

On June 3rd, 1940 you were born early in the A.M. on a beautiful sunny day. You were so determined this was to be your birth date that you wouldn't even wait for the Doctor to arrive. Fortunately we had planned on a home delivery, as your Grandmother Whitcomb, my Mother, was an R.N. and Grandpa Whitcomb had assisted at many farm animal births. So all turned out just fine, even though the umbilical cord was around your neck a couple of times, my mother knew exactly what to do. Your Father paced the door yard as he was a nervous wreck, and Dr. Elkavich arrived just a few minutes after you did and announced every thing was O.K.

We named you Dorothy Elizabeth, after my sister, Dorothy Frances. We nick named you Dottie as my sister was called Dot. You weighed five pounds twelve ounces and you were a beautiful baby. My Mother loved you very much and you were always her favorite. You gained weight at the rate your Doctor said you should but you were slow teething, about ten months old; creeping around one year old; and you didn't walk on your own until you were nearly eighteen months old.

Your first brother, David Frederick, was born on May 29th, 1941, just five days before you were one year old. He was born in Fitzwilliam Depot, N.H. at your Father's Aunt Mildred's and Uncle Jim's house. The two of you kept me pretty busy as you were still in diapers and still insisted on a bottle. By the time you were walking you were just about potty trained. You were also having more colds than the Doctor thought you should have as you had huge tonsils and adenoids. We lived in an old drafty house in Marlborough, N.H. and the floors were very cold. I kept you in a play pen with a blanket around it to protect you from the cold drafts, and put David in it with you when he was awake as you loved your brother very much and wanted to play with him a lot. The two of you always played very well together, sharing toys and enjoying each others company. You showed many motherly instincts even at that young age.

When you were free of any cold about the time you were eighteen months old, the Doctor said you should have a Tonsilectomy and Adenoidectomy. It was arranged for the visiting nurse to come and get you, take you to the hospital and then bring you back the next day. You were so good about the whole ordeal. I was told you were a little angel. Your Grandmother came and brought you ice cream and even stayed and fed it to you. You were 'all better' in no time at all.

You soon learned to get around well once you had decided to walk after you'd fully recovered from your little operation. You and David were constant companions and preferred getting into mischief and keeping me busy to arguing. You were such little joys. But you had to be watched constantly as you both loved getting into laundry soap, sugar, coffee or anything of that nature that you could mix together or spread around.

From this farm we moved onto another larger dairy farm still, in Marlborough where the house was nicer and warmer. This was the Charles Richardson Farm and he was very well thought of around the community. I still didn't have any indoor plumbing but the water did run in by gravity feed. And the "out door facilities" were near the back door near the wood shed, and all under the same roof as the house. We were there just a few months as your Father heard of a better job on a beef cattle farm in Westmoreland, N.H.

We liked this farm (Owned by the Albee's of N.Y.) as the beef cattle were Herefords and they grazed right by our little house. I was pregnant by this time and we spent many nice summer days outside under the shade tree watching the cattle. There was a sand pile of nice white sand that you and David loved to play in.

Because both of my first two deliveries had been easy and of short term we decided on using the private facilities at the Cheshire County Nursing Home and Hospital. The Doctor's fee would be thirty five dollars for prenatal care and delivery and the private room I would use was ten dollars a day, with no charge for the delivery room. Our second son was born on October 11th, 1943. He had bright red hair and was a handsome boy. We named him Donald Willard. It was only natural that we nick named him "Red" because of the color of his hair. He was a good baby and you and David had lots of fun with him. You were two years four months old and David was one year four months old. We enjoyed our family tremendously.

While Red was quite small your Father wanted to change jobs again, so we moved to a dairy farm in Westmoreland. This was a big beautiful farm, with the lower fields bordering the Connecticut River. The house was a large colonial, with many antiques, fireplaces, and large sunny rooms. A real nice place for you children. The owner was a Mr. Leach, who had lost his wife and child in a train accident not far from his home. He loved you children, especially Red. He called him 'Sunshine Jim'. We lived with him and I prepared all the meals and took care of all that big house.

I soon discovered I was pregnant again. This baby gave me a few more problems during my pregnancy than the other three ever had. We felt it best that I go to Keene for this delivery as there could be complications. The last three months I had a lady to help around the house and when "my time" came she stayed at the house to take care of every thing. This baby was a hard delivery, requiring forceps. Our new baby was another little boy, born on November 5th, 1944. He was a handsome baby, weighing a little under seven pounds. We named him Dexter William. When we were discharged from the Elliott Community Hospital we went to stay with my Aunt Dodo for a few days until I felt a little stronger. You were now

three years five months old, David two years five months old and Red one year one month old.

The next year was to be a busy one, Dexter was a fussy baby, his formula didn't always stay down and he had trouble breathing. But the Doctor said he'd out grow this problem in time. You and David were always very helpful with your two younger brothers. You wanted to help with baths, diaper changing, feedings and playing. We sure enjoyed our young family. You all gave us many enjoyable hours!

Your father also wanted to move again, to another dairy farm in Ashburnham, Mass. Each move we made we bettered ourselves but I sure did get weary of it. This farm was back in the hills and really very nice. We also had indoor plumbing, no out door privy, and an honest to goodness bath tub, instead of the big wash tub. What luxury! The owners names were Davis, and they liked you children very much.

This is the farm that you and David got into so much mischief. We lived on the second floor and I was pregnant again so I wasn't getting around very swift, which meant I didn't always keep as close an eye on you as I would have liked to. Consequently I didn't always know all the naughty little deeds you two did. The worst was when you scooped up barn yard drippings in your sand pails and then dumped it into the gas tank of your Father's car. The next time he used the car it didn't run very good, and when he found out why he was pretty angry. This little deed cost you two your freedom, and you children were then provided with a fenced in area to play in. The most humorous of your little escapades was when I decided to sneak down the stairs to see what you were doing. You both had come up onto the big porch that led to our door, and I got down there just in time to hear David say to you " Dod Dottie I haven't got any left". You had told him to fill up all the knot holes with pea and he'd run out. Poor little guy!

A few days before Christmas that year (1945) we were on our way back from a visiting and shopping trip in Keene when a car coming towards us somehow lost control of his car and hit us nearly head-on. Our car was totaled, Dexter's head and my elbow broke the windshield, the door on the driver's side was pushed back, allowing terrible cold air to come in on us. You were petrified with fear that your baby brother was badly hurt and that the rest of us were hurt too. I finally managed to get Dexter calmed down, and then convinced you that David, Red and your Father and I were O.K. When the police arrived they took us to a nearby farm house where the people were awfully nice. They even made us sandwiches and something hot to drink. Your Father stayed at the scene of the accident, filled out the necessary accident reports and loaded our things into the other police car. We were then all taken home. That was quite a day!

We got through Christmas O.K., and even had a small family celebration for my folks twenty fifth wedding anniversary. Shortly after Christmas I was having contractions pretty regular and we wanted Dexter checked for any possible after effects of the accident. So we both went to the Doctor's over in Gardner, Mass. Dexter checked out fine as far as could be determined. But our baby wasn't due until mid March and the Doctor was afraid "it" was trying to be born early. He told me to go home, stay put, and to take it easy. Early the morning of January 26th, 1946, the Doctor was summoned to the farm to see if I was really in labor. When he arrived he determined I was indeed in labor and so he loaded me into his car and took me to the Gardner Hospital. I was only in the labor room a few minutes when your red headed sister arrived. She was a feisty little fighter, weighing four and a half pounds. Because of her small size she had to remain in an incubator for a while. I had to go home without her until her weight got up to five pounds. She remained there for three weeks but the Doctor assured us she was doing just fine. You and your brothers couldn't wait until it was time to get her home. When the big day finally came we were a very happy family, especially you, Dottie. She was very tiny and so beautiful and you just wanted to take over all of her care. You acted more like a nine to ten year older than you did your actual five years seven months age. You were a big help to me and saved me many steps.

By late February your Father was getting uneasy and wanted another job, back in the Keene area. This is the time when things started going down hill. I always knew once he didn't want to work on farms anymore that our lives would never be secure again with your Father. He went back to Keene and Marlborough looking for a job and housing. I stayed with you five children, started packing for yet another move and hoping for the best. He found a job in construction work and a second floor apartment in Marlborough. This would only have to be temporary housing as I was going to take one of my Aunt Dodo's houses in Keene as part of my inheritance. She had passed away late summer of 1945.

We lived in this house for a couple of months and then moved to my own house. This house is just off the upper end of Court St. and not far from where the new Monadnock Regional Hospital is now. We all loved it there. There was a nice big yard for you kids to play in. I also rented the upstairs apartment to a school teacher and her teenage son, which helped with our finances as your Father wasn't working very much. I also discovered I was pregnant for the sixth baby!

You were six years old this year (1946) and it was time for you to start school. You were not ready as I hadn't taken the time to teach you to write your name or to say your alphabet and numbers. You were also so motherly to your peers that they didn't take very kindly to you at times. What you were