

My childhood was a happy one. We lived in Maplewood, a suburb of St. Louis. Although my parents did not own a home until I was of college age, we always had a big yard, trees to climb, and plenty of neighbor children to play with. Gina and I loved playing “dress-up” and paper dolls. Bicycle riding was also a favorite pastime.

Every summer we spent several weeks with my mother’s parents, John and Mary Borth, in Doniphan, Missouri, the small town where my mother was born and raised. It is located in the southeastern part of the state, near the Arkansas border. The beautiful Current River is nearby, and my brother and I took many lovely walks there. In the evenings we enjoyed going by the schoolhouse my mother had attended. It was always fun to climb over the stile by the schoolyard.

Mary Borth, my mother’s mother, was an amazing woman. She had been born in Kentucky, and as a child worked in the tobacco fields removing caterpillars from the leaves. She had a large vegeta-



*My maternal  
grandparents,  
John and Mary  
Borth, c. 1885.*

ble garden, raised her own chickens (I liked going with her to gather eggs and pick up the little baby chicks), made quilts, and crocheted. She was a fantastic cook who made the family's meals on a wood-burning stove. To iron, she used two irons, which had to be heated on top of the stove. Her whole life was devoted to my grandfather, John Borth, and they had eleven children, eight of whom survived.

Grandpa Borth was a tall, lean man who worked at several trades but never was a great success at any of them. He loved country music, and my fondest memory of our times together was listening

with him to "mountain music played by a real hillbilly band."



*My mother, Lillian Ruth Borth, born in Doniphan, Mo., in 1897.*

My father's family was also very interesting. We think they probably came to the United States from Wales shortly before the American Revolution, because we know there was an ancestor who fought in the Revolution. One branch of the family went into the southern states and settled near Meridian, Mississippi; another branch of the family went northerly and ultimately made their way to California.

My father's people were the ones who settled around Meridian. After they lost all of their property in the Civil War, my grandfather, Edmund Hatch Daves, came north to St. Louis, Missouri, and settled in Olivette, in St. Louis County. Grandpa Daves, who was never very financially successful, passed away when I was about three or four, so I have only the vaguest memories of him.

The other branch had a descendent who was Delmer Daves, a Hollywood movie director. At one time he contacted my father about the Daves' family tree. Daves is a rather unusual name, and my father was very proud of it. We were always cautioned not to do anything that would reflect poorly on that name.

My father had two older brothers and a younger sister. The family always blamed their plight on the "damn Yankees." My Un-



*My father, Edmund Hatch Daves, Jr., at around age 10, with his father. Olivette, Mo., early 1900s.*

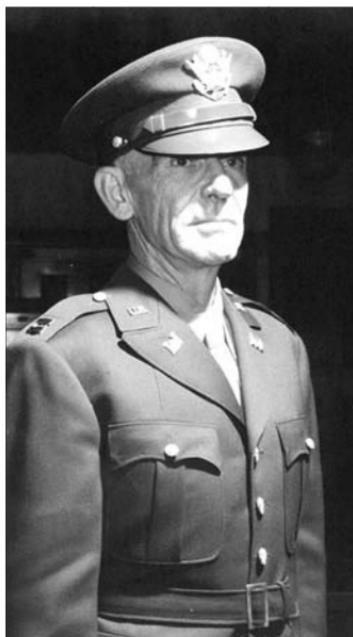


*My paternal grandparents, Edmund Hatch Daves and Mattie Coburn Daves. St. Louis, Mo., c. 1930.*

cle Lee would never wear Yankee blue, but dressed in gray instead. When someone in the family died, the women would dress themselves in deep mourning. (The black lace from their dresses was later used by my mother for Halloween costumes for Gina and me.)

My grandmother, Mattie Coburn Daves, came to live with us for a short time before she died. I was about five then, and I remember the many times she read *Peter Rabbit* to me.

My father enlisted in World War I, and was soon in the trenches in France. He rose to corporal and had a wonderful time in Paris after the war. After he returned to the U.S., he met my mother and they were married. He eventually became an employee of the Missouri Pacific Railroad and worked on flood control on the Mississippi and Missouri rivers.



My father dropped out of high school, and my mother had only one year of college. She graduated second in her high school class at age 17 and received a scholarship to prestigious Stevens College in Columbia, Missouri, but the family had no funds to send her

*"A born leader of men": my father served in both world wars.*