

EARLY LIFE OF HARRY E MCCRACKEN
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TO START MY HISTORY, I AM THE FIFTEENTH CHILD OF A FAMILY OF SIXTEEN MY PARENTS NAMES ARE FRANK ELLSWORTH AND CORA MATTIE DULLINGER MCCRACKEN. FOUR MEMBERS OF MY FAMILY DIED AS BABIES. ETTA, RAY, CLARENCE AND LLOYD. THEY ARE BURIED IN MT. PLEASANT CEMETARY. THE TWELVE THAT LIVED WERE CHARLES, EVA, ARTHUR, EARL, EDNA, EDGAR, ALBERT, MARY, ANNA MAE, ME AND MILTON. I AM NOT SURE WHEN I STARTED REMEMBERING MY LIFE. CHARLEY AND EVA WAS ALREADY MARRIED AND GONE FROM OUR HOUSE. I BARELY REMEMBER ARTHUR. I DO REMEMBER HIM RIDING A MOTORCYCLE IN THE ALLEY ABOVE OUR HOUSE. WHICH WAS LOCATED AT THIRD AND MAIN STREET WESTMORELAND CITY, PA. MAIN ST. IS NOW BROADWAY. THE HOUSE SAT BESIDE THE FIRE DEPT. TRUCK ROOM. IT WAS THE ORIGINAL BARN FROM THE FIRST FARM IN TOWN. THE BARN WAS CHANGED INTO A HOUSE. THREE ROOMS FIRST FLOOR. THREE ROOMS ON THE SECOND FLOOR. NO BASEMENT. I REMEMBER EARL A LITTLE MORE. HE WORKED FOR THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD. HE TOOK ME FOR A RIDE IN A MODEL T FORD, THAT WE HAD. WE WERE COMING DOWN THE ROAD PAST WHERE SCULL SCHOOL NOW STANDS AND THE TIRE CAME OFF THE RIM. MY PAP AND HE DID NOT GET ALONG FOR SOME REASON. I DO NOT REMEMBER HIM LEAVING, BUT HE WENT TO NEW YORK WITH ARTHUR TO FIND WORK DUE TO THE DEPRESSION. HE SENT MOM MONEY FROM TIME TO TIME TO HELP US OUT. I DO NOT THINK THAT ARTHUR EVER DID. MY PAP NEVER HAD A REGULAR JOB. HE STARTED OUT IN MOUNT PLEASANT WORKING FOR H.C. FRICK COAL AND COKE COMPANY. HE KNEW HOW TO PLACE COAL IN THE COKE OVENS TO MAKE COKE. ACCORDING TO MOM, HE COULD NOT GET ALONG WITH HIS BOSSES HE ALWAYS KNEW MORE THAN THEY. MOM AND PAP MOVED FROM THAT AREA TO MANOR THEN TO WESTMORELAND CITY. PAP HAD A LOT OF JOBS WORKING IN COAL MINES BUT NEVER LASTED VERY LONG. HE WAS AN ALCOHOLIC SORRY TO SAY. AS A SMALL BOY, I REMEMBER SLEEPING IN THE SAME ROOM AS MOM AND PAP. MY SISTER MAE WAS MY BED BUDDY. I HATED IT BECAUSE SHE ALWAYS WET THE BED. AS WE GOT OLDER, SHE MOVED INTO THE BEDROOM WITH MY OLDER SISTERS. MILTON WAS THEN MY BED BUDDY. I DO NOT KNOW WHERE HE SLEPT BEFORE THAT.

WE HAD A CAT THAT WOULD CLIMB UP ON THE PORCH ROOF AT NIGHT AND COME IN OUR WINDOW AND CRAWL IN OUR BED. ALL SUMMER WE KEPT OUR WINDOWS OPEN. NO AIR CONDITIONER. PAP NAILED TIN ON THE PORCH POSTS TO DETER THE CAT BUT IT DID NOT HELP. AS FAR BACK AS I CAN REMEMBER, MY BREAKFAST WAS COFFEE SOUP. I PUT A SLICE OF BREAD ON A SAUCER POURED COFFEE OVER IT SPRINKLED SUGAR ON IT AND ATE IT. WITH THE LEFT OVER COFFEE IN THE SAUCER WAS DUMPED BACK IN THE CUP AND DRANK. ABOUT THE ONLY TIME I HAD CEREAL, IT WAS WHEN MOM WAS MAKING MUSH. SHE WOULD COOK THE CORNMEAL PUT SOME IN A DISH WHILE HOT AND I WOULD HAVE IT WITH MILK. WE RARELY BOUGHT MILK DUE TO NO ICE BOX TO KEEP IT IN. REFRIGERATORS WERE A LUXORY. MILK WAS BOUGHT FROM A MAN WHO CAME AROUND IN A TRUCK. YOU TAKE THE SIZE CONTAINER TO THE TRUCK AND HE WOULD FILL IT. THE SAME WITH ICE. THE ICE MAN WOULD COME AROUND AND SELL PIECES TO THE PEOPLE WHO WERE FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO HAVE AN ICE BOX. US KIDS WOULD FOLLOW THE TRUCK AND GET THE LITTLE PIECE TO EAT. WHEN I WAS A LITTLE BOY, I REMEMBER A COLLIE DOG WE HAD. WE