

Tribute given by Stan Hay:

It is good to exercise our faith in times of loss, while we find our earthly path to the end of living, to claim the promise made to us by our Creator.

Effie lived a long life of 88 years of which only the last weeks were affected by loss of memory. Born in Oamaru on 11 March 1904, she was the first of the family of four to Frank and Edith. Joe was born in 1906, Frank 1908, Ivan 1917.

Grandad was employed at Dalgety's until Effie was about 13 years, completing most of her schooling by that time. The family transferred to Nelson where Ivan was born and inheritance moneys left Edith were spent purchasing a general second hand shop. Their next move was to Timaru where Grandad found employment with John Mill & Co at Timaru. Effie commenced working at the woolen mill, soon becoming a Leading Hand. I can find no record of her conversion but during these years she, at Timaru Corps, was a songster, Life Saving Guard Leader and Sunday School Teacher. there was no doubt in anybody's mind that a change had come about in Effie's life.

During this period Joe commenced work as a cabinet making apprentice with Zechariah Berry; Frank was employed by Ransay Drapers becoming a salesperson; Ivan trained as a chemist with Oddies Dispensary. Joe and Frank as schoolboys delivered papers after school.

The family lived in a number of locations. I recall the large house and property at Timaru south where I followed Grandad into the fowl yard at feeding time. A large white rooster advanced on me and I fainted.

Grandma had become unwell and there was a shift to Leclercs Ter above the cliff on Caroline Bay. Effie reduced her working hours to care for Grandma who was often found spending her hours in a pleasant glass observation room overlooking the bay. Grandma was my overseer from this room as I fished from the Fishermans Wharf. I was about 8 years at this time and I recall when leaving the property for any reason I had to be properly dressed in my school uniform. One of the days when fishing with other boys off the wharf, I slipped off the large rope buffer which ships were tied against, getting very wet and was able to climb out on my own. There was a great flurry at the house when I arrived which turned to amusement when I exclaimed "But I kept my cap on".

Grandmother's health deteriorated and they again moved to Greys Rd. A boarder was taken in, Bert Ray. Effie had met him at work. By now there was romance. Bert asked Effie to marry. The family consensus was he was not good enough. He smoked besides with the men having to work, who would look after mother. Effie disappointingly declined. Later one of the family was heard to say "She did not have to choose to stay". As Grandmother's sickness progressed her memory failed to a point where Effie was accused of being the enemy. I recall these sad periods as reducing Effie to tears. These outbursts unsettled me. I would not enter the room when Grandma called, though I realised later she loved to see me.

This is my last recollection of Grandmother. Not long after on the 27 October 1943 Grandmother died at the age of 65. Effie was then 39 years. Grandad worked a short time to retirement, living at Greys Rd with Effie until Herb Baker came on the scene to propose marriage. This was accepted and Effie started her new life in a farm house situated in the loop of the river at Studholme on the Ruddinclaw Property. Our chosen cousins are Charlie, Len and Joy and the family are grateful at the acceptance and care which Effie was given by this part of the family. It was not long before Herb took ill. Effie cared for him until his parting.

Effie and Grandad then moved to Christchurch into a house near Lancaster Park where Effie worked for Joe in a Draper shop on Ferry Rd. Grandfather became ill. Effie ceased work and cared for him in a house at Madras St where he died in 1959. Effie, now 55 years, took a flat and worked at Addington during Frank's management term on the men's home. From Addington Effie retired to a flat in Mable Howard Place then Clent Lane and finally to Resthaven.

During her sickness in the last month Helen and I visited her at Resthaven where, although very uncomfortable after a stroke, she sang us the chorus "If God looks after His sparrow He will surely take care of me". This is my last recollection of Auntie Effie before we became snow bound. I could have told more of my memories but have chosen to ask the family for theirs.

Frank : Effie was a tower of strength to mother, Herb and father.

Lawrence : Effie was always anxious and cared totally for others, not for herself.

Glenis : Recalls the many people cared for over the years especially Glenis as a child with her sisters and brother when their parents were away.

Lynette : Recalls the bags of oranges as a child when Effie visited. When courting with Kevin, Effie was concerned at the time spent in the car saying goodnight. There were a few words passed. Making up was a pleasurable experience.

Ivan : In the house at South Timaru there was a large trellis of sweetpeas which was tended by mother, a zealous gardener. My friends and I climbed the trellis ruining the flowers. Mother was so angry I was sent to bed without tea. Later Effie smuggled food into my bedroom. She was another person.

Andrew : Auntie Effie was always willing to spend time and interest which gave me a genuine feeling of being cared for.

Noeline : Like a mum. Very interested in all things especially in married additions. Always willing to listen, encourage, not critical.

Shirley : Very special friend. A caring lady. Gentle - fitted in quietly anywhere. Never took the limelight.

Jennifer : A lady who was always the same. Saw the good in people. Exercise her sense of right and wrong by quiet correction.

Pam : Everybody's aunty. Lovely lady.

Bram : In a life of selfless devotion to the caring of others she created a family far wider than she could ever have had of her own.

David : Most lovely, beautiful Aunty with a gently spirit.

We agree Effie is special. She affected all of us for good. Effie had no special personal urges for greatness. She chose by faith to live a humble life treating us to all the qualities which are gifted to a true believer of Christ.

Tribute from the Baker Family:

When Effie Hay married our father she took on the formidable task of assisting in caring for his four children who were aged from 9 to 20 years. Coming from a life in Timaru to a farm at Willowbridge must have, in itself, taken some adjustment. But with a quiet determination and the support of her father, Uncle Frank, who also joined the household, she set about the making of a home which was run with clockwork efficiency, warmth and understanding. It was only a short time after they were married that Dad became ill and was unable to work. So a move to Waimate was made. Then sister Margaret also became ill so life for Effie became one of caring for the sick as well as running the household. Over the months and years of this trying time her support and help in so many ways cannot be put into words but will remain forever in our memories.

Effie left a little of herself with many people through her caring and gentle ways but to all the members of her step-family she will always be remembered as someone very special, very much loved because she gave so much of herself to everyone of us. We were enriched by her presence and are the poorer for her passing but find solace in knowing that she has gone to a special place in the arm of her Lord.