

Charles Arthur Rountree (Pappy to us) and Ida May Day were married in either Taney or Greene Co, Missouri, Aug 13, 1898. He was born to Junius Meredith and Rachel Foster Rogers (Breedlove) Rountree on June 19, 1877 at Springfield. Ida May was born to Robert Allen Day and Malinda Jane Jameson Day at Niangua, MO on May 9, 1879. They lived on what Ethel Irene Rountree Davis called the rocky 40 acres to the Southwest of Springfield. (It's part of Springfield now) Joseph Robert (Joe Bob) and Ethel Irene were born while they lived on the farm, David Francis was born after they moved into Springfield when Pappy went to work for a seed company. He later worked for the Frisco Railroad as a blacksmith's helper. By 1915 times were bad enough that Pappy went to Kentucky to work in a distillery, a job that Grandma considered immoral. He worked there almost two years, when they were persuaded to go to Montana where Grandma's parents and married sisters had gone to homestead. There was a chance for the children to have free schooling, unlike Missouri, and the country was still pretty wide open. (Our family had a silly saying; I'm wild and wooly and full of fleas, I come from Montana and do as I please. That reasonably summed up the native attitude at the time)

Ethel recounted tales of their life in Missouri as to make it seem at times almost heaven and sometimes, even better! There was a communal family way of life to make even those in the depths of poverty feel secure and loved. There was time for play and learning the ways of nature. I don't suppose this was restricted to the Rountree family, rather that it was a general experience for the times and the place. There is a story Ethel began to relate incidents of their early life, full of warm, bucolic sort of events. *(Available on request)*

When the family moved to Montana, Grandma and the children rode on the train to Kansas City, Minneapolis and then to Forsyth. Pappy came in an immigrant car (railroad) that held all their worldly possessions, including the livestock. I believe there were work type horses and cows for milking, possibly poultry. These were in one end of the car, held by pens Pappy built of hardwood. He had heard that there was no hardwood in Montana and wanted as much as could be reasonably taken. The household belongings were in the other end of the car which was his "Pullman" car! They had brought along extra staple groceries. World War I had been declared and they worried about there being a shortage of such things. Pappy had tried to anticipate all the necessities and took all he could afford, and get loaded onto the car. His mother, Rachel, died the day after Pappy's train left Springfield--he was her baby and the light of her life. It is said that she died of a broken heart. He had an older brother, Albert H., who stayed in Missouri. After a short time, Grandma's sisters, Virgie and Bessie and their respective husbands left the Slaughterhouse Creek homestead and went first to Drummond, MT and later on to Anderson, IN. Great Grandma Day moved to Tulsa, OK to live near or with her son Bruce Day. Thus Pappy and Grandma and their family were the only ones left there in Forsyth. By this time, both Bob and Ethel had finished school. Pappy worked for the railroad in Forsyth, later he worked with Bob at a gas station, where he got his nickname "Bob". They'd moved into town (Forsyth) from Slaughterhouse Creek, and kept a fine garden, chickens and Grandma had her cow. I remember one Hallowe'en the rowdy crowd led Grandma's cow up the 30 some steps of the High School and tied her up for the students to encounter on their way into school the next morning. They also encountered Grandma, mad as an old wet hen! She didn't think that prank was very funny.

Grandma raised love birds, canaries and floweres galore. She dabbled in painting china, that her neighbor sent away to be fired. One neighbor was an amateur, although talented artist and they enjoyed each other's company. One day when Mama left me with Grandma for an afternoon, Bill and I ventured across the street and picked whole armfuls of California poppies as a surprise present for Mama. They belonged to Grandma's very close friend, and I think Bill and I got our fannies swatted, along with a trip to apologize to the lady.

Grandma might have a bag of feathers hanging on the clothesline, that she'd use to make feather pillows, but she might also have a car or motorcycle engine torn apart and laying around in her living room, where Uncle Dave did his overhauling when it was too cold to work outside. Grandma walked around this mess, and went on her way, taking care of the birds and doing her handwork. She saved everything under the sun, but was partial to anything you got at the carnival, the theater (they gave away gimmicks as a lure to the movies) and from the newspapers. She had quite a collection of salt and pepper shakers, too. She was a warm, caring person, not given to pretension or frivolity.

Grandma died after a brief illness, at her home in Forsyth, in early 1940 and is buried at Pioneer Cemetery there.

Pappy had worked for several years on the bridge crew of the Rosebud County roads department. He collected a lot of fossil rocks, and arrowheads when there would be a cut made to build a road. He tended to the garden, and read a lot. Those were hard times, with the Great Depression just trying to wear everyone out and down. Sometimes there was electricity at Grandma and Pappy's house, sometimes not. The only thing electric was a single bulb hanging from

the ceiling in most of the rooms, and even when they could afford lights, used them very sparingly. After Grandma died, Pappy took to going to the bars downtown to relieve the loneliness. Uncle Dave had gone to the Army Air Corps, and Bob was gone to Eastern Montana in his work with the state highways department. Ethel and Graham had moved to Huntley to a 40 acre dairy farm, leaving him without any family nearby. Eventually the taverns held no fascination for Pappy and he looked to church. A Foursquare Gospel church was being organized and was led by some young women, who used deceptive enticements to bring Pappy into their church, along with a lot of his money and possessions. He had very little anyway, so it was a hard lesson learned. By 1945, Graham and Ethel had moved first to Billings and then to Colstrip, where Graham worked for Foley Bros. and drove a powder truck as well as delivered coal to the homes of the workers. Pappy had gotten so lonesome, he was happy to come and live at our house—we were every bit as happy to have him with us. He was such a sweet man and a story teller supreme. I never knew anyone who didn't just love Pappy.

When Dad and Mother moved to Tenino where Dad was driving an eighteen wheeler powder truck, Pappy came along. I think he loved it at the little acreage they had there and worked at the flowers and berries with enthusiasm. He wasn't comfortable with the damp weather and seemed to put on a few more clothes every time we went to visit. He eventually was afflicted with what we call Alzheimer's disease now--then it was called senility. After Mom went to work full time, it wasn't possible to keep Pappy comfortable and at home. He

would wander off, thinking he was returning to Missouri or Montana, where he thought he'd be happier. When he got really bad, they had to have him confined to a nursing home, where he died on Feb 26, 1957. He's buried in the Forest Grove Cemetery at Tenino.

Pappy and Grandma left a legacy of very little materially, but a wealth of love, nurturing and kindness unending. They were cheerful in the face of adversities that we can't even imagine, teaching their children and grandchildren not to fear the unknown and not to be afraid to live.

By Donna J. (Donna) Hays
12/7/93

Guilette Gervaise Davis and Helen Graham were married at the Palmer House in Chicago, ILL in 1898. He was born to John Wesley Davis and Sarah Grant Davis at Acton, ME in FEB 1867. Helen Graham was born May 17 1871 at Poukeepsie, NY to William Graham and Harriet Clark Watson Graham. He was always G. G. to family, friends and acquaintances. With a name like Guilette, what could you do about a nickname? G. G. had received a degree in law but never practiced. After their marriage, he taught at a boys school or possibly a detention home for boys at Toledo, OH for about 2 years, then moved to farm near Riceville, IA where their three sons, William Graham Davis, Sr., John Wesley, and Guilette Gervaise, Jr were born in 1900, 1902, and 1904. They later lived at Sioux City, IA and at Lemmon, SD. where G G was a county supervisor. He and Mr. Lemmon arrived at the same time and established, platted both Lemmon and Daviston SD-in the very Northwest corner of SD. G G was a postmaster at Daviston for a time. Along with farming, he was a land speculator and helped locate areas for railroads to go through. After seven years of continuous drought, G G abandoned their expensive farm machinery and settled at Ingomar, MT on the advice of one of G G's partners from SD, Don Delay who had gone to Ingomer to work with the railroad. Here, too, G G was a land locator. Graham tells of boarding in Ingomar with a family so he could attend school (a common practice because of the distance from the farms to the school, it would be impossible to ride a horse or drive a buggy every day). When the first meal time came, the family passed what presumably would be butter, but Dad thought it must be lard because there was hardly any color to it. He refused, saying he never used butter, but preferred his bread dry. He soon found that the home churned butter was colorless because the cows were on a dry feed and

produced a poor quality cream. He lived with the family for the entire school year but didn't ever muster courage to admit that he'd used poor judgement, so ate dry bread, pancakes and bisquits the rest of the year.

In 1912, G G was offered the position of county auditor, and office he was later elected to, the first of many offices on the county level, including treasurer. At his death he was a state senator at Helena.

Grandma Davis was the only girl among nine brothers, and was by her own admission, spoiled. She was sent to New York City to finishing school run by her spinster aunts. According to my Aunt Alice Dennison Davis, Helen was fluent in French, elocution and the practice of "Delsarte". She must have shuddered at the thought of living in a sod shanty (in SD) with nothing to cover the dirt floor but her lovely carpet. The country and the weather were harsh, and her liveliness and vivacity probably dried up with the wind. She was never able to cope with the roughness of rural South Dakota nor Ingomar. At Forsyth, she had at least a church and neighbors to associate with. She seldom cooked, but enjoyed entertaining, so that involved simple things, like tea and cookies. We older kids would find ourselves being taught the etiquette necessary to survive the toughest tests, when we ran to her little house after a cold walk home from Howard school, to be served Boston Brown bread and hot cocoa, from her lovely china cocoa set. We might have learned a few words of French or be encouraged to read a certain book she thought appropriate. What a bunch of ruffians we must have seemed to her. Grandma inherited some stocks and bonds which afforded her an occasional trip to Minneapolis to shop, and there was enough left when she died in 1940 to set Graham and Ethel up on their little farm at Huntley. Grandma and G G had lived in a little house on our farm at "Poverty", but when we moved to a

different farm, they found a house in Forsyth. Grandma always seemed frail after that, and it wasn't long until she passed away, during her afternoon nap on April 11, 1940.

G G was not well and after a month's illness he died on Nov 14, 1940

My memories of G G are that he was stern, but the older sisters remember him as having a good sense of humor, and conducting lively discussions during meals at our huge kitchen table, where as many as 12 would be seated. He urged us to learn and pressed us to do our best.

Grandma did her best to teach us the niceties of life. It seems to me now, they would both have been at a better advantage to have stayed in the East, but then my Dad and Mother wouldn't have gotten together, would they?

By Donna J (Jonnee) Hays

Dec 6, 1993

Notes for Jonnee, for her part of the Rountree geneology book:

Pappy was custodian at the old Alexander school at least around the time of the great flood (1918?) They lived across the street from the school. The Alexander school was where the Rosebud County Museum is located now.

The "neighbor" of Grandma Rountree's who was artistic was Louise Wimer, mother of Frank and Tom. Her parents, the Wright's lived diagonally across the street from Pappy and Grandma. Louise didn't always stay with her parents, only occasionally. Marsha Wagner (a widow) lived in the little white house straight across the street.

I always thought Grandma died from a heart attack, even though Pappy's letter to Grandma Day says gall bladder trouble. I also think the reason she died at home was because she didn't trust doctors and couldn't afford to go to the hospital. The doctor who attended her was Dr. Elliot, an osteopath, that Mother called. (At this time David was in the county jail for whatever reason, and upon his promise to return, and the doctor's advice that Grandma wouldn't live through the night, David got to come home to see her before she died. You don't have to include that in any of the official notes.) Grandma learned to paint with oils at the same time as Uncle Bob did, during the depression when the WPA had classes. She and Mother learned how to make mattresses, gloves, etc.

Pappy was forman of one of the county bridge crews (and also cooked) in the later years. Not all of his fossils and artifacts were acquired then. I remember a picnic we took to the north side of the river to a place called The Stellar. An old oil exploration struck hot water instead of oil. We were looking for fossils. I understand that petrified dinosaur skeletons are found there. Pappy also found a lot of the arrowheads when they lived on Slaughterhouse Creek.

G. G. and Uncle Tom cut prairie ^{land} ~~had~~ and sold it in South Dakota. Did you forget the story about the floor of the sod house having a "floor" of canvas after one of the boys, presumably Gervais, spilling the water barrel? G.G. and Uncle Tom built the sod house. G. G. owned the first automobile in Perkins County. He was a land locator in Montana. In early days in order to promote the building of railroads, the government allocated every other section along the route of a proposed railroad to the RR. And the other sections were for homesteads. When the homesteaders came out, they had to have somebody show them where their homestead was located, for a fee.

Grandma Davis's income was from a trust fund left to her by her father to be administered by a law firm he had personally chosen before he died in 1923. Over the years from then until she died in 1940, a succession of other lawyers "took care" of that fund invested in various stocks, some exceptionally good and others nearly worthless. Her income was from the dividends. In early years the income was substantial. That was the money that paid for her to spend the winters in Minneapolis.

G.G. died of peritonitis. I can't remember the cause of the peritonitis, but I suspect he had stomach ulcers

Grandma and the boys lived in Minneapolis just before they went to Ingomar. Dad's teacher asked if he wasn't afraid of the "wild" Indians in Montana. Dad also said they ice skated on Lake Harriet in Minneapolis.

Dad's share of the trust fund was about \$2000 in cash. Wes and Gervais kept their share of the better stocks and made good money from the dividends. It was G.G.'s idea for Dad to cash his share in to buy the little farm at Huntley.