

My name is Elizabeth Jane Pickering Walls. I am 4 years older than the one you honor this evening, Frances Evelyn Pickering Longenecker. We were both born in San Antonio, Texas, where our father, Frank Isaac Pickering worked at Fort Sam Houston. Our younger sister, Virginia was also born there. She was 2 1/2 years younger than Frances and died of cancer.

Our Mother, Bertha Elizabeth Davis Pickering, told us that Frances was born with reddish-gold hair. She had curls. We lived in a small, two-bedroom house on an unpaved street not too far from the Fort. Although our family had a car, Daddy walked to work. When Frances was six months old and again when she was three, we went to Boulder, Colorado, for summer vacations with relatives. We camped along the way so the car was heavily loaded with three children, our parents, tent, bedding and foodstuff. A snapshot shows baby Frances sitting behind the wheel in the car, her hair curled in the same long rolls along the top of her head.

One summer, the Methodist Church where we attended had a float in a civic parade. Mother made Frances a butterfly costume with wings, and she rode in the float. We children played in our yard as Mother was very strict about keeping us home. The house was built on stilts about four feet off the ground. With the leadership of our brother, Gordon (four years older than I), we built roads and town for little cars underneath the house.

Our parents were Free Methodists and when another family moved to town a Free Methodist Church was started. Our Parents were very faithful in attending Sunday morning and evening services as well as Wednesday night prayer meetings until Daddy was ordered to Honolulu, Hawaii.

In the summer of 1926, we travelled to San Francisco by car, camping along the way and visiting relatives in Colorado and in California. Our parents were seasick most of the voyage. It took some time to get their "sea-legs." ... We left Honolulu in May 1929, as Daddy had been transferred to Omaha, Neb. That summer was spent travelling by car, camping out when not visiting relatives, from San Francisco to Seattle, to Colorado, to Ohio and then to Omaha. Here an apartment was rented near the Free Methodist Church.

A member (of the Church) was a builder and within a year we moved into a brand-new house on the corner of 40th and Maple Streets. It was a beautiful home, with full basement and garage in it, a bedroom on the main floor as well as a living room, dining room, kitchen and bath. Upstairs were three bedrooms and bath for the children. Frances and Virginia shared a room while Gordon and I each had our own rooms.

There were many happy experiences in this house even though the Depression was on. The family stayed in Omaha seven years and Frances completed the first two years of high school. Then it was back to Honolulu for a second tour of duty for Daddy. Of course, I had to go along even though I was finishing my junior year at Greenville College in southern Illinois. This time we began our trip at the Army dock in New York City. We three girls had a memorable trip through the Panama Canal to San Francisco and then on to Honolulu. There, I spent my last year at home with my sisters as I left in the fall of 1937 to be married in Waterloo, Iowa.

My Dear Frances:

On this your special evening, Wesley and I are in Hong Kong. Tomorrow, we take the train to Canton for a tour of mainland China. We are thinking of you, and we are happy that you are being honored by the

people of your church for you are worthy of it all. You are a talented person, not only musically, but in your relations with people, and in your organizational ability. Your commitment to Christ shines through everything you do.

I feel that I am privileged to have you for a sister. As I remember, we enjoyed our childhood experiences and got along very well. I regret that our adult years have been spent so far apart. Our brief reunions have been very special times, and I hope that we can get together at least once each year. We did have a few years near each other when you lived in Bellingham and then in Settle. It seems like such a short time now, but I do have happy memories. You are special to me and I love you very much.

Your sister, Elizabeth "Buffy"