



# Alice Community History Book

## Daniel Boyle Family



Martin Boyle 1950

I was born in 1933 on the farm in Highland Township which my grandparents, Cornelius and Ellen (Doyle) Boyle, had acquired in 1885. This farm is 5 miles SE of Alice. My father was turning 55 years old and my mother was 45 when I was born. My father also was the youngest of his brothers and sisters. Recently, a relative characterized me as a trailer of a trailer. In 1937, I moved to Alice with my parents, Martin J. and Mary L. (Brown) Boyle. The farm had been lost, not with the usual Sheriff's sale, but with a U.S. Marshall sale because there were competing mortgages against the property. The debt against the 640-acre farm was \$6,500, slightly more than \$10 an acre.

We moved from the five bedroom, two dining room, two kitchen, one bath, centrally-heated farm home with its own 32 volt Delco light plant into a three room house at the north end of the main street in Alice. It had a dirt cellar and a cistern with a pump. The rent was \$6 a month. Later,

we lived in a four room house on Highway 38 between Jim and Reggie Decker and Reverend Bechtel. It had a hot air furnace and a concrete floored basement with (joy of joys) a chemical toilet. The rent was \$8 a month. The last house we rented belonged to John Boyle in 2000. His grandfather, another Cornelius, was my cousin. It was a mansion compared to the others and rented for \$35 a month in 1945.

We left the farm with a year-old 1936 standard Chevrolet two-door sedan. The only option on this car was a dollar pocket watch mounted on the rear-view mirror. I envied my uncle, who also had a 1936 Chevrolet. His was a deluxe model with knee action and chrome headlights. Although my mother did not drive, our Chevrolet was licensed in her name; apparently to protect it from my father's creditors.

My father, Martin, started over at age 59. He worked a variety of jobs in Alice: Mixing grasshopper poison on WPA, mowing grass along the sides of county roads in the summer and operating the wing blade on snowplows in the winter. He worked as a section laborer and sometimes "checked gravel" when roads were being improved. Later, he traveled from farm to farm selling Occo mineral and yeast supplements to be added to the grain which farmers fed to livestock. He also sold Pride hybrid seed corn. He often acted as constable during dances in the Alice town hall and at the Silver Zephyr, a dance spot located at the intersection of Highways 38 and 46. I never heard him say a bitter word about the change in his fortune from that of a prosperous farmer to a laborer. He would say, when making a small, not entirely necessary, purchase, "I might as well be broke as the way I am."



Mary Boyle 1950

During this time, Mary's health was poor, but she worked in a school lunch program in Alice. She later recovered her health and lived well into her 92nd year. While we lived in Alice, my older brothers and sister; Robert, James, John, and Eloise were sometimes there. Robert did light housekeeping with his cousins, Kathleen and Geraldine Boyle, while they attended high school in Sheldon, ND. They graduated in 1939. James had started his career as a seaman on ore carriers sailing on the Great Lakes. He spent part of his winters with us. He was friendly with Leo and Thelma Verlinden, who ran a tavern. John went to Illinois and then to Washington state, where he worked for the Boeing Airplane Co. Eloise's claim to fame is that she worked as a nurse for the Brown quadruplets; Connie, Cleo, Clair and Clayton in Leonard, ND, when they were babies. Eloise's daughter, Valerie Wold, lived with us in Alice for a year or so.

I remember several things about living in Alice:

- *The kindness of Mrs. Charles Multz.* She operated a cafe and fed me many free malted milks, especially when I was recovering from the usual preschool tonsil and adenoid operation performed in the doctor's office. She had a reason to like me; years before when she had an appendicitis attack my dad rushed her to Fargo for surgery in his 1912 Mighty Michigan touring car. I used to run errands for her to the Stangler meat market. She insisted that the hamburger I bought be freshly ground--red all the way through, not just around the edges. One year under the Christmas tree in the town hall when all the children got bags of candy, I got a bag of candy and, in addition, a sled from Santa Claus, alias Mrs. Multz.
- *Being the only Irish child in town,* I dealt with that in a strange way. I was probably preschool age and hanging around Corcoran's garage when someone asked me my name. I said, "Just call me Swede". That name lasted for the rest of my time in Alice.
- *Helping the Hartl girls herd cows along the railroad right-of-way.* It was probably a chore for them, but I loved riding their Shetland pony, Beulah, even though she was old and mean-spirited and would try to scrape me off her back by running close to the heavy railroad snow fences. I felt a proprietary interest in Beulah; earlier she had belonged to my relatives, Pat and Mike Boyle, who lived 2-1/2 miles north of Alice.
- *Going west of Alice to the Booster Wadeson farm for drinking water.* Alternatively, we went to a spring in Highland township located on land my parents had once rented.
- *Ardeen Blasl delivering milk to our house.* In the winter, she had a horse and sleigh. I would tie my sled to her sleigh and go for a ride. I would also tie my sled to the sleighs of farmers who had come to town and have long, bracing sled rides into the country and cold, dreary walks back. We also ran with our sleds, belly-flopped onto them and slid down the main street slope, dodging cars as necessary, sometimes traveling half a block.
- *Breaking my collarbone* on the first day of school vacation in 1943. I was playing on the pipe near the co-op store. This pipe was attached to poles and was intended to be a hitching post so farmers could tie up their horses while they shopped. Other kids played on this pipe for hours at a time. I tried it once and broke a bone. I had my arm in a sling for at least half of the summer vacation. When asked which of the doctors in Enderlin I wanted to set the bone, I said, "The one with the fewest steps."
- *Eighth grade graduation,* when the growing season was so late there were no flowers to decorate the stage of the town hall. I think it was Gertrude Kraus who had the idea to use rhubarb blossoms and pussy willows.
- *Lil Hager was Justice of the Peace* when a local farmer, while "in his cups", damaged the town Christmas tree with his car. He was a smart man. She said he could quote more law drunk than she could look up sober. Lil's brother was North Dakota Attorney General about that time.
- *A girls' basketball game between Alice and Chaffee.* One of the Chaffee players was my cousin, Marian Brown. Her father, Leonard, was there and disputed some of the calls made by the referee, Frank

Clarens. Frank's day job was being the depot agent. During half-time there was a fight, and someone jumped on Uncle Len's back and Frank caught him square in the eye. It was a black eye that turned all shades of yellow and green and lasted for a week. Drink may have been taken! Eloise saw the fight coming and ushered me out quickly. I missed the action.

- *Playing in the junkyard.* Scrap iron was in great demand during World War II. Obsolete farm equipment was being collected in order to be made into war material. Great heaps of it were stored by the loading dock near the depot. I found it a wonderful place to play and explore. In retrospect, it was very dangerous.

Most of all, I remember the funeral of my brother, Robert (Bob). He was killed in an airplane crash while serving in the Army as a flight engineer instructor in May of 1945, only months before the war ended. The crash occurred near Denver, CO. The funeral procession leaving St. Henry's Catholic Church in Alice for St. Mary's Cemetery in Sheldon was a long one. The Verlinden family supplied a big LaSalle sedan for our use. A book, which lists all the people from North Dakota who served in World War II and Korea, states that Robert's remains were never recovered. We didn't know at the time we were burying an empty casket.



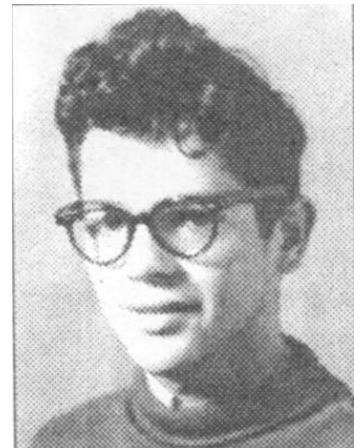
PFC Robert T. Boyle

In 1946, my parents and I moved to Sheldon so I could attend high school. I graduated from Sheldon High School in 1950; from St. John's University (Minnesota) in 1958; from the University of Minnesota with a Master's degree in social work in 1962; and from the University of Michigan with a Master's degree in public health in 1964.

In 1965, I married Elaine Dysthe of Minneapolis. She had been a classmate in social work school. Elaine and I divorced in 1980. Our children are Brenda and Kristin. Both are single and massage therapists. Brenda graduated from the University of North Carolina-Wilmington. She lives and has her massage therapy practice in Alexandria, VA.

Kristin graduated from New College, the honors college of the Florida State University system. After living in Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and San Francisco, she lives and has her massage therapy practice in Alexandria, VA.

In 1982, I married Ann Morrison MacKay of St. Paul. Ann's career has been in the long-term care field, where her last employment was as an association executive for a national trade association in Washington, D.C.



Danny Boyle 1946

The bulk of my career was with the federal government helping to administer the Medicaid program. I worked in Washington, D.C., from 1965 until 1979; In St. Paul, MN from 1980 until 1982; and in Baltimore, MD, for the next 16 years. When I retired in 1997, I had worked in the Medicaid program

longer than any other federal employee. Now, Ann and I live at the Charlestown Retirement Community in Catonsville, MD. We enjoy traveling, including spending time in Minnesota and in North Dakota.

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