

THE MARRIAGE OF FAYE DAWNA HILL AND RICHARD LEROY DAVIS

21 July 1994

Sixty years ago today on 21 July 1934 Richard LeRoy Davis and I, Faye Dawna Hill, were married. The wedding took place in the morning in the parlor of 819 East Sixth Street, Topeka, Kansas which was the home of her mother, Clara Dawna (Isenberger) Hill and her two sisters, Fern Darlene and Floy Daylia. Faye's dress had been made by a local dressmaker of peau de soie. The maid of honor was her sixteen year-old sister who still had long curls and wore her Junior High School graduation dress.

The flowers cost a total of fifteen dollars. Dick's best man was his brother, Robert Vincent Davis. My Washburn organ teacher, Rachel Johnson, played for the ceremony on our upright Schiller piano. The Reverend John R. Golden, minister of the First Christian Church performed the ceremony. He had been asked to do this only because he had conducted the funeral service for Dick's mother who had died just the previous March of leukemia. Dick and I had no other church association. After the ceremony we and our few guests went to the dining room where we had cake and little glasses of grape juice. In the basement of 156 Fairlawn there is a box with some of those same little glasses that were used that day.

My father, Burton Hill, was present for the occasion. It was the first time he had been in the house since he and my mother had been divorced which, I believe, was in 1929-30. It was an accomplishment for me to persuade my mother to allow him to attend. Dick's mother had been endeavoring to bring Dad and Mother together in the hope that they would be reunited but she became ill and was unable to continue her efforts.

1934 was one of the hottest summers Kansas had ever had. The day we were married it was 112°. In those days there was no air-conditioning. Perhaps Mother had an electric fan operating. I don't recall.

Arthur Vincent Davis, Dick's father, was present but unable to do much standing because of lack of circulation in one of his legs. My last memory of him as Dick and I left the house for our honeymoon trip was of him sitting at the rail on the front porch. He was a fine man and we shared many pleasant years together as a family.

Our honeymoon destination was to be Chicago where the World's Fair was taking place. We were traveling in a second-hand Chevrolet coupe which Dick and I had purchased previously. It was so unbearably hot that we bought a chunk of ice

to put on the wooden floorboard. The first night was spent in Hannibal, Missouri. It was a miserable night. The only relief to be had was to bathe in as cold water as was available. There was a tiny electric fan in the room and its hum served mostly to remind us of the sound of the car motor.

Once in our Chicago hotel room I pulled out my "big" surprise: a sample bottle of whiskey which a salesman calling at Hill Packing Company had given to me. There were all of two short drinks in it and I can remember how Dick laughed at my big deal. However, he had nothing of the sort to offer.

Chicago is well known as the "windy city". While we were there it was not only windy but very cold...a sharp contrast to the temperatures we had been experiencing. I had had a beautiful coat of light orange wool made but on that hot wedding day I had forgotten to take it along. Lake Michigan had blown some very cold air in from the north and I shook with cold. Dick had some relatives there with whom we visited and, thankfully, one of the young women loaned me a coat. These were still Depression days and the coat showed signs of much wear. The cuffs were frayed.

When we returned from our honeymoon we rented an apartment on the third floor of 919 Tyler Street. We had a minimal amount of furniture which included the white chair now in the living room at 156 Fairlawn Road as well as the Karpen sofa which Ronald, my son, uses to this day. They were good pieces of furniture and had been bought on time in advance of our marriage.

When we were married Dick was working at the Boys' Industrial School in North Topeka. His salary was \$50.00 a month. I had a little advantage because I was working for my father and drew a salary of \$75.00 a month. I kept a very good record of our expenses. There was no cause for a budget. We simply had to be able to pay bills as they became due. If I was foolish enough to buy a candy bar for 5¢ during the month and it threw our cash into a hazardous situation the next month saw no such extravagance.

We remained at 919 Tyler until one day I dropped my sack of groceries on the top stairway and the contents rolled down to the bottom. I had an overactive thyroid condition and was distraught all of the time. It was at this time that we decided to join Dick's father and brother at 126 North Courtland where we shared all expenses and lived much better. It was a pleasure to live with them both. We had a black girl to do the housework. She was paid \$4.00 a week.

I hope that this little resume will give you an idea of the life and times of the Depression years as well as the circumstances of the marriage of Richard LeRoy Davis and Faye Dawna Hill.



## EPILOGUE

Dick's father, Arthur Vincent Davis, had been paymaster of the \_\_\_\_\_ Orient Railroad at Wichita, Kansas. Dick was in training there as a mechanic's helper. When the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad bought the Orient Railroad Dick's father was transferred to Topeka where he became the assistant paymaster for the railroad. J. C. Fink who became his best friend was the paymaster. Dick came with his family to Topeka. He and I were introduced by Marie Davis and Gene Congdon who later married. Gene was a Wichita friend and Marie was my best friend at Washburn College. After a telephone call from her they came to my home with Dick, picked me up and we left for a ride. Dick and I rode in the rumble seat. That was the beginning of our relationship.

Richard LeRoy Davis was born 3 February 1907 in Wichita, Kansas. He died 7 March 1966 in Tucson, Arizona. His death certificate states wrongly that he was born in Topeka, Kansas.

Faye Dawna Hill was born 19 August 1909, Topeka, Kansas probably at 824 Madison St.

Arthur Vincent Davis, father of Richard LeRoy, was born 24 September 1875 near Paxton, Ford County, Illinois. He died 23 October 1944 in Topeka, Kansas

Mae Jeanette (Hoover) Davis, mother of Richard LeRoy, was born 11 October 1882 at or near Pearl, Pike County, Illinois. She died 8 March 1934 in Topeka, Kansas

Burton Hill, father of Faye Dawna Hill, was born 18 December 1880, Mission Creek Township, Wabaunsee County, Kansas. He died 15 September 1962 at Topeka, Kansas.

Clara Dawna (Isenberger) Hill was born 4 July 1887 on Coulson's Hill, near Portland, Indiana. She died 6 May 1977 in Topeka, Kansas. She was Faye's mother.

Written and typed by

Faye Dawna (Hill) Davis Greene

156 Fairlawn Road, Topeka, KS

21 July 1994

*Faye Davis Greene*