

A MEMOIR OF A BELOVED HUSBAND

written by

Dial Winifred Davis Moorehead

Transcribed by granddaughter
Becky Moorehead Hoag

From a beautiful album Winifred created, with photos and
memorabilia, about her beloved husband, Lee

She then set the album aside for decades, until family
members discovered it in her living room in Decatur
around 1970.

She didn't want to speak of it, but let us look at it.

THE BABY

On a hot, sultry, Sunday morning in July just as the robins began their morning chorus, there was ushered into the world -- a baby boy. It seemed as if the robins knew of the joy and happiness that this tiny life was to bring into the world, and they bursted their throats that his birth might be heralded. The name of this child was -

Lee Coddington Moorehead

The date - July 13, 1890.

The place - Hopedale, Illinois

THE PARENTS

The mother was before her marriage - Clara May Coddington

Her parents were - William and Minerva Coddington
thrifty farmers of Scotch-Irish descent.

His parents were - Hiram and Mary Moorehead
also farmers of the fertile farm lands near Boynton, Illinois.

The marriage date was - September 23, 1886.

AUNTS AND UNCLES

There were six uncles on the fathers side.

On the Mother's side there were two uncles -
William Coddington and Charles Coddington

And one aunt - Lillie Coddington Griesemer

BABYHOOD

Lee's babyhood was spent in Hopedale. There were loving relatives on both sides of the family to admire and love the plump and rosy baby and it was only a fore-runner of the love and adoration that followed him all the days of his life.

When he was about two years old, he was christened at the Methodist Church in Hopedale. His Grandfather Coddington gave him a little red book of "Proverbs." Lee was very fond of it and called it his "prayer book."

While still in Hopedale he went to kindergarten taught by Miss Dora Tounn.

CHILDHOOD

When Lee was seven years old he moved with his parents to Delavan, Illinois. Their first home there was a little bungalow in the south part of town. It was while living here, that he became acquainted and played with a little girl whose birthday was on the same day as his own, Helen Duncan. It was a friendship that lasted throughout the years.

In February they moved into a new home which they had built in the west end of town. Several happy years were spent in this home. Lee went to the public school, his first teacher being Mrs. Abbie A. Newman. He took piano lessons and also violin lessons.

PLAYMATES AND PETS

Lee led the life of a normal, healthy child. Across the street lived Willis Crabb, a boy of his own age. The two little fellows were almost inseparable and spent long days together at each other's homes. Harry Armacost and Paul Jones were also his little friends. He had many pets but the most cherished of all was "Old Maude," a black horse. He rode her from babyhood up to fifteen years of age, always without a saddle and in a gallop from one end of town to the other. His favorite pastime was to tear up rags and sit beneath his beloved pet and wrap her legs making believe she was a race horse. And Old Maude would not so much as switch a fly when her little master played beneath her feet.

SCHOOL DAYS AWAY

When Lee was fourteen years old, he went to Lake Forest Academy to school. He had a wonderfully good time there and again is found evidence of his popularity and the esteem of those with whom he was associated.

Here he played his first football. His chum was Neil Jeffrey. The two boys had many good times together in Chicago which was Neil's home.

He did not return to Lake Forest the next year but went to Wesleyan at Bloomington, Illinois. It was during his year there that the only real sorrow of his life befell him. On February 5, 1906 his father died. The house in Delavan had been sold and plans were being made for another trip and possible permanent move to California.

Mr. Moorehead, was ill one week with pneumonia. No one knows what influence his father's life and passing had upon the young man of tender years. But his father's nobleness of character and the careful and prayerful training of his Mother brought him safely through the pitfalls of the dangerous age of boyhood and he developed into the kind of young man of which he gave promise in his babyhood.

The summer following his father's death Lee spent on his father's farm near Hopedale. Here he was under the supervision and care of Chris Kipfer and his wife, hard-working, industrious German I people. It was an epoch in the boy's life, a far from easy existence, but it strengthened his character which was then in the moulding.

The next year Lee went to St. Charles Military College in Missouri. Here he had good times with the girls at Lindenwood, a neighboring school and made frequent trips into St. Louis for pleasure. Again he played football which was his favorite game.

EASTERN TRIP

The summer following his year at Military school, Lee and his Mother traveled through the east. They visited Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York City, and Albany. They spent one month at Lake Placid in the Adirondack Mountains. From there they went to Montreal, Canada and through the Rapids of the St. Lawrence river, The Thousand Islands, Toronto, and Niagara Falls. They sailed from Buffalo, New York via the Great Lakes for Chicago, a trip of three days and nights by water and one never to be forgotten.

MILLIKIN SCHOOL DAYS

The fall following the Eastern trip Lee began his school days at James Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois. He Mother lived with him there for the first few weeks. He graduated from the academy in 1909 and continued on in College work. His popularity there was the same as it had been all his life and he was initiated into the Kappa Delta Chi fraternity where he proved to

be one of its best loved members. The fraternity house was at 1041 West Main Street and Lee lived there during his Millikin days.

He studied voice under Professor W. B. Olds of the Conservatory at Millikin. He had a beautiful lyric tenor voice but was always too modest to show its real qualities. He sang in one of the church choirs and in the fraternity quartette.

COURTSHIP

It was on a bob sled ride during the winter of his first year at Millikin that Lee met the girl who was afterwards to be his wife. Her name was Winifred Davis and she was there living at the Girl's Hall on the campus. From that beginning started the romance which was never ending.

The first "date" was to see the play "The Witching Hour." It was indeed a bewitching hour for them. Although the play was good, they preferred the intermissions for there was much to talk about and to find out about each other - this boy and girl who were rapidly and heedlessly falling in love with each other. The courtship was earnest from the very start. The days sped by. As spring came on there were many long walks and drives in the woods, violet hunting, Loitering boy and girl fashion, the little love god leading the way. They made a trip to Mt. Auburn to visit Winifred's parents. Lee was at once taken into the family circle. The following winter the Davis family moved to Decatur. Then, freed from the restrictions of dormitory life, the romance hastened on to its culmination.

The hours flew by when they were together, they dragged when they were apart. Lee was only nineteen and Winifred eighteen when their pledges were given to each other. The betrothal ring was a moonstone which Lee had found on the beach in California. He had a special setting made for it and gave it to Winifred on her birthday. It was also her birthstone and had engraved within its depths the date of the betrothal. Lee gave a little dinner down town in a private room in a restaurant to announce the engagement. The only guests were Lena Moore and Carleton Limcox, a young couple as much in love as themselves.

About this time Mr. Davis and Lee went into the automobile business together. It was rather a new field then and did not prove very remunerative, only it did provide an excellent excuse for Lee to remain in Decatur during the summer months.

Lee's own car was a little Mitchell roadster for which he had special cushions made to give it more of a racing appearance. There were many happy trips taken in the roadster. They went several times to Delavan to visit Lee's mother. On his twenty-first birthday all the Davis family went to Delavan to attend a dinner which his Mother was giving in his honor. His place at the table was marked by a gold monogrammed watch, the gift of his Mother.

Lee had often made the jesting remark that he would be married during his twenty-first year or not at all. And so it was arranged that the marriage should take place that winter. Although they both were so young, the consent of both families was given most readily. Lee had endeared himself into the hearts of Winifred's parents in a thousand ways. It is not strange that the popularity which had been his from babyhood should follow him through his romance. His nobleness of character, the charm of his personality, the sunshine and cheeriness of his nature could not help but win favor in the eyes of the parents who were giving him their elder daughter.

The wedding date was set for New Year's day - the lovers thought this the most appropriate day on which to begin their life together. Winifred announced the fact which had long been apparent to their school world by wearing her diamond solitaire. Later she announced the day at a

luncheon which she gave to the members of her sorority.

Lee chose Fred Railsback, a lifelong friend to be his best man. Winifred had Mabel Edmondson of Atwood and Eurada Griswold of Chicago for her bridesmaids and her sister, Haldeen, for her maid of honor. Geraldine Holben was the ring-bearer.

THE HONEYMOON

New Year's day, January first, nineteen hundred and twelve, dawned fair and cold. "Happy is the bride whom the sun shines upon." Surely the sunshine of that day foretold the happiness of the years to come. The wedding was gay but tinged with sadness as most weddings are. there were the usual good-byes, the mad rush to the railway station followed by the merry crowd and the young couple left on the 4:40 train for St. Louis, the first stage of their honeymoon trip to California.

They left St. Louis the next day aboard the Dixie Flyer for Memphis. Their stay there was short, leaving the same day for New Orleans. They stayed there two or three days, sight-seeing around the city. On January sixth they took the "Sunset Limited" for Los Angeles. They spent one night in Los Angeles going out the next day to Pasadena. They were soon established there in a tiny bungalow of two rooms and a bath run in connection with La Casa Grande hotel where all their meals were served. There began the real honeymoon. They were in their little bungalow almost a month. The days were filled with pleasures of all kinds, long walks, canyon and mountain trips, drives, beach outings, horse back rides, and visits into Los Angeles to the theatre and for shopping. There was one night spent on top of Mt. Wilson in a tiny cabin, going to sleep to the music of the wind in the pines and awakening early to view the glorious spectacle of the sunrise. They went through the huge solar observatory which is on top of Mt. Wilson. Their guide explained everything to them until their heads were in a whirl. The Mt. Wilson trip was voted the best one of all.

At last came the time to bid the little bungalow good-bye and it was done almost tearfully. They spent a few days at San Diego going there by boat from San Pedro. They stopped there at the U.S. Grant hotel going out from there on side trips to the Coronado Islands, La Jolla, and down to Tia Juana, Mexico. They returned to Los Angeles and after shopping and sight-seeing a few days there they went over to Catalina Island. Here Lee went goat hunting. He rode forty miles in one day with a guide in search of mountain goats and was rewarded by killing two of them. He had one of the heads sent to a taxidermist an mounted and was always very proud of his specimen.

The only "blue" day of the honeymoon came while on the boat from San Pedro to San Francisco. They were on the ocean two nights and one day in the worst storm that had been experienced in many years. Both were frightfully, wretchedly sea sick, not caring if the boat kept afloat or sank. They were eighteen hours late into San Francisco but reached there in safety and soon forgot their unhappy adventure on the ocean in the midst of sight-seeing in that city. They spent one wonderful afternoon in Golden Gate Park and many happy hours on the beach. Their side trip out from there was across the bay to Sausalito and from there to Mill Valley and up Mt. Tomalpais. They lunched at the tavern there and in the afternoon went to the Muir woods. They had a wonderful time there walking miles through the magnificent woods which are a U.S. forest preserve.

They left San Francisco on the California Limited for the Grand Canyon. There they took the trail down the Canyon seven miles down to the Colorado river, a trip of awe-inspiring grandeur and

magnificence.

The next stop along the way was at Colorado Springs where they got their first touch of winter again. It was a decided contrast to the sunshine and warmth of California. In spite of the chill winds they enjoyed a drive through Manitou, Williams Canyon, Ute Pass, over Temple drive to the Cave of the Winds.

From Colorado Springs their next and last stop was Denver. They saw the sights of Denver rather hurriedly for they were getting nearer home and felt the pull of the home folks who were anxiously awaiting their coming. They went at once to Delavan and to housekeeping in the house that Lee's Mother had ready for them. There were many friends in Delavan who welcomed the young couple and they fell at once into the social life of the town.

FATHERHOOD AND BUSINESS LIFE

On May 18, 1913, Rosemary Jane Moorehead was born. Their cup of happiness had been full to the brim and with her birth it was full and overflowing. She was a dear baby, the first grandchild on either side and was loved by everyone who came in contact with her.

While living in Delavan Lee had been looking after his and his Mother's farming interests. He soon tired of this inactive life and decided to move to Peoria. They left Delavan in the fall of 1914, regretfully but with high hopes of a greater business future.

In Peoria he was first connected with an insurance company but left that work to go into business for himself. He bought out a small factory known as the Lanet-Cedar Co. It was an old, run-down business and he worked zestfully to build it up and trade it off for more important things.

On January 23, 1916, William Dial Moorehead was born. Lee had hoped for a son and rejoiced greatly when his hopes were realized. When they first moved to Peoria they lived in an apartment. But the first spring days sent them house hunting for a place with a yard in which Rosemary might play. They bought a little bungalow just being completed at 312 Peoria Avenue. To this little house the Mother and the new baby came back from the hospital. It was a dear little house and many, many happy days were spent there. The little bungalow soon proved too small for their needs and they began once more to hunt a more commodious house. One day during the summer of 1918 as they were driving along Parkside Drive they saw a house for sale. The house itself was far from pleasing but the location was ideal and there was a great deal of ground, enough to satisfy all their desires. The house had great possibilities for remodelling and within two or three days the deal was closed.

The house was remodelled from basement to attic and was made into an attractive, commodious, comfortable, convenient house in every sense of the word. They moved into the house in December, 1918. On February 28, 1919, Lee Charles Moorehead was born. He was well named, for from the very beginning he was the image of his father and the resemblance in looks, manners, and characteristics increased with every year of the child's life.

Lee's father had been a real estate man dealing in farm lands when the game was new. Lee had always felt the urge to go into the same work. At last he opened up an office in the Central National Bank Building. He and Mrs. A. W. Haller of Elgin, Illinois had become greatly interested in North Carolina land. They formed a partnership taking over a tract of 35,000 acres near New Bern, North Carolina. They formed a company known as the Pamlico Lumber and Development Company to sell the stocks and began developing and clearing the land. It was a tremendously

big undertaking but its future was very bright. Lee was an untiring worker in the interests of the company making occasional trips to North Carolina. He never liked to be away from home and went and came as quickly as he could. But he did enjoy the outdoor life in the woods while away on these trips. There was a hunting lodge on the tract of land where he often stayed and hunted and fished during his few spare moments.

On December 18, 1920, Robert Davis Moorehead was born. Although he was the fourth baby he proved to be the sunshine of the house. Lee was very proud of his little quartette. He was a wonderful father, sacrificing his time and strength that his family might have the things he desired for them. He was interested in the minutest details of the house life. It was a most happy family circle and the happiest occasions were when they all went off together for an outing in the woods or for long drives, always in the country if possible for they loved the great out-of-doors.

Lee spent every minute that he could working in the garden and around the house and yard. There was nothing that he could not repair or mend nor any job too big for him to undertake. He held regular sessions for mending dolls and broken toys always with an admiring little audience around him.

There were several delightful vacations spent away from Peoria. The summer before little Lee was born, they drove to Devil's Lake, Wisconsin and from there on to "The Dells." It was a pleasant two weeks. The summer of 1922 they drove again to Wisconsin and spent a wonderful month in a cottage on Lake Winnebago near Fond du Lac. It was a never to be forgotten holiday.

SOCIAL AND CIVIC LIFE

Lee was a charter member of the University Club of Peoria. He was a willing and ardent worker and did much to make the club the success it became. He was also a member of the Country Club. He was a Shriner but did not give much of his time to lodge affairs.

He belonged to the First Methodist Church and for a time sang in its Vested choir. Dr. Shaw, the pastor, called him "a prince among men" and said that he could always rely upon him for assistance in any sort of works that could be done without ostentation.

When the world war came on, Lee became a member of the Illinois Reserve Militia. He was made a corporal in his company. He answered the call to arms two different times, once to quell a riot at the Keystone Steel and Wire Company of Peoria, and the other for riot duty at West Frankfort, Illinois where he led the life of a soldier for a week.

In politics he was a Republican but voted for the man instead of the party. He was a most ardent admirer of Roosevelt, considering him to be one of the Nation's really great men.

He numbered his friends among all stations in life. He was Lee to everyone. It was very unusual to hear him called Mr. Moorehead. He was ever ready to assist a friend in any way that he could. He gave freely of his time, his money, and his ability to the demands made upon him. But always in an unobtrusive, quiet manner, never seeking for fame or glory. His ideals were of the highest and his morals without question. Few realized the depths of his character but many knew and felt the warmth and charm of his personality. Those who knew and loved him best knew him to be an artist in many ways, a singer of great ability, a lover of sports, a thorough and most capable business man, and above all, a devoted son, husband, and father.

THE LAST CHAPTER

On the first day of March 1922, Lee was taken sick with a hard chill. His condition was not alarming at first, but in two days pneumonia developed. Then the fight began. Doctors and nurses and loved ones worked valiantly but to no avail. At nine o'clock in the evening, a week from the day he was taken sick, he left this world for the next one, leaving behind him heartache, desolateness, inconsolable grief and anguish. On the eleventh of March he was laid to rest in the Jobst Mausoleum in Springdale Cemetery in Peoria. A few months later his permanent resting place was made in beautiful Fairlawn at Decatur.

Yet, O stricken heart, remember, O remember,
How of human days he lived the better part.
April came to bloom, and never dim December
Breathed it killing chill upon the head or heart.

Doomed to know not Winter, only Spring, a being
Trod the flowery April blithely for a while,
Took his fill of music, joy of thought and seeing,

Came and stayed and went, nor ever ceased to smile.
Came and stayed and went, and now when all is finished,
You alone have crossed the melancholy stream,
Yours the pang, but his, O his, the undiminished,
Undecaying gladness, undeparted dreams.

All that life contains of torture, toil and treason,
Shame, dishonor, death, to him were but a name.
Here, a boy, he dwelt through all the singing seasons,
And ere the day of sorrow departed as he came.

-Robert Louis Stevenson