

George E. Jack (1887-1951) by Adelaide Jack McGorrill

Life began for my father on the post Road in Bowdoinham, Maine on Dec. 12, 1887. He was the oldest of six children born to Henry and Lucinda Jack. His ancestry included the first settlers on the Post Road and even today there is a Jack cemetery preserved on the old farm which was a Jack property. Thus it was that my father was brought up on a farm at the turn of the 20th century. Such little bits of information from him about those early days are treasures to me now.

He would tell me about his Grandmother Jack and her asthma attacks. She would sit up all night, and frequently smoked a pipe for her malady. Then there were stories of skating parties, school affairs, baseball games, haying, packing ice in ice houses, apple picking, among other things. In those days it was his mother who was the influence on his life. She encouraged him to read at a very early age such books as *'Child's History of England'* and the Bible. Her family went to church and despite her quiet ways, she maintained a firm discipline. To me, she instilled in my father those traits that the public respected with the passing of the years.

At sixteen he entered Bates College; where he received free tuition by pledging not to smoke or drink. It was not unusual for boys to earn their way through college by working long periods before returning to class. It was during these years that my father had a serious case of measles. To build up his health, he took up weight lifting.

Graduating from Bates College in 1910, he started his teaching career which included the principalship at Hollis High School (1912-17). During

this period at a school function at the I.O.O.F. Hall in West Buxton., he met my mother, Edith Roberts, a native of Hollis and a teacher at North Waterboro. They were married on March 25, 1918 at Mother's home in West Hollis by Elder William Cotton of the Bullockite Church.

World War I found my father in France with the 303rd Field Hospital Medical Unit. Little known to the public was his study of medicine. He had an unusual knowledge for a layman. Also, Father had a faculty for languages and readily employed his German from college days while overseas.

Upon his return from the war, he was principal of Hollis High School and then Superintendent of Schools of Union #8 until his death. He served as an educator for 42 years with all but his year at Moses Brown in Providence, Rhode Island, for the State of Maine.

In the ensuing years my sister and I were born. (I once met) a lady whose first words to me were, "Oh, I remember when you were born! Your father told Miss Berryman, our teacher, about your arrival as if you were a celebrity!" I hasten to add that we did not know how much he wanted a son until the arrival of my son, Brian Wakefield McGorrill in 1949. With deepest sincerity, he stated, "He is worth more than a million dollars. Take good care of him." He was delighted with his Irish name and proceeded to tell me about Brian Boru of Irish history.

During my childhood days I was constantly sick with something, and upon these occasions, I remember Father's standing in the doorway of my room and cheering me by telling about his boyhood days. I never tired of hearing about his sucking the juice out of his mother's blueberry pies in the pantry.

Paper straws were unheard of then so they used to make them from hay. This is part of my memory of father's kind ways for you see he left home discipline to Mother.

Since Father kept his office in our home, my sister and I were very much aware of schools. One of my pleasant jobs was stamping new books in the late summer so that they would be ready for school in September. Both my sister and I took turns as hostesses for those who awaited his services. My sister tells me she sang the whole hymnal for Henry Card who became principal of Hollis High. I remember so well the arrival of Miss Abbie Harvey for the first time. She was so dramatic looking and she had the nicest perfume. There were some arrivals who were ushered into the kitchen—the impetigo cases. Father kept a large bottle of ointment and pill boxes in the cellar way. Mother was ready with the Lysol bottle upon their departure. Occasionally, he would have youngsters sent out by the teachers for 'itchy complaints'. I recall the children who had a home remedy—namely, ink stoppers on the spots. Father was certain that they had a new disease at first glance.

Some of Father's problems dealt with the law and high sheriff of the county while others were of a lighter nature, such as last minute substitutes, furnace problems and others. I shall never forget one stove story which involved the River Road School. The young janitor called up one morning to say he couldn't start the fire. "Why not?" replied my father. "I don't have a stove," came the reply. Someone had stolen the stove! Incidentally,