

**The Early Life Stories  
of  
Edgar John Taylor Boyle (1921-2004)  
And  
Marjorie Alice (Perdue) Boyle (1917-2012)**

From The Diary Notes of Marjorie Boyle

Author: Garvin H Boyle  
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# **The Early Life Stories of Edgar John Taylor Boyle (1921-2004) And Marjorie Alice (Perdue) Boyle (1917-2012)**

From The Diary Notes of Marjorie Boyle

## **Marjorie's Spiritual Journey**

*(or, The Search for God)*

By: Beverley Boyle, from

Marjorie Perdue was born into a family of 5 girls, 4 of which were living when her mother (Bertha) died and Marjorie was 2 years old. Her father Edwin Perdue was left with two older girls Beryl and Muriel; then Marjorie, and a newborn baby Jean to care for when his wife died, so relatives agreed to take the baby and the two older girls. Marjorie stayed with her father because at two years of age she refused to be separated from him. The plan was that all the girls would again return to live with him when he was able to care for them. He moved between Vancouver and Washington State looking for a job and it was at this time Marjorie was cared for by a family relative who read the Bible to her, when her father was working, and Marjorie at a young age became very interested in God, but did not go to church or read the Bible again until many years later. Edwin later remarried, and with his new wife Edna, Marjorie, and Edna's daughter Mary, and they returned to Vancouver. Muriel and Beryl came to visit during the summers and so contact was maintained between the sisters, but they never returned to live together. Jean was adopted by a family member living in Ontario and so had less contact with her sisters in Vancouver.

Edwin and Edna continued to have 4 more children but not being the daughter of Edna, her father was the only one who gave Marjorie a sense of belonging to the family. When Marjorie was in grade 9 (about 14-15 years old) her father died and her step mother could not care for her and so found a job for her as a live-in baby sitter and she never again was able to return home or finish school. She was at the top of her class in school and loved to play the violin, but all this ended abruptly.

Her teenage years were busy looking after a family of 5 children whose mother died the first summer Marjorie was hired as a help in the home. As a 15 year old she was to become the sole housekeeper, cook, and substitute mother to 5 grieving children, one of which was a new born; whose father was also grieving and distant from his children, all while Marjorie too was grieving the loss of her own father and no longer being a part of her own family. About five years later, the father of the children announced that he was going to remarry and so her services were not needed anymore. He asked that she never see the children again because they were too attached to her and they needed to adapt to their new mother. This was a shock to Marjorie as she had no schooling, no place to live, no family to return to, and had become very attached to the children she had cared for. During the years of her childhood and teen years she prayed often to God to help her, though she knew little of the Bible and of Jesus as a personal Saviour and never attended church.

An elderly couple heard of her and her needs at this time and asked her to come and live with them to be their live-in maid. It was very difficult in the beginning with this couple, but they started to include her in their life by taking her to church with them. This was the first Marjorie had been to church, but she enjoyed it and could be involved in activities which she had missed out on as a teenager. The Haines family became a family to her and Marjorie from this time on called them her mother and father, and kept close contact with them. It was also at this time that she met Edgar Boyle who had enlisted with the Canadian Air Force and was stationed on the west coast. Marjorie realized that her job with the Haines was not a permanent job, and she needed to think of being on her own, and so decided to join the Canadian Air Force and was sent to Guelph Ontario for training as a hospital cook which

also required training in refrigeration. She again was at the top of her class and so was given first choice of the hospital where she wanted to work. She chose to work in the home of the Pitfield's in Montreal which was turned into a convalescent hospital for wounded airmen who were being returned to Canada.

Michael Pitfield, who was later to become Senator Pitfield, was a very young child at the time and followed her around as she worked. It was at this time that she also had the privilege of being introduced to the famous Canadian fighter pilot Billy Bishop. Being in eastern Canada she visited her sister Jean in Lindsey Ontario and renewed their relationship as sisters. She also kept in contact with Edgar Boyle on the west coast and when the war ended they decided to get married and settle in Sand Point. It was at this time that she received a greater understanding of the Bible, of her need for a Saviour, and received teaching that would build up her faith and maintain her faith strong through many years and many more difficulties. I never heard her complain. She was an example of Christian love and grace to all who knew her.

The care of her 6 children and the activities of the Gospel Hall in Arnprior were her main focus in life from this time on. She taught a Daily Vacation Bible School during the summers in Sand Point, and was involved in Bible studies and led Bible studies at various time throughout her life. In her last years in the nursing home she was known as always giving everyone a smile and always saying 'thank you' This was not usual apparently. She is now with the Lord and there is no more sorrow, or hardship. She has been carried by the angels into the presence of Jesus her Saviour where she will be for all eternity.

## **MARJORIE GROWS UP**

*(Or, The Search For a Family)*

By: Garvin H Boyle, based on Marjorie's diaries

### **Family Origins**

The origins of the Perdue and McNeil families, from which Marjorie Alice Perdue is descended, can be found in the Counties of Bruce, Grey and Peel in Ontario (Perdue family) and Victoria County in Ontario (McNeil family). Associated with the McNeil family were a number of other family names that play a role in this story, including Fowler, Crawford, Hardy and Pedlar. These families were the relatives' names centered on Bertha Caroline (McNeil) Perdue, Marjorie's mother. This extended family played a significant role in Marjorie's young life.

William Henry McNeil married Josephine Crawford. Bertha Caroline McNeil was born to them, but Josephine died, probably in childbirth, or shortly thereafter. Henry McNeil eventually remarried and had four more sons, but, apparently Bertha Caroline McNeil, Marjorie's mother, was adopted by a cousin William Bray Pedlar and his wife Elizabeth Jenny (McNeil) Pedlar. They brought her up and educated her as a school teacher. She taught in the school in Kamloops when she was barely out of her teens. [ Note: in one story Marjorie says that Bertha's father died and her mother remarried, having four more sons. The stories agree that Bertha had four half-brothers, but they disagree on whether they were paternal or maternal half-brothers.].

According to his marriage certificate, Edwin Darcel Perdue was born in 1886, in Chelton, Ontario, the son of Joseph T. Perdue and Eliza Payne. Nevertheless, the origins of Edwin's family are particularly difficult to unravel. Family lore says that he is the youngest of twelve children raised near Markdale, Ontario, and this appears to be true. When Marjorie was young she met several 'cousins' belonging to a large family of Perdues scattered about in the area of BC and Washington State. She knew of several aunts and uncles, and met one. She firmly believed that Edwin belonged to this family, which originated in Chinguacousy township near Markdale.

Examination of the census records indicates that a Joseph Perdue living in Chinguacousy, Ontario (Peel County) indeed did have twelve children, however Edwin is not listed among them. Furthermore, there is no place called Chelton, and it appears there never was one (according to the eponymy division of the Federal Government). In addition, the mother of this family was Elizabeth Page, not Eliza Payne. Finally, the twelfth son was NOT named Edwin Darcel Perdue, but was named Albert. There are significant discrepancies between Edwin's recollections of his family and the official records, which do not include Edwin.

Edwin played a fiddle, and was known by those who worked with him as “Frenchy”. He loved to sing ballads in French or English, tell stories, and quote the poems of Robert W Service to anyone who would listen. In short, the official records do not place Edwin in this large family, and his upbringing was apparently different from the rest of his supposed siblings. Nevertheless, the western members of this large family treated him as a brother, and I have come to believe he was, indeed, a brother to them.

A couple of explanations offer themselves. His mother died in childbirth, and he was raised by a neighboring family when his family moved West. His birth name was Albert, but he was raised as Edwin Darcyl. But, this is just speculation.

The Perdies of Chinguacousy form a large family with traceable origins. If Edwin belongs to that family, and I believe he does, then we have a LOT of Perdue cousins.

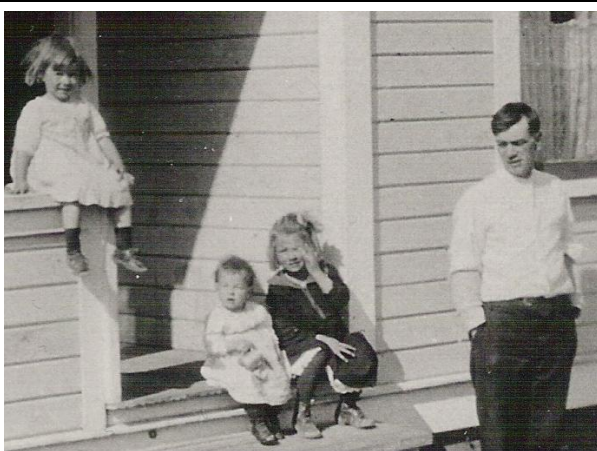
### **The years with Bertha Caroline (McNeil) Perdue**

Bertha married Edwin Darcel Perdue in 1912 in Mission, British Columbia, and they made their family home in Kamloops, British Columbia. They had five daughters. One, named “Happy”, unfortunately died of typhoid fever about the year 1919.

Bertha died in March 1920 in Kamloops during an epidemic of influenza. Muriel, Beryl, Marjorie and Jean survived their mother. Jean, the youngest of the children of the marriage, was two months old at the time. Edwin could not raise such a large family (four girls) by himself, and so arrangements were made by Frank Hardy to have several of Bertha’s relatives help. He took his two oldest daughters, Muriel and Beryl, to live with William (Bray) Pedlar and Elizabeth Jenny (McNeil) Pedlar, the couple who had adopted and raised Bertha, and who were in practice their grand-parents. Jean was adopted by Cousin Charlie Hardy and Cousin May Fowler (of the Parker/Newson line), who lived near Lindsay, Ontario. Marjorie stayed with Edwin and was raised by him. William Pedlar introduced Edwin to Harley and Emma Giles, a couple who opened their doors to Edwin and Marjorie and gave them a stable home in which to live for three years.



**Bertha Caroline (McNeil) Perdue**



**Edwin Perdue and Daughters**



**Bertha Perdue and Daughters**

## The Years with Auntie Em and Uncle Harley Giles

So, Edwin and Marjorie went to live in Everett, Washington, with Auntie Em and Uncle Harley Giles, for three years. Auntie Em and Uncle Harley came from Grand Rapids, Michigan. He came west to work in the shingle mill in the tiny Washington community of Granite Falls. She came to look after her husband, her home, and such other cares that came her way. In the off seasons they resided in Everett, Washington, on Maple Street. It was there that Edwin took Marjorie, and these kind folk supplied the comfort and family stability that was lost when Bertha died.

There was a fifth person in the household (apparently), the young girl Thelma Marie Scott. Harley and Emma parented a niece, Thelma Scott, during that time, and Marjorie and Thelma came to be like sisters. Marjorie was not certain what the relationship was between Thelma, Em and Harley, but she believes that Thelma was a niece. However, Marjorie's notes also mention an Uncle Tom, and a father and a mother. Thelma was about the same age as Marjorie, and became a close friend of Marjorie until the day she passed away at about age 25 (in 1942). There was also a Billy, a neighborhood boy with whom Thelma and Marjorie played often.

Auntie Em was a somewhat stern lady. Later, when the Perdue girls were finally reunited, Auntie Em was unpopular with Marjorie's siblings. Marjorie, however, loved both her and Harley dearly until they passed away. Of "Christian Science" faith, Auntie Em was ever ready to demonstrate the practical interpretations of her faith. She insisted that every morning, after beds were made with meticulous care, and dishes washed and stowed away, that she read Psalms to Marjorie and that they pray together for family and friends. During those formative years (ages three to six) Marjorie saw more of Auntie Em and Uncle Harley than she saw of her father. She became bonded to them like they were her parents, though she still adored her father Edwin.

Auntie Em was determined that Marjorie should be raised as a young "French Lady" consistent with her heritage. According to Muriel, Marjorie's older sister, Marjorie's second name Alice came from the love of the book "Alice in Wonderland" shared by Muriel and Edwin. But according to Auntie Em, Marjorie was now to be called 'Alyce', said with a French accent. Marjorie considered Auntie Em to be her mother, and for the rest of her years living with various adult guardians, Marjorie stubbornly refused to allow anyone to take Auntie Em's place in her affections, or to usurp Auntie Em's authority as her mother. While Marjorie later understood that this caused some problems, she remembers Auntie Em and Uncle Harley as the stars in her life.

## The Years with Edna (Barnes) Perdue

Edwin eventually met and married Edna Barnes. Edna had a daughter from a previous marriage, Mary Georgina (Babe) Cook. After their marriage in 1924 in Stanwood, Washington, they lived in Stanwood for about a year, and then Edwin moved Edna, Babe and Marjorie back to BC in 1925 to start a second family. The new Perdue family home was on Randolph Street in Burnaby, British Columbia.



**Thelma (left) and Marjorie**



**Thelma, Harley, and Marjorie**



The relationship between Marjorie and Edna was, apparently, always strained and difficult. Marjorie recalls that she was not backwards about expressing her opinions about moving to Canada. She declared that she was not going anywhere without Auntie Em and Uncle Harley. Eventually adult arguments won her over. She had three sisters in Canada, and would want to live with them again. She could come to Everett every summer and see Thelma, Auntie Em and Uncle Harley. However, on returning to Canada, Muriel, Beryl and Jean did not rejoin the family right away. They each had their own circumstances and separation emotions to work through. Marjorie, at age eight, felt betrayed by her father Edwin and especially by Edna, and Edwin had a lot of difficulty settling her down.

At some time during those years when Marjorie was living with Edwin she met an uncle, the only uncle she ever met on her father's side of the family. Peter Perdue was Edwin's brother. He lived in a religious community somewhere in the Cascade Mountains. Pete came to visit with Edwin for a few days, and Marjorie got to know him a little bit. She remembers his kind and quiet demeanor, his white shaggy hair, and his long white beard. At the time of the visit he said he lived up north where gold was found. He eventually moved to the community in the mountains and died in a sanitarium in the Cascades of Washington.

When Jennie (McNeil) Pedlar died, Muriel and Beryl were in their teen years, and they returned "home" to live with their father, Edwin, and Edna. For perhaps a year they 'familied' together. Edwin was slowly realizing his dream of having all of his children living with him again. However, he was trying to respect the needs and wants of his children along the way.



**Marjorie and Babe**

When Marjorie was about age 12 or 13 (in 1929 or 1930), her father Edwin took her to Birch Island to meet with, and get to know, her sister Audry Jean (Perdue) Hardy. Marjorie enjoyed the lonely mountain scenery, and really enjoyed getting to know Jean. Marjorie, at the mature age of twelve years, remembers her younger ten-year-old sister Jean as "Like a wild little colt pony." I guess it was Edwin's intent that Jean come back to join (be reunited with) his growing family. However, at the end of the visit Edwin, Cousin May (Fowler) Hardy and Cousin Charlie Hardy decided that it would be too great an upset for Jean to stay in BC. The adoption by the Hardys became permanent. Jean was glad to return to her own home. Marjorie was glad to get back to her home on the coast. Beryl, sharing her father's desire to maintain the sense of family, maintained a contact with Jean, visiting her at the Hardy's often.

That same summer Marjorie packed her bags for another visit (a fifth or sixth summer visit) to Everett Washington to see Uncle Harley Giles, Auntie Em, and Thelma Marie Scott, her childhood friend and almost step-sister. Auntie Em was the real mother figure in Marjorie's life, teaching her and Thelma about family values, sex, gender roles, hygiene, the importance of education, spiritual values, and other such things that a young girl might learn only from her mother. Edna (Barnes) Perdue never took on that role for Marjorie, largely because Marjorie would never allow it, but also because Edna was not interested. She referred to Marjorie, not by name, but as "that Perdue girl". Marjorie would have been happy to stay in Everett with Thelma and the Giles, but her connection to her older sisters was also strong, and she wanted to be with them too.

That summer, Thelma and Marjorie decided they would do something nice for Auntie Em and surprise her. When Emma went out to shop Thelma and Marjorie made a cake for her and put it into the oven to bake. They had no idea how long it should stay in the oven, so they opened the oven door after a while to look at it. It appeared to be done, so they took it out. As they sat and admired their work, the centre slowly started to sink. Not having time to make another one, they decided to make a lot of icing and fill in the centre with icing. It was on the table waiting for her when she got home. As supper proceeded, Auntie Em realized that there was something wrong with the girls, who



were not their cheerful selves. The girls confessed about the icing, and Auntie Em merely smiled and said she liked sweets sometimes.

So, life was like a dream – Edwin’s dream. The family included Edwin and Edna, Mary Hendrix (Babe) Cook, Edna’s daughter from a previous marriage, Muriel, Beryl, and Marjorie (re-united), Dorothy Louise whose beauty fascinated Marjorie, Betty with her Veronica Lake blond tresses, and Edwin II (Bud) on the way. There was also a Fred (Junior) Johnson in many of the family pictures of this time, a young man about Marjorie’s age. He was Edna’s younger brother. Marjorie enjoyed violin lessons at this time and enjoyed playing with her father.

Then disaster struck. Edwin died at the close of the first week of Marjorie’s first High School term. He was killed in a violent car accident on his way home from work. After the funeral, when Marjorie returned to school, Marjorie was greatly distracted, grieving for her Dad, and not doing well. Neither was she ready for the process of making new friendships in which all of the other students were engaged. She withdrew from everyone and lost interest in school. Her life became a routine of violin practice after school (no more paid lessons) and baby sitting on Saturdays. The school teacher was very strict about use of time in school, and had little patience for one whose mind was not on her work.



**Muriel, Edwin and Marjorie**

Concerned about their younger sister, Muriel and Beryl convinced her to join the school orchestra, which she did. Then a notice on the bulletin board gave her something else to attract her interest. There was a school-wide contest for a public speech, on the student’s choice of topic. Muriel and Beryl encouraged Marjorie to participate. Marjorie decided to speak on the topic “Fair Play”. Muriel helped Marjorie write the speech, and Beryl provided the interested and appreciative audience that was needed to make practices enjoyable. They coached her on use of tone of voice and body movements. Recalling how much Edwin enjoyed an audience for his music, stories and poems, the three girls were determined to do well “for their father”.

Come contest day, Marjorie was nervous. The speeches seemed to take a long time, and Marjorie was well down the alphabetical list of participants, being a “Perdue”. She used her time watching the other contestants and noting their mistakes, mentally practicing her speech, and wishing her sister-assistants were present. Eventually, she delivered her speech. She says she shook herself a wee bit before starting, and judged herself as she went along, looking for ways to improve her delivery. Then she waited impatiently while the remaining students spoke in turn. Finally, after all speeches were done and the judges had conferred, they announced that the winner of the first prize ribbon was Marjorie Perdue. She ran home as fast as she could, eager to announce “We won!” Linked arm in arm the sisters shouted and jumped for joy. They shouted, “That was for Dad”. She then had to go through the school the following day delivering her speech in each and every classroom. That opened a door for Marjorie. She began to make friends again and close off the grieving for her father.

One of those high-school friends was a young East Indian boy who was having difficulty adjusting to school in Canada. Remembering her difficulties adjusting to the change from US to Canadian schooling, she felt a lot of sympathy for him and his problems. She gave him what help she could, and, strangely, this raised her own spirits. Together they assembled a small group of friends who studied together. At the end of the year, he was the top student in the class, and Marjorie came in second place, four marks behind him. That made her very happy indeed. It also set a pattern, a precedent, for later experiences, and successes, in her life.

### **The Years as a Live-In Nanny (The Baldwins)**

At the end of that first year in High School Edna, Marjorie’s step-mother, decided that a teenaged girl should go out to work. Marjorie felt betrayed yet one more time by the adults in her life. However, one must wonder what

financial means Edna had available at that time to support her large family. Economic necessity and the needs of the younger children may have driven her decision.

Marjorie by now had experience baby-sitting her own younger siblings, and also baby-sitting for neighbors. Ruth, a friend of Muriel (and Art), lived about a block away with her husband and four children. Marjorie quickly got a job as a live-in nanny looking after Ruth's family, about one block away from the Perdue family home. Ruth had four small children and was expecting a fifth. There was lots of hard work, but Ruth was fun to be around and easy to please, as long as Marjorie kept an eye on the young ones. Marjorie was given room and board, and was earning a very small salary, just enough to buy the necessities for a young teenager.

Beryl headed for Kamloops to begin her nurse's training in the hospital, supported by Cousin May and Cousin Charlie. Muriel, who had finished school a year earlier, now had a job, and "the best boyfriend any sister could have". Arthur Dalamore was a thoughtful, considerate young man who took a role in helping the family overcome their tragic loss. He was level-headed, musical, and comical. These were all good qualities for a sister's boyfriend, in Marjorie's estimation.

Muriel and Art took a leadership role among the girls of Edwin's first family, counseling Beryl and Marjorie, and helping them through difficult times, and keeping in contact with Jean. Art Dalamore and his parents attended an Anglican Church, and that became a significant influence over Muriel and her sisters in the following years. As soon as Marjorie had a Sunday off she went to church. She attended many young people's groups, and made many friends, with some of whom she stayed in contact for many years.

So, in June, immediately after the school year ended, Marjorie started working for the neighbor Ruth Baldwin. There were four children under the age of nine, and Ruth, their mother, was expecting another. Come September Marjorie wondered about going back to school, but Ruth's health was not good, and no one, not Edna and not even the school authorities, contacted her about going back to school.

Ruth's new baby arrived in October, but both mother and baby died. It happened like this. One day about two in the afternoon, when all of the children were at school, Ruth fainted and fell to the floor. Marjorie did not know what to do, but she knew that a neighbor across the street had just returned from a missionary trip to China as a nurse. Marjorie ran across the street so fast she slipped on some round pebbles, fell on the road, and almost knocked her own self out. The neighbor nurse came, called an ambulance, and called Ruth's husband to come immediately. Ruth and the baby died a few days later. Marjorie, recalling the keen sense of loss she had recently felt, did her best to rock and console the bereaved young children.

Marjorie, at age fourteen, continued in her duties there. Then a few weeks later the children's aunt (a woman by the name of Evelyn (Baldwin?), the father's sister) suggested that the entire family move into Vancouver to live in her rather large house with her, her husband, and their daughter. There was lots of room for everybody. Marjorie was also invited to go along, to look after the children and to help prepare meals. She was concerned for her own schooling, as per Auntie Em's guidance, but did not have the courage to abandon the children in their time of greatest need. She agreed to go along.

Aunt Evelyn Baldwin was likable, did not make life uncomfortable, and advised Marjorie on what to do for the (now five) children under her care. A friend of Evelyn offered to sew clothes for the children to lighten the load. Marjorie worked with this family for about four years. The father was rarely home, and Marjorie came to love the children, and they came to love her.



**Evelyn and Marjorie**

During the four years that Marjorie worked for this family she was unable to continue her summer visits to Everett, Washington. She made trips down there as often as possible, but she found it to be not often enough. Thelma, by this time, had grown to be larger than Marjorie, so Marjorie had a steady supply of clothes sent to her from Thelma. Although Thelma had a mother and father, to Marjorie's recollection, Thelma's life was managed largely by the Giles, and Marjorie benefited from that. The Giles were now well into their seventies. At some time during those four years Auntie Em passed away, and Uncle Harley became a lonely old man. Marjorie went to visit as often as possible.

It was a habit in Evelyn's household to invite the less fortunate to join them at dinner every Wednesday. The guests were often two single middle-aged men who were friends of the family in some way. One day one of these gentlemen, a man by the name of Bill, said to Marjorie "You wouldn't be one of Frenchy Perdue's girls, would you?" Marjorie, never having heard her father called by that name, replied with a cautious "Maybe!" The gentleman talked about working on an electrical crew that "brought electricity to the BC interior in Kamloops". As Bill explained, Frenchy Perdue was a great story-teller, singer, and poetry raconteur. And Marjorie looked a lot like him. Marjorie consulted with her sister Muriel, and obtained a photo of her father.

The next time Bill came to dinner, Marjorie showed him the photo, and the guest agreed that it was indeed Frenchy Perdue. Marjorie told Bill of her father's death. Bill in turn recounted how he had traveled with Frenchy throughout the interior of BC stringing electrical lines from area to area. They spent their evenings camping around a fire, cooking supper, making tea, and then relaxing about the fire until bedtime. Their foreman, Frenchy, would recite poetry by the hour. He could sing like an opera singer, mid-base and tenor, and could recite entire books of French-Canadian poetry, or Robert W Service poetry, or other poetic authors. Bill recalled many happy days spent in the company of Frenchy.

This fellow Bill worked for the BC Electric Company during the winter season, but he owned a fishing boat and fished for summer catches. His wife had died when their son was born, and he had been unable to raise his son. So his son was being raised and cared for by a couple living some ways up the BC coast. They treated him as if he was their own, but Bill visited them every summer when he was fishing, and paid for any special expenses incurred on behalf of his son. This boy's foster parents taught him the value of education, and he planned to go to college. His father, Bill, paid for his college education. Bill asked Marjorie one day why she was working for these people, and Marjorie explained why. Bill made it clear to Marjorie that if ever she needed money for anything, because she was Frenchy's daughter, she should talk to him. Marjorie did not think she could accept such an offer, though she knew the offer was sincere, because he really respected Frenchy Perdue (and admired his choices of entertainment).

For some time Marjorie had very little time off, being a full-time nanny to the four children. She was now about eighteen years of age and the oldest of the four was about thirteen years of age.

Muriel was married about this time. Muriel married Arthur Dalamore on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August 1936.

One day the father announced that he was about to re-marry, to a woman named "Nell". Nell met Marjorie, and they discussed the children's future together. Nell was a very likable and pleasant lady who had great compassion for the children, and showed an interest in their welfare during the coming change. Marjorie could see that



**Edwin (Frenchy) Perdue On a Pole**



eventually she would no longer be needed, and began to think of her own future. However, she did not guess how quickly the transition would happen. One day the father rather abruptly announced that he would be married in two weeks, and, after a short honeymoon, he would be moving his family to a distant part of the city. He noted that the children loved Marjorie, and he wanted them to learn to mind and love Nell, and he believed that it would not happen with Marjorie present. He therefore informed Marjorie that her services would no longer be required in three weeks time, and she should look for other employment. His instructions were that she was never to see the children again. He moved his family away to another part of the city one day when Marjorie was out. She came home to an empty house. They had left without a goodbye from the kids, or even a thank you from the father. The aunt very kindly offered to let Marjorie stay with her until she could find other employment. As instructed, Marjorie never saw the children again, but she felt the loss very hard. Evelyn, the father's sister, was very upset with her brother's behavior, as were Muriel and Art.

So Marjorie found herself very suddenly facing uncertainty. At this critical time, Marjorie also got news that Auntie Em Giles (her only real mother) had passed away. Uncle Harley said he would apply for adoption of Marjorie, at age eighteen, making her a US citizen, and set up an account to allow her to continue her education in Michigan State. Marjorie very seriously considered this option, and was about to agree to it when Uncle Harley's sister contacted her.

His sister explained that, while Uncle Harley had every good intention, he did not understand how difficult and expensive it would be to complete the adoption, and in any case, he did not have enough money to pay for her education. Further, he was not at all well. She and Uncle Harley's other sisters were in process of making arrangements to take him with them back to Michigan. She expressed sincere regret that Uncle Harley was not able to carry out his plan, and assured Marjorie that she would have opportunity to see Uncle Harley before he left for the East. Being now very frail, he passed away very shortly after returning to his childhood home in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

### **The Years as a Live-In Maid (The Haines)**

In a few days a mysterious lady phoned Marjorie with news of a job. Marjorie later reasoned out that this was a Hardy relative looking out for her. This lady knew of another lady, Mrs Sally Haine, who had fallen and broken her hip, and she needed someone to fetch and carry for her while the rest of the family was at work. I was to report to the Haine's home at 1 PM the following day. The lady on the phone made Marjorie promise to be there, so, the next day, she went as promised, with all emotion locked into place. She says she remembers how desolate and hopeless she felt, only going because she felt she had to keep a promise made.

The lady who was laid up in bed, Mrs Haine, interviewed her. She asked why Marjorie was looking for work, so Marjorie told her the story of the lady, Ruth, who had died, and the small children, and how Evelyn had taken them in, and how she cared for their daily needs for several years. When all that was finished, Mrs Haine smiled and said that Marjorie should start the next day, at 8 AM, and that pay would be arranged. Mrs Haine offered to give Marjorie a place to stay as well, or she could stay in Evelyn's home. Marjorie chose to stay at night in Evelyn's house until she had gotten control of her emotions.

Day by day Marjorie was getting used to living with the Haine family. After about a month she moved out of Evelyn's house, and she moved into the Haine's house. They gave her a large attic room all to herself with a large bed and all the space she could use. Her daily chores were over by 7 PM each day so she had the evenings to do as she wished.



**Marj and The Haines**

Marjorie made lunch for Mrs Haine every day at noon, and prepared supper for the whole family. She also helped Mrs Haine each day between 8 AM and 7 PM. That was her work day. The Haine family and their boarders ate in the dining room, and Marjorie ate in the kitchen. After all of the social dinners at Evelyn's home, Marjorie felt left out of the company, and began to be lonely. One day Frank Haine came to her and asked her why she was looking glum, and wasn't she getting thinner than she had been? Marjorie said that she was used to having lots of people around with which to associate, with lots of conversation and bits of fun.

A few days later Mr Haine approached Marjorie and said "Mrs Haine requires that you attend her at the table, sitting beside her to help her from time to time. But the girls will help you clean-up after the evening meal. You know it was just a bad habit that we have gotten into, which we will change. Most previous kitchen help preferred to eat alone. Also, we go to church each Sunday. You are welcome to come along if you wish. We will plan Saturdays and Sundays so that there is little or no work to be done on Sunday, giving you the day off."

About this time, at age 18, for some reason, the Governor of BC (or maybe of Canada) gave all 18-year-olds a box Kodak camera. That was some time about 1935 or 1936. Marjorie says that she supposes photography became her hobby, though she never thought of it that way. She never studied it, or developed it as a skill. But she did use it as a way to record pleasant memories of family and friends. So she has quite a few pictures starting at that time.

One day Marjorie accidentally dropped and broke a small mixing bowl. During the interview she had been informed that the person who broke them must pay the replacement cost of any broken or chipped dishes. Marjorie informed her employers of the accident, and expected to see the appropriate adjustment in her next pay check. When the deduction did not appear, she approached Mr Haine to remind him of the accident, and to ask how much she owed them. He smiled and said it was all right, that they assumed it was an accident. Due to this and many other signs of acceptance, the generosity and welcome of these caring people overwhelmed Marjorie.

There is a story behind the 'mixing bowl' incident. Marjorie was preparing an 'English-style boiled pudding' in a cloth bag in a pot of boiling water on the stove. She was moving it to the mixing bowl when the heat from the boiling water caused her to mishandle the pudding, dropping the bag with the pudding and the bowl onto the floor.

The bowl broke. Mabel Haine, on hearing the crash, rushed into the kitchen, got another bowl, scooped up the bag with the pudding and dumped it into the new bowl. She then said quickly "Get behind me and we'll march it in!" Mabel, known as "Mibs", sang as she marched into the dining room with "Miggy" (Marjorie) following behind. Frank said "Mibs, did you dump that pudding on the floor?" and Mibs replied "Now Dad, you know I wouldn't do that! Here it is as fresh and ready for eating as it could be." And so, without further question, they sat down and enjoyed the pudding.

Over time Marjorie came to know Sally and Frank Haine, and their daughters Molly and Mabel Haine very well. Eventually she became

a very stable and welcome member of the household of eight adults. It was as though she belonged to them. Time went by. Marjorie had every Sunday off, so she could go to church, or go to Muriel's place, or stay in her room if she wished.



**The Haine Family**

That household was amazing in Marjorie's memory. It consisted of Sally and Frank Haine, two grown daughters, Molly and Mabel, a friend of the girls, and two other boarders. All of the grown women were talented. Christmas was a grand event in which everyone took part, even Marjorie, who was able to play the violin. They planned and executed home-made entertainment for the "seniors". After dinner on Christmas Eve they would rush to clean up the dishes and plan the events for the evening. In about half an hour they would write the plot, sort through clothes to find suitable costumes for the characters they had invented, and outline the dialogue needed to carry the plot. Then, costumed, they would ad lib their way through the planned plot line, struggling to keep a straight face while having the most hilarious fun. Everyone was coming up with funny lines, often forgetting about the plot. After an hour of fun, Marjorie would take out her violin, Molly's friend would go to the piano, Molly would sing, and Mabel would tell stories and jokes. Christmas Eve was capped with a stroll through the neighborhood, a shared plate of sweets, and to bed.

Marjorie's spirit was greatly refreshed in the Haine household and she felt like a lot of pieces of her life were finally falling into place. She began to see the work of a hidden hand. When she thought that she had figured out who was behind it, she ran to her sister Muriel's house to breathlessly tell her what she had discovered. Muriel, the elder sister, knew a lot more about their mother's, Bertha's, relatives than did her younger sister. It turned out that Molly Haine and Mabel Haine were close friends of Mildred Hardy. Mildred's father was a brother of Cousin Charles Hardy, Jean's adoptive father. In other words, Molly and Mabel were best friends with Jean's first cousin. The other brother, Ralph Hardy, was a minister of the "United" church and in due course was invited to minister at the church attended by the Haine family.

Marjorie pondered the complex interconnections of her mother's family for some time. So many adults had played a role in her life and the lives of her sisters: the Pedlars; the Hardys; the Giles; the Baldwins, the Haines. Eventually she confirmed the story with Frank and Sally Haine, about how she was related to the Hardy family, and how she believed that the unknown mysterious voice on the phone that arranged the interview between her and Sally Haine belonged to one of the Hardy women. However, they declined to put a name behind the voice.

When Marjorie was struggling with the difficult decision about enlisting in the Canadian Forces, the Haines were helpful and encouraging, like parents would be. Marjorie had deep concern for her lifelong friend in Everett, Thelma Scott. She did not want to abandon her friend, who was in need, but she also felt the need to contribute to the war effort. She also worried about terminating her employment with the Haine family. Mabel Haine planned to retire soon and look after her elderly parents, making Marjorie redundant as an employee. Marjorie knew it was time for her to 'leave the nest' but was worried about what would come next. Frank and Sally Haine counseled her that she must follow her conscience in such difficult decisions. Marjorie felt she could do little more for her friend Thelma, and was no longer needed by the Haines, and so she decided to respond to the ads and join the Canadian Forces. The Haines assured Marjorie that her home was with them, and should she return to BC when she was out of the forces at some future date, she would be welcomed back to live with them until her future was secure. And so that is where she returned when on annual leave.

They said, "You are one of our family", and they treated her that way.

### **The Giles/Haine Legacy**

These were the kind of family experiences that Marjorie endeavoured to recreate in later years when, as a mother, she raised her own children in Sand Point. Even though the Boyle family lived in relative poverty, the house was filled with novels, reference books (atlas, dictionary, various spiritual biographies and studies, and a set of encyclopaediae), and recordings of classical music. We children were encouraged to learn to play musical instruments. Often evenings were spent around the piano, singing, as Marjorie played the violin in accompaniment. And, we children wrote and enacted Christmas plays in which neighbourhood children participated, and neighbourhood parents laughed at the silly antics.

## **SERVICE MEMORIES OF MARJORIE BOYLE**

By: Garvin H Boyle, based on Marjorie's diaries

Marjorie says, I was given a choice of two postings: on the prairies, or in Ottawa. Arriving at AFB Uplands, Ottawa, on a hot day in June, 1942, I got my real introduction as to what one does besides obeying marching orders.



There seemed to be difficulties in the hospital kitchen. One chef (the Sergeant and supervisor of the hospital kitchen) was on leave. She lived at Dacre, Ontario. The second was very unhappy and seemed to want “out”. She was from Newfoundland and wanted a posting to Gander. I was the third. These two women did not want to work as a team. I wondered what was bothering them. As the new person, I worked at whatever I was asked to do, and there was little socializing. I was determined to do my best no matter the circumstances. Our full-time staff of three was often augmented, in busy times, by staff from the airmen’s mess. They had a much larger kitchen staff.

Came the day when the chef on leave returned and the other left on leave. I think she likely got her posting to Gander, because a replacement was posted into the hospital in her place. Actually, I was a Grade A chef, and the two ladies with whom I now found myself working were not trained as hospital chefs. The one having just come off leave, the Sergeant and supervisor, was a good sized, red-headed Irish lady and she intrigued me completely with her brogue. It was similar to Edgar’s accent, so I asked her where she came from. She lived in Dacre, a few miles from Sand Point. That question answered my curiosity. Eventually we got along fine.

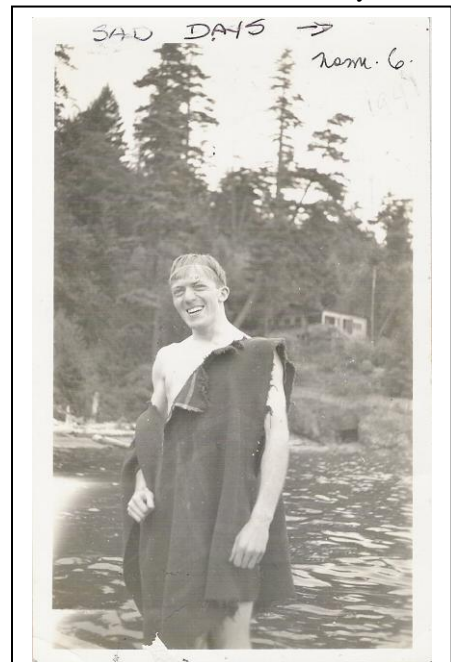
The Sergeant eventually found a way for the three of us to work as a team. Because of injuries to my feet that I had suffered as a teenager, I had difficulty with heavy lifting. She thought I was too small (compared to her) to do heavy work so she gave me lighter jobs until we got a system going between us. The third chef on the team was a young and pleasant girl, not afraid to work, but not highly motivated, either. She often found herself in trouble with the officers (the doctors) because of some inappropriate or insubordinate remark. I agreed to coach her, keep her busy at useful work in the kitchen, and keep her out of trouble. So, we became a team.

About a year passed in this fashion, with this routine. From time to time assistant chefs came from the airmen’s mess, and we would teach them our system. Most of them got postings sooner or later. I stayed and stayed, and I can’t remember how many of the chefs with whom I worked were looking for the possibilities of a ‘good’ move. Uplands was not a popular destination. I was still determined to do my best wherever I was.

The spring and summer of 1943 were difficult and gruelling. A flu epidemic passed through the station, the hospital was full of people needing special meal programs, and many of the kitchen staff both in the mess and the hospital became ill as well. Eventually I, myself, got the flu. After two weeks of bed rest, I went on my annual leave to Vancouver, but my illness turned into pneumonia. On my return to Uplands I learned that the Sergeant got a request posting (hers) to go to Muskoka. She was somewhat standoffish, but I worked well with her and I was sorry to see her go. Then I found myself suddenly in charge. So I returned to the hospital kitchen every evening and worked out a schedule to have everything done in lots of time to take advantage of any opportunity for relaxation.

I set up my own system of operations, like the Sergeant had done, based on different people’s abilities. I learned to tell the difference between those that wanted to make things work better, and those who wanted to make their own life easier. If another chef was not happy with my system she soon got a posting. In time, even adjustments of job assignments around postings became a routine affair. After a while order became the rule and the girls at the airmen’s mess thought we had a nicely co-ordinated routine, apart from unforeseen circumstances. That Christmas we decided to have a Christmas party in the hospital for the staff and patients. I remember that as a wonderful event.

My posting to Saraguay was a surprise. I was told it was a selected posting. I was informed as soon as I arrived there that of all the chefs in our Command, I had been selected for posting to Saraguay. In the hospital there was, however, one lady Sergeant who did not really understand how to ‘sarge it’ without quarreling and degrading others. She could not work with the two of us cooks who were beneath her in rank. Each of us had, from the moment of arrival, been confronted and abused by her, and that was difficult. But, shortly after my arrival she was posted out and a replacement cook was posted in.



**Many Friends Died in the War**

But I was presented with a problem in the form of this replacement cook. The L.A.W. working in the kitchen was a good cook, a hard working gal, but she did not have administrative abilities that warranted her getting a promotion to Sergeant. The senior medical doctor, a Doctor Boyle (no relation to Edgar), intended that I receive the Sergeant's stripes. However, Command headquarters had slipped up and posted a Sergeant to Saraguay who was expected to arrive shortly, and there could not be two Sergeants. The doctor offered me a couple of ways to become a Sergeant. However, these did not match my idea of hospital kitchen supervision, which is what I wanted to do, so I declined. I asked him to give the other cook credit for her abilities that she did have, which were considerable. I asked for the three cooks, regardless of their rank, to work together. We would figure out our own weaknesses and strengths, and work together to make it easier for all of us. I asked to be allowed to interview the incoming Sergeant (Doreen Green) and present my ideas to her. The doctor allowed the interview, and the new Sergeant agreed to my proposal, and our year passed with no problems of jealousy, or skipped chores, or whatever.

I used the same program that I had developed at Uplands, at the request of the senior medical doctor at Saraguay. I explained it to Sergeant Doreen Green when she arrived at Saraguay, and we three cooks implemented it together. It worked 100%, with lots of laughs thrown in.

War brings major changes in many lives when an individual suffers the loss of his life, and his or her friends suffer the loss of friendship and miss the companionship. Two pictures remind me of those sad days.

Going to see Quebec City with a couple of friends one weekend, we three entered the elevator at Chateau Frontenac in Quebec City and met a male friend, with other RCAF men, by chance. A Y.P. camper, and everyone's friend, he had joined the RCAF and trained as a pilot. It was their last few hours in Canada before shipping overseas. We visited briefly. In hours they were in England. But his life was brief. Shortly afterwards we heard that he had lost his life, shot down on a run over the enemy lines over Switzerland.

Another time, a friend and I were holidaying in Victoria. Some army soldiers were leaving Victoria for the long trip to the European Battle Grounds. So, by chance, we saw their march to the harbour from where they would go on to Vancouver and onwards to the East. We took this photo. I've often wondered what fate waited for them.



*See also O.C.*

**Troops in Victoria, BC, Off to War**

## **A LIFE LESSON**

**Living on a military base at a training camp was for me one of the best experiences I have had. Responsibility makes you mature. No matter how small or large your role, if you are responsible for the health and well-being of a large number of people you learn to put their needs ahead of your own. But you also learn that you cannot expect high praise for simply living up to your responsibilities. Others recognize your worth and give you opportunities to stretch yourself, and take on larger responsibilities. Though you may never ‘catch the golden ball’ you learn about your own strengths and abilities, and you learn the value of loyalty.**

**I learned that my strength lay in faithfulness to family, friends employers, and officers, without being wimpy. I learned that I must do my best no matter the circumstances. I learned to face difficulties, look for solutions, and always look for ways to improve upon those solutions. I learned that you earn people’s respect by the actions you do and the promises you keep, not by the rank of the uniform you wear or the boasts you make.**

## About RCAF Uniforms

By: Garvin H Boyle, based on internet sources

In 1925, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) issued new uniforms. Commonly referred to as Air Force



blues, due to their rich blue colour, uniforms served a variety of practical and symbolic purposes. Each button, badge and insignia served as a symbol to communicate an airman's rank, classification and nationality.

RCAF uniforms during World War II consisted of a jacket with four buttons, a belt cinched at the waist, a collared shirt and black tie, matching pants, black boots and a cap. All British Commonwealth Air Training Plan trainees wore what was called a wedge cap. All aircrew trainees wore a flash of white material on their caps, which indicated that the wearer was undergoing training. With so

many airmen on every base, it was essential to separate those undergoing aircrew training from those who were not.

Uniforms were required to take the harsh Canadian climate into account and therefore, depending on the season and the occasion, the airman's dress was different. For example, an airman on duty would wear something different from while messing, just as an airman on duty in the summer would wear different clothing from that worn during the winter. Summer uniforms took on the same style but were made from a lighter weight and lighter coloured fabric.



It was not until Canadian airmen served overseas in World War II that a shoulder badge was worn officially. The badge read "Canada" and was worn to show one's nationality. Each component of the uniform was to comply with regulation and this badge was no exception. The top of it was to be worn 3/4 of an inch below the shoulder seam. Airmen and airwomen were required to wear this on both shoulders of all jackets except for overcoats, officers' mess jackets and bandsmen's dress jackets.

Upon enlisting in the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP), each airman and airwoman received the classification of Leading Aircraftman (LAC) and Leading Aircraftwoman (LAW). This was displayed on their uniform by the propeller badge worn on both shoulders. Once trained in a specialized capacity, each trainee would receive a new classification and a new badge to display this. Airmen were granted their Wings in graduation ceremonies and often rushed back to the barracks to stitch the badge on to the uniform. Wing badges were worn on jackets on the left side over the chest.



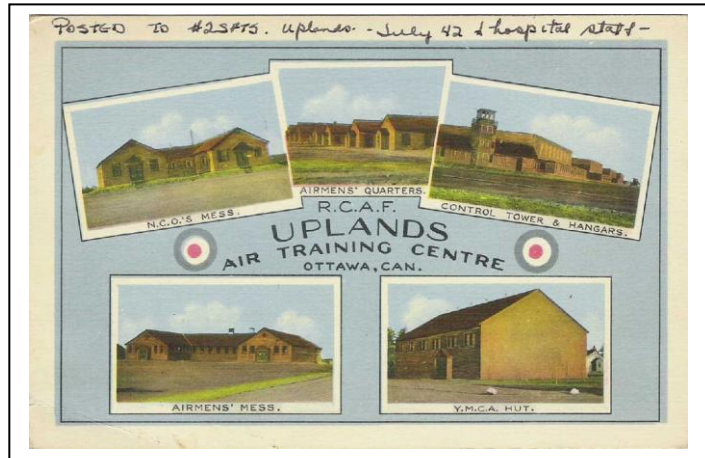
Uniforms for the Royal Canadian Air Force Women's Division (RCAF WD) were rather controversial. Many considered the first caps to be quite unattractive. The first summer uniform, a blue dress worn with grey stockings was also very unpopular. The officials at Air Force Headquarters took these problems into consideration and the uniforms that resulted were both stylish and of excellent quality.

Copied from <http://www.abheritage.ca/flyboys/homefront/uniforms.htm>



## A Canine Military Casualty

I was posted to the RCAF Uplands Air Training Station in the summer of 1942. I was assigned to work in the kitchen in the hospital, as per my training in Guelph. But training had not prepared me well for the chaos I would find there. None of us had ever worked in a large kitchen before, and none of us had cooked on a team. Our training was focused on how to select and cook healthy foods and process them in large quantities. It did not cover how to assign different jobs, or how to manage the business of preparing many special meals simultaneously for many different health requirements. The Sergeant in charge of the kitchen clearly wished she was somewhere else, and was not friendly to the kitchen help. I quickly learned to just do my best, and help others when they seemed to be distraught. For my first Christmas in the RCAF WD I went to the airmen's mess with a couple of acquaintances, and had a turkey dinner, then returned to my quarters.



After about six months at Uplands, a stray dog came on the scene. I think this dog had the wanderlust. It was a stray dog, having no name that I recall, and belonging to no one. I don't know where it lived before it came to the station.

He was a very independent animal and, during the winter of 1942-1943 he roamed the housing section of the Uplands RCAF Training Station looking for refuse from the three operating messes. But he finally decided our hospital rear entrance was a good place to settle down for shelter, and the occasional scrap of food. After making his rounds of the usual sources of food, he would often spend the rest of the day near the hospital kitchen, just sleeping or doing whatever dogs do when they have nothing to do. The hospital kitchen staff befriended him more than most, I guess, and he was attracted by the hospitality. At that time I wore the 'Whites' of the common kitchen help, and mostly did what I was told by the kitchen supervisor, who dressed in 'Blues'.

One day the signal bells rang in the hospital, indicating an incoming emergency. No one knew for sure what to expect, but in a few minutes the station half-ton parked at the back entrance near the kitchen quarters, and the dog was carried in, obviously in bad shape. He had been hit on the hip by a truck off-station, and lay in a ditch unable to move. One of the airmen found him injured and brought him back to the hospital.

The doctors gave him medication to quiet him, x-rayed the hip, and then thought they would brace his hind leg and hip, which were badly injured, with a large cane. Then with my permission they made use of a small storeroom near the kitchen where they piled some old blankets on the floor and made a place for him to convalesce.

The dog was clearly in great pain and could not, at first, get up for food or water, or for other personal needs. In time he started to recover. However, when several people tried to take a look at him he snarled and said, in dog talk, "Get lost or lose a chunk of your hand". The poor thing was in awful misery.



The storeroom where the dog lay was situated where my daily routines kept me constantly nearby. I began an effort to try to give him food or water, but as with everyone else, he would try to bite me whenever I got close. So, after thinking about it for a few days, I wrapped my arm in an old sweater. I put a pan of water below his nose, almost, and, as he had done to the others, he lunged at me to bite me. I immediately stuffed my arm so far into his mouth that he couldn't bite. He tried to back his head off, the better to bite me, but I continued to force my arm into his mouth and pat him gently on the head until it was clear he no longer had that intent. Then I withdrew my arm and continued to pat him on his head, and talk to him. He became tolerant of me, allowing me to bring him food and water after that.

Then I said, "Now you and I are going to get up and walk". After a few painful efforts, we learned how to co-operate together to get him on his feet for a walk. Still, no one else could get near him. He would bite them without warning. Eventually, he began to wag his tail when he saw me coming with food and water.

There was an airman on station who's girlfriend declared that she could tame the dog, because her father was a veterinarian. Even though I cautioned them clearly, she was certain she knew how to approach the dog safely. She proceeded to get down on her hands and knees to approach the dog. No sooner than she got onto her knees, the dog started growling. He growled and snapped until she finally gave up. I thought of saying something nasty, but I held my tongue, and let them learn for themselves.

Eventually the dog could get himself up on his feet, or lay down again, but with some difficulty. He wore the brace for some time. One morning during 'sick parade' there was a particularly long line of people waiting to see the doctor. Unfortunately, the dog had left his storage room and decided to lay himself down just outside the door to the doctor's office. Thinking that all the people were there to intimidate him, he growled and showed his teeth to everyone who passed.

The doctor came hurriedly down the hallway to the kitchen saying "Corporal, will you come and get that dog out of the way. He will not let anyone come or go, including me. We know you are the only one who can handle him." So, away I went down the hall between the men waiting for their turn to see the doctor. I had to sit down beside the dog, which appeared to be in distress. I scolded him and told him to behave himself. He thumped his tail for me (a better sign than a growl) and tried to get up but whimpered and fell down again. I had learned a useful maneuver to cause the 'cane' to be brought into walking position.

I talked to him as we left the lineup of airmen. Some clapped, and I could hear one say, "Boy, if she can handle an ornery animal like that, what would she do with a husband?" No one else said a word.

Winter became Spring, which turned to summer, and the dog slowly improved. While the dog was still very dependent on me we suffered a bout of the flu sweeping across the station, which disabled some of the kitchen staff as well. I was trying very hard not to get it, so I slept in the hospital kitchen area and avoided any contact with sick people. I would get up about an hour earlier than normal to walk the dog. But, being in charge of the kitchen at that time due to the illness of others, I also had other problems to handle that almost overwhelmed me. For example, for a while I was doing two shifts a day preparing special meals for an unusually large number of patients. A young doctor just posted in heard the story of the dog, and offered to take him for his early morning walk, allowing me a little extra time to sleep, and he also took the dog for evening walks from time to time. The nameless dog now had at least two friends.

By this time he was mine (in his mind), and he let everyone know it. He followed me everywhere I went, and was prepared to defend me if the situation looked threatening. My own health was not good because I was always tired. I guess I had over-extended myself. Eventually, I also caught the flu and had to spend two weeks in bed. On returning to work the station CO (Commanding Officer), the Senior Medical Officer, met with the kitchen staff and informed us that, the flu episode being over, two of us, the Sergeant and I, were being sent on special leave. I was to go first. He told me that my pay was ready for pick-up, my ticket was purchased, and I was expected to be on the evening train headed westwards. This was a great relief to me, because I knew that I was due for a leave and not able to work, but I wondered what ever would happen to that dog. So, when the doctor informed me I should have a rest after the previous summer and its difficulties, I asked him "What will you do about that dog?" The answer, "Oh, We'll look after him." I had no choice but to leave him in the CO's care.



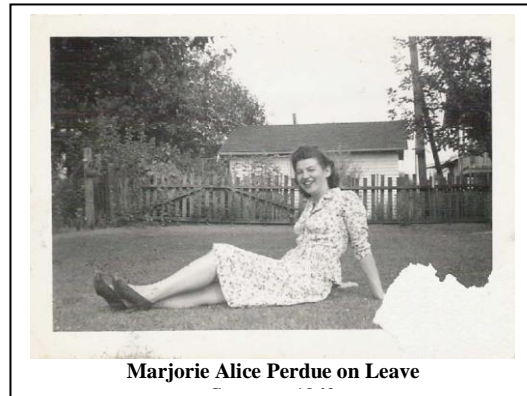
The visit to Vancouver was wonderful. I stayed with the Haine family, my previous employers. I had opportunity to visit with my family, with Ed Boyle, my fiancé, and with beloved friends.

I had two weeks of leave, but halfway through my leave I knew I wasn't getting any better. The flu seemed to have returned, I was tired, and I had little or no strength. I wondered if I should report to an RCAF station out West, but decided that I should return to Uplands, where they knew the history. On the train going eastwards an army medical attendant tried to convince me to be hospitalized in Winnipeg, but I insisted on going back to Uplands. He told me that he had notified the station that I was ill, and they would have a car waiting for me at the train station.



**Marjorie Perdue, Molly Haine, Evelyn Baldwin**

On my return I was greeted with two pieces of bad news. I arrived at Uplands in time to see the Sergeant leave on her two weeks of leave. This was the first piece of bad news. I was sorry to see her go, even though she was difficult to work with. But, also, the MPs on duty at the gate gave me the second piece of bad news – shortly after I had left they had disposed of the dog on the orders of the CO. I was really mad at the doctors. If they knew they were going to destroy the dog, they could have done it right after it was injured. I felt I had been betrayed. Thinking back on it now, I understand why they did it, but I have kept the picture of this dog to remember my friend, the nameless dog. Within 24 hours of my arrival at Uplands I became a patient in the hospital with pneumonia. I was in bed for a month.



**Marjorie Alice Perdue on Leave**

After a few weeks in bed, while still in the hospital, I was informed that the Sergeant would not be returning from leave, but had been posted elsewhere. Also, a new Senior Medical Officer (or CO) had been posted in. The previous CO had solved the dog problem before he left, rather than leaving it for the new CO to handle on arrival. The new CO came to my room and introduced himself and said, "When you are well enough to be discharged you will no longer wear 'Whites' – just 'Blues'. You will be in charge of the kitchen, and direct the kitchen operations. You will have all of the help you need, and you can select your own staff." In further conversation he asked how I would handle the problems with morale that had developed in the kitchen. I guess he was asking indirectly who should be posted out. I said I wanted to talk to each person, find out what they were unhappy about, and try to resolve each issue before we made such decisions. He agreed with that approach. But he underlined forcefully that, wearing 'Blues', I was not to do the work myself, but was to direct the others on how to do it, and ensure that it was done properly.



**Staff at Uplands RCAF Training Station  
1943**

So, the pain of the loss of my pet was greatly relieved by the assignment of my new duties and status. Actually, I was put on medical quarantine for a while after I took up the new duties. I could only go off Station with an escort to take me where I wanted to go. The driver of the Station car was assigned as my escort. Being used to driving

senior officers about, he asked why I was given such a privilege, and I explained that I was under health watch, recovering from a bad bout of pneumonia. He was very friendly and made sure that I was well taken care of.

Staff morale in the kitchen eventually improved, and we developed some techniques for managing the kitchen work as we addressed complaints and problems. There was a rather constant parade of people being posted in and out, so we had to package jobs up in such a way that they could be easily handed from one person to another on short notice.



**Christmas at Uplands  
Either 1943 or 1944**

Our Christmas celebrations made for a great end to a difficult year, for me and also for many others. With Christmas approaching we were sent a number of British Airmen who were suffering from severe malnutrition. We were informed that they would be with us over the Christmas holidays. Normally, we would eat Christmas dinner in the airmen's mess, but with these patients arriving, we decided to have a special Christmas dinner in the hospital, with a tree, decorations, and a Christmas Party. The hospital staff knew each other, and the patients, very well, and we all had a great time. It was much more fun than previous Christmases in the mess.

So, each time I see this picture of the nameless dog, I recall that special casualty in a year of hardships and rewards.

## THE STORY OF THELMA SCOTT

By: Garvin H Boyle, Based on Marjorie's diaries

Thelma Scott was Marjorie's best friend during her pre-teen years. She was apparently the niece of Auntie Emma Giles and Uncle Harley Giles. When Bertha Perdue passed away in 1920, Edwin and Marjorie went to live with the Giles in Everett, Washington, and they stayed there for three years. The Giles family were recommended to Edwin by William Pedlar, Bertha's adoptive father. William Pedlar took care of Muriel and Beryl, and Auntie Em and Uncle Harley offered their hospitality to Edwin and Marjorie. Jean, the youngest, went to live with Cousin May and Cousin Charlie.

Marjorie and Thelma played together incessantly. When Edwin remarried he moved his family (with Marjorie) back to Canada with the promise that Marjorie could spend all of her summers in Washington State close to Everett. And so she did right up until the Second World War intervened.

Marjorie and Thelma spent much time alone together. They played imaginary games while listening to the radio during the day. During the evenings they would listen to hit parade tunes and Hawaiian music.

A few years into her teens Thelma had torn a ligament in her heel and she became house bound. Someone had attached castors to the legs of a chair, and she got around on the chair, pulling herself along on the floor. Surgery could have fixed the problem, but it was not done for reasons that Marjorie never knew. Then her father died, but before her father died (?) he appeared on the scene and gave Thelma money for necessities and was gone. He also gave some to Marjorie (for necessities?). Then Thelma's mother developed Dropsy and passed away. It is not clear, from Marjorie's notes, whether or how these people were related to the Giles.



One summer Marjorie asked her employers (the Haines) if she could go to see Thelma, as per her usual custom, to which they agreed. When Marjorie returned to Canada she received a call that Aunt Halley (I presume this would be Thelma's aunt, and her guardian! GB) had died the following day. Marjorie's employer advised her to go back to Washington for three weeks until the current situation had straightened out. Marjorie did what she could to help her friend organize her life again.

When back in Canada again Marjorie received a visitor from Seattle who was a social worker. She interviewed Marjorie asking many questions about Thelma which Marjorie answered as well as she could. What they were trying to understand was Thelma's mental state. For example, the social worker said that Thelma claimed to have lived in Hawaii, but Marjorie knew she had never lived outside of the State of Washington. Eventually Marjorie arranged for the Big Brothers organization in Vancouver to lobby the social workers in Seattle to take Thelma to the hospital to have the torn ligament mended.

Marjorie went to visit Thelma for a week, during her rehabilitation, and was with Thelma the day that Canada 'went to war' in the Second World War (Sept 1939). In due time Thelma was walking again, and a Jewish couple hired her for reasonable wages. However, she was hospitalized again several times for her leg, and for her deteriorating mental state. She was becoming more confused about who she was.



Eventually, Marjorie decided that she must enlist to do her part for Canada, but she was concerned that it was not fair to her friend Thelma. However, after discussion with the Haines Marjorie was convinced that she must follow her convictions, so she joined up. In February of 1942 when she had been notified of her acceptance into the RCAF WD, Marjorie went to visit Thelma, then Thelma arranged for someone to drive her and Marjorie to Vancouver where she signed up.

Just after Marjorie had settled into the RCAF base at Uplands she got a letter from her sister Mary (Babe) who had visited Thelma a few times. Thelma had been institutionalized and had died in hospital. Her last weeks were spent in a mental hospital in the Cascade Mountains in Washington State.



Marjorie remembers Thelma as a beautiful, imaginative and artistic young girl who was always cheerful, and never quibbled about things or people. But Marjorie carried a lot of guilt about her best friend. It was Marjorie who convinced Big Brothers of Vancouver to provide funding for Thelma's surgery. And Big Brothers of Vancouver got the Health-Care Association of Seattle involved, leading to her hospitalization and surgery. They helped her considerably, but it shocked Thelma to think that someone would intervene in her life like that. Evidently, in her mixed up mind, she was not entirely grateful.

The above painting in velvet was a gift from Thelma to Marjorie, said to be her last artistic effort, and given during the last contact between Thelma and Marjorie. Thelma called it "Hermit of the Hills' Hut". A sticker on the back has the title written in Thelma's handwriting. It is currently (2012) in the possession of Marjorie's son, Garvin Boyle.

## HOW EDGAR AND MARJORIE MET

By: Garvin H Boyle, based on Marjorie's diaries

Marjorie says, Edgar's entry into the Canadian Forces was not easy. Canada declared war on Germany on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September in 1939, after Germany invaded Poland. Edgar turned eighteen on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September of the same year. I am not sure at what date Edgar originally tried to sign up, but, when he first went to sign up, he was weighed and found wanting. They said he was underweight for his height, and told him to go home and fatten himself up.

Edgar's RCAF WWII service began at Toronto's manning pool. He was called to the Recruiting Centre in Ottawa on his birthday, the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September, for screening. I believe this would have been in 1940. In the Ottawa intake centre he was screened and informed that he would be sent immediately to Toronto. He did not have the opportunity to return home to Sand Point to pack a bag. In the rush of leaving he had just the clothes on his back, and little or no pocket money, shaving gear, or other travelling things. Nor did he even have opportunity to inform his mother and sister where he was going. In Toronto, he had expected that he would be sent home for a day or two to pack his things before heading for a training base. No such luck. Their names were called out alphabetically and Ed Boyle was one of the first to board the train bound for Boot Camp in the Maritimes. I believe that the boot camp was in Sydney Mines, Nova Scotia.

Owning his own gun, and having some years of experience using it while hunting, he was assigned as an air gunner. He flew several missions out over the Atlantic guarding the convoys of ships headed to Europe. Typically, the RCAF would guard the convoy halfway across, and the RAF would meet the convoy at the halfway mark and guard them the rest of the way to Britain. Edgar would lie on his belly in the bottom of a plane, guns in hand, watching for the enemy and ready to shoot.



When not flying missions, the RCAF members would be put on guard duty along the coast, watching for enemy ships or submarines. Edgar was assigned to a team that was guarding from a tall rocky formation along the Newfoundland coast. At 10:00 PM one evening, Edgar was put on a four-hour watch, out in cold and windy weather. But the duty commander fell asleep, and neglected to relieve Edgar for an eight-hour stretch of time. Wearing only his RCAF uniform hat, Edgar was suffering from severe hypothermia when relieved. Due to this long outdoors guard-duty session he developed a serious cold and sinus infection. Then noise of the guns perforated his infected ears. This ultimately led to surgery to remove an infected lymph node in his neck. With damaged eardrums, he was re-mustered from gunnery to hospital orderly. I think that his medical training (as an orderly) was completed in Sydney Mines, Nova Scotia. He had now been in the Maritimes for about a year.

Then, events in the Pacific changed all plans for shipment overseas. The RCAF needed crews to guide planes flying out over the Pacific, and guarding the West Coast of Canada. So, soon after the events of Pearl Harbor (7<sup>th</sup> December 1941), Ed's detachment was sent for training to "Sea Island" Air Force Base on the sands of the Fraser River delta. It was winter, cold, and damp there. Anyone with time off bussed to the Service Centre in Vancouver for warmth, food and company. It was there that he first met Marjorie Alice Perdue, his future wife, who was acting as a "youth hostess" for the service men.

After "Sea Island" Edgar was posted to "Pat Bay" on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Edgar's postings included Glace Bay (in Nova Scotia), Sydney Mines (Nova Scotia), Sea Island (in the Fraser Valley), and Pat Bay (Vancouver Island). He clearly spent some time in Newfoundland, and Hh often spoke about Toffino Point and Amphitrite Point as well, and the Queen Charlotte Islands. I don't know in which order he was posted to these places.

Edgar and Marjorie first met in the “Dugout”, a refurbished and comfortable “Club Room” in one of Vancouver’s old Church buildings, in which Marjorie and some of her friends were acting as volunteer hosts for visiting service men. Marjorie’s assigned evening for ‘hostess’ duty was Wednesday, but they had asked her to switch to Sundays. She agreed, under the condition that she could come after the church services were completed. So, she became a regular Sunday-evening hostess.

Ed arrived one Sunday looking a little uneasy. Marjorie, in her role as hostess, asked if he was in need of anything, or wanted to do anything. Ed suggested they play a game of Bridge, with Marjorie making the fourth. She did not know how to play card games, and was in fact a little averse to them, but she agreed to play, as a fourth person was needed. So Edgar regularly showed up Sunday evenings and they got to know each other. He took it as a challenge to teach her new card games each week. She enjoyed hearing his “Irish brogue”, which was in fact an Ottawa Valley Accent as thick and as strong as they come.



In the mean time, Marjorie had started to think about her own future. It was apparent that her services at the Haine household would not be needed for much longer, and she need to start to look for other opportunities for employment. Mabel Haine, the elder daughter, wanted to retire and look after her aging parents. This would make Marjorie redundant. The Women’s Auxilliary Air Force had been formed in July 1941 and was later renamed to the Women’s Division (WD). She had heard that young women were being taken into the RCAF. She arranged for an interview with the RCAF WD. After a long interview in which they expressed concern about her injured feet (due to badly fitting shoes she had worn as a teenager) they then sent her back home with the advice that she was ‘not really suitable’, but get ready ‘just in case’.

The hostesses were not to be escorted by the military men at any time. But over a period of six weeks it became apparent that Edgar and Marjorie enjoyed each others company. Eventually, at the suggestion of Sally and Frank Haine, Marjorie invited Edgar to visit her at the Haines’ home. In fact it was Molly Haine, their daughter and Marjorie’s friend, that invited him over to help her pick the cherries, a task that he evidently found enjoyable. The Haines were very willing and eager to meet him, and were anxious to develop an opinion of him.

On Marjorie’s birthday in 1942 she was called for an interview for entry to the RCAF (Women’s Division) for war service. She was at the Recruiting Centre for 9:00 AM, followed by a visit to the Shaugnessy Hospital for x-rays, back to the Recruiting Centre by 1:00 PM, to the CN train station to board a train by 5:00 PM, and on her way to Ontario by 6:00 PM of the same day. In those few hours she did had time to phone a few people. This was seen as providential, as Marjorie’s entry into the RCAF gave her a future and also cleared the way for Mabel Haine’s retirement.

At the time of the phone call Marjorie was visiting with her life-long friend, Thelma Scott. Thelma realized that they did not have long to plan a send-off, and Marjorie had a lot to do. Thelma undertook to spread the word around amongst other friends. Marjorie called her sister in Burnaby to tell her she was leaving at 6:00 PM for Ontario. She also called to the tuberculosis sanitarium in Kamloops to make contact with her sister Beryl. Beryl had aspired to be an army nurse but was diagnosed as having TB. Finally, she called through to the Edmonton Base where a highly-respected friend was stationed.

By 6:00 PM there was a small crowd of friends and well-wishers at the train station to see her off. Too soon the call came “All aboard” and they quickly settled into their seats, and the real knowledge of what they were leaving behind, not knowing what they were getting into. As the train pulled into Kamloops for a brief stop, sister Beryl



was there, supported by two escorts making sure she was warm and cared for. Marjorie and Beryl laughed and cried and talked as quickly as they could until the “All aboard” sounded again, and she was on her way again.

While sitting on the train on the long voyage eastwards these were her thoughts: This will test my mettle. I will be a responsible adult. I will do my best. I will NOT disappoint my friends. I will not disappoint my family. And most especially, I will not disappoint the recruiting officer who ignored my misshapen feet.

The sendoff was memorable because it was so full of hope. The arrival in Toronto at the other end of the trip was memorable because of the ‘Station Truck’ into which the young women were loaded to take them to the RCAF WD barracks associated with the training camp.

Marjorie’s basic training was in Toronto for two months ( March-April 1942). Those who wanted to cook were sent on to Guelph for another month of training (May 1942). In Guelph they were put through a grueling schedule in which they learned a lot about the large-scale cooking of masses of food. It was promised that the top student would be held back, at the end of training, for extra instruction about hospital kitchen cooking of meals for patients.

Marjorie and five western friends immediately set their sights on this lofty goal, determined that one of their number would be the one to win this plumb assignment. Came the last day at Guelph, they had a “March Past” as a gold-braided officer inspected them. Then came the wonderfully welcome news, Marjorie had been selected for extra training as a hospital chef, and her five friends were all posted together to a base in northern Manitoba. All six were pleased.

There followed some special training at McGill (two weeks), during which time Marjorie learned to function as a hospital dietician, and not just a cook. When Marjorie finished this training (about the end of June 1942), she had a choice of postings: one to an air force base on the prairies, and the other to Uplands Air Training Centre in Ottawa. As she says it, grinning wickedly inside, making plans to see her sister Jean when possible, she chose Ottawa. And eventually, some time in the early summer (July) of 1942, she was posted to Uplands Air Force Base.

During her two-and-a-half year posting to Uplands she had many challenges, and learned much. At some time during that time at Uplands, Edgar proposed. As a parting gift from her friends at Uplands, she was given a camera, which she put to prolific use in her next posting. For more details about her life at Uplands, read the story “A Canine Military Casualty”.

She was then posted to Montreal for a year. I believe this happened in the fall of 1944, or the winter of 1945. The Number 1 Convalescent Hospital at Saraguay, near Cartierville outside of Montreal, was where they cared for returning RCAF crewmen that suffered severe burn wounds and, in some cases, severe malnutrition. Her posting to Montreal she found particularly pleasant. Her senior medical officer, a Doctor Boyle (no relation), wanted her and Edgar to be married at Saraguay, and he even offered to give away the bride. So plans for the wedding were set in motion.

At the end of her Montreal posting she received a surprising offer. The war was coming to an end, and there was talk of releasing large numbers of personnel and sending them home. She was asked to re-muster with the offer that she would be sent to Kingston for officer training. Had she not already accepted the offer of marriage, she likely would have taken the education that the RCAF had offered her.



The patients of the hospital gave Marjorie a bridal shower, which she remembers very fondly. The wedding took place at Saraguay. It was like a huge family wedding, with Doctor Boyle giving away the bride, and all of the patients and staff attending.

The wedding was celebrated in the news papers as the 'first such RCAF wedding'. I suppose that, since the RCAF WD was a new invention, RCAF personnel had not had the opportunity to marry each other prior to this.

One of her favorite memories from that period of her life is from the day she met Billy Bishop, the WWI flying Ace. Billy Bishop had been in charge of pilot training, and he had been scheduled for a visit to see some of the injured pilots at the hospital in Saraguay. He had heard about Marjorie, and asked specifically to meet her. He knew her by reputation (the woman who had turned down an officer's commission for love), and wanted to meet her personally. She thought the fuss was a bit silly, but she enjoyed the attention.

## That Famous Picture

By: Garvin H Boyle



**Babe (US Navy) and Marjorie (Canadian Air Force) in a Seattle Restaurant  
Award-Winning Photo**

One day when Marjorie was home in Vancouver on leave, she decided to meet with her sister, Babe, for a quick visit and update on their separate lives. Marjorie was in the Canadian Airforce, but Babe, who had been born in the US, had signed up for the US Navy. So, while the two young women were sitting, in uniform, in a downtown Seattle restaurant, a young reporter for the Seattle paper walked by. Seeing the two women in the uniforms of different

countries, he stopped, went in, and asked why they were together. On learning that they were, in fact, sisters, he asked if he could take their picture.

Evidently the picture was printed in the paper, and became a bit of a sensation. Eventually it was submitted for review and won some type of journalism award.

This photo remained on the walls of our home in Sand Point, and travelled with Marjorie to the end of her life. I think, for her, it was a reminder and symbol of the strange but enduring family in which she grew up.