

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface.....	1
Editor's Note.....	3

PART I

Beginnings: The Doyle Family.....	7-11
Mummy and Father.....	12-18
1603 Paru Street.....	19-25
Mummy and Her Sisters.....	26-28
Everyday Life in Alameda.....	29-32
Getting Trapped in the Barn.....	33-35
Patsy's Illness.....	36-38
Vacations in Marin County.....	39-41
Father Comes Home From Sea.....	42-45
Becoming an Artist.....	46-49
Mummy's Death.....	50-54

PART II

Marriage, Family, and War.....	56-66
After the War.....	67-70
The Grand Passion.....	71-74
Jolly Good Times.....	75-79
Frank and the Girls: Music and Art.....	80-89
The Corcoran Show.....	90-95
New York, New York!.....	96-99
Blind Rain.....	100-109
Brass International.....	110-112
On My Own.....	113-118

PART III

Meeting Bill Brobeck.....	120-130
My Cancer.....	131-133
Bill's Gift.....	134-139
Letter to Bill.....	140-144
Jennifer.....	145-156
The Gift of Creativity.....	157-162
Desperate Times Call for Desperate Measures.....	160-161
My Grandchildren.....	163-171
Reflections.....	172-176

Afterword, by Catherine Prins Sidman.....	177-182
Gloria Brown Brobeck: Life Timeline.....	183-185
Curriculum Vitae.....	186

Marriage, Family, and War

During Mummy's illness, I worked with Frank Brown, who was a copywriter in the advertising department of H.C. Capwell. He and his mother and sister lived in a small, rented apartment in Berkeley. Frank was gorgeous and romantic, and I was madly in love with him. He was 6'1", with dark, wavy hair and even features. He was very handsome, a cross between Cary Grant and - later - Walter Cronkite. Most important, he had excellent brains and a great sense of humor.

Frank made googly eyes at me and I made googly eyes back. He asked me out, and we met each other's families. We were going quite steady when Mummy died.

I guess I pretty well fell apart after that. I can't remember too much about that period. I remember that Frank asked me to marry him and I did, on Valentine's Day, 1941. I was all of 19, pretty young, and he was 26. But it was a good marriage, and soon, it was time to start a family.

On September 17, 1942, Hilary was born in the Albany Hospital. Dr. Kenneth Hargrove, a family friend, delivered her. Before she was born, two of my English cousins from Hong Kong visited, and we went over names

together. I wanted a three-syllable name to go with the one-syllable last name of Brown. They suggested Hilary, and some other names that I liked very much.

I loved that little baby, and motherhood came easily to me.



World War II was starting. Men - and women, too - were signing up for duty, or being inducted. Frank signed up, because he wanted to get in the Air Corps, and he did.

Frank got in through his wits as much as anything. He was a very intelligent man; strictly bright, smart enough so that he scored very, very high on the written test, so high that they wanted him. But he wore glasses,



*Gloria and Frank on their wedding day, February 14, 1941, in Oakland.
At left is Gloria's sister Pat and at right is Frank's brother Avon.*

and he didn't pass the eye exam. As a pilot, one is required to have to have 20-20 vision, and his eyes weren't that good. They said, "Go home, eat lots of carrots, and come back in week to take the test again."

Frank went back three times. He memorized the eye chart. He not only memorized it forward, he memorized it backward. The third time he went in, it was a snap – he passed the eye test!

Once in, he was designated as a navigator. Navigators only had to have 20-30 vision. He had less than that, correctable to 20-30, but he was in for the duration as a navigator.

As a cadet, Frank was to be paid the grand salary of \$75 every month, so I had to get a job to support Hilary and myself. I went to U.C. Berkeley, which offered wartime "quick courses," and took a beginning drafting class.



Frank, Hilary, and Gloria in Austin, Texas, in 1943.

Some of my commercial artist friends were doing this, too. Frank's brother Avon, who was an automotive engineer, brought me up to speed on math, and I perfected my skills at lettering on blueprints and at drafting. I immediately got a job in Richmond Shipyard #2 in the engineering office, as a draftsman.

About six months later, after graduation, Frank was actually called to duty. He became a navigation instructor at the San Marcos Air Force Base in Austin, Texas.

In the early stages of the war, there was not enough housing for everyone. New bases were being built, new airstrips, new quarters, new posts. Hilary and I had to wait about a year before we could join Frank. Just after Hilary had her first birthday, we made the journey by train from San Francisco to Los Angeles, then took another train to San Antonio, Texas, and yet another to Austin.

Frank found us a little white house to rent on the back of a large lot in Austin. We had no idea how long this new chapter would last, but we didn't think about it. Just being together again as a family was deliriously wonderful. We settled into our new life in the little frame house, with a park for Hilary at the end of the block.

As it turned out, we stayed there one year, with Frank going off by carpool to San Marcos Field every day to teach navigation. I kept house and took care of Hilary, strolling with her in the little park almost daily. The war went on full tilt, but our own little lives were snug and secure.



Hilary Brown, 1943.