

Maplelawn Farmstead: Alyce Scott in high school and beyond

Part VII of a series

Last week we read all but one of Alyce Scott's papers, written sometime during her school experience at Whitestown, in which she told of her ancestors and her life through grade school. Today we'll read the fourth section, entitled "My High School Life."

"In 1931 the class and several new ones entered as freshmen, of course being called green.

"Our first freshman party was at Annabell Kendall's, which was not carried out very successfully because nearly every-

body was there ready to black faces and all that goes with it.

"The next semester we had another party, and it was at the gym, that year passed rather quickly.

"The next year came, another party was wanted so it was at Rosetta Hand's, where we had a wiener roast. The night of this party, the Freshmen had theirs, so all the boys went and got their refreshments and brought some of them back and we ate apples and thought of the freshmen."

That's where the paper ends. Perhaps all four parts were written for a class during her sophomore year. Since the copy covered only half a page, it is unlikely that Alyce wrote about her junior and senior years. We do know that Alyce was graduated from Whitestown High School with the class of 1936.

She then attended the Methodist Hospital School of Nursing, but did not complete the course of study, perhaps because marriage was on her mind. I don't consider myself presumptuous in suggesting that reason, based on her diary entries beginning on Dec. 24, 1937.

You see, Lester Earl Bradley gave Alyce Anita Scott a five-year diary for Christmas in 1937. But, that was not his only gift. I'll let her diary entry on Friday, Dec. 24, 1937, tell the story:

"We took Robert & Alleen to Lebanon on train. I saw Lester a little bit. At night Lester came down. We all exchanged gifts.

Lester gave me my Diamond. Do I ever love it. It's just beyond words, it's so grand and he treats me so sweet."

According to her diary, they had their first date on June 20, 1936.

Now is probably the right time to properly introduce you to Lester Bradley.

Lester was the son of Omer and Allie Sharp Bradley. He was born Nov. 11, 1917. He attended Fairview school for four years, Lindbergh School for four years, and was graduated from Lebanon High School in 1935. His parents farmed on Ratsburg Road and

owned and operated a farm southwest of Lebanon.

Lester had a younger brother, Noble Sharp Bradley, who died in May, 1937, at the age of 17.

How Alyce and Lester met, I can't say for sure. But the Bradley acreage southwest of Lebanon and the Scott farm northwest of Whitestown were close. Both farm families probably took part in county agricultural activities, and Lebanon and Whitestown competed in basketball, with a county tourney held every year. It's no great stretch to say that the young couple had numerous opportunities to meet.

With gravel county roads, few automobiles, and no OnStar®, young people who wanted to spend an evening together would often spend the night. Since Lester lived east of Lebanon on Ratsburg Road and Alyce lived on County Road 200 South at C.R. 575 East, their homes were far enough apart that one would often stay the night at the home of the other.

For verification of that last statement, we'll turn again to Alyce's diary, and the entry for Friday, Dec. 31, 1937: "Lester came at nite. Virg. & Maurice, Madge & Charles and Lester and I went to the Indiana (Roof) Ballroom. We got home at 2:20. Lester stayed all night. We went to bed 20 till 4. I sure had a grand time."

According to Alyce's diary, during the 14 months before their marriage the young couple did practical things: 'Went to Mrs. Clines

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Photo submitted

Alyce Scott wore her high school graduation dress in this snapshot taken with Lester Bradley in September, 1938.

sale, we bought a sweeper; was over at Lester's to get trailer. We went & got our electric stove; Lester & I ordered a comfort made."

They enjoyed themselves: "We went to tourney in afternoon, again at night. Pinnell and Lebanon played; Lester, his Mother, Mother and I, we went to the city. I got a new dress. Lester and I went to show in evening, saw Blue Beard's Eighth Wife; VW & MB were down in P.M. At night we 4 went to Lyric to hear Wayne King & Orchestra; (on Alyce's birthday) Lester was here all day, brought me a hassock, flowers and a cake. We went to see Lou in P.M. Maurice & Virg & Lester's folks were here for supper, Lester & I had a swell time."

Next week a charivari nets fine for Lester, five others.

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