

Maplelawn Farmstead: Alyce Anita Scott, from the beginning

Part VI of a series

At some point during Alyce Scott's school days at Whitestown, she wrote a four-part review of her life, including: 1) My Ancestors, 2) Before I Started to School, 3) My School Life and 4) My High School Life. The pages were typed on lined notebook paper and may have been a rough draft of those she submitted to the teacher, for there are type-overs, misspellings and grammatical errors we wouldn't expect in a finished paper.

Her work reveals interesting tidbits that I'm sure you'll enjoy; so, with the respect I'd like to be shown if rough drafts from my pre-computer days ever surface, I'll clean up the copy I use.

In the first section, she wrote: "I was born May 15, 1918, near New Augusta, Marion County, Indiana.

"My father's people came to Boone County nearly one hundred years ago from Carolina and settled near the little

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Lutheran Church east of Whitestown.

"My maternal ancestors also came from Carolina and Nantucket Island. They grew flax and wove linen for a cover for the wagon which was drawn by oxen over the mountains and through the marshes to Carthage, a little town in Rush County, Indiana.

"There they developed a plantation after the Southern style, building several little cabins for their Negroes and a large Manor House which still stands. The wagon covers were then used as ticking for feather beds, the feathers being secured by shooting wild geese.

"My great-great-grandfather (Thomas) Henly was kidnapped by the Indians while they were living on Nantucket Island. They

did not find him for three or four years, or until he was twelve years old. Then he did not want to return home. Later the slaves were given their freedom, but they preferred to remain with them until they died."

In the second part, Alyce noted: "I have no brothers or sisters, so I guess I'm lucky to start out my life with no one bossing me and getting into fights.

"I do not remember so much before my school life, only remembering myself getting in trouble by running off or playing some trick on somebody.

"I do remember one day when I thought I was getting rich. My Grandpa told me for every chicken I would catch and bring to him and get it out of the yard, he would give me a penny. So I started out catching chickens. I caught all that were in the yard and got my pennies for them, but I decided that wasn't enough, so I got some feed, opened the gate, let the chickens into the yard and caught more.

"When I took them to him, he began to think there were more

chickens in the yard than he thought, so he said he would go and see where they were getting in. He was running out of pennies. He did. There I was, caught right in the act, and he knew all the trouble.

"Later he gave me fifty cents. He said that it was worth it to see me running them all down."

Alyce began the third part with a description of her preparation for the very first day of school.

"In the fall of 1924, I began to gather together pencils, erasers, pencil boxes, and new lunch kit, for I was getting ready to start to school.

"On the first Monday in September I was up early and waiting for the bus to come. It was a horse-drawn vehicle. Some of the tops are used yet on the trucks.

"Not many things of importance happened during that year. Miss Baber was my teacher.

"Near the close of school, we presented an Operetta in which I had the part of a primrose, which was my first appearance on

stage. Our dresses were made of crepe paper, and all very colorful.

"There was quite a large class of us and we passed on from year to year, a few leaving and others entering, until today there are only a few of us who have gone all through school together.

"From year to year I contracted the children's diseases, such as measles, chicken pox, etc., and have been vaccinated several times for other diseases.

"As the years passed, it was the same thing over and over again. Finally I got as far along as the freshman class. There, like everybody else, I thought I was as smart as anybody could be for we would be getting to have class parties, and everything like that. Now I can see it is just very common."

Next week we will check out what Alyce had to say about her "high school life."

Editors note: Joan Lyons is a member of the Zionsville Historical Society's committee to preserve the Maplelawn Farmstead.



Photo submitted
Little Alyce Scott posed for the camera at the age of 15 months.