

Story by Millie Scarber Brister

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I will try and tell you a little about my life and things that happen. When I was five years old I went to singing school at Whiskachitta. Alfred Bald Ginter was our teacher. We lived on Mill Creek. The creek was about one third of a mile from our house. My grandpa, Isaiah McDaniel, built this house and my dad bought it when Grandpa Isaiah moved back to Rapides Parish and built another house. Later he built a sawmill, cotton gin and grist mill. Mill Creek ran behind my dad's field. We had a spring branch in front of our house. There were a lot of springs and cold water close to us.

Our house was a log house with a dirt fireplace chimney. My Granny Beckie and Granny Watson lived in a log house next door. My dad built this house for his mother and grandmother just a few feet from our house. Our well was between the two houses.

We lived here a long time but between times, we would move in with Grandpa Isaiah and Grandma Lucretia, near Elizabeth, Louisiana, in Rapides Parish.

Dad contracted to haul turpentine and anything people would hire him to haul. Dad had lots of oxen and I was always glad to move, as long as I could take my cats. My sister, Mary, did not care for cats so I had to manage them all by myself.

I was six years old and went to Bethel School. My Uncle Roy McDaniel and Aunt Katie McDaniel went to school with me. We all went to Bethel school and had to walk four or five miles because there were no school busses then.

The Bethel Church was near the Bethel School and we all went to this church. We walked to church. There was a large building near the church. Later I found out that this was the Woodman of the World Lodge Building.

During the time we lived here with Granny Lucretia, mother, Granny, Mary and I started to McNary, Louisiana to see Uncle Isaiah and Aunt Modlin and their daughter, Lela. She was a little baby and looked like a little doll and had black curly hair. Grandpa Isaiah would not let Granny drive the gentle horse. She had to drive the stallion horse and he had never seen a train. He was scared to death of them. Granny told us all to get out of the buggy and she led the horse away from the train and as far as she could and she tried to hold him. Mother tried to help her hold the horse. The horse was jumping as high as he could and come down and knocked my mother unconscious. After we got back home, we never drove that horse again.

We moved back to Mill Creek and home. Mary and I went to the Whiskachitta School. Mother and I had the same school teacher, at this school. His name was Pat Cavanaugh. Mary and I had to walk to school. There were no school busses at that time. My cousins, Ada and Ida Pelt went to the same school with us. Monroe and Arthur Pelt.

sometimes drove a buggy and sometimes they walked to school. They would walk with Mary and I. They lived a mile or two farther from school than we did. We also went to school with Leona James. We moved to Anacoco, Louisiana in 1920. My dad worked for Nona Mills and it was owned by Rose Ferguson. Jim Brister worked at Nona Mills and he boarded at our house. I met Jim two years earlier when he visited at our house and went to church with us. Jim was a nice person to be around and I told my sister, Mary, "You know, I might capture him." Mary laughed and said, "I don't know if you can or not." Well I did and we were married on November 29, 1921. Jim Oakes, the Clerk of Court, married us at the Courthouse in Leesville, Louisiana. Dad, mother and Mary went with us to get married. That was fifty eight years ago. We have had our ups and downs but the Lord has been good to us.

We moved from Anacoco to Kurthwood, Louisiana in 1922. Jim went to work as a railroad bridge builder, for Mr. Oscar Peavy. We had to stay at Mrs. Gurley's Boarding House until Mr. Kurth could have us a house built.

At Kurthwood, I went to work for the telephone company and I was the Chief Operator. When the mill cut out and everybody had to move, we moved to Cross Lake, five miles out of Shreveport, Louisiana, on fifty three acres that we liked very much. After three years we moved into Shreveport. What we enjoyed most was when dad, mother and Mary moved in with us, at the lake, one year after Barham cut out.

Jim went to work for the city of Shreveport. He worked forty years and as Maintenance Superintendent for Public Utilities, for twenty years. He retired at City Hall and my folks moved in with us. Jim knew every sewer and water line in the city of Shreveport. Right before he retired, they put it down on paper. It was in a book several inches wide.

I went to work for the Yellow Cab Company as a telephone operator. In a few months, they trained me to be a dispatcher and I have a lifetime radio operator license to operate a radio.

I quit the cab company and went to work as chief operator at Captain Shreve Hotel. When I retired from the Cab Company, Mr. Walter Wilmes and Mr. James Bell were my bosses. At Captain Shreve Hotel, Mr. Guy Stevens was my boss. These three men were wonderful people to work for. Mr. Guy Stevens lives in Houston, Texas, with his wife. I get a Christmas card each year from them. Mr. Guy was Assistant Manager at Rice Hotel when he left Shreveport, Louisiana, until it closed down. They are fine people. When my nephew, Billy, had his surgery on his back, in Houston, Texas, Mr. Guy Stevens called the Manager of the Rice Hotel and told him to give us a real nice suite. They stored our car and we did not have to pay a penny except for our food. We really appreciated it and we did not know that he was going to do that. His secretary gave me a sealed envelope and said, "Give this to the manager." We sure did get nice service.

You just don't forget things like that.

Well back to Shreveport and our church. My dad, John Scarber and my mother, Laura McDaniel Scarber, Jim and I were members of Cedar Grove Methodist Church. Dad and Mother were members there when they died. Jim and I still belong to the same church. WE have belonged to this church for forty years. Jim is a Master Mason El Karuba and Shriner York rite and several lodges. He is a member of American Legion Post No. fourteen. We are Eastern Star Magnolia Chapter No. twenty seven, White Shrine Bethel No. 2, Amaranath Court No, twelve Pelican Club. We love our church and lodges and still do. I just wish that we could go as we want to. .

Dad, Mother and Mary are buried in the Century Memorial Park Cemetery in Shreveport, La. We bought eight plots all in one space. It is a beautiful Cemetery and that is where Jim and I will be buried. Jim has a sister and brother in law buried in Century Memorial Park and his brother, Will Brister, is buried in Forest Park Cemetery. Jim's brother, Almer Brister is buried in Bossier City, Louisiana in the Hill Crest Cemetery.

*Millie Brister*