



When I hear my mother's sauerkraut and cherries story, I savor every image.

The parsonage where Mom lived in Clyde, Ohio stood between a railroad track and a cannery. Hobos followed the rails and stopped in at the pastor's home. On Sundays, Mom and her mother also walked the tracks, but their destination was the Nazarene church where Rev. Eva Hayman pastored. Rev. Paul Hayman, Eva's husband, drove 19 miles north to his pastorate at the Sandusky Church of the Nazarene.



*Rev. Eva Hayman, Rev. Paul Hayman,
daughter Marian, son Paul, Jr.,
ready for church, circa 1940*

In winter, cold winds blew through Clyde from nearby Lake Erie. Though numbing, the fresh iciness was preferable to the smells in autumn when sauerkraut was processed at the cannery. The nose-tickling aroma swirled in the air and settled over the town like a briny cloud. In summer, when seasonal fruit was processed, the cloying smell of cherries saturated the neighborhood like thick syrup.

The year was 1942 when nine-year-old Marian, her older brother Paul Jr., and her parents Paul and Eva Hayman moved to Clyde. They rented the bottom floor of a wooden two-story house. The porch came in handy that winter when the refrigerator leaked sulfur dioxide. "The smell was awful," recalls Marian, "we

shivered outside while the repairman worked inside,” Apparently the technician knew to discharge the noxious gas into a pail of watered lye, thereby rendering it odorless and harmless.

During the months following the Depression, it was typical for a pastor’s family to live in cramped quarters on the wrong side of the tracks. But the Haymans were not a typical family. A dozen years earlier, in 1930, Eva Pauline Koontz graduated from the Cleveland Bible Institute and Training School. Her diploma declares that she “satisfactorily completed the Theological Bible No. 2 Course of Study and gave evidence of worthy character and efficiency in Christian Service.”

Four months later, twenty-four year old Eva assumed the pastorate at the Church of the Nazarene in Syracuse, Ohio. In this quiet coal mining village situated along the curve of the Ohio River; the arrival of a new neighbor was big news. “I’m feeling a little strange,” Eva, aka Rev. Koontz, noted in her diary. “Notice of my welcome reception is posted on the post office door.”



I have many images of my grandmother from those days. I see her fixing meals in the kitchen of her first apartment. “I canned a few tomatoes today,” she wrote in her diary. I envision her sitting at a petite oak desk with five pigeonholes, praying over sermons and puzzling over a budget. “For the week of September 14,” Eva recorded, “6 preaching services, 2 prayer services, 15 calls, 2 open air services, and salary of \$16.00.”

Too, I imagine her preaching at her first open air service. “Good attendance and attention at Mine #17 today,” she penned in her journal. Throughout the fall of that year she kept returning to preach at the coal mines, where attendance peaked at 31. Perhaps my grandmother was

prepared for the rough atmosphere at the mines. As a young girl, she often had to retrieve her alcoholic father from the various saloons in Shelby, Ohio.

Eva never learned to drive. Did the coal dust shake from her clothes as she walked the distance between the mine and the church? “She looked like an angel dressed in white, while she paced back and forth across the platform,” recalled a teenager who attended one of Eva’s first church services.

“Attendance at church good today,” reads Rev. Koontz’s diary. “I had to ask people to move in toward the wall to make room. People peeking in door. God blessed.”

Yet the dearest picture of my grandmother stems from her notes on Sunday, September 21, 1930. “Taught Sunday School Class, had preaching service, young people’s meeting at 6:45, and preaching at 7:00. All in – seriously wondering if I’ll hold out all year. Am looking to Jesus for a daily supply of grace and strength, praise His Name.”



Rev. Koontz went on to preach a 14 day revival at Syracuse with such sermons as “The God Who Answers by Fire” and “Mileposts to Hell.”

A young schoolteacher named Paul Hayman (at left) attended one of the revival services. “What a handsome gentleman,” Eva thought to herself.

“But if I greet him and shake his hand, the gossip will spread like fire at a coal mine.” When the two did meet, it was at the altar where Paul prayed through and was saved. They continued seeing each other and were married the following June.

In the years between Syracuse and Clyde, the family increased, struggled, and adapted. Two children were born, first Paul Jr., then Marian Iris. Paul Hayman, Sr. received a call to full-

time Christian ministry. “Times were hard; there was very little cash money,” recalls Paul, Jr. “If not for the turkey farmers who attended our church, there would have been very little meat on our table,” adds Marian.

Yet the Haymans shared what they had with those who had even less. In Clyde, hobos searched out the welcome symbols at the parsonage. Was there an I8 (I ate) scratched on the fencepost? Or maybe the symbol ò, written inconspicuously on the shed, communicated the news that “Good people live here.” Whatever the sign language, one thing was certain: “We always had devotions at the dinner table,” recalls Marian. “I couldn’t resist peeking during prayer time to see if the hobos had their eyes closed.”

Mealtime conversations in those days must have centered on world events. The March 20, 1942, headline from *The Sandusky Register Star News* declared: “American Planes Score Direct Hit on Jap Cruiser: M’Arthur Promises Offensive.” Fifteen pages later, “This Week’s Amusement News” included an ad from the Dew Drop Inn: “You’re missing the fun if you don’t join the crowds that are coming here on Saturday night to hear Harvey Roberts and His Melody Boys.” In smaller type, the “Rural Churches” column listed the Clyde Church of the Nazarene on White Street: “Rev. Eva Hayman welcomes everyone to Sunday School at 9:30, morning worship at 10:30, N.Y.P.S. at 6:30, and evening service at 7:30.”

While Clyde boasted churches, a railroad, and entertainment aplenty, it was—and is—best known as the home of the Clyde Kraut Co. Positioned beside the Nazarene parsonage, by 1909 the cannery had become the largest sauerkraut manufacturing plant in the United States. Its most famous products? Silver Fleece Cherries and Silver Fleece Kraut. In fact, Miss DeBoth of the 1941 Toledo Blade Cooking School took out an ad in praise of the kraut, saying, “There’s

nothing more healthful than sauerkraut and sauerkraut juice. Serve a sauerkraut dinner once a week and drink sauerkraut juice often. Be sure to insist on Silver Fleece, the kraut of uniform quality.” Miss DeBoth also penned a recipe column for the Toledo Blade newspaper. After reading her description of a liver sausage two-decker sandwich, rinsing one’s palate with sauerkraut juice sounds a bit more appealing.

Glistening glass jars of the kraut can be bought today at large retailers like Wal-Mart and Kroger. Surely farmers like John Kline (pictured at right in a 1906 photo), who competed to haul in the largest single load of cabbage, would be proud to know their legacy lives on. The winning nine ton load left such large ruts that stones had to be hauled in to pave the dirt roads.



Although my mother doesn’t recall eating cherries and sauerkraut at the parsonage table, of this I am sure: Taking the sweet with the sour was a daily choice for the Haymans. When his salary plummeted at the Sandusky Church, my grandfather gratefully accepted a second job as a school bus driver. When my mother’s saddle shoes wore out, my grandmother used recycled cardboard to patch the holes. When extra guests crowded around the table, everyone gave thanks for the turkey farmers. And when Rev. Eva Hayman grew tired, her poetry testified to a steadfast faith in Jesus:

HOMESICK

Sing me a song of heaven tonight,
For I am tired of this earth,
Tired of its riches, losses and gains
Tired of its glory that glows and wanes,
And its sadness it hides in mirth.

Sing of the Lamb and the Light thereof
For He is my all in all.
Sing of the joy and peace and calm
Sing of the glad celestial psalm,
And the pure sweet Gospel call.

-Rev. Eva Koontz Hayman