

## Aunt Clara's Story

Clara Eva Broyles the second child born to Leander (Lee) Clayton Broyles and Angeline Harp Broyles. She was born on August 14, 1909 at their home on Joshua and Mary Broyles farm in Rockholds Ky. Lee (Pa) and Angeline (Mammie) built a home about 100 yards from Joshua and Mary's home. Clara went through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade at the Rockholds school.

At some point in her early adulthood she had a sever case of pleurisy. At the time, of course there were no medical treatment for it other than bed rest and treatments for pain. She did have to have the fluid drained over the six months that she was 'bed ridden'.

Clara's first marriage was to Amos Mayfield a tall handsome man. Amos was an excellent auto mechanic when he could stay sober long enough to keep a job. I personally witnessed his intelligence as I watched him build a very complicated perpetual motion machine that he had drawn. The machine consisted of a large wooden spoked wheel with a massive number lever arms, lead weights, small nail stops and pivots. Once given a start the wheel would spin for quite some time but would eventually stop, of course.

Clara and Amos had a home in the Highland Park section of Williamsburg. On one winter day in 1948, Betty Grant (Banks) and I were standing at Pa's kitchen window, getting ready for school, when we saw a red glow on the Highland Park bluffs above Williamsburg. As we later found out, it was Aunt Clara's house which was totally destroyed. At the time Aunt Clara had already gone to work at her job at a sewing factory. She had no insurance so they lost everything.

After Aunt Clara's house burned she and Amos moved into the house with Pa, Betty and me.

As I mentioned Amos tended to like his alcohol way too mush. One afternoon, Amos, in a drunken stoop-er, had an altercation with Pa and struck him knocking him to the floor. The next day Aunt Clara was in an attorney's office filing for divorce.

In 1953 Aunt Minnie and Loel moved from Rockholds to Williamsburg to live with Pa, Aunt Clara Betty and me. Aunt Clara continued to work at her sewing job at the only factory in Williamsburg, one of the few jobs available to women at the time. She was making 75 cents an hour with extra pay when she could exceed the established hourly piece rate. All her wages went to support the five of us.

One of the few enjoyments that Aunt Clara had was watching wrestling. From time to time she and a few of her friends would travel across the mountain the 100 miles to Knoxville Tennessee to watch the likes of Gorgeous George, her hero, in action, driving back late the same night. When she watched wrestling on the black and white TV she would get very animated, yelling and pounding the chair arm. We had all left Williamsburg by the time she met her future husband Gary Starkey, a sewing machine mechanic from Louisville Ky who had taken a job at the factory where Aunt Clara worked.

In about 1960 the sewing factory closed and Aunt Clara and Gary were both without a job. Gary took a job in Decatur Ga a suburb of Atlanta. Not long after their move to Atlanta Pa became very ill as his COPD progressed. Aunt Clara decided that she would return to Williamsburg to care for Pa, as she would have done for any one of us. Gary continued to work in Decatur for a few months until Aunt Clara's absence became to much for him to bear at which time he quit his job and moved back to Williamsburg to be with her. There were a number of letters from Gary left in Aunt Clara's belongings after her death. It is obvious from those letters that he adored her.

After Pa died from COPD in 1964, Aunt Clara and Gary had the old house torn down and built a new house for themselves. Kevin and Debbie probably remember the old house.

Gary died in 1975 and Aunt Clara continued to live at their home until 2001 when she was diagnosed with advanced Alzheimer. When Gary died Aunt Clara was only 65 years old and not ready to sit idle. Some time later Aunt Clara dated a local gentleman, Ancil Campbell. They spent a lot of time together including a lot of traveling about by car. In her late eighties she volunteered in a local seniors food kitchen waiting tables.

When Aunt Clara was ninety we became aware that she was having mental difficulties. Loel took her to

Lexington where she was diagnosed with advanced stage Alzheimer. Loel and Betty, Loel's wife, moved her to Lexington to live with them where they could care for her.

After about five years her disease advanced to the point where she was a danger to herself and Loel no longer able to provide the care she needed. She then moved to a nursing home in Williamsburg until she died in 2013 at he age of 102.