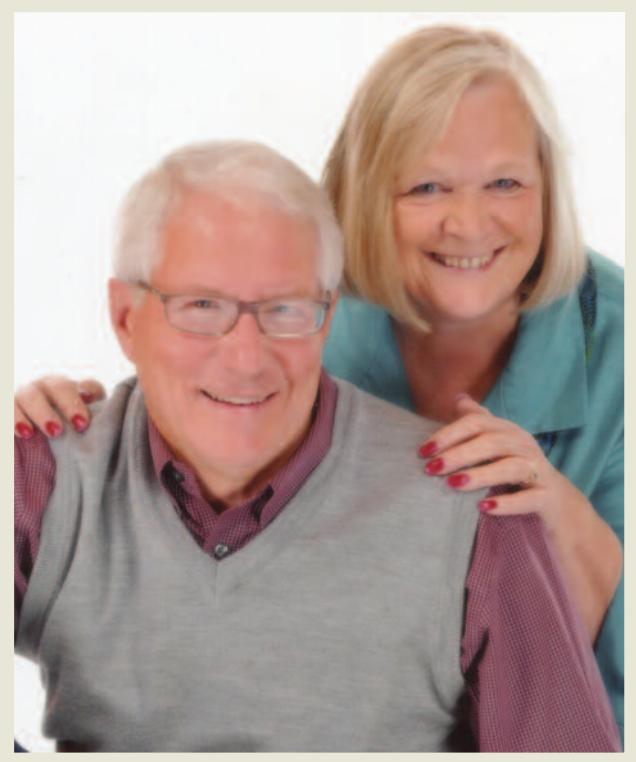


The Time of My Life



While I was growing up, I dreamed of what my childhood might look like if things were different. I had dreams of what my grown-up life might be in the future. There were dreams about what my children would be like and how many I would have. Sometimes dreams are not the ones you dream but the ones that come true when you least expect them. I have been blessed by so many events in my life; some of them were mountaintop events, while others were the lowest of the low. Yet all of them blessed me in some way. The power of family and the miracles and misfortunes of life have brought me to write this book. I hope you find it a blessing.



CAROL PRICE

Contents

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any way or by any means without the express written permission of the publisher.

Copyright ©2013 by Carol Price

Published by:

Life Sentences Publishing
434 Kentucky Avenue
Tipton, Indiana 46072
www.lifesentencespublishing.com
(765) 437-0149

Prologue • 1

- 1 Being the Firstborn Means Always Being the Oldest • 5
- 2 I'll Just Join the Army • 17
- 3 My Husbands and Their Mothers • 25
- 4 When You Die, May I Have Your Box of Felt? • 37
- 5 The Devil Made Me Do It • 49
- 6 Just Give Me a Little Space • 59
- 7 Why Didn't You Tell Me Tomorrow Is Christmas Eve? • 71
- 8 A Wicked Stepmother — Not! • 81
- 9 Sibling Rivalry — or Revelry? • 87
- 10 Husbands Come and Go, but Girlfriends Last Forever • 93
- 11 Catholic, Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist ...
I've Been Blessed! • 105
- 12 Carol, We Think You Should Run for Mayor • 113
- 13 Carol Price, It's Your Time • 121
- 14 And Then I Really Was the Oldest • 129
- 15 Lifetime of Happiness and Now What to Do
with the Rest of My Life • 135



My parents — Roy and Mary Huntington — June 14, 1948, Richville, Minn.

A decorative watermark featuring stylized, symmetrical floral or leaf-like patterns in a light gray color. Overlaid on the center of these patterns is the word "Prologue" written in a flowing, cursive script font.

LITTLE MORE THAN A BOY, 15-YEAR-OLD HENRICH GERHARD Siebels boarded the North German Lloyd Ship Weser II in Bremen, Germany, leaving behind his family, his friends, and the only life he had known. The year was 1887, and under the leadership of Prussia and Otto von Bismarck, Germany was experiencing a momentary expansion. Sailing for Baltimore, Maryland, and possibilities yet unimaginable to him, Henrich had paid twenty pounds for the nine-day voyage, a hefty amount for a teenage boy of limited resources.

Henrich was born January 5, 1872, in the northwestern area of Germany known as Niedersachsen, in the city of Oldenburg-Strucklingen. German church records inexplicably indicate that not only was he born that day, but he died that day as well. However, official records in this country indicate that Henrich lived a long life, dying at seventy-four. Thus, whether Henrich was the surviving brother of a twin, or was perhaps being protected from some unsafe situation, or was simply the victim of sloppy

recordkeeping, it is anyone's guess.

Awaiting Henrich's arrival in the New World was an uncle and a new home in Minnesota, where he would settle, marry Bavarian immigrant Sophia "Josepha" Greb Dietlein, raise a daughter, Margaret Katherine, born in 1905, earn his U.S. citizenship in 1914, and eventually die. And most important, Henrich planted hearty seeds that took root, producing generations of fruit that flourish yet today. But the Henrich Siebels' thread was only one of hundreds in the family tapestry.

One of those threads, the one that is most important to me, belonged to Alphonse Ledermann, who came to America in 1883. After the death of his first wife, Clara, Alphonse married Elizabeth Hemmelgarn Fuchs, who gave birth to Joseph Ledermann in 1897.

Many years after Henrich and Alphonse set foot on American soil, their children, Margaret Katherine and Joseph, met in Perham, Minnesota, and married. As a result of their union, Mary Elizabeth Ledermann, my mother, was born in 1929.

THE HUNTINGTON FAMILY HISTORY IS LONG AND STORIED, including Samuel Huntington, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. The Huntingtons leaving their home in England and coming to America dates back to 1650. The family of eight was within two days of landing in New York Harbor, when the family's patriarch died at sea, leaving a wife, a daughter and seven sons to begin the Huntington legacy in America. Subsequently, their family produced many statesmen, ministers, and prominent businessmen in Connecticut and Pennsylvania.

Six generations later, in 1875, Everett Guild Huntington joined the movement west into the new country, settling in Ottertail County, Minnesota. Those who settled there became farmers, community leaders, and were important Catholics of their day. Families were large, averaging

ten children.

One of those children was Vernon Edwin Huntington, born February 24, 1881, in Verndale, Minnesota. On November 9, 1907, he married Anna Katherina Rickett, a very stoic and self-assured woman of that community. Leaving Verndale, they moved nearly forty miles northwest to Richville, where they made a life and raised their four children, an unusually small number of offspring for their time. Their youngest son, Roy Edwin Huntington, was born in 1924. He was my father.

Most babies born in the early part of the century were born at home, and my father was no different. That he survived is nothing short of a miracle. At birth, he weighed one pound, six ounces and was never taken to the hospital. Rather, he was nursed at home, where his cradle was made from an oatmeal box.

My parents' world consisted of Ottertail County, Minnesota, where

they attended one-room school houses and completed the eighth grade. They met at a dance after he returned from serving in the Army during World War II. They married June 14, 1948 — Flag Day. Just ten months later, they welcomed their first of six children. Me.



My grandparents, Joseph Ledermann and Margaret Seibels, taken the day they married in Perham, Minnesota, about 1926. She died in 1929 at the age of 23, shortly after my mother was born.



The Huntington family poses about 1956. Clockwise from front, left are: me, Dennis, Mary (mom), Donna (baby), Roy (dad), Joe, and Roger.

*"She is so big, you better buy her a lunch pail
and send her to school." — The doctor who delivered me*

*When I was a little girl just so high,
Mamma took a little stick and made me cry.
Now I'm a big girl, Ma can't do it
So Papa took a big stick and hopped right to it!*



A RED-HAIRED BABY WEIGHING NINE POUNDS, THIRTEEN ounces, I was brought home from the hospital to a small farmhouse where my father milked cows and grew grain. The doctor told my parents, "Get this kid a lunch pail and send her to school." I heard that story so often as I grew up, I have always thought of myself as bigger than average. Okay, so most of my life, I have been bigger than average perhaps! More of me to love others and be loved.

Life was typical for a small farm family with a collie dog. Ring watched over me on a blanket in the yard as my mother went about her vegetable garden tasks. Mother said that no one was allowed near me, including my father, when the dog was on duty. I don't think Ring liked

Some pages are omitted from this preview.

FROM MY ALBUM



Dad, in his Army uniform, and Mom, both in 1947, a year before they married.



I am pictured with my brothers Roger (left) and Joe, at our home in Cohasset, Minnesota, in 1953.



Here, we are playing together several months later.



This photo was taken of me at the Covered Bridge Festival in 1975 in Parke County.



This is me, looking out a window on the Orient Express, traveling from Paris to Venice around 2003.

*Know that I love you all and thank each of you
for the part you played in my life
and the joys I have experienced.*



SIXTY-FIVE IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER. THE ACTUARIAL tables say I will live until age eighty-four. So whatever shall I do with nineteen more years?

The first nineteen years of life were spent learning and yearning for the next bit of knowledge, excitement and adventure. Then from age nineteen to now, most of my time has been spent with responsibilities. Being a mother and a wife, a daughter and a friend, and a member of a church and a community have shaped me into the person I have become, and I'm pleased with how I turned out.

Aging is a bit unnerving when I think about the possibilities. Will I be healthy until the end and enjoy an active life for years to come? Will I



Larry and me in the Swiss Alps in 1995. Larry loves the mountains.

have Alzheimer's like my father and forget my own life and the lives of my family? Will I be in a wheelchair like my mother and need lots of assistance with everyday activities? I think I choose to prepare for the worst and hope for the best! I will be happy each day, I will take time to feel the nature around me each day, and I will help someone else each day. I will love my children, tell them so, and allow them to love me in their own individual ways.

I would like to make more memories with my children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. It is important to keep contributing to the greater community if I have the opportunity. Traveling and enjoying special times with Larry is important and a reward for a life well lived. But, we can't just go willy-nilly into old age without some preparation. We must think of the *what ifs*, even if we don't want to. If we prepare for them, perhaps they won't happen — like carrying an umbrella will keep the rain away.

For my final years, my hope is that my children are not burdened with my care or overwhelmed by the changes I am experiencing. I want

them to remind me of the old stories that we all enjoy laughing about and to bring me chocolate, even if it is not good for me. A glass of wine every now and then would also be welcome. I know there will be days ahead that I will be a worry or a problem for my children. I don't intend to be and don't want to be. I have taken lots of notes of what not to do or say as I have taken care of my father and Larry's parents, but I also know that I may not have control over what really happens. I hope my children will allow paid staff to care for me and spend their time with me having fun and making sure that I don't look like too big a mess.

It's weird to think that I won't always be in the lives of my children, but I know that birth and death are part of the order of life. I accept that. I have lived a very full and fortunate life and have had so many opportunities to grow, to experience, to give, to teach, to care, to mourn loss and so much more. I do, however, want to live the years that are left, enjoying my family



THE TIME OF MY LIFE

and my life.

I hope I have created good memories for all the lives that I have touched; and when I am gone, I hope I am thought of in a good way.

I hope this book will help my family know me better and realize I have done the best I knew how to do in raising my children and loving my spouse.

I want my children to know me as a child and teenager and not just as a mom.

I want them to know the challenges of my life because knowing them might come in handy as they face challenges of their own.

Know that I love you all and thank each of you for the part you played in my life and the joys I have experienced.