. Grandpa was five years older than Grandma. Dating today can be very complicated and expensive. In the late 1920's, though, it was considered
a date when a couple would sit in the parlor or on the front porch and talk. Grandma and Grandpa went to church together every other Sunday, and if Grandpa had the money, they would go to a show. Finally, on September 23, 1931, they were married.

On their wedding day, Grandma put on a dress that she already had, and they called the minister. It took a while to convince the minister, Reverend J. W. Dickman, to marry them because he thought it was a joke. The wedding took place in the minister's home, and Grandpa's brother, Forrest, and his wife were witnesses.

Grandma and Grandpa Dale set up housekeeping in a small house near Geneva. Their first child, Delores, was born in 1932. At this time Grandpa was farming and driving a school bus. This was also during the Depression. Some of the farm prices Grandpa and other farmers were receiving were: corn, $0.13 a bushel and hogs, $2.00 per hundred weight.

In 1933, my other grandparents were married. Harold Scripture and Genevieve Hatton were wed on March 24. They went to the church at St. Louis Crossing, and had the minister there marry them. The minister's wife was their witness. Grandma had bought a new dress for the occasion. She could afford to do that because she was teaching at the time. Grandma had gone to Blaker's Teachers College in Indianapolis after she graduated from high school. After the wedding, she finished out the year, but her contract was
not renewed for the next year because she was married. At that time the school board thought that single teachers were more productive.

While Grandma was teaching, Grandpa hauled farm produce and livestock. He would buy corn from farmers for $.11 a bushel and take it to Cincinnati and sell it to a doctor for $.15 per bushel. He also hauled hogs. The hogs cost $2.50 per hundred weight, and his fee for hauling them was $.15 per hundred weight. Keep in mind that this was during the Depression. It was especially hard on farmers, and since there were so many farmers in this part of Indiana everyone else was effected. The pay for working on a farm was $1.50 to $2.00 a week.

In 1934, Grandpa and Grandma Scripture were blessed with their first child, Barbara Joyce, my mother. One month earlier a second child had been born to Grandma and Grandpa Dale. This was their first son, Larry, my father. Both of these children were born at home. Grandma and Grandpa paid $15.00 for the delivery when my mother was born. The rest of my mother's brothers and sisters were also born at home. The price for delivery of a baby had gone up to $35.00 by 1949 when Janey, the youngest of my mother's six siblings was born. All but two of my fathers ten brothers and sisters were born at home. Joyce and Marcia were the only Dale children born in a hospital. When Marcia, the youngest, was born, the hospital bill was $149.00. This is quite a bit less than a family would expect to pay today.
These two children were very special in their families. Being the oldest child, or the first son, brought with it many expectations and responsibilities. Since my mother was the oldest child she was in charge of keeping an eye on the younger children as she grew older. The oldest son is special in any family since he brings with him the hope that the family name will be passed on. He is also the first that a father gets to teach "manly things".

Both the Dales and Scriptures were poor families, but like my Grandma Dale said, "Everyone was poor, we weren't any different than anyone else." For my mother's first Christmas, my grandparents could not get enough money to buy my mother a doll, so my Great-Grandma and Great-Grandpa Scripture did. When my father was three, he was kicked in the head by a horse. At this time Grandma and Grandpa had only $.25. They had to borrow $5.00 from Grandpa's brother-in-law to pay the doctor bill. Another example of how scarce money was occurred one year at Christmas when my father was about five. My grandparents sold some hogs for $2.00 per hundred weight, and my father remarked, "Now I can get a haircut."

Grandpa Scripture said that things began to get better in 1936. In 1939, Grandpa Scripture began driving a bus for the Noble Township School District. He was paid $7.49 a day, and had to furnish his own bus. He drove sixteen years for Noble Township and twenty years for Decatur County. In 1940, he bought his first farm. He paid $3,000 for this farm. The next farm he purchased cost $5,000.
Grandpa Dale continued to farm and drive a bus for the first eight years he and Grandma were married. In 1938, he quit driving a bus, but four years later in 1942, he began driving again. This time he drove for 28 years. He was paid approximately $295 a month. In 1944, Grandpa began working at the Waldron Elevator. He worked there until 1947 when he became a security guard at Bohn Aluminum in Greensburg. Until 1957, Grandpa was working at three jobs. He was farming, driving the school bus, and working at Bohn. In 1957, the family moved from the farm, and he kept the other two jobs.

Both of my grandfathers started out driving buses for Noble Township. Since they lived in the same general area their children went to school at Noble Township School. My parents were in the same class in grade school. They went to Noble Township School through their eighth grade year. Since my grandfathers were friends, their children also became friends. This is how my parents first met.

With such big families there was never a lack of companionship, whether you wanted it or not. There was usually two children per bed and four children in a room. My mother shared a bed with her sister Charlene and brother Danny. Part of the time another brother, Jim, would join them for a night. This companionship also offered an opportunity to have a lot of playmates, and to get into large amounts of trouble. My father spent a lot of time playing basketball. He got his first basketball from my Great-Grandma.
Dale. It cost about $.59. The first time Grandpa shot the ball, he hit a wire and the ball burst. Grandpa then sent off to Spiegler and bought my father a really good basketball that cost approximately $5.00. Dad would either play with his brothers or with his uncle, George Wayne, who was only five years older than him.

My mother played with her sister Charlene most of the time. Once at Christmas time my mother and Charlene found a small table and chairs hidden behind the organ. They did not think that it would hurt if they got it out, and had a small imaginary tea party. When they were finished they put it back behind the organ. The next day it was gone. They were afraid they were not going to get it for Christmas, but Christmas morning there it was under the tree. That taught them not to snoop much around Christmas.

When my parents began the ninth grade they went to Waldron High School. My parents did not date during high school. The closest thing to it was at a basketball game when they were fifteen. They and two other students went outside and sat on the bus until my grandfathers came out looking for them and made them go back in.

Before their freshman year was over, my father was stricken with tetanus, also known as lockjaw. He was in the hospital for three weeks. This cost quite a bit of money that Grandma and Grandpa did not have. The people of the community collected approximately $800 to help pay the bills.
After his stay in the hospital, my father had to stay in bed at home for several weeks. Because of this he missed the rest of his freshman year, and had to repeat the ninth grade the next year. This put him in the same class as his brother Bill.

My father was not the only member of his family to have a serious illness. When his youngest brother Glenn was eighteen months old, he suffered from spinal meningitis. His fever went so high that it caused severe brain damage. Grandma and Grandpa took care of Glenn at home until it just became too much for them to handle with ten other children at home. They took him to a nursing home in Muscatatuck where he stayed until he passed away at the age of 21.

After his bout with tetanus, my father was able to finish high school with no other mishaps. He played varsity basketball, and ran track. He lettered in these two sports, and also in fast-pitch softball. He graduated in 1953. My mother had graduated a year earlier. In the summer of 1951, my mother took a job at the Waldron Bank. She held this job during her senior year in high school. During school she would work on Saturdays, and one month before she graduated she took over for a lady who retired. In order to do this, my mother had to get permission from the principal to leave school early four days a week. In 1956 my mother took a job with the Indiana Gas Company. She only worked there for two months before quitting to go back to work at the bank, where she has worked ever since.
After my father graduated from high school, he joined the Navy. He enlisted for four years. For basic training, he was stationed in San Diego, California. After graduation from basic, he attended Sonar school, also in San Diego. When he finished that school, he shipped out. He was on a ship called a mine sweeper. They sailed to places like Hawaii and Japan. Once while they were out at sea, my father's commanding officer told him that he would have to swim out fifty yards from the ship and back. My father was not a very good swimmer, but he agreed to do it after the officer told him that he would be there the whole time. Well, my father swam the fifty yards, turned to come back, and the officer was gone. He was on his own when he swam back to the ship. After serving his four years, my father was discharged in Seattle, Washington.

It was while my father was in the Navy that he and my mother began to date. My father's sister, Sara Jo, called my mother and asked her if she would go out with him while he was home on leave. My mother said yes. They went to a movie on that date. Most of their dates consisted of driving around, going to a movie, or sitting on the front porch. The bulk of their courtship, however, was the letters that they wrote to each other. My mother still has the letters my father wrote to her, but she will not let me read them, and she has done a very good job of hiding them.
My father came home in May, 1957, and worked at DePrez Hardware Store in Shelbyville for two months before getting a job at Kibbler Trucking Company in Indianapolis. In September of that year my parents were married. When my father asked my mother to marry him, she went home and told her parents. The next day my grandfathers were working together, and my Grandma Scripture went to see them. She asked my Grandpa Dale what he thought of the news, and his reply was, "What news?" My father had not told his parents yet.

The wedding took place at the Union Chapel Evangelical United Brethren Church, now the Union Chapel United Methodist Church. The minister who performed the ceremony was Harold "Preach" Fredericks. My mother's sister Charlene and my father's brother Bill stood up with them. Most of those attending were family members. For their honeymoon, they just took off with no real destination. They ended up spending two nights in Michigan.

When they came home they began housekeeping in a small stone house across the street from the St. Paul School. My father still worked at Kibbler's. They hauled groceries for A&P Grocery Stores. Since my father was at the bottom of the seniority list when they bid for jobs, he usually ended up with the night shift. Sometimes he would work all night then take a run to Bloomington or Crawfordsville the next morning and not get home until noon.
Many events took place in 1957. Not only did my parents get married, but so did my mother's sister Charlene. She was married in March. Later that same month my Great-Grandpa Scripture passed away. On August 7 my mother's other grandfather, my Great-Grandpa Hatton, passed on. Grandma and Grandpa Scripture moved in late September, and Grandma and Grandpa Dale also settled into a new home during 1957. This was a year that brought mixed emotions to the Scripture home. In December of the next year, my Great-Grandpa Bayless died.

My parents lived in the house across from the school for six years. For the first five years my mother's younger brother and sister, Adrian and Janey, and my father's younger sisters, Linda, Janice, Joyce and Marcia, spent many nights with my parents. They would keep my mother company while my father was working at night. On November 21, 1962, my parents' brothers and sisters had to share the house with me too. My aunt, Janey, said that she was very jealous of me at first because I got to stay with Joy, my mother, all the time.

When I was six weeks old, my mother fell and broke her ankle. Since my father was working nights, we stayed with my Grandma and Grandpa Scripture. We stayed with them for a couple of weeks, and then went home for the weekend. They wanted us to come back on Monday, but Grandpa got sick, and they did not want to take a chance that my mother or I would get it so we stayed at home.
We spent one year after I was born in the stone house. We then moved about two blocks to the house I grew up in. This was the same year that my Great-Grandma Dale passed away. My mother had gone back to work by now, and I was staying with Katie Favors. This was very convenient for my mother because Katie lived directly across the street from the bank in St. Paul where my mother worked.

When I was three I began staying with June Clapp. She lived right around the corner from us. I could walk to her house instead of Mom taking me all of the time. One morning I just took off, and went to June's without telling Mom. To say the least, my mother did not appreciate that. At age five I began kindergarten so I spent the afternoons with my friend Larry Alexander at his house.

Larry was the only other child my age in our neighborhood. We played together all the time. I had a swing set so we spent most of our play time in my back yard. We had very vivid imaginations, and my swing set was anything from a spaceship to a house. Since I am an only child I also learned to use my imagination while I was playing by myself. I would spend hours in a laundry basket at my Grandma and Grandpa Scripture's house pretending that I was on a ship sailing to far away places. I think I did that until I outgrew the laundry basket.

I spent countless hours at Grandma and Grandpa Scripture's house. They only lived a mile away from us, and my aunt, Janey, babysat for me a number of times. I can
remember sitting on the swing with Grandma, and she would let me brush her hair. Grandpa would let me ride on the tractor with him, and once in a while, with his help, I got to drive. The thing that Grandpa did that I always got the biggest kick out of was that he would take out his false teeth and talk.

When we went to Grandma and Grandpa Dale's, there was usually a slew of children there to play with. We played all sorts of games. I also played with my father's sisters. They would get me down on the floor and tickle me. I remember yelling for them to quit, and when they did, I would start begging them to do it again. The most vivid thing I remember is a Fourth of July celebration. We had a cookout, and Grandpa had sparklers for all of the children to light after dark.

In August of 1964, my Great-Grandpa Dale passed away. Two years later my Great-Grandma Scripture died. I do not have any recollection of these people, but when I was five my Grandma Scripture suffered a heart attack and died. This was the first time I had to deal with death. I remember very vividly going to the funeral home with my parents and asking when she was going to wake up. This was 1968. In that same year my father went to work as a computer programmer at Farm Bureau Insurance in Indianapolis.

In 1969, I entered first grade at St. Paul Elementary School. I spent six years at this school. When I was in the sixth grade, we moved from town to the house my Grandpa Scripture lived in. He had lived there since 1957. Grand-
pa had remarried in 1969, and his wife, Virginia, wanted to move to town. When we moved to this house, two of my dreams came true. I got to ride Grandpa's bus all the time, and I got a horse. He was a five-year old Appaloosa gelding. The day we went to pick him up was filled with both happiness and sadness. As we were leaving, my dog, Happy, followed us. While we were driving along, another dog began chasing him, and he ran out in front of a truck. He was killed almost instantly. I remember crying myself to sleep that night.

Sadness had entered the lives of the Dales in 1970. During this year it was discovered that Grandpa Dale had Hodgkin's Disease. This is a form of cancer that effects the lymph glands. Shortly after this was diagnosed, Grandpa quit his job at Bohn Aluminum, and he and Grandma moved to Shelbyville. Grandpa was remarkable throughout the illness. He took chemotherapy treatments that made him sick, but he never seemed bitter, at least not around us. He passed away in June of 1974. Grandma Dale has not remarried and still lives in Shelbyville. During Grandpa's illness my last two great-grandparents passed away. My Great-Grandma Hatton died in October of 1970, and Great-Grandma Bayless passed away on September 18, 1972. Great-Grandma Hatton was 93, and Great-Grandma Bayless was 88.

I continued my education at North Decatur Junior-Senior High School after leaving St. Paul Elementary. During my six years at North Decatur I played in the band, sang in the swing choir, was editor of the school paper, and was a
member of National Honor Society. I kept myself busy with activities and schoolwork. I graduated from North Decatur in 1981, and began making plans to attend Ball State University.

While I was in high school, the Scripture family went through some changes. My Grandpa's second marriage lasted ten years, but ended in divorce in 1979. This was one of the hardest decisions for my Grandpa to make because he had been taught that marriage was sacred, and that divorce was a sin. On July 11, 1980 Grandpa married Roselyn Boger. They were married in Jamestown, Tennessee by a Justice-of-the-Peace.

The summer of 1981 brought some changes for my immediate family. I was preparing to enter college, and my father was giving up thirteen years of seniority at Farm Bureau to take a new job. On June 19, my parents and I went to orientation, I registered for classes, and declared my major as Special Education. When we got home, my father began preparing for the next day. It was his first day at Federal Mogul in Greensburg.

I have been at Ball State for the last four years. In that time I changed my major to Computer Science, so I have one more year to go at Ball State. My father is still at Federal Mogul, and my mother is working at the same bank, although the name has changed to Central Indiana Bank. My family is going strong, and I hope it continues to grow in the future. Right now there are sixty-five members of the Dale
family and thirty-seven members of the Scripture family. Three weddings are in the planning stage for the Scriptures, and there are plenty more that will be planned in the future. These families have survived many challenges and changes. They have remained strong, and most importantly they have been able to stay close.