

This I Remember

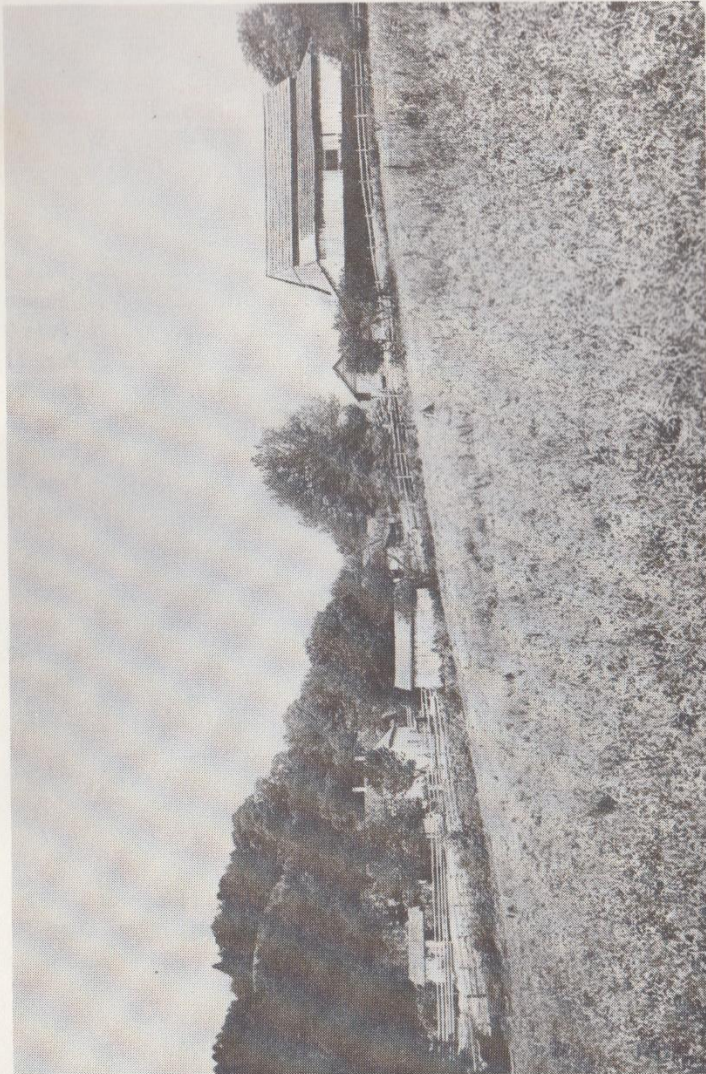
Memories
of
Christian "Crist" Emory Eller
and
Rebecca "Becky" Martha (Henry) Eller
by
Relatives and Friends

Compiled by
Henry C. Eller
1984

July 1940



Christian Emory Eller, January 10, 1870-May 3, 1948
Rebecca Martha (Henry) Eller, December 12, 1877-December 26, 1944
(Picture by Vincel Trostle, Handwriting by Rebecca Martha Henry Eller)



Homeplace — Date Approx. 1910
 Owner - Jacob, Abraham, John, Christian

Introduction

Memories included in this booklet came from relatives of Christian E. and Rebecca (Henry) Eller, the Oak Grove Church of the Brethren members, and friends; also, leading members of the Verlina (First and Southern) District Churches of the Brethren.

It has been out of a prolonged desire to keep memories of Christian "Crist" Emory and Rebecca Martha (Henry) Eller that the soliciting and assembling of "This I Remember" was begun a number of years ago. It is hoped that relatives and friends will receive the compilation of these memories and preserve it for their posterity.

The privilege of editing contributions has been exercised. Special care has been taken to retain the thought of each contributor as it relates to either or both the subjects of this collection.

Beginning with their children the material has been arranged under headings according to who has contributed rather than by content. I have included some memories that my brother John C. Eller collected in 1946. They are in the last three parts of Section I contents.

The concluding Section II is a revision of my "Some Memories" (1970) as relates to Christian and Rebecca Eller.

I am indebted to Rodger Sappington, Jacob Replogle, Mrs. Mary (Wine) Lanier, Leah (Flora) Zigler, and some of my own relatives for valuable help rendered; especially to my brother, John C. Eller, for writing the "Foreword" and "The Author."

Henry C. Eller
 Bridgewater, Virginia

Foreword

My brother, Henry, has done the family a favor. He has brought together persons who knew our parents to write a brief memory about one or both of them. These memories are about two persons who lived all of their lives in Roanoke County, Virginia.

Christian "Crist" Emery Eller was born January 10, 1870, on a farm on Tinker Creek in a community known as Rockeydale near Hollins (Roanoke County), Virginia, to John W. Eller and Hannah (Brubaker) Eller. He was the third child of this, his father's second, marriage. His father's first wife, Leah Barnhart, and two of their children, died while he was in Ohio during some two years of the Civil War. In all, he fathered thirteen children.

At the age of five, after his grandfather, Abraham Eller, had died, the family moved to the Eller farm on Sugar Loaf Mountain Road in the Oak Grove Community, now Rural Route 2, Salem, Virginia. The farm had been purchased by his great grandfather Jacob Eller in 1797.¹ In 1899 he assumed management of the farm. In addition, he was to care for his grandmother, Mary "Polly" (Wertz) Eller, his mother Hannah, two unmarried sisters, Cora and Sarah, as well as providing for his own wife and young family.

His formal education was limited. His early years at the Oak Grove grade school consisted of only two to four months per year, from 1877 through 1889. A year at Bridgewater College in 1889-90 qualified him for a public school teacher's certificate. It was during his eleven years of teaching that he met, and later married, one of his pupils, Rebecca Martha Henry.

Although farming, with major emphasis on fruit growing (apples and peaches), would provide income for his family, he became a leader in community projects. He served as an officer of the Sugar Loaf Telephone Company from its inception, March 25, 1912, until it was replaced by the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company in 1932.

He was called to the Ministry by the Peters Creek German Baptist Brethren congregation at the Cave Spring Meeting House in 1891. His major preaching opportunity was at the Oak Grove Church. However, while serving thirty years on the Mission Board of the First District of Virginia of his denomination, he served as presiding Elder of thirteen different congregations. Of the approximately fifty revival meetings he conducted, many were in neighboring small rural churches and mission points.

He died at Jefferson Hospital, Roanoke, Virginia, May 13, 1948.

Rebecca "Becky" Martha Henry was born to John Thomas Henry and Jane Frances (Grisso) Henry on their farm at Poores Mill, Roanoke County, Virginia. She was the second of their ten children. Her father, who was a successful farmer and fruit grower, was one of the dedicated Deacons who

helped found the Poores Mill Church of the Brethren on State Route No. 221 in the Back Creek Community.

She was heard to say on occasion, "The best thing I got in grade school was a husband." She fell in love with and later married her teacher, Christian Emery Eller. After her death December 26, 1944, the women of her church named one of the Circles in her honor.

To the marriage of "Crist" and "Becky" were born ten children, four girls and six boys.

Four of the children became public school teachers, five of the sons were ordained to the ministry (two served as full time pastors most of their lives), one became a registered nurse and health educator, one became a hospital administrator and they all became active church members.



The Oak Grove Church

Since the Oak Grove church of the Brethren was so much a part of the life of the Eller family, it is fitting to include information about its early beginnings.

This congregation began as a preaching point of the Peters Creek German Baptist Brethren. The name was changed to The Church of the Brethren in 1908.² The first meetings were in the Oak Grove grade schoolhouse four miles south of Salem, Virginia, on what is now known as Rural Route No. 2. The first superintendent of the Sunday school was Christian Emery Eller. It became a separate congregation October 13, 1923.³

In 1908 the first church building was constructed from lumber that had been cut and sawed on the Eller farm. It was located on the west side of Highway 419 (Cave Spring Road) in the Oak Grove Community. The church building was remodeled and additions added in 1925 and 1937. In 1946 land

was purchased on the east side of Highway No. 419 for a new church building and a parsonage. The parsonage was built first and the new church building was dedicated in 1965. The old church building was sold.

Christian Emery Eller devoted much of his time and energy as a free minister to the Oak Grove Church of the Brethren and to those who worshiped and labored there. The last call they gave him was to become their first salaried part-time pastor.⁴

John C. Eller
Washington, D.C.

Footnotes:

1. Botetourt County Deed Book No. 7, p. 655, Fincastle, Virginia.
2. Roger E. Sappington, *The Brethren in the New Nation* (Elgin, Ill., The Brethren Press, 1976), p. 10.
3. Horace C. Spangler, *A History of the Oak Grove Church of the Brethren* (1945: Reprinted. Roanoke, Va. 1983), p. 17.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

The Author

Henry Cline Eller was born April 12, 1900, the second child of Christian Emery Eller and Rebecca Martha (Henry) Eller, at the Eller farm, Route 2, Salem, Virginia.

He was educated at the Oak Grove and Dyerle grade schools and Salem High School. He later graduated from Daleville Junior College (1921), Bridgewater College (1924), and Bethany Biblical Seminary (1936).

The Peters Creek Church of the Brethren elected him to the ministry in his home church at Oak Grove at an early age of eighteen. During his forty-one years of active ministry he served as Pastor and/or District Executive of his denomination in Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Ohio and Indiana.

After several years of research, he published a genealogical account of the descendants of Jacob Eller in 1948. This information was later included in the book, *George Michael Eller and Descendants of His in America*, by James W. Hook.¹ He also published genealogies on the Henry, Grisso, Brubaker and Barnhart families.

In 1970 he authored an autobiographical booklet called *Some Memories*,² containing over one hundred fifty of his life memories.

His graduate thesis at Bethany Biblical Seminary was titled *John of Ephesus*.³ Copies are in the library of the seminary and Bridgewater College.

On September 3, 1924, he was married to Effie Mae Naff, who was born July 2, 1899, and was the daughter of Elder Benjamin T. and Flora (Bowman) Naff of Calloway, Virginia (formerly Dillons Mill).

They met at and were graduated from Daleville Academy and Junior College, Daleville, Virginia. Their children are: Wendell C. Eller, Adel, Iowa; Doris (Mrs. John C.) Heisel, Modesto, California; and Galen R. Eller, Stephens City, Virginia. They have ten grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Retired in Bridgewater, Virginia, since 1965, they became residents of the Bridgewater Home in April, 1982. Effie died Nov. 30, 1984.

Footnotes:

1. James W. Hook, *George Michael Eller and Descendants of His in America* (New Haven, Connecticut, 1957), pp. 53-63.
2. Henry C. Eller, *Some Memories* (Bridgewater, Virginia, 1970).
3. Henry C. Eller, *John of Ephesus* (Chicago, Illinois, 1936).

The Generations of Henry Cline Eller and Family

- I. Jacob Eller, b. (born) ca. (about) 1760, d. (died) ca. 1830. m. Magdaline _____?
- II. Abraham Eller, b. June 5, 1801, d. (ca) 1872, m. Mary "Polly" Wertz, b. Mar. 31, 1814, d. Dec. 13, 1906.
- III. John W. Eller, b. May 26, 1836, d. Mar. 7, 1899. m. (1) Leah Barnhart, b. Nov. 16, 1836, d. Feb. 22, 1865. m. (2) Hannah C. Brubaker, b. Aug. 25, 1842, d. Dec. 28, 1903.
- IV. Christian "Crist" Emory Eller, b. Jan. 10, 1870, d. May 13, 1948. m. Rebecca "Becky" Martha Henry, b. Dec. 12, 1877, d. Dec. 26, 1944.
- V. Henry Cline Eller, B. April 12, 1900, m. Effie Mae Naff, b. July 2, 1899, d. Nov. 30, 1984.
 1. Wendell Cline Eller, b. April 22, 1926, m. Sonya Jane Kaufman, b. Aug. 6, 1935.
 - (1) Jerel Kent Eller, b. Nov. 27, 1960, m. Dawn Elaine Kesselring, b. Jan. 30, 1961.
 - (2) Denise Diane Eller, b. June 18, 1962.
 - (3) Sheri Rene Eller, b. Mar. 20, 1965.
 - (4) Shawn Gregory Eller, b. June 20, 1969.
 2. Doris Helen Eller, b. June 15, 1933, m. John C. Heisel, b. June 24, 1931.
 - (1) Gail Marie Heisel, b. Jan. 31, 1960.
 - (2) Joy Elaine Heisel, b. April 19, 1964.
 3. Galen Ross Eller, b. Dec. 25, 1937, m. Mary Caroline Winger, b. Nov. 8, 1938.
 - (1) Marlin Scott Eller, b. Dec. 19, 1958, m. Joyce Kathleen Bowman, b. April 19, 1960.
 - (a) Beth Kathleen Eller, b. Aug. 13, 1983.
 - (2) Myra Dawn Eller, b. Nov. 25, 1959, m. Lee Jones, b. Sept. 28, 1958.
 - (a) Jessica Marie Jones, b. July 27, 1980.
 - (b) Joshua Paul Jones, b. Jan. 26, 1982.
 - (3) Blair David Eller, b. June 17, 1963, m. Virginia Fay Shirtz, b. Jan. 30, 1962.
 - (4) Burton Earl Eller, b. Oct. 9, 1970.

Children



Orien D. Eller

My father, Christian E. Eller, felt led of the Lord to follow his sister Jennie and brother Danial "Dan" to Kansas. However, since Mr. David Sedon (a near neighbor) offered to sell a plot of land on which to build a church house, Papa decided to remain in Virginia. With the help of Elder John H. Garst, Nathan Garst and John T. Henry, the land was purchased and the Oak Grove Church of the Brethren, a wood frame structure, was built and dedicated in 1908. Later more was added to the building. A new lot was bought across the road. The old church building was sold and a parsonage and new church house built.

I remember that during a thunderstorm we workers rushed to our bank barn on the farm just as a clashing clap of lightning struck a large cherry tree on the opposite end of the barn killing one of the horses that was standing on a root. I was sent to the house to inform my father of the tragedy. At the supper table, his prayer included our thanks that no other injuries were experienced.

During a series of meetings in the Air Point Chapel Church of the Brethren, Papa was preaching in a big way. His upper plate with one tooth came loose and dropped to the floor, landing near his shoe. He, in a gesture, kicked the plate halfway down the center aisle. His closing appeal was a reminder that sinners must repent or be kicked into hell. Several did confess Christ that night.

*Deceased Feb. 13, 1985

Orien D. Eller, Friendship Manor
Roanoke, Virginia



Gertrude Jane (Eller) Lefler

My second cousin on my mother's side (Julia "Grisso" Lefler), Ernest Lefler, walked the three miles by our house while attending the Oak Grove one room school. We became sweethearts.

My parents saw to it that I attended Daleville Academy in Botetourt County. There, I found other boy friends, one of which came near to an engagement.

Upon graduation, I lived at home and taught in the newly built Oak Grove two-room elementary school.

Along through the intervening years, Ernest and I could not break off intermittent courtship, even after he went to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to work as a carpenter.

My difficulty was that Papa and Mama maintained a quiet, but sustained, opposition to my marrying Ernest. However, his urging led me to go against my parents' will.

Upon learning of my decision, they invited us to have the wedding at home. Their surrender and gracious attitude was a beautiful experience.

Following our wedding, Sept. 1926, we went off to live in Pittsburgh, and in the fellowship of the Church of the Brethren there.

Gertrude Jane (Eller) Lefler (d.)*
(Contributed by her
brother Henry)

*Deceased Feb. 10, 1927



Ruby (Eller) Foster

"Wake up, it's time to start a new day!" How I recall Papa's words! His gentle and understanding ways with me were so needed. Precious were the times I sat on his lap listening to him read and explain the scriptures. They helped lay a foundation for my 24 years as a school teacher.

Doing school work at home was so difficult for me. Mama often helped me with my hardest subject, history. It was because of her that history became my favorite subject. How she shared her concerns about Roy and I bringing up our 3 boys!

Mama always enjoyed her trips to her John and Jane Henry parents home. The winter snows gave her such great delight.

Ruby (Eller) Foster
Blue Ridge, Virginia



Edna (Eller) Snavelly

At age 21 my older sisters and I were wearing hats instead of bonnets, as our mother still did. After attending our District Meeting in 1930, we talked of Mama being the only minister's wife present not wearing a hat.

Since they were depression days, and having to order a bonnet from Pennsylvania costing from \$7 to \$15, it seemed to be too much for Mama's butter and egg money. Even Papa "Crist" agreed. After all, Mama "was a pretty lady if you please."

I took Mama to the "Pugh" and "Highronomous" department stores in Roanoke. After many tries, the decision was to choose a black "sailor" straw hat. Again, Papa was pleased, even calling it "cute" as she tried it on for him. Thus, "the passing of the bonnet" became a reality with the "Crist" Eller ladies.

Edna (Eller) Snavelly
Waterloo, Iowa



Raymon Eller

The year was 1937. I was a second year student at Bethany Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ill. My mother, Rebecca Martha, was a bit apprehensive and concerned when she learned first hand that I was looking forward to marrying a Bethany student. After June 13 was set for our wedding to be performed by President Dr. D. W. Kurtz, in Minneapolis, Minn., the excitement heightened for Mama and Papa. My mother was overheard to say, and later verbalized to me, "Why did Raymon have to marry some wild western girl. We have lots of attractive girls in Virginia!"

In spite of apprehensions both my parents started making plans to attend our wedding, a decision that pleased me no end. Being an attractive woman herself, Mama immediately recognized AnnaBelle's beauty and charm. Following the wedding, both of us were invited to spend the summer with them on the old Sugar Loaf Mountain farm near Salem, Va.

Having purchased a 1931 Chevy, AnnaBelle and I (along with sister Edna, brother Paul and a couple of others) took off for the "Eller Plantation." Soon after arriving we were surprised by being given a "belling," frightening AnnaBelle. To say the least, it was an exciting time, and a happy reunion with friends and neighbors for me. It was my mother who prepared and served refreshments to all.

My parents were truly unique people. What an understanding mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship AnnaBelle and Mother Rebecca had that summer! I busied myself finishing out and helping harvest the large peach crop.

Raymon Eller
North Manchester, Indiana



Paul C. Eller

When Papa's sister, Cora Bream, and her three boys, Calvin, Robert and Hugh, visited from California, we boys took a notion to drive to town. We bought and drank root-beer. After returning home Aunt Cora asked where we had been. Speaking up, Robert said, "To Salem to get root-beer drinks." A little later, my parents cornered me privately and Papa administered a scolding for drinking root-beer (a no, no at our house).

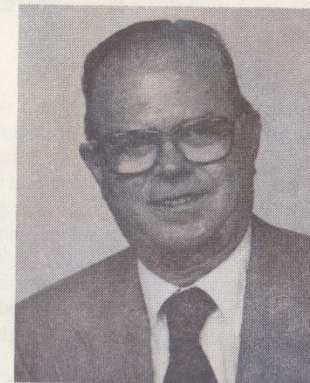
Among the many sayings of my father this one, as I recall, has a special ring in it: "Ice cold lemonade, made in the shade and stirred with a spade; dug 49 feet beneath the ground beside a diamond; passed around by six ladies, each a size smaller than a baby elephant; one for your wife, one for your daughter; all three for a quarter of a dollar. Step right up ladies and gentlemen."

One afternoon my father came to our home (the remodeled former Negro schoolhouse), asking me to accompany him to the home of Rufus and Icy Wertz, and asked me to tell no one. Upon arriving we found them seated in their rocking chairs (both past "three-score and ten" years). We enjoyed conversation and eating from a basket of apples. It surprised me when my brother Orien arrived, followed soon by the Spangler brothers, Horace and Carl, all three ministers.

Brother and Sister Wertz explained their desire to be anointed for the renewal of their faith and baptismal vows. Still wondering just why I was there (being only a deacon), Brother Rufus requested that I sing three hymns: "Amazing Grace," "Blessed Assurance," and "I Love to Tell the Story." How meaningful and different the occasion, as we closed the service, all singing, "Blest Be the Tie That Binds." Father and I talked the experience over as we returned home.

Paul C. Eller
Rocky Mount, Virginia

John C. Eller



I remember the afternoon when Mama had a near tragedy. She had been peeling potatoes in the kitchen. When she finished the peelings were put in what was called the "Anna bucket" and taken up the hill back of our house and fed to the chickens. Presently I heard a faint call, "John, John." Sensing that something was wrong, I rushed from the kitchen to the back yard and there she sat in the "Anna bucket." As she was returning down the hill from the chicken house

she lost her footing and landed backward into the bucket she had been carrying. It wasn't easy but I managed to pry her loose unharmed. I can still see and hear her laughing with me as we shared a moment of great relief.

I was later to learn that the "Anna bucket" had been a gift from Anna Thomas Edmanson from Bridgewater, Virginia. She had spent a summer in our home when I was a baby.

Papa made many trips to mission churches. One of those was the Copper Hill Church of the Brethren in Floyd County. He served as Presiding Elder for the congregation and preached on many occasions. Mama always sent either Paul or me to ride with him in the car. She later told me why. We were to keep him awake while he drove, and we did.

It was after I had been appointed pastor (by the District Mission Board) of the Church of the Brethren, Crab Orchard, West Virginia, that Papa gave me what was perhaps his best advice.

Although I had been away for four years at Bridgewater College, I had not really left home. Mama cried most of the morning while my car was being packed. She knew that many of the board members who had asked me to go to this, my first full time pastorate, had doubts as to whether the church would accept me.

Finally, all was in readiness and goodbys were said. Papa followed me to the car. "John," he said, "you are going to what may become the greatest challenge of your life. Make up your mind, here and now, that you are going to succeed. Otherwise, don't go." The memory lingers.

John C. Eller
Washington, D.C.

Lowell F. Eller

Mama advised me never to drink 7-Up, saying, "Water that is good enough for animals is good enough for you, too."

Paul and John fought many verbal battles. I'd tell Mama on them. Then, they'd find ways to get it back on me. Mama made me sleep in between them in the cold of winter. I had not been broken from bedwetting, thus I'd get my revenge.

It was Christmas week and Mama was stripped for taking a wash-tub bath in the living room. She forgot to pull the blinds. As church carolers approached, she called excitedly, "Lowell, pull down the shades!"

I often tried to sing with Mama (an alto voice). I couldn't keep from going flat. Her favorite song was "Whiter Than Snow."

Once, while Papa was preaching, I walked up to the pulpit and stood by him until he very quietly led me down to Mama's seat.

On a later occasion, I became involved in a whispered conversation as Papa preached. He looked down at me, stopped, and said, "Lowell, when you finish, I'll continue." Mine was a painful trip to the woodshed when we got home.

As a middle teen-ager I had found a girlfriend on Back Creek. I had to ride 8 miles to court her. It was often as late as 2 or 3 a.m. when I returned home. It was a touch-and-go trick to climb up and walk on the tin roof of our porch and keep from waking my parents. On one such late return Papa called me to get up and go with him to the Roanoke market with peaches and vegetables. It was 4 a.m. That shot my hopes with my Back Creek girlfriend.

My father was a wise counselor. Accompanying him before the Roanoke County Draft Board, he asked the right questions and gave the right answers. How I wish I had that wisdom!

Lowell F. Eller
Salem, Virginia



In-Laws

I had one of the best mother-in-laws that ever was. Following marriage, Orien and I lived in her house 21 months. I was treated as one of her own. After moving into the tenant house, I often returned with my babies to wash clothes, process food, etc. I also took her to many activities such as Ladies' Aid meetings, District events and shopping. On returning from one of our last shopping trips, Mother Eller said, "I've got such a hurting in my chest. What can it be?" After a few months, she died, 12/26/44.

Gladys (Sutphin) Eller
Friendship Manor
Roanoke, Virginia

One of my pleasant memories of Grandmother Eller was that of receiving almost weekly, her newsy-encouraging cards. She supported me with statements like: "You are without your man again . . . It's a mother's lot to care for the home most of the time . . . Hope you make it fine." Two days before her death she wrote, "I'm not so good. It makes me feel more and more like we must be ready when the time comes. We've decided to have our Christmas get-together here instead of Sadie's."

Effie (Naff) Eller (d.)*
Bridgewater, Virginia

*Deceased 11/30/84

Brother Eller, my father-in-law, was an excellent counselor. Once he missed it in advising a girl staying with Mrs. Nienkie. She had planned for beautician training. He remarked, "It's only a fad and will soon go away." After she became thus employed, I heard him confess, "I surely missed that time."

Soon after our Eller parents had made their trip to California, including seeing the Rose Parade at Pasadena, Sadie and I took them on a Skyline Drive trip in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Mrs. Eller remarked, as she stood at one of the look-outs, "Of all the scenery on our California trip nothing compares with what I am beholding from this spot."

Carl Spangler
Bridgewater, Virginia

In January 1926, I came down with the flu at the Eller home, having gone Saturday evening to be with my girl-friend, Ruby. Mr. Eller called the doctor. Confined to bed, my sister Halley came to nurse me. I'll never forget the fine relationship we both experienced those days.

My father-in-law accompanied me to get our marriage license, in Salem. On our return he gave me wise business and domestic counsel. In regard to a happy marriage, he advised against burdening my wife with job or business problems. He believed women could not endure very much of such concerns. Also, he expressed a longing that I become a minister, which I seemed never able to accept.

Father Eller taught in the Roanoke County Grisso public school. Rebecca Henry was an older class member. Some of us teased Mother about her teacher centering his mind on her. She always reacted my saying, "He never once showed any partiality that his pupils could notice, or that he was in love with me!"

I've never sensed that Father Eller ever showed favoritism or partiality to any of his large family, or otherwise. That is the secret to the loyalty of his children and the happiness of his family.

Roy M. Foster
Blue Ridge, Virginia

Father "Crist" Eller once used an endearing name for his wife in my hearing. The two were grading eggs. He seemed quite careful in handling them to her liking. He called her "Dumplin." Both were very dear to me during the few years I knew them.

I knew Mother "Becky" Eller as a calm, steady person. Once I observed her handling a very frustrating request to provide more meals for dinner than she had expected. With a plan soon made and help enlisted she served a quite acceptable dinner for all. She taught me the varieties, values and usages of both peaches and apples; which were best for sauce, pies, baking, frying, canning and eating raw. I was impressed by her choice of tree-ripened and uniform sized peaches she required for canning in halves. My daughter is her namesake, Rebecca.

AnnaBell (Whitmer) Eller
N. Manchester, Indiana

The Christmas Mother Eller died (1944), I met Lowell at a church social. We had decided to marry February 6, 1948. Lowell said, "I don't know if Papa will wear a tuxedo or not." We went together to ask. At first he gave a doubtful look, then said, "I think I would like that." He seemed to be quite pleased. That was his first to wear a bow tie.

Mildred (Harper) Eller
Roanoke, Virginia

Moderator C. E. Eller (then known as Elder) made regular visits to the Church of the Brethren in Richmond, Virginia, when Harold Row was pastor from 1939-1942. He conducted the business meeting and gave counsel to the pastor on each visit.

Usually he would spend a night with us in our apartment. In his quiet and steady way his counsel proved to be beneficial to the church as well as to the pastor and wife.*

Little did I dream that I would marry one of his sons in later years!

Leona (Z. Row) Eller (Mrs. John)
Washington, D.C.

*I remember the late W. Harold Row saying, "Brother Eller pours healing oil on troubled water" after he had helped solve problems in a struggling city church.

Grandchildren

Granddaddy Eller was one who had absolute faith in every person. For instance, he and I had gone to Bridgewater when I was 17 (1940) to attend a meeting and for me to take a look at Bridgewater College. As we started home, he asked me if I could drive. I said, "A little." (As I remember, I had only changed the gears a dozen or so times as the car sat in the driveway at the big house.) He confidently said, "Drive home."

After starting on our way to Roanoke, Granddaddy climbed into the back seat and went to sleep.

I did manage to drive us to the outskirts of Roanoke where I asked him to take over, drive through the city and the rest of our way home.

Kathryn (Eller) Roller
Richmond, Virginia

I always seem to remember Grandpa sitting propped up beside the big furnace-looking heatrola with his stocking feet on a chair. He said he was "toasting them." How he held his newspaper, read and slept at the same time was a wonder! Sometimes I would get down low and look to see if his blue eyes were open. I wondered, "Did he have some special power to read with closed eyes?"

Thoughts of Grandma fly back to times when I would run down to her house in hopes that she would go to her secret place in the pantry and get me one of her large sugar cookies, or other goodies. She never allowed me to go into the pantry.

One Sunday evening Grandma was not feeling well, so I had to stay unwillingly with her as the rest went off to church. After playing outside until dark, I took a notion to play a trick on her. Going up to the front porch door, I knocked several times. Soon she called out, "Who's there?" Getting no answer, I saw her in wonder turn and go to the back side door, open it and call the same words. Since there was no answer, she returned to the front door, switched on the porch light, peeped out through the curtain, saw me standing there, opened the door and said, "I'm sure glad to see you, Janet." My mother told me later that Grandma had had a real scare.

"The memory of the righteous will be a blessing" (Proverbs 10:7, NEV)

Janet (Eller) Coffman
New Windsor, Maryland

I have many pleasant memories going to Grandpa Eller's as a teenager, especially during peach or apple harvest times. I will never forget experiences at the packing house. As we packed the fruit for market, Grandpa insisted that the whole basket be filled with good fruit, not just the top, or "cap." He inspected our work, too. In this, Grandpa taught me a lesson regarding merchandising that I always appreciated and shall never forget.

There were delicious meals around the big dining room table. Grandpa led the devotions, sometimes using the "Gospel Messenger," at meal time.

Making peach ice cream in the 5 gallon freezer was always a big event, drawing together all the nearby aunts, uncles, and cousins.

I remember Uncle Lowell bringing in to Grandma a bunch of frog legs to be fried. I had never heard of eating frog legs, a dish that turned out to be quite a delicacy. Grandma protested a little, but fried and served them anyway. Their taste was not bad, but it was Lowell who ate the most of them.

Wendell C. Eller
Adel, Iowa

What really impressed me about Grandpa Eller was his sense of humor. I can still see him at the dining room table with his Bible open and a deep pink flowered bowl of Kroger cornflakes on his plate. Table times were special to me. He impressed me as being a spiritual thinker.

I was 12. Grandmother had not been well. Arriving on Christmas Day for the family get-together, I developed a strange feeling. We grandchildren were sent off to Uncle Orien's house. Next morning I heard the sad news, death.

Doris (Eller) Heisel
Modesto, California

I was 7 years old and in the Lexington Virginia Hospital for a rather urgent appendicitis operation. Grandpa and Grandma Eller came to visit me. That silver dollar that he gave me will never be forgotten.

Galen R. Eller
Stephens City, Virginia

Being at Grandpa Eller's, Uncle Lowell and I got into a scuffle. "Fighting is wrong, boys," he declared. Feeling guilty for the incident (it was Lowell whom he caught and spanked), I wondered why he had to suffer for me.

As a mere boy, I was gleefully surprised to receive a coin or dollar bill from

Grandpa for handling some baskets at the packing house.

Before going to college, Grandpa pleaded with me privately at a church council to accept the ministry for my life vocation. Even after his second effort, I was unable to do so.

Kohlmer Spangler
Richmond, Virginia

Kathryn (Eller) Roller and I were in the midst of making mud pies, using eggs we had gotten from the hen house, when Grandmother Eller spied us. Her scolding killed all of the fun of that day.

Miriam (Spangler) Martindale
Roanoke, Virginia

Being a boy of 18 at Grandpa Eller's death in 1948, all of the orchards that he had planted from 1915 to 1934 were bearing.

Grandpa's interest in peaches, especially, intrigued me. Georgia Belles were his first choice. They were of a sweet white texture, of greatest demand for marketing as well as his choice for making ice cream or serving raw on the table; Grandma's too.

However, I can well remember Grandpa's beaming face as he walked into the kitchen holding up a basket of very red Mayflower peaches, saying, "Look, our first ripe peaches."

Wayne Spangler
Vienna, Virginia

I well remember Grandmother Eller's big platters of fried chicken, and the time when she had been served a glass of buttermilk instead of sweet.

Dawn (Spangler) Jeffries
Lakeland, Florida

Near Relatives

On October 4, 1902, we at the home of John J. John were thrilled to see the buggy arriving that brought Elder C. E. Eller and wife Rebecca for the marriage ceremony of Marjorie John to Levi Garst. Following our wedding breakfast, Levi and I left for a visit and supper in the Garst home; then, we were off by train to Mt. Lake next morning.

Becky Eller was both a pretty woman and very attractive. She seemed always ready to say, "You go home with us for dinner." Church duties were first in her life; yet, she seemed progressive enough to be among one of the first in our church district to leave off the bonnet and put on a hat.

Marjorie (John) Garst
Roanoke, Virginia

On December 30, 1889, the five-year-old men's dorm at Bridgewater College burned down. Crist and other students were told to run and save what they could of their possessions. Later, he told us that he got out with an ink bottle, pen, his pocketbook, Bible and other books; then wondered why he forgot to get his clothes.

Cora (Eller) Bream (d.)*
Azusa, California

*Deceased Feb. 21, 1972

Before the Oak Grove Church was built in 1908, and while at Becky's and Crist's, we walked a mile to services in the school house. Once, when a number of people were to be baptized, I saw Crist doing the baptizing in a pond made in the creek just below his house.

Jennie and I went to the Eller home the day after Christmas, 1944, following Becky's death. I heard Crist say to Lowell, youngest of their ten children, "Now we will be like Oscar and Eddy Grisso (our 1st cousins), without a mother."

While visiting Crist in the hospital, just before his death, I then heard him say to Paul, "Did they have prayer for me during church today? There's much power in prayer."

Howard M. Henry
Roanoke, Virginia
("Becky's" brother)

I liked to visit Aunt Becky and Uncle Crist because their son Paul was the one cousin that "knew things." Ours was a match between a farm boy and a city cousin—in the world of the 20's. Since my own hard working father, Jerry Henry, was away from home a great deal, and my loving and caring mother was paralyzed, Aunt Becky always made me feel good and special. Both were very special.

Maurice Henry
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

Although born and raised to age 19 in Leeton, Mo., I remember being at my mother, Jennie Eller Neher's homeplace near Salem, Va., when I was 8 years old. Evidently we had traveled by train to be with my mother's father, John W. Eller, in 1899. I remember seeing my grandmother Polly Eller smoking a clay pipe. When my grandfather had died, my step-grandmother Hannah Eller said, "He had suffered so long."

It was both a thrill and a wonder to climb up on Sugar Loaf Mountain, to see the large pile of chestnuts on the old bank barn floor, and the old black man with three thumbs.

When I was 40, our family (Ethel, two boys Merlin and Raymond) went to the old Eller homeplace again (1933). Uncle Crist showed us around in his apple orchards.

Saylor Neher
Jasper, Mo.

In the summer of 1933, following the death of my father, Robert Bream, my mother, Cora (Eller) Bream, my two brothers (Calvin and Hugh) and I made the trip from California to Roanoke to visit our Uncle Crist. That was during the "dust bowl" days of the "depression," so we saw the devastation of crops on our way.

The evening we arrived in Roanoke, Mother Nature put on a spectacular thunder and lightning storm with a heavy downpour of rain. Since mother wasn't sure she could find the farm under these conditions, we stayed in town over night, driving out the next morning. That was the only rain during our two weeks' stay in Virginia. As his truck garden began to show stress, due to lack of rain, Uncle "Crist" requested all hands (including we guests) to help mulch around the plants to prevent loss of moisture. Thus, we were introduced to a different way of life on the farm. We considered ourselves

farmers (orange-growers); but methods of handling crops, etc., were totally different.

On this trip we met many of our relatives for the first time; our parents' cousins (who were about our ages), as well as their parents. The kindness, respect, and love of Uncle "Crist" and Aunt "Becky" made our visit one of the memorable times of my life.

Robert O. Bream
Strathmore, California

"Crist" Eller and I had a lot of togetherness in doing church work. Some of it required much patient counseling and prayer. "Crist" had fine social qualities, was a wise counselor, and expressed to me that one of his highest goals was to "move people." He was especially good as a personal evangelist, as well as a good preacher.

D. Crist Naff
Roanoke, Virginia
(son of Eliza Eller Naff)

*Deceased

When Vincel and I moved to Washington, D.C., area, we soon found ourselves lonesome and searching for family members; so we drove to Salem, Va., to visit Uncle "Crist" and Aunt "Becky" Eller where we enjoyed wonderful hospitality. Breakfast next morning was served on the dining room table. Pie for breakfast! But, that's one thing Aunt "Becky" served. After being filled with old Virginia ham and eggs I can still see Vincel cutting and eating a big slice of her pie and enjoying it thoroughly. Dessert has always been his favorite, no matter what meal.

Lucy (Eller) Trostle
Pasadena, California
(daughter of Daniel Eller)

On our 1922 Virginia wedding trip, many of our relatives gathered on the old Eller farm and took pictures, one of which I still have.

What a curiosity to see water running continually out of a faucet on the back porch. Its source was a spring some 1500 feet up the creek.

On a later visit, how we did enjoy the sweet cherries from a tree in the yard. On one visit my husband, Omer, picked up a peach to eat. Plucking one from

the tree Uncle "Crist" said, "Here, this one is much better." We took several plywood gallon-sized baskets full on our return home to Eaton, Ohio. What a delight on our table.

My heart went out for my little nephew John begging to go along up on Sugar Loaf Mountain. I carried him to his great delight.

I can see Uncle "Crist" yet at the head of their long table filling the stacks of plates to his left with lots of food.

We took our children (Harold, Ruth, Hannah and Leah) along with us on our 1937 visit. With Uncle and wife, we went up on Back Creek to see both Aunt Sarah Henry and Aunt Nannie Grisso. Another trip was made to visit Aunt Lucy Eller's daughter Alice Boone over in Franklin County, and the Sam and Annie (Eller) Floras near Bassett. On that last trip Omer asked Uncle which direction the winding road was taking us. After a pause, Uncle said, "Generally southwest."

On one of Uncle "Crist's" visits with us, seeing the large 15-bushel yielding peach tree in our yard, he remarked, "I've never seen the equal."

Brother Willie and I made a train trip to Aunt "Becky's" funeral in 1944. I was unable to attend Uncle "Crist's" memorial in 1948 because of being in the hospital.

Rhunella (Deaton) Brubaker
Eaton, Ohio
(daughter of Mary (Eller) Deaton)

In 1937 Vincel and Lucy Trostle visited the Uncle "Crist" and Aunt "Becky" Eller frame home with us. Oh, how we remember the wonderful tasty meals Aunt "Becky" served, the hike up on the Sugar Loaf Mountain; and, that mischievous son of theirs, Lowell, pronouncing tomatoes with a u-like curve on the "a."

Charles & Bernice Eller
Bolder, Colorado
(son of Daniel Eller)

I recall the scene of Uncle "Crist" and Aunt "Becky's" small house, located next to his parents, Grandpa John W. and Hannah Eller, at the foot of Sugar Loaf Mountain. Aunt "Becky" sent me down to the tomato canning factory with a horn to be blown. It was to notify the workers there, and in the fields, that it was dinner time.

Alice (Brubaker) Boone
Wertz, Virginia
(Daughter of Alice Eller Brubaker)

Cousin "Crist" Eller's were our good farm-adjointing neighbors. How I wish I could again run over the hill, and red gullies, to their fruit farm home. My boyhood visits and playing with Orien, Henry, Sadie and Gertrude made me feel at home. Our fathers did many things together: threshing, butchering, shredding fodder, building roads and telephone and electric lines. They bought their first power sprayer that way. How I recall cousin "Becky's" visits during the birth and death of Lerah's last baby.

Willie Jamison, d.
Salem, Virginia
(Grandson of Alice (Eller) Brubaker)

*Deceased 1984

My father told me that cousin Crist Eller was both his first school teacher and a good one.

Virgil Jamison
Salem, Virginia
(half-brother of Willie Jamison)

On many occasions, when the Newton Eller family visited Uncle "Crist's," I was indelibly impressed to see him always running instead of walking to the barn or canning house. Later, I went to the Roanoke market square with my Dad to buy some of Uncle "Crist's" Sugar Loaf peaches. They were the best. Aunt "Becky's" fried chicken, fresh corn right from the field, and other things left a wonderful memory of their house.

Kathryn (Eller) Peters
Sebring, Florida
(Daughter of D. Newton Eller)

I have always felt that C. E. Eller was a man of deep insight, and carried a great responsibility with vision and humility. I have been amazed at how he was able to keep growing, remain poised, sweet and happy through the years. In many ways he stayed ahead of his contemporaries.

Raymon R. Peters
Sebring, Florida
(Spouse of Kathryn (Eller) Peters)

Oak Grove Church

Quite a number of relatives and neighbors had gathered on a cold fall evening to make ice cream in our 5-gallon freezer. As we were filling up their saucers, Mr. Eller (wearing an overcoat) went with his to the kitchen and placed the saucer in the oven, "to warm it up," he said.

Dora Aldridge
Salem, Virginia

I've never forgotten how Mr. Eller planned and arranged for some persons to sit with my father, Mark Bryant, during his long illness.

Stella Broyles
Roanoke, Virginia

As I approached the Oak Grove Church to attend a revival service, Mr. Eller greeted and encouraged me to step into a room set apart for early prayer service. The earnestness of his prayer for a designated person so impressed me, especially as I witnessed the answer to his prayer at that service.

Frankie (Bryant) Beardsmore
Roanoke, Virginia

My father often confided in C. E. Eller as a highly respected presiding Elder of the Oak Grove Church of the Brethren; also, as a wise counselor in business and financial matters. I knew him best through my father, H. C. Spangler.

When the 7-acre plot of land, and beautiful old buildings, of the Keagy estate on U.S. Route 11 came up for sale, he consulted with Mr. Eller. He told him how much he would love to buy it, but could not afford the asking price. Mr. Eller suggested, "Let's not be too hasty. Figure out what you could pay and make them an offer." To his great surprise his \$6,000 bid was accepted.

During a district conference in the Copper Hill Church, Mr. Eller demonstrated his very effective church statesmanship. A number of persons had spoken against a motion up for action. My father thought that Mr. Eller was in favor of the motion, however, wondered why he had not spoken. When the opposition had completed their speeches, Mr. Eller stood up, and in a masterful, but very quiet way, made a rebuttal to each of the points presented. He was so effective and convincing that the delegates voted in his

favor. It seemed that he had a way of knowing just the right time to speak up, and what to say.

Martin O. Spangler
Elizabethtown, Penna.

I always thought of Mr. Eller as Janet's Grandpa. He is remembered as one who talked about church, business, etc. He knew how to keep me warm, even solve the experience of a stubbed toe.

To me, there was another side to a Grandpa in him. I was at his home for a social occasion. Unobserved, he slipped out of the group to the kitchen. On returning, he stepped up to the one having a birthday and put grease on her nose.

Once, while helping to grade peaches at the Eller packing house, I got sick, and had to quit and was sent to the house. Later, on the screened-in porch, I noticed Mr. Eller putting employees' pay in their envelopes. I told him I got sick and had to quit. With a twinkle in his eye, he said, "Well, you have sick insurance, don't you?"

Josephene (Spangler) Wampler

I'll never forget the trip that Troy and I made by auto to California with Mr. and Mrs. Eller, 1928. There was never a dull moment during those six weeks. Seeing the Grand Canyon, Petrified Forest, the big Red Wood forest, and swimming in the Catalina Island ocean waters, all were unforgettable. They were the best of traveling companions, and always ready to lend a helping hand.

Pearl (Sweeny) Shephard
Salem, Virginia

Brother D. C. Naff and I were called to the Jefferson Hospital in Roanoke to anoint Brother Eller. However, before we could get there his operation had already been performed. We conducted a brief service, anyway, an occasion I shall never forget.

Horace C. Spangler
Roanoke, Virginia

*Deceased

I recall that Mr. Eller went with my sister and husband, Troy, on their California trip. He promised me, before leaving, to send a box of oranges. Before returning, I received a large postcard picturing a big box of oranges. His note read: "Here is the box of oranges I promised."

Lelia (Sweeny) Poff
Salem, Virginia

Occasionally I borrowed horses from Brother "Crist" Eller. There was never any charge. I can see him yet harnessing a team and pulling my car out of the mud near his house.

Clarence Minnix
Salem, Virginia

Upon our moving into the Oak Grove community we were sought out repeatedly by Mr. Eller. His visits, encouragement and being guests in his and Orien and Gladys's home, won our hearts and my loyalty to the Oak Grove Church.

Buena Boothe
Roanoke, Virginia

Getting from my Salem home to meetings in the Oak Grove Church required a bus to Shepherd's Garage; sometimes walking or a pick-up ride. Once, Brother "Crist" Eller's old shaky truck was there for repair. I determined to walk. He caught up with me near the creek below the church. He stopped. I had to get in with him.

During two-week revivals, Orien, Neiford or Lowell were sent to Salem to haul us. How he did care about us!

I can still laugh about Mr. Eller as he came out of the church furnace room to speak his part during our practice on a Christmas program. Forgetting his lines, he said, "You just have to give me a few minutes to think."

How impressive it was to see Mrs. Eller, as Lowell grew up, sitting on a front bench with her squirming son.

Mattie Mills
Salem, Virginia

What a proud expression came upon Mr. Eller's face as his son Paul gave himself to Christ! He followed Paul back to his seat, and remained the rest of the service.

Once, while Mr. and Mrs. Eller were at our home for dinner, I became quite embarrassed over my insistence that he take a second piece of fried chicken. Guess I was more interested in pleasing myself.

Edna (Mrs. John) Jamison
Roanoke, Virginia

My dad died when I was only seven. Brother "Crist" Eller took an unfailing interest in our needs. I can never remember our family going hungry. On many occasions he hired members of our family to work on his farm. As I grew up, he continued to remind and encourage me to accept Jesus as my Savior and be baptized. Again and again I put him off; but his persistence finally won my heart.

I sat up with him during his last night in the hospital, watching his quiet, peaceful movements and occasional efforts to talk. I knew him as a man of untiring efforts to change people's hearts for Christ and the church. The influence of his life has been a saving memory of mine.

Emmanuel Sowder

Friends

In one of Brother Eller's sermons in the Green Hill Church of the Brethren, he paused, saying, "Something's wrong in our business world. What is it? I call it SIN." He could hardly preach without becoming emotional.

Prentis Tate
Salem, Virginia

I recall that Mr. "Crist" Eller always had two texts for his sermons. He often talked with me at length while selling produce on the Roanoke market. He was well-known and liked on Back Creek.

Myrtle (Wertz) Hunt
Roanoke, Virginia

Brother "Crist" Eller occasionally represented the District Mission Board at our Pleasant View Church in West Virginia. He seemed so short, but quite tall in delivering stirring sermons.

Galen McAvoy
Boones Mill, Virginia

I have known Brother "Crist" Eller for over 40 years. His giving first place to the Kingdom of God deeply impressed me. His humble Christ-like spirit during Church Councils was an inspiration.

E. L. Clower
Fayetteville, West Virginia

*Deceased

Cousin "Crist" Eller came by our house one day to see my sick father. He had forgotten to change from his old work shoes. My brother Walter got the shoe polish from the pantry and gave them a real blacking; then he was on his way to the Peters Creek Church for a meeting.

Mary Naff
Roanoke, Virginia
(daughter of D. "Crist" Naff)

Two things I so well remember about Brother "Crist" Eller: his promptness and his long prayers.

Galen Showalter
Roanoke, Virginia

I'll never forget seeing Mr. Eller entering the N & W passenger station in Roanoke one June day. He was on his way to the Wynona Lake Annual Conference of the Church of the Brethren in Indiana. There he came carrying his umbrella and wearing large overshoes.

It was a puzzle to me why he could admonish the Poages Mill Church men not to wear ties, then wear one himself in later years.

Hattie Hunt
Roanoke, Virginia

While we were serving the Copper Hill Church, Brother C. E. Eller was continuing as congregational presiding Elder. We were able to have an item put in the budget for his travel and services (a 40 mile round trip). Some complained that he would not want or even take it. He had already served for some 30 years, and no doubt accepted it for the sake of future serving Elders.

Oscar R. Fike
Bridgewater, Virginia

*Deceased

Brother C. E. Eller came into my life, June 1940. Oscar R. Fike and I with our three children, had decided to move back among the mountains of Virginia to Air Point, Virginia, for health reasons. We had left a lively church in Oklahoma.

As Elder of the Copper Hill Congregation, Brother Eller had already served the church for many years unremunerated and living some 20 miles distant. One of his striking sermons, based on Psalm 34:8, "O, taste and see that the Lord is good," assured me of the joy he had experienced in serving his Lord. That memory reassured me, giving strength to work through the many difficult experiences we were to face as pastor and wife, during our three years in service.

Barbara (Ringgold) Fike
Bridgewater, Virginia

My mother told me that when Brother "Crist" Eller and my preacher Papa (Daniel Shaver) visited in the homes of our "Bent Mountain/Copper Hill" community, he was just one of them, especially in our homes. He not only sang his Christianity, he lived it. He took the lead in helping my mother and others organize our "Sisters Aid Society" in 1926.

"Lives of great men all remind us, we can make our lives sublime; and in parting leave behind us footprints on the sands of time."

Ruth (Shaver) Grant
Bent Mountain, Virginia

Brother Eller was the Moderator of our Copper Hill congregation for some forty years. He conducted at least two revivals in each of our preaching points. While in a Roanoke hospital for twenty-three days in 1935, he came to visit me every day, except during a Bridgewater College Spiritual Life Institute. Even then, at his request, his wife Rebecca, and son Paul, came. Upon being taken home, a twenty mile trip, I had to hold the shift gears of his car to make sure of our safe ascent of the Bent Mountain road. The weather never got too bad, nor obstacles too great for Brother Crist Eller to serve.

Cassie (Shaver) Fralin
Bent Mount, Virginia

Here is a happening back in 1911 or 1912. I had taken a group of young people from the Roanoke City Church to the Peters Creek Church on a Saturday. Following the afternoon consecration service and intermission, I sat during the communion service where I could see the minister's table. They seemed to be looking at us and whispering. Glancing around, I noticed no other man or boy had on a tie.

Brother "Crist" Eller arose, walked down to me and whispered, "Brother Allen, don't you think you would feel better without your tie?" I said, "I wouldn't feel entirely dressed. However, to prevent there being trouble with the other young people, I will leave the table and wait outside until the service is over." "But," he said, "You were in the 'order of the Church' at the Copper Hill District Meeting a year ago." "Yes," I replied, "I made a mistake then, but I have resolved not to make the same mistake again." "Well," said Brother Eller, "If that's the way you feel about it just stay where you are." As I teased him about that event later, he would just smile.

H. Allen Hoover
Roanoke, Virginia

*Deceased

During my pastoral service with the Copper Hill Congregation, a very memorable Official Board meeting was held. One of the older officials (Isaac Shaver, d.) arose and spoke in a very heated argument against the pastoral program. After granting him much time, Elder C. E. Eller quietly arose, lifted his hand for silence and spoke. "Don't you think you have gone far enough with that?" In reply, he said, "I am being led by the Spirit and would like to finish." Brother Eller said, "You may be led by the spirit; but which spirit?" The brother sat down and the session proceeded.

A. Ray Showalter
Bridgewater, Virginia

*Deceased

After advising with C. E. Eller, representing the District Mission Board, his instructions were, "Go on down to the Hopewell Church and see if you will like it. I'll come later." He came, and it was really later.

In 1943 the church came to a crisis. The question was, "Support the program or close the church." It was put to the membership. He placed the responsibility on the church and trusted. Due to his vision this church still exists.

Sound Christian thinking was characteristic of the Elder. He was not biased by prejudice. He ventured to try new methods. His mind was young and too busy to grow old. His Council Meetings have always been clear and direct to the point. The very Spirit of Christ permeated the atmosphere.

James Lee Houff
Eden, North Carolina

The Hopewell, Virginia Church of the Brethren was organized March 4, 1923. Brother C. E. Eller, one of the District ministers present, preached that morning. Someone asked, "Why the little man" (among others present)? After the sermon, my father said, "That was the most powerful, sweetest and best sermon I have ever heard on heaven." (Psalm 34:8, "O taste and see.")

Brother Eller was called to serve as our Elder, October 20, 1927. He has seen to it that our church had a minister serve, including John, one of his sons.

There was no question as to what dessert to serve Brother Eller when at our house. The only thing he liked better than ice cream was more ice cream.

Mrs. O. F. Edmonson, Clerk (d.)
Hopewell, Virginia

*Deceased

Having boarded at John W. Eller's while teaching in the Oak Grove School during 1889-90, I learned to know "Crist." He was one of the attendants at our wedding in 1894. We served together 31 years on our District Mission Board, he being the chairman. He had the ability to help the rest of us come around to his point of view most of the time. I doubt if anyone was ever more progressive in vision and policy in our district.

John W. Ikenberry
Daleville, Virginia

*Deceased

Willie Mills, who was a residential hired man at Brother "Crist" Eller's told me of a striking incident. Several men were hauling in hay. One load fell off, turning the wagon over. Brother Eller walked all around the scene, sizing up the situation, but said nothing. Righting the wagon, it was reloaded. After unloading at the barn, still having said nothing, he remarked to Willie, "You know, I had an awful time to keep from getting mad." I treasure that memory.

We worked for some 25 years together on the District Mission Board. He had untiring patience, and was an expert in ironing out problems. He did more for our mission churches than any other man in our district.

John S. Crumpacker
Cloverdale, Virginia

*Deceased

I knew Brother C. E. Eller. He has been with us many times. He was the preacher at Sister Bertie Fleishman's funeral. He also preached Spirit-filled sermons in a revival here at the Spruce Run Church of the Brethren.

I always enjoyed visiting in his home near Salem, Virginia. The orderliness of his home and life proved him a fine Christian man.

Mary Beckie Broyles
Lindside, West Virginia

*Deceased

I stayed with the "Crist" Eller's during a revival meeting at the Oak Grove school house in 1902. A baby girl was born while I was there, later to become Carl Spangler's wife, Sadie. Brother "Crist" called on me to conduct a special dedication service. Being only 19, I felt so inexperienced and unworthy to do such a thing.

Enoch Bowman
Boones Mill, Virginia

*Deceased

My mother, Flora (Bowman) Naff, had died October, 1938. My father, "Ben," told inquiring neighbors, "Get Brother "Crist" Eller to come preach Flora's funeral." Pastor Marvin Clingenpeel assisted.

As a young boy, I remember his staying in our home during a two-week's meeting in Blackwater Chapel.

Joel B. Naff
Boones Mill, Virginia

Mr. Eller always wore a black suit and a pair of gold-framed glasses. I well remember how his emotions would get the better of him in the pulpit.

Nick Niker
Roanoke, Virginia

I always looked for Brother Eller at every District Meeting. Somehow, he always had something to say, offering his persuasive judgment as to matters up for decision. When not present, I'd inquire as to where he might be.

Gladys (Persley) Ripley
Buchanan, Virginia

Section II

Introduction

"Some Memories" (1970) Revised

Following the death of my sister, Sadie (Eller) Spangler, June 13, 1969, I decided to write some of my personal memories. That resulted in developing a booklet of over 150. Some 100 copies were made and distributed in 1970.

In the former Section I, I have solicited and compiled a collection containing memories of my parents. It seemed appropriate to revise and include in this Section II, as far as referred to one or both of my parents, a few of my *"Some Memories."*

In addition, I have included an up-date of my 1970 birthday tribute to my parents.

It is sincerely hoped that this revised edition of my *Some Memories*, a total of 34, will add further insight as to the nature, character and spirit of my nearest ancestors.

Section II

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Resourceful Parents

Since Papa was first to rise each morning, he built fires in the woodstoves. Having spilt some kerosene on the kitchen floor, he lit it to remove it. The leaping flames created much excitement before he got them smothered.

Papa and his hired man awakened me both on applebutter-boiling and butchering mornings when building the fires under the kettles. Occasionally, I would hear a rifle shot and a pig squeal.

I remember once when Mama rescued Sadie and me from stinging yellow jackets by pouring buckets of water on us. We had played too close to their nest at Papa's sweet potato bed back of the smokehouse.

On another occasion as Mama and several of us children returned from a visit with her Henry parents, Orien, having gone to sleep at her feet, fell out of the one-seated buggy. Morgan, our horse, was rounding a sharp turn in sight of the Grisso grade school where she had been a pupil of Papa's. He was uninjured.

When I was planning to enter college for my 3rd and 4th years, Mama's brother, Jerry M. Henry, was president of Blue Ridge College, New Windsor, Md. I really wanted to go there. However, to have me closer home and for economic reasons Papa arranged that I enter Bridgewater College.

During a two-week's evangelistic series in the Oak Grove Church, Papa was taking me around for visits. One night as we proceeded to greet the people leaving the church, Elsie (Wertz) Sowder asked Papa, "Brother Eller, why didn't you and Henry come to our house for supper this evening?" Humiliated, Papa had to admit he had forgotten and had scheduled one at another place. He told Elsie to "Warm over everything that needs it. Henry and I will be with you for breakfast." We went, making three company meals that day.

Rewards for Parental Discipline

A baby was to be born at our house. Papa took me in our single buggy for a couple weeks stay with Grandpa Henry's. After playing with my Uncle Howard and his shepherd dog, Rover, for some time, Papa went to the buggy to return home. I couldn't stop crying. He had to go back home with me.

As my parents were leaving for a trip to town, Mama instructed me to give the kitchen floor a good scrubbing. I recall doing the dining room, too. Upon their return, my heart was thrilled at Mama's words of praise.

One evening, Papa had said something that caused me to go upstairs to bed sobbing. Because I was unable to quit, he came up and apologized. Can I ever

forget that example?

Occasionally, I went along with Papa to the Roanoke farmer's market in our one-horse wagon. On a trip near Christmas, he took me to Cousin Clay Eller's store on the square. To my great delight, Papa bought me a pearl-handle pocket knife. Sometimes he would buy me a cone of ice cream from the peddler pushing his little white two-wheeled cart. Always he would buy some tasty yellow cheese and a box of Uneda Soda Crackers for our lunch.

Trusting in the Providence of God

Until we children were old enough to take a turn, Papa led prayers at meals (unless there was a visitor present). When no church service was scheduled on Sunday evenings, Papa conducted family worship. There was no piano until our high school days.

After our old bank barn burned down, early one morning in October, 1913, Papa's prayer at a late breakfast included the words, "Lord, we thank Thee that it is as well with us as it is."

During one of Papa's W. Va. preaching trips over a weekend, a severe pain developed in my abdomen. After his return on Monday, I felt a thump inside. My pain subsided. Our doctor in Salem was called immediately. He confirmed that my appendix had ruptured. An ambulance came and took me to the Roanoke Jefferson Hospital. Before leaving, Papa and Mama kneeled down by my bed and prayed.

Dedication to Church Opportunities

On one of Papa's many trips to the Copper Hill Church, Mama and I went along. We visited Mama's cousin Susie (Henry) Moore on our way. They had lots of chestnuts. I got my fill; too many. After the Love Feast that Saturday evening, we stayed overnight with another of Mama's Henry cousins, the Aldridges. Papa took me the next morning for my first and only after-Love Feast-breakfast for the many visitors. A brother Shaver served a table of boys. As he did so he remarked, "We've got to feed the boys or the men'll get scase."

The press of home duties caused Papa and me to start late for the train in Salem. Hearing the whistle blowing for the station I got our horse into a gallop. We were able to arrive on the wrong side of the train just in time for Papa to grab the hand bar and step on. He got inside at the next stop. Thus, Papa was off for another church-related trip into W. Va.

Since our parents would not take us older children in our surry the nine miles to the Peters Creek fall love feast, they secured "Aunt Amy" (a negro neighbor) to stay with us. How we trusted and loved her, including her black "red-eye" gravy.

Parental Council Reversed

A church council was scheduled to be held in our Oak Grove Church. That was August, 1918. A special matter of business was the election of one or more persons to the ministry. Being at a loss as to whom I ought to cast my vote for (privately) before the District Elder's Committee, I advised with my parents. They suggested one such as cousin Price Garst. (Somehow, my own name did not seem to be involved; although my Uncle Jerry M. Henry some ten years earlier remarked to me, "I want you to be a preacher some day.") I was the church's choice that day, and duly "installed."

Two Memorable Christmas Days

Our third child (second son) was born while I was serving as pastor of the Brownsville, Md., congregation. Following his birth in a small Brunswick, Md., hospital, I drove the eight miles to see both mother and the tiny son. Deciding to send a message to my parents (visiting with my sister Ruby (Eller) Foster), the telegram read, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given" and "his name shall be called" (Isa. 9:6) Galen Ross. That was Christmas Day. Later, Mama told me that upon receiving the news she "felt like jumping up and down and cracking her heels together three times."

Since my mother had been experiencing some heart pains for a few weeks, she did not greet my family at the front door on December 25, 1944. We greeted her seated in the kitchen with other children and grandchildren gathered for the usual family festival. During the buffet meal she had to be put to bed. Soon she called brother Orien and me to her bedside for special prayers. She remarked, "Boys, I think this will be my last." Under the watchcare of my nurse sister Edna (Eller) Snavely, her spirit slipped away soon after midnight. The next Sunday morning my sermon theme in the Buena Vista, Va. Church of the Brethren was, "In Celebration of the Death of My Mother."

1971 Up-Date Tribute to My Parents

I cannot speak for all who have contributed to these "Memories" of my parents. I can only share my own personal tribute to loving and faithful heritage. Indeed, Hebrews 11:4b, as Moffatt translates, seems appropriate, "He died, but by his faith he is still speaking."

Three months after Christian Emory Eller's 30th birthday, and seven months following Rebecca (Henry) Eller's 23rd, and seven months past their 3rd anniversary, a 2nd son was born on April 12, 1900. They named him Henry Cline after his mother's maiden name and the famed Brethren Civil War hero, John Cline, of Broadway, Va.

On this, my 84th birthday, I recall with great delight what God had done through my parents' devotion and sacrifices. I am amazed at beholding my plump baby face at fourteen months. What tender loving care must have already been given. Now, as I reflect on my life as it began with them then, and on through childhood, youth, and into the years when I became a husband and parent of my own family of three children, ten grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren, what more can I say? I cannot find words to adequately express the praise, gratitude and commemoration due both them and our God.

