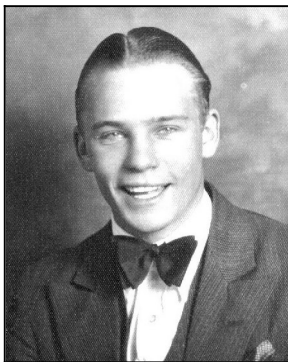


Clifford “Cliff” and Edna Martin Family



John Clifford Martin
about age 14 in 1927.

“Dear folks, we have another boy...just about on grandpa’s birthday.” That was the way in which his mother, Mary Martin introduced John Clifford Martin by a postcard sent to his grandparents in Bancroft, the day after his birth in April, 1913. Born the day after his grandfather John Martin’s birthday, the latest child born to Herman and Mary Martin in Dalton, Nebraska, was named John to honor his grandpa. For whatever reason, as he grew older, he went by the name Clifford or “Cliff.” Cliff’s positive and good-humored disposition reflected his upbringing in the fun-loving Martin family, especially influenced by some of the antics of his older brothers Kink and Dude. Cliff was not one to get into trouble, but was definitely mischievous. In school, he was more fun-loving than serious. He enjoyed intramural baseball and played varsity basketball. He and his friends enjoyed being around his older brothers’ cars. Cliff graduated from high school in 1931.



Clifford “Cliff” Martin
Dalton High School
graduate, 1931.

During and following school, Cliff had worked in his father’s blacksmith shop and learned the trade. Cliff went to California in 1934 to explore opportunities with his brothers Chet and Kink who were living there. Their father Herman died of a heart attack. Upon returning to Dalton, it was decided that Cliff would take over the operation of the family blacksmith shop. This provided Mary Martin with a continuing income and enabled Cliff to embark upon his own career as Dalton’s blacksmith.

Edna Maude Ewing was born in Dalton in November, 1915 to Ed and Maude Ewing. Ed had been a traveling hardware salesman and would soon establish a grocery and general merchandise store in Dalton. Edna generally got along well with her brothers and sisters, but when serious disagreements erupted into fistfights, she would rarely lose. She was somewhat of a “tom boy” and enjoyed doing those things that, “proper girls don’t do,” as her mother cautioned. She felt she could do anything a man could do, and as a result she acquired many “handyman” skills. Edna generally liked school and did acceptably well. She enjoyed softball and other sports activities. She worked in the family’s grocery store on a regular basis. Following graduation from high school in 1933, Edna went to Lincoln to live with her older sister. Edna attended college during that year and benefitted from a little “finishing” provided by her sister. When she returned to Dalton, she and Cliff began seeing each other more frequently. They were married in Dalton in September, 1935 and moved into a house known as the “little stone house.”

About 1940, Cliff remodeled and enlarged his father’s blacksmith shop. His welding and innovative fabricating skills were always in demand, but the main function of the work was sharpening farmers’ plow shares. But, World War II had produced new metals and technologies,

so sharpening plow shares became outmoded. Cliff had been Dalton's blacksmith for eleven years, but the future for the blacksmith trade did not look promising.

Cliff and Edna and their children Larry and Marilyn departed Dalton in the summer of 1945. They were soon asked to join Edna's parents who had retired from Dalton, first to Santa Barbara, California and finally Salem, Oregon. Cliff and Edna looked after Ed and Maude Ewing for twelve years. In 1959, for the first time since leaving Dalton, Cliff and Edna moved into a home of their own.

Cliff had struggled to find work he could enjoy which satisfied his needs for social contact and for fixing things. Eventually, he did find what he wanted with a large vending machine company as a route person. He had a wide and varied territory where he called upon many clients on a daily basis, servicing vending machines and repairing those that were malfunctioning. His candy truck, parked in the driveway, was always popular with his grandchildren. Cliff had a great deal of independence in operating his routes and was happy with his work until his death at age 64, in Salem in 1977. Edna had been working as the manager of women's shoes in a large department store in Salem, and went on to manage a uniform clothing shop. She died in Salem in 1987.

Cliff and Edna's two children, were born and spent their early years in Dalton. Larry had a career as an intelligence officer in the Air Force and then as a civilian systems analyst. Larry and his wife Danell have four children. Marilyn raised her family of four children and operated a woodcraft business. In later years she worked in various real estate related activities and, at the age of 56, began a new career as an airline flight attendant. Both Larry and Marilyn live on the central Oregon coast.



Cliff Martin, Dalton's blacksmith 1934-1945 at the shop, 1945



Edna and Cliff Martin, late 1940s-early 1950s, Salem, Oregon.