

The following transcribes a type-written account given to Howard Joseph Saalman by his sister, Helen Roberta. Howard speculated it had been prepared by one of Cornina's daughters, Lura or Ethel. But Ethel died in 1922, and according to my resources, Lura died an infant in 1902. Whomever wrote it, the account was probably kept in the records of Rubie Orilla Saalman since Helen became the custodian of them after Rubie died.

Todd Saalman 12/31/1992

MEMOIRS of MOTHER

Cornina Alice Knowlton was born near Bone Gap, Ill. Dec.29,1862 and departed this life on Wednesday afternoon, Aug.7, 1946, aged 83 years, 7 months and 9 days.

She was united in marriage to Josephus Geeding in Bone Gap, Illinois, September 17,1882 and went to housekeeping on a farm near Bone Gap.

To the above union eleven children were born, six boys-- Elbert C., N. Clyde, Herman R., Chesley A., Harold L. and Walter W. and five girls-- Ethel H. Neaville, Bertha F. Carney, Rubie O. Saalman, V. Augusta Lyons, and Lura Beatrice. Her husband and two daughters, Ethel and Lura [these two names handwritten between typed lines] preceded her to the Life beyond.

When Elbert was about a year old they moved to Missouri, near West Plains. They resided here four years when they returned to Illinois, near Fairfield. Here they reared their family. After selling the farm they moved to central Illinois near Fithian where they became interested in The Church of the Nazarene. Later they moved to Harvey.

Her influence as a Christian Mother continues to be felt in the lives of her children. It is no accident that three of her sons are ministers of the Gospel and pastors of their respective churches. Elbert is pastor of the Sparta Congregational Christian Church, Kimmell, Ind., and Chesley and Walter are pastors of The Church of the Nazarene in Middletown, Ohio and Elgin, Illinois. Others of her children serve in responsible positions as laymen in their respective churches.

She leaves also thirty grandchildren, twenty-eight great-grandchildren, many other relatives and many, many friends. This is revealed, in part by the fact, that she kept up a regular correspondence through the years which will be missed by all of us.

Her judgment was sound, her convictions firm, her criticisms were conservative and constructive. She ruled her household in love for "in her tongue was the law of kindness."

She treasured the sacred memories of former days as revealed by the fact that she kept old photographs, locks of hair, baby clothes, her girlhood autograph album

and the last letters received from her mother and from her daughter Ethel. Among her keepsakes were discovered a shopping list of baby clothes for her first baby before he was born and an invitation from her beau, a year before their marriage, asking her to accompany him to a Fourth-of-July celebration to be held in Olney, Ill.

Her thoughtfulness and her concern for others, and her appreciation for kindnesses shown her, are clearly revealed in the notes written in her own hand, to be read after her death. These are as follows--

"Clyde, open when I am gone. Mother"

"I am writing this because I feel so badly so much of the time. I may not be here long.

"I want to tell you children how I have loved you all through the years, and how I appreciate the love, care, and devotion you have shown me. I have tried to be a real mother to you, and yet, as I look back over the years, if I had lived closer to the Lord in your childhood days how, much better a mother I could have been. I praise the Lord for the Christian parents and grandparents I had. Life is short and uncertain, and we should always be ready for Christ's coming.

"I was saved in a Methodist revival at an altar of prayer when I was sixteen, was baptized by immersion, and joined the M.E. Church; did not live just as I should and later, while living near Fithian, Ill., was reclaimed and sanctified under the preaching of Brothers Lewis and Mathews, who were holding a tent meeting. I joined the Church of the Nazarene in Fithian. When we moved to Harvey I transferred my membership to the church in Harvey. I'm praising the Lord for the Church of the Nazarene and what it has meant to me.

"Thank the Lord for my boys that are preaching the gospel, but I'm just as thankful for the children that are living real Christian lives and praying for the ones that are unsaved. I am expecting them to be saved before it is too late. I'm glad that Everett has been saved and praying that he may stay true to the Lord and be the means of family's being brought to the saving knowledge of Christ who died for them.

"Now Just a simple burial service, something similar to Pa's, with as little bother and expense as possible, you boys as pallbearers, if it is not asking too much of you; whoever is pastor to hold services.

"My clothes, let the girls have. Keep the old bureau, and clock, and chair, in the family. The other things, you boys paid for; they belong to you. Do as you wish.

"Well, praise the Lord for victory through the precious blood of Christ who redeemed me.

"Mother."

"P.S. This is a sample of the dress I would like, color. Song by Howard, 'Just Inside The Eastern Gate. ' Mother. Jan.18, 1938."

"Dear Ones--"Nov.7,1941

"Just writing a few lines to tell you I want Bro. Gough, or whoever is pastor, to have charge of my funeral; the boys to be pallbearers, and Howard to sing. If one or more of the boys cannot be here, Luther or Wilfred. Take me to the undertakers as I know we have no spare room here.

Mother

The above, from Mother's own hand, speaks for itself and needs no further comment.