



Laura Jane Musser and
Family Papers.

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Early Childhood days -

Little Falls, Minnesota which since 1921 has been known as Lindbergh's home town, was a small lumber settlement when my father moved there from Cloquet - over fifty years ago - a Swedish landowner, Mr. Sandahl, sold Mr. Weyerhaeuser, lumber magnate, and father's business partner, and father's extensive lands along the Mississippi River. ^{about 1/2 mile South of town} that was cheap in those days, and such was my father's and Mr. Weyerhaeuser's business acumen, that those same lands are there today save for what they turned over to the city. Both the Weyerhaeuser home & our home, clapboard structures to this day were built on top of a hill overlooking the river and commanding a frontage of lower ^{wooded} land ^{that} ^{extended} ^{some} 100 yards to the river itself. There was the "front" lawn too that extended almost the same distance to ^{Lytle} Highland Ave. and a

East
good quarter of a mile to the Jefferson Highway
Little Falls' main artery. On this front lawn
we built a swimming pool & tennis court
that saw many a lively splash party and
heated shower when mother's young friends,
and later on my two sisters & my friends, met
for merry competition. Also on this front lawn
were many stately oaks & lindens, graceful elms,
& poplars, & pretty maples & scattered here & there
were gardens - one big formal one fronting the
street and showing off to advantage - two
pergolas, a arbor, & a gazebo & sundial,
and its two big flower beds full of poppies, gladioli,
coral bell, etc. Then the side beds in plots
along the drive that give the visitor a cheery
greeting from its gay poppies, sweet peonies, lilies,
& daisies. There were also gardens on the lower lawn,
the Weymouth being easily recognized by
its entrance flanked by two apple trees, and ones
at the other end - a more precious & warm appearing

one, I thought, with its arbor, stone seat, pond
& with fountain in the middle. Later on there
grew a rock garden, ^{bordering the river and} ready for summer house
when the families used to have picnics & watch the
sun set over the river. As this was in the
days of horses & carriages, father & Mr. Waychacura
owned horses and had carriages or currup for summer
driving & cutters for winter. They of course were
stables and outbuilding for these necessities, and
when autos came into being - these outbuildings were
used for additional livestock - namely cows, pigs &
chickens, for both men thought it cheaper to
produce their own dairy products.

Mary's notes: Was Peter Massa a lumber man?
Why did he move to California? When did he
move back to Iowa? Ask about great
mother.

Little Falls, Minnesota which since 1927 has been known as Col. Charles A. Lindbergh's hometown, was a small lumber settlement when my father, Richard Drew Musser moved there over fifty years ago. My grandfather, Peter Musser from Muscatine Iowa, a well known business man, had traveled over covered wagon west to the California mountains with his wife and two eldest children, and there they settled in a mining camp called Blue Gulch where father was born. My grandmother had five children in all of which three lived to grow up - a sturdy, remarkable little woman, she was a talented landscape painter, and her painting of her home in Blue Gulch hangs on our wall above the staircase in our home. Father's tales of his life as a child where he grew up with Chinaman boys and girls as his playmates, and a colored man "of all work" as his "nurse" kept me entertained

for hours. When father was accepted he entered
the University of Iowa where he graduated as
a civil engineer. He spent several of his
early "apprentice" years as a coal miner in Alabama,
but his heart was in lumber. [margin note] where
I often did not meet Mr. Wapshausen? Accordingly,
he came to St. Paul, Minnesota where he met
Mr. Charles Wapshausen, a young lumberman, and
founder of the Wapshausen Lumber Co. Within the
next few years their friendship ripened to the
extent where father became business partner.
Their headquarters at first were Chicago, Minnesota,
and then both men moved to Little Falls where
they felt they could be more independent. [What was the
real reason for their move?

A Swedish landowner, Mr. Henning
Lundberg sold them a large section of land 1/2
mile south of town along the banks of the
Mississippi. On top of a hill overlooking the
river the two men built their houses -

gayly -
when they lived in solitary existence -
housekeeping in the haphazard fashion
that men do until the early 1900's when
both married within a year or two of each
other.

Always believed the story of my
mother's courtship days that it took an
"upset" during a sleigh ride to wrangle a
proposal from dad - My mother, Sarah
Walker, had come to eloquent Minnesota as
a young girl in her early twenties - Mother was
born & brought up in Glen Falls New York -
At seventeen, she went abroad to Berlin, Germany
to study music in company with an older cousin.
There she had enjoyed companionship with German
girls - the most intimate being a certain Gretel Hessel
whose parents were wealthy and owned a large
beautiful country home, mother used to visit - Her
stories about the graciousness & kindness of
this girl & her parents were many & most interesting

in view of the fact that when World War
two broke out, Guterlich begged mother for a
"loan" to enable her to come to America. Mother was
unable to do this, and as a result she lost
touch ^{with} her friend completely. Mother has
often remarked that if she had not
known the "circumstances" of the German crisis,
she would have done all in her power to help
Guterlich. Mother's previous study was piano,
and she was encouraged to study with a
very famous pupil of Franz Liszt, Adolf Busch, who
was highly regarded to "prevent" her when she
finished her training course. However, her
course of study was abruptly terminated
by an economic setback in her family,
and she was forced to return to
America to help support the family by
teaching. In the summer of 1901

Childhood Recollections

THE CANDY MAN

THE DAY I MET SANTA CLAUSE

- My Home -

Little Falls, Minnesota, a town of seven thousand people having the added distinction of being Colud Chas. a Lundberg boy hood hometown is some ninety-eight miles north of Minneapolis. An excellent concrete highway connects these two places, and continues on through Little Falls as far as Brainerd where it is joined by other highway. This Little Falls main artery, and is called Main Street by the inhabitants whose houses front its pavement, and the Jefferson Highway by the state road maps. Within recent years many new attractive little homes of early American architecture have sprung up like a border of multi-colored flowers on either side - terminating with a handsome ^{new} sand stone chapel belonging to the Franciscan order, and an adjoining school build of the same material - further back ^{within the city limits} the old hospital & sister home can be seen. The chapel stands like a sentinel at the ^{marking the gentle boundary of Little Falls} bend of the pavement almost as if it had assumed

the sole responsibility of guarding the town.
As one advances into Little Falls from this
vantage point, about a quarter of a mile, he sees
on his left a ^{green} picket fence in the shape of
the letter U. The long part extending west
at right angles to the bank of the Mississippi
River. Facing the pavement the ^{shorter} part of fence
extending north for a few yards makes another
right angle, turn west going over a little rise
following the contour of the place next door
and ends at a rather high bank overlooking
a pond which has been formed by the
river aided by springs within the pond's
depth. Sometimes in the spring the pond
becomes so full that it floods the bit of
land that separates it from the river.
A great deal of erosion has ^{occurred} occurred from this
flooding, and one day this land strip may
disappear. It is a beauty spot though with its
trees growing thickly from its grassy surface. In
the spring when it is not being flooded
many wild flowers, some suckle & wild roses bloom.

there, and it makes a wonderful place for picnics. Retreating his steps alongside the picket fence one finds ~~an~~ ^{part of the Southern corner} entrance between two white posts. The dirt drive winds gracefully through a lovely green lawn, ^{covered} with stately trees of various kinds, and border flower gardens of many bright colored flowers. A swimming pool and tennis court can be seen, and then the road divides - the upper section continuing for a short distance going past another glimpse of lawn with a landscape flower garden in its center - The garden is conspicuous for its two pergolas & arbors facing a gazing globe - a narrow side walk follows the road as it makes a sharp turn to the right ^{passing} ~~going past~~ a large house of clapboards painted green and continuing to another ^{white clapboarded} large house where it makes another turn in circular fashion & meets the lower section of road which connects it once more with the entrance drive. The large white house is my home, and the house next door belonged to my father's business partner.

who died ^{several years ago} leaving his part of the property to my father. My Green house, as we children called it, has had quite a history, once it served as a private school, and has housed at different times two families. The house is distinctive also in never having been changed or modernized in its structure. It is a ~~large~~ roomy house, and its peaks & gables on one side make it appear a little baroque - or gingerbread style - It has a ~~funny~~ mysterious air - almost as if it challenges outsiders to probe its recesses - Indeed we children endlessly explored the funny little attic rooms with their interesting cubby holes appearing unexpectedly. One little room was built under the eaves and a portion of it extended way back till the ead was lost in the shadows - It made a wonderful yet somewhat scary hiding place - and there was also a round window - that being, we insisted to a room that had no entrance; at least we never could find the window from the

inside.

Our house was as open & frank as the other was mysterious. Its very color, white, betrayed its spirit. Some people would have called it a rambling house, and so it was, as if its big heartiness was longer able to be contained within its confines had overflowed into additional rooms. It was a house that loved people & gay parties, particularly the informal kind - and it was a house that loved children. It seems as if there have always been children in my home. First, as children we lived there - my two sisters & I with our parents, & our grandmother, then our cousins who were around our age would spend long periods of time with us so that they too seemed to consider our home their own. And now that we have grown up, my sisters children are taking our place keeping the spirit of our home ever youthful. Its rooms have seen childish happiness & woes. Its closets, storerooms, & kitchen have provided

many hiding places on a rainy afternoon.
Its divans & settees have seen dance
courtships, and its hearthside has
seen cozy evenings in winter times -
story telling, popcorn parties, and a family
gathering at the bridge table. Small
concerts & musicales have taken place
in the music room, our beautiful
mahogany stairway giving much
comfort & place through music to our
moments of loneliness & the pipe organ
with its ^{automatic} roller attachment giving excerpts
from Bach & Wagner masterpieces -
The library with its new beautiful leather
bound books, ^{new} offering its hospitality to those
whose minds are literary, & lastly the
basement amusement room answers
our needs for more joyful kind of entertainment -
On the floor that I have been away, it
has come to mean the most blessed kind
of security possible in this confused & sad
world. Its walls have absorbed the peace of mind

happiness and love of my mother & father, whose
sole concern has been to live for others.

~~My father was a farmer.~~ We do
have a small farm & raise our own produce,
and the upkeep of the place has to be
carefully managed, but it is the home
we all helped make, and want to share with
our friends.

MORE ABOUT SUMMER TRAVELING DURING MY CHILDHOOD

By Laura Jane Musser

"FROM LITTLE FALLS TO ALASKA AND BACK" (First of 3 parts)

PART I - Little Falls to Yellow Stone Park

I have written in my columns from time to time about summer vacation travel when I was a child. In the summer of 1929 my parents decided to make an extended tour by automobile as far west as Seattle, Washington where we would then take the "Steamship Alaska" as far north as Seward--a two week voyage. En route west by car we would take in tours through the Black Hills, Yellow Stone Park, the 'Jackson Hole' country, Colorado Springs, Coeur D'alene, Idaho for a short stay with relatives, and finally Seattle. We would leave our driver, Lawrence Nelson, in Seattle, and rejoin him on our return from Alaska. Lawrence, meanwhile, would look after two of our "house hold help" who would take their vacation at that time coming to Seattle by train where Lawrence would meet them and drive them around to do some sight-seeing until they had to return to Little Falls to get our home ready for our return late September.

We started our trip the first part of August. I had been at a girl's camp near Bemidji for the month of July and rather hated to leave my friends there and the good times I'd been having; still, I was excited about seeing new sights climaxed by the voyage to Alaska.

By the year 1929 many of the main roads were paved with cement, and the gravel roads were not bad. However, Macadam paving was not as extensive as it is today, and we still had to be careful of our tires carrying plenty of spares with us. Streamlined automobiles were yet to come, and our Buick touring car could go at a speed of 45 miles per hour. Traveling at this much more leisurely pace than we drive today, gave us a chance to really enjoy and savor the yet unspoiled country scenery with its marvelously fresh air free from the pollutants of diesel engines and factory smoke which one experiences today.

Our first over night stop was ^{PIERRE} Pierre, South Dakota where we took a side trip to the "Bad Lands" so-called because there were no green things growing, and no streams. I have seen the "Bad lands" several times since, and never cease to marvel at its fantastic rock formations of vari-colored sand stone and lime which reminds me of some fairyland. Rapid City was our next stop, and there was and Indian "Pow Wow" dance going on in the streets which we watched for a while before going to bed in our hotel for the night. The next day we traveled through the Black Hills which, in those days, had no 'tourist traps' or 'junk food restaurants' to mar the beauty of the scenery, nor were there any 'presidents faces' on the side of Mt. Rushmore. We stopped at Crystal Cave, the first time I had ever gone into a cave, and the feeling of getting lost was present even though there was a guide with a torch to take us around. To be shut in a narrow passage way with a low ceiling of jagged rocks and a rocky uneven floor, without much light, was quite a frightening experience.

Now a day's caves are well lighted; and the passage ways well-marked so that one can enjoy the beauty of the stalactites (sharp pointed tooth-like rock formations dangling down from the cavern roof), and the stalagmites (sharp-pointed tooth-like rock formations pointing upward from the cavern floor). Then we traveled on to Sylvan Lake, with the spectacular 'needles' near by, where the state game lodge is located, and where we spent a few days for sight-seeing in the near-by areas.

The Black Hills have been the home of Native Americans for centuries before the coming of the white man, and have been revered as an important sanctuary. Today, Native Americans are striving to reclaim this land inhabited and revered by their ancestors.

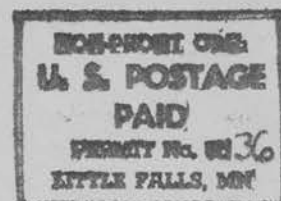
From there continued our trip to Yellowstone Park.

END OF PART I

This article by Laura Jane Musser will continue in next month's newsletter..

The Morrison County Fair will be held August 16th-19th.....

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YELLOW STONE PARK TO COEUR D'ALENE IDAHO

By Laura Jane Musser

"From Little Falls to Alaska and Back"

(Second of 3 parts)

(This is Part 2 of a 3 Part story written by Laura Jane Musser on a trip taken by her and her family during the summer of 1929.)

It was hard to leave the Black Hills and the State Game Lodge where the scenery was so magnificent with acres of Forests--noble and serene--the tall pine, evergreen, and spruce trees towering above the smaller maple, oak, birch, and aspen trees. On the higher slopes of the hills some of the leaves of the maple and aspen had started to change color, for even though it was August, fall comes early to the high altitude areas. We started in a southerly direction in order to reach Casper, Wyoming, where we were to spend a few days with my Mother's Brother Otis's family. Casper had become a center for oil drilling, and as we approached this bustling community, we passed several oil wells with their derricks towering above them. The smell of oil was almost overpowering, and the high altitude of over five thousand feet above sea level made our breathing rapid until we got used to the altitude. The scenery around Casper is almost devoid of trees, and the grass brown and parched looking. Casper is in the foot hills of the Rockies, and not much rain falls there.

During our visit we took a drive to an area called "Hell's Half Acre", a sunken area of ground which looked like a miniature Grand Canyon. At the rim of this "canyon", there was a place to rent horses which would take us down into the canyon over a precipitous trail. There would be a guide, of course, and he told us to let the reins hang loosely on the horses' necks and let them pick their way along the trail. We all decided to go horseback, and we had no difficulty in reaching the canyon floor. But it was hot that day, and at the bottom of the canyon the heat was almost unbearable. We didn't dare dismount for the guide warned us of rattle snakes. It was worth the trip, however, for the fantastic rock formations were something to see. Whether "Hell's Half Acre" was the result of an earthquake of pre-historic times, or a volcanic eruption we never did find out.

We then left Casper for Yellow Stone Park entering it by way of the "Jackson Hole" area which is among the Continental Divide--another treat of gorgeous scenery. Long before we reached the park there was a strong smell of sulphur in the air which was almost sickening. We stayed at "Old Faithful Inn" for about three days making tours of the geyser basin where the various geyser sprays spouted from vents in rocky mounds gorgeously tinted with a rainbow of colors from the minerals of which they were composed. We threw our handkerchiefs into "Handkerchief Pool" to have them bob up again during a "spray". We viewed "Morning Glory Pool" which was called a 'bottomless pool' because it went several hundred feet into the earth. The color of its scaldingly hot water was a beautiful opalescent blue, and of course we saw "Old Faithful" which would send up a stream of water every hour on the hour, though they say now a days it's not so faithful. During our drives about the park we were warned about bears who would poke their heads into open car windows begging for food, and would claw one in the process. I have always wondered if Yellow Stone Park's location was, at one time, the top of a volcanic mountain. The Indians regarded it as the home of evil spirits, and certainly one can see why.

From Yellow Stone we left for Coeur D'Alene, Idaho of which I have written before in an earlier article. Our route took us through Bozeman, Montana, over another section of the Continental Divide, and into Idaho where we traveled north along the Snake River Canyon. I'll never forget

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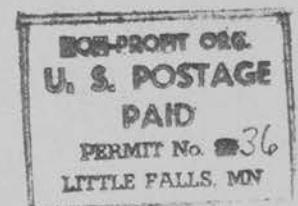
(2)

that drive for the temperature was over 100°, and so hot that we carried pails of water in the car with some turkish towels we had purchased in one of the villages along the way. We wrung the towels out in the water and fastened them to our car windows which cooled the air as it came through the towels. Such a crude 'air-conditioning' contrivance worked remarkably well--otherwise we might never have survived the trip. We finally reached Coeur D'Alene where we spent some very happy days with our relatives, visiting well-remembered sights, taking cool swims in Lake Coeur D'Alene, and one day, to my great joy, going to Spokane (a short distance from Coeur D'Alene) to spend an afternoon at the Natatorian Amusement Park whose rides were much more fun and less dangerous than the "midway" rides of today. We rode the "Jack Rabbit" a giant roller coaster, The Caterpillar"--a ride that goes in a circle with a wavy motion then, as it gains speed, a canvas top arches over the cars, and a wind machine is turned on, blowing ladies' skirts over their heads to the merriment and embarrassment of the passengers, the "Merry-Go-Round", The "Dragon Slide"--a huge spiral shaped slide towering about 50 feet in the air. We'd climb to the top, then sit on the mattings to protect us from friction burns, and go spinning around to the bottom, the impetus of speed landing us on some soft cushions as we spun off the slide. We also rode the "Magic Carpet" where we'd go into a little dark room, sit down on a kind of bench, and suddenly the bench would flatten out and we'd find ourselves rolled through an archway onto a length of moving canvas which would carry us along in the manner of articles on a production line moving belt. Lastly, there was the "Fun House" with its wind machines, rolling barrels, mirror mazes, and the "Joy Wheel", a flat whirling circular disk which would spin us around until we'd slide off.

Such were the days of amusement parks in those days. Many of these parks are gone, now, and only "Disney World" is able to bring back the wholesome fun of those 'long ago' amusement parks.

END OF PART 2

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FROM LITTLE FALLS TO ALASKA AND BACK

By Laura Jane Musser

(This is the third and final part of a written account of a trip taken by Laura Jane Musser and her family during the summer of 1929.)

While in Coeur D'Alene, we took a side trip to Hayden Lake, a beautiful resort area nestled among the Idaho mountains and famous for its golf course upon which had played many a famous golf player in those days--Palmer among them.. In many respects, Idaho's scenic beauty--its mountains, lakes, and forests--is much like that of Switzerland which I was to see some years later on a trip to Europe. The clear mountain air mingled with the scent of pine forests, and made one feel glad to be alive. We then continued our trip to Seattle, stopping in Spokane to have a lunch put up for us at the Hotel Davenport, and after a day's drive which took us over two mountain passes, we finally arrived in Seattle stopping at the Olympia Hotel where we spent two days before boarding "The Steamship Alaska". One of the Weyerhaeuser families lived in Seattle, and we were invited to their beautiful home for lunch the day before we took the boat. What fascinated me was their beautiful Japanese Garden with its tiny bridges over lovely ponds filled with gold fish, stone lanterns strategically placed here and there in the garden, little paths of stepping stones leading to flowery nooks, and other spots exquisitely designed as only the Japanese know how to do.

Then came the day we boarded the "Steamship Alaska" taking the so-called "inland water route" along the Canadian coastline as far as Ketchikan, our first Alaskan stop. The weather was marvelous, and our boat--originally a fishing vessel which had been redesigned for passenger transport--was used primarily to transport teachers and a few archeologists to Alaska. We had good accommodations even if the "cabins" were a bit small; and the people on the boat were very friendly. I made friends among some of the teachers, and some teen-agers my age. During our evening dinner hour music was supplied by a "string trio" made up of some music teachers who were teaching music at the schools in Ketchikan. My parents made friends with an archeologist and his wife from England--a Major and Mrs. Talbot. Major Talbot had served in the British war against the Turks under General Allenby who conquered Jerusalem in 1919 thus putting Palestine under British rule until it became the State of Israel.

The scenery, with its rugged snow capped mountains gorgeous waterfalls, and pine forests was spectacular. The nearer we got to Alaska we could see an occasional glacier. When we reached Ketchikan, many of the teachers left the boat. The buildings along the shore line of Ketchikan were on stilts because tidal waters would have swamped them otherwise. At Juneau we got off to view the Mendenhall Glacier which had the most beautiful grotto in its side--shading from a delicate pearly pink to a deep violet blue. I picked up a couple of "glacier rocks" with a band of white running around them. From Juneau we came to Wrangell, home of the Governor of Alaska Territory, famous for its salmon hatcheries; then on to Cordova, crossing the Gulf of Alaska. Mt. St. Elias, the tallest mountain in North America could be seen with its 20,000 ft. peak rising above the clouds. Cordova is famous for its crab industry, and we took time to visit a crab cannery, and view the Columbia Glacier with a dimension of three miles across its area. We then passed Valdez, famous for its salmon fishing industry, and lastly reached Seward, the northern most city our route took us to. Seward is like other Alaska frontier towns, and we toured it--stopping at a farm run by an old prospector, and sampling some of his

(continued.....)

strawberries which were the size of apples. He told us that many cobbled streets in Alaska had gold in their make-up.

Our trip back to Seattle and home was for the most part uneventful except for being delayed by fog which made us three days late into Seattle. At one point as we again passed the Columbia Glacier, the captain blew the fog horn, and we heard a great splash, as a great chunk of glacier broke off falling into the water. The vibration echos from the blow on the fog horn had caused the glacial chunk to break off. The captain had a gala dinner and dance given on the last night on board, and we all attended. It was, in fact, a masquerade party, and everyone was encouraged to fashion some sort of costume. My costume was formed from a Japanese kimono, and over my head I wore a shimmery scarf. I remember that at that party I danced with some young male students on their way to colleges in the east.

When we reached Seattle, we regretfully bade good bye to the many friends we had made on ship board. We found out that the Talbots owned the only "Arabian Dog Farm" outside of Arabia. Major Talbot had been presented with a male and female Siluki* by an Arabian Chief whom Major Talbot befriended during his war years in the Middle East. He promised my parents he would send them two Siluki dogs in a few months after our return home. This he did. We kept the female Siluki whom we named Hadji, and sent the male Siluki to my father's sister in Muscatine, Iowa. Hadji lived with us for two years, and died as a result of being run over. A death that caused us much sorrow for she was a beautiful and affectionate dog. Tall, slim, and graceful as a deer.

Thus ends the story of my first visit to Alaska.

*Siluki is the Arabian name for dog.

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