

12-7-2000

Emma, Alice and Honey

This is a story that is more along the line of human interest rather than being chock full of historical data.

As my colleague Neil Johnson has pointed out, we are now getting to be old enough to tell history first hand.

Back when I was in high school and college, during the early and mid-1960s, I did house painting during the summers as a means of earning money. Consequently, I worked for a number of people over a period of seven or eight summers.

This included painting whole houses or in some case, just minor jobs.

Several of my patrons were elderly ladies. I know some of these ladies happened to be friends and traveled in the same circuit, so to speak. Two of these people, which I very fondly remember working for were, Emma Hughes and Alice Hassett.

They had been schoolmates together and both graduated from Albion High School in the class of 1903. Both had gone to Brockport Normal and were retired school teachers when I knew them.

Emma Hughes lived in her family home, a big house on Caroline Street, now owned by Dorothy Martin. Alice Hassett lived in her family home on West Park Street, now owned by Alex Theodorakas.

Alice and her sister Marian also owned a cottage east of Point Breeze, which I painted around 1963. Marion, however, had died in 1954.

Emma Hughes was quite a conversation-

alist and would frequently tell things about her friends, especially Alice Hassett. Alice, however, was more reserved and had a much more authoritative demeanor. I'm sure she must have been a very strict teacher except when it came to Honey.

Honey could absolutely do no wrong! He was the darling in her life. He was called Honey because he was a honey-colored cocker spaniel. Believe you me, Honey made all the decisions.

Before I went to work for Alice, she wanted me to come to her home for an interview.

That's when I first met Honey. Alice told me as I entered, not to make any quick motions and what chair I should sit on in her living room. Within five minutes of my being there, Honey jumped up on my lap.

Alice said he had never done that to a perfect stranger. Therefore, he must really like me. I was hired on the spot. And over the course of several weeks Honey and I got along quite well.

It seems that Alice had a big Buick sedan and Honey always rode on the front seat passenger's side with no exceptions. Now the rest of the story is Emma's.

It was sometime during 1962 or 1963 that Alice invited Emma to go to a bake sale and bazaar, which I recall was out at the West Barre Methodist Church.

Emma didn't drive, so Alice picked her up. And because Honey always rode in the front seat, Emma was informed by both him and Alice that she would have to ride in the



rear seat: and so off they went.

Emma didn't like Honey and was somewhat intimidated by him. At the bake sale Emma bought a cake, which she put beside her on the back seat. About five minutes into the ride home, Honey caught a whiff of the cake and not being able to control himself, jumped over into the back seat. Poor Emma, was helpless, afraid and defenseless. Honey, as you can imagine,

ate the cake.

Alice simply said, as she drove along, "Now darling, you know you mustn't do that."

When Alice died in 1964 she left no living relatives. Mrs. Balester, a neighbor, tried to take care of Honey. But he was so distraught and could not adjust to a new life style without Alice, he eventually had to be put to sleep.