

APPENDIX B -- BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

These short descriptions of Ila Diantha Pangborn McKay and her five children were written in collaboration with my cousins and siblings.

Ila Rupley

PHOTOGRAPHS of McKay and other ancestors are at the URL:
<http://rupley.com/~jar/McKay-Ruud/>

If navigation is not obvious, click on "README".

There are currently (May, 2005) six photogalleries containing about 280 images.

A FAMILY TREE for McKay and other families, compiled by Fred Ruud, is at the LDS genealogy site, URL:
<http://www.familysearch.org/>

Navigation:

1. On Main screen, top bar, click on "Search"
2. On Search screen, fill in minimal information, e.g.:
First Name: George Frederick
Last Name: McKay
Country: select "United States"
State: select "Washington"
Then click on "Search".
3. On Matches screen, click on an appropriate Ancestral File, selected according to the listed birth date, etc. There may be several apparently equivalent selections -- pick any one.
4. On Individual Record screen, click on "Pedigree" to display a Pedigree Chart, giving the family tree back three generations.
5. On a Pedigree Chart, click on an arrow at the right edge of the screen to display previous generations.

ILA DIANTHA PANGBORN McKAY

Ila Diantha was born July 14, 1868 in Shellsburg, Benton County, Iowa. She was the second of six children, five girls and one boy. When Ila was sixteen, the family traveled west in a covered wagon, probably in the spring of 1885. They journeyed with a wagon train over the Oregon Trail to Walla Walla, Washington, about 2,000 miles. A young sister, Fay Pangborn, born in 1879, was killed when caught in the spokes of a wagon wheel, and was buried along the trail. Fay would have been 5 or 6 years old at the time of her death.

Howard Pangborn, Ila's father, was a Civil War veteran and a survivor of the infamous Civil War prison camp at Andersonville, Georgia. Over twelve thousand Union soldiers died there, from horrible conditions and disease. Howard claimed that he survived only because he boiled everything he ate or drank. One family story says that, subsequently, Howard suffered from a kind of post-traumatic syndrome. Unable to cope, he sat for hours playing his fiddle. On arriving in the West, Howard moved his family to the Idaho mining country, where he found work. The children were raised in Idaho.

Ila (and Howard) greatly enjoyed reading. She obtained her teaching certificate in 1890, good for the "Territory of Idaho". Later, she was certified to teach in Washington State. In 1893, Ila met her future husband at Palouse City, a small town north-east of Pullman, Washington. While giving a presentation in a meeting at the high school, Ila caught the rapt attention of another teacher, Frederick Harrison McKay. Fred had been searching for a suitable wife. Upon seeing Ila, he became immensely attracted and began a vigorous courtship. On July 24, 1894, the two school teachers were married at her parent's home. Fred and Ila raised five brainy, musical children, all destined to become teachers like their parents.

Beautiful and bright, Ila had a lovely figure and elegant style. She was short, about five feet, compared to her husband's over six-foot height. She played some piano, played organ in church, sang, and loved poetry. She seems to have been intensely cerebral, very sensitive, and artistic. She was described by one person as an "intellectual being", even mystical. Serious in nature, and a bit lacking in her sense of humor, she didn't smile much. She has been described as also lacking tact, with her sharply critical comments. Ila was thought to be moody and more introverted than Fred. She was not cuddlesome, yet she visited pleasantly with grandchildren, who considered her accessible and friendly. Eloise described her mother as strict, neat, stylish, well groomed, and always said, "She was a good mother". Ila sought culture. Her tastes were rather aristocratic. She could flash her temper, when necessary, to control her husband.

Fred was considered practical, outgoing, athletic, and hardy. Eloise described him as "sanguine", or sturdy, cheerful, and of "high color". She said he had a bright,

hopeful outlook. He hugged, played with children, was emotional, opinionated, and rather domineering. An earthy type, he admired the manly strength and capability of "the common man". Like Ila, he loved music. He sang, played violin, and the "bull fiddle" (double bass). Fred read aloud to his children each evening. Their favorite book, "Lorna Doone", by R.D. Blackmore, was read through several times. Eloise cherished those memories, and that book, all her life.

The family's comfortable Spokane home was orderly and well kept by Ila. She had household help from a poor relative, Jennie, who lived in, yet Ila made her own soap, and spent many hours cooking for her large family. Fred often brought home treats of the best food available in the market, like the nicest fruit in season. Grandchildren remember good eating, with delicious fresh vegetables from Ila's kitchen garden, and lots of heavy cream and butter. She presented "proper" meals in the dining room, where the table was set with white linens. Thanksgiving and Christmas meals were an event, often with guests. Some grandchildren think Ila was overburdened, that she sometimes didn't feel well, and yet forced herself to cope.

Ila was the parent who insisted on the children having music lessons and practicing. At a given moment, each child might be playing a musical instrument, each in a separate room. A blanket was placed over the piano to quiet it, so as not to disturb others at practice. Ila and Fred sang in a Spokane chorus. They took their children to classical music concerts, and to performances by great artists, including Caruso and Pavlova. An artist with entourage would travel by special train to major cities. Spokane, in sparsely populated Eastern Washington, was on the list. The family sometimes attended religious revival meetings and made a point of visiting churches of various denominations, to broadly educate their children. Ila believed in a university education for women. After her children left home, Ila was able to spend more time reading poetry. She took piano lessons. Fred and Ila enjoyed listening to music together, which they then discussed critically. Interest in politics was shared, along with pleasure in gardening.

The family enjoyed sitting on the long covered porch, which looked out over the lights of Spokane. They liked to watch electric storms move over the valley. Eloise remembered many evenings on the porch, in 1910, watching Halley's Comet hang in the sky over Spokane.

Garnets were Ila's favorite stone, which she wore in a ring, bracelet, and necklace. Fred's affectionate nickname for her was "Idyll" (spelling by Eloise), a poem which suggests peace and contentment, appropriate for a beautiful woman who loved poetry and music. He may have implied a double meaning, since she liked to sit and read.

The family regularly vacationed at nearby lakes, especially Loon Lake near Spokane, and Twin Lakes in Idaho. Ila and Fred encouraged their children to be athletic through calisthenics and stretching exercises. A chinning bar was placed

in the basement. Since there are a number of photos of Ila in a bathing suit, she must have enjoyed that important family sport.

In later life, depression became a problem for Ila. Fred wrote to son George about Ila being in one of her dark times. Surely, depression contributed to the suicide of her mother, Alice Elizabeth Pratt Pangborn, a widow of 19 years, who jumped or fell into the Spokane River (the death certificate lists "suicide"). Ila felt sad, even though she was still needed by her children, who relied upon her for help through emergencies. Ila developed adult diabetes, which eliminated many of her favorite foods. A family story says she indulged in heavy cream, a favorite, which caused a diabetic crisis. In a diabetic coma, Ila died the day after Christmas, December 26, 1942, at age 74. Fred spread her ashes about her rose garden. He tenderly cared for the garden, rising early in the morning to cultivate, as long as his own health lasted. He died in 1948, 6 years after the death of his adored Idyll.

ELOISE MCKAY

Eloise was born September 22, 1897, in Harrington, Washington. The oldest McKay child, Eloise developed what she called "an executive personality", meaning she felt comfortable organizing and having authority. Scholarly, Eloise studied Latin 6 years, and chose the science course at North Central High School in Spokane, where she also won the "German Medal" in language. She graduated early, in January, 1916. She enjoyed debating, proud that she had never lost a match. Eloise remained a challenging conversationalist all her life, and could score a point with laser-like intelligence. For Eloise, discussions were mostly "debates", not "arguments", and therefore carried no hard feelings against the opponent. A liberal "global thinker", Eloise opened many minds.

Certified at Cheney Normal School to teach, Eloise taught briefly, then studied at Washington State College, then at the University of Washington, where she earned her Bachelor of Arts in 1920. At college she continued to study German language, reading poetry by Goethe. She also studied French. Classical voice training refined her accents. Her mezzo voice repertoire included "Song to the Moon" (from "Rusalka"), by Dvorak, and the "Habanera" (from "Carmen"), by Bizet. She sang Schubert lieder, especially loving his quiet "Du bist die Ruh". Eloise was an accurate, expressive pianist. The McKay children performed chamber music at home, and for guests of the family. She also was trained by her father to be a competitive swimmer, specializing in the backstroke.

In 1921, Eloise became the high school English teacher at Waterville, Washington, a town recommended by her father. He thought the nearly constant breeze there, from the snowy Cascade Mountains, was sweet and healthy. At a community dance, she met rancher Oliver Ruud, the oldest son of a pioneer from Norway. Eloise enjoyed Oliver's deep voice, quiet manner, masculinity, beautiful physique, and graceful dancing. They were married November 27, 1923, at Spokane. Oliver was less educated than Eloise, but she respected the intelligent resourcefulness and strong character of the farmer. Her view was influenced by her father, who admired the farmers he interacted with in his bank job.

Oliver and Eloise raised seven children: Frederick Olin (1925); Lois Christine (1927); John Oliver (1929); Otto Francis (1930); Carl Edward (1931); Esther Louise (1933); and Ila Eloise (1937). Eloise often played piano, while the family sang. Her attentive listening to the Metropolitan Opera Saturday broadcasts, taught her children to appreciate opera. She pursued hobbies and projects, in such diverse areas as semantics, the culture of China, or family history. Nurturing projects, called "I took that child under my wing", were frequent involvements. Eloise taught principles of art with her oversized "picture book", made of fanciful paper collages she created, using magazine art by great illustrators. Her wide knowledge was a family resource. Oliver and Eloise were proud that all their children became college graduates, most doing advanced study.

Serious in personality like her mother, Eloise had a surprising flamboyant streak. A "snazzy dresser" (her words), she placed her hats at a dashing angle, and dared to wear a bright purple coat. She laughed at Oliver's well-timed, sometimes risqué jokes. Physically, Eloise was rather delicate, with allergies and migraine headaches. She never participated in outdoor ranch chores. Although the pastoral quiet of the ranch rested her, it was in reading and music that she found respite from the unending chores of caring for family. She cooked many years on a wood-burning stove for a family of 9, farm hands, and vacationing relatives, while also canning hundreds of quarts of produce in the summer heat. She used to say, "Do the hardest thing first, then all the rest will be easy."

Eloise died from pneumonia at age 98, on January 19, 1996, two years after the death of Oliver, her protective husband of 70 years.

GEORGE FREDERICK McKAY

George Frederick was born June 11, 1899, in Harrington, Washington. He attended public schools and received his early music education in Spokane. George began to compose music when still a teenager. In 1918, he entered Washington State College, taking courses in business. In 1919, he transferred to the University of Washington to study music. George won a scholarship to study music at Eastman School of Music, in Rochester, New York. He entered Eastman in 1921, and there studied composition with Selim Parmgren and Christian Sinding. George graduated in 1923, earning the first degree in composition awarded by the school. He played with the Eastman Theater Orchestra. His primary instrument was the violin.

In 1927, George was hired as a music professor in the School of Music at the University of Washington, where he taught 41 years, and became head of the composition section. He encouraged young composers to find their own unique style, rather than imitate the old European masters. Compositions by George were presented by famous conductors, including Sir Thomas Beecham, Leopold Stokowski, Milton Katims, and Carmen Dragon. Performances were broadcast on ABC, CBS, NBC, CBC, and Mutual Radio. George several times conducted the Seattle Symphony, in performances of his own music. Competent on violin or viola, as needed, he occasionally played with the Seattle Symphony to supplement the family income.

George musically referenced folk and Civil War melodies learned from his Grandfather, a Civil War Veteran and country fiddler. His music often evokes western landscapes, and sometimes echos American Indian themes. He achieved an "American" sound, with unique harmonics. Influenced by his mother's deep love of poetry, George found musical inspiration in poems. He authored three books: "Technique of Modern Harmony", "Creative Orchestration", and "Creative Harmony". He composed over 800 original works, including music for choral groups, solo voice, piano, organ, band, chamber groups, symphonies, and pieces for children.

Frances Greene and George were married in 1923. They raised five children: Georgianne (1924); Richard (1925); Annette (1931); Harrison (1933); and Frederick (1943). George had competed in swim meets when young, winning trophies in his specialty of sprinting short distances. His wife Frances had been a competitive diver. Bainbridge Island, in Puget Sound, was the vacation spot for George, Frances, and their children, where they swam, fished, and boated. When fishing on the cold Sound with young son Fred, a fish struck hard, knocking Fred's new pole out of his hands. Without hesitation, George, still a powerful swimmer in his 50s, dove into the icy salt water to rescue the pole from the bottom. Throughout his life, George kept active with swimming. He also played a vigorous handball game. A modern Renaissance man, George combined caring

for family with athleticism, a vigorous intellectual life, and his extremely productive artistic life as a musician, conductor, and composer.

George was warm, quiet, and considerate in his relationships and remarks. He earned respect and affection from his students and colleagues, and was adored by his family. After a happy day swimming with Frances in Lake Tahoe, George died suddenly and unexpectedly, on October 4, 1970. He and Frances (who died in 1996) are buried beside each other, in north Seattle, overlooking Lake Washington.

The "George Frederick McKay Publishing Company", formed by his family, is making George's music available. A web site which lists his music is: georgefrederickmckaymusic.com. The company may also be contacted at Mckaymusic@aol.com or at GFM Music, P.O. Box 10896, Bainbridge Island, Washington, 98110. Three all-McKay CDs are available: Naxos 8.559052, Naxos 8.559143, and Naxos 8.559225. Selections from the CDs are now broadcast around the world.

FRANCIS HOWARD McKAY

Francis Howard was born March 7, 1901 in Harrington, Washington. He received his first instruction on violin from Leonardo Brill and Moritz Rozen in Spokane, where he also attended public schools. After study at the University of Washington, he won scholarships to study violin with Vladimir Reznikoff at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. Francis played first violin for two seasons with the Rochester Philharmonic, under conductors Albert Coates, Arthur Alexander, and Eugene Goossens. He played also in the Eastman Theater Orchestra. In 1931 he earned his Master's Degree in Composition under Carl Paige Wood, at the University of Washington.

Georgia Moore and Francis married in 1929. They raised children Keith Howard (1931); Claudia Jane (1934); Elaine Louise (1939); and Frances Norene (1946). Francis loyally cared for his wife Georgia until her death, in 1978. Through his niece Georgianne McKay, he was reacquainted with Frances Greene McKay, Georgianne's mother, and the widow of his brother George, who had died in 1970. The F.H.McKay children and Frances Greene had all been friends in Spokane. They had met through swimming activities when teenagers. Both the Greene and McKay families vacationed at Twin Lakes. Francis and Frances were soon married.

Trained in swimming by his father, who coached swimming at the YMCA, Francis won trophies in the Regattas at Lake Couer d'Alene. At age 13, in 1914, he won the Spokane Junior Swim Championship. The McKays also swam for North Central High School. A long distance swimmer, Francis is remembered with awe for powerfully swimming across the wild, fast flowing Columbia River near Wenatchee. There are happy remembrances of Francis and George having great fun racing each other, at Lake Chelan, the Spokane YMCA pool, and elsewhere. They were both life guards in Spokane.

Francis taught music for more than 42 years, beginning at Lincoln High School in Seattle in 1925, the Idaho School for the Blind during the depression, and the Port Angeles, WA. public schools. He taught composition and performance at the Los Angeles Conservatory of Music. At the university level he taught at Humbolt State College, CA., University of Southern California, Cheney College of Education, Washington, Washington State University, and the College of Education at Monmouth, Oregon. He retired from public education after 12 years in Ketchikan, Alaska.

Francis is best know for his brass and woodwind ensembles. He composed for band, choir, piano, pipe organ, and solo instruments, including a junior solo series. An art song, "Let me Remember Music", is exquisite. Much of his music for young players is available from C.L. Barnhouse Company, telephone (641) 673-8397, at 205 Cowen Ave., West Oskaloosa, Iowa, 52577

(orders@barnhouse.com). His music was romantic in nature, and distinctly of the contemporary school. He became a member of ASCAP in 1946. Over his career, his original compositions were published by diverse publishers including Belwin, Boosey Hawkes, Boston Music, Choral Press, Ditson, Carl Fischer, J. Fischer, Lorenz, E.H.Morris, Presser, Remick, H.M. Schmitt, Silver Burchard, Summy Burchard, Witmark, and United Band.

Francis was especially close to his mother, helping her with cooking and chores. He shared her aristocratic ideas regarding music and intellectuality, and her sharp wit. He is remembered by his daughters as responsible, caring, and nurturing. Francis died of pneumonia in 1985, in Seattle. He disapproved of celebrating birthdays, funerals, and religion, and told his daughters that he wished to be "fed to the fishes". They spread his ashes into Puget Sound, as requested. Francis is remembered for his keen intelligence, elegantly romantic music, his special interest in composing for young players, his quick wit, and his quirky sense of humor.

ALICE McKAY

Alice was born September 6, 1903 in Spokane. Very early in life, Alice demonstrated a gift for playing piano. She played while young Eloise, 6 years older, danced about the living room. In Spokane, she was a class mate of Frances Greene, who later married George McKay. After piano, singing lessons, and high school in Spokane, she graduated from the University of Washington, in about 1925. Her degree was in "piano performance", which would have required her to give public recitals at the University. The degree was then called a Bachelor of Science. Later in life, Alice studied oil painting. She also played a very good game of bridge, and enjoyed playing in a card club.

Like her siblings, Alice was trained by her father to be a champion swimmer, competing in swim meets at lakes near Spokane. She was on the North Central High School swim team. Two of her father's best friends had drowned in the Mississippi River. That tragedy caused him to insist on all his children becoming capable swimmers.

One of Alice's childhood playmates was Bing Crosby, so named (Alice said) because he would say "bing! bing!" instead of "bang! bang!", when playing cowboys and Indians. Considered beautiful, Alice was also socially popular, and enjoyed dancing with ALL the boys at a party.

After college and several years teaching, Alice married chemical engineer Floyd Bond, on August 29, 1929. Alice, Diantha, and Floyd's sister Mary traveled by train to Charleston, the capitol of West Virginia, where the wedding took place. Floyd worked for the DuPont Chemical Company in Belle, West Virginia, near Charleston. The family lived in Charleston, in several different homes. Floyd was transferred to Morgantown during World War II, where Dupont opened a new plant. After the War, he returned to Charleston. Floyd was employed by DuPont most of his life. Floyd was a grandson of the first Governor of the State of Illinois.

Alice eventually found the climate in Charleston too hot, so Floyd told DuPont he needed to leave. The company found a job for him with the Savannah River Atomic Energy Installation in Aiken, South Carolina. In Aiken, Alice became re-certified to teach, working in special education for retarded children. She taught for about ten years. That experience led her to single-handedly lobby, with success, to improve the laws regarding special education in South Carolina. She was proud of that important accomplishment. Alice also demonstrated her capability and determination in support of her own children.

Floyd and Alice raised four children: Barbara Kay (1930); Martha Louise (1932); Shadrack Floyd (1935); and Mary Caroline (1941). Mary Caroline is now called Caitlin Elizabeth Stuart. The children all inherited talent for music. Alice was their beginning piano teacher. Later, they all had professional piano lessons. The

girls studied dance with a sister of Isadora Duncan. Martha and Barbara studied voice with Annie Laurie Leonard. Son Floyd also sang, studied violin, and now plays guitar.

Alice taught music and English at a prep school in Charleston. She worked as a retail clerk. Ace played piano at parties at the elegant mansions located along the Kanawha River, to help pay for lessons for her children.

Floyd and Alice retired to Florida, hoping their grandchildren would visit Disney World and them, on the same trip. Alice and Floyd have 9 grandchildren. After Floyd's death, Alice moved to Denver, to be near her son Floyd. In February, 1991, at age 87, after 3 months in a nursing home, Alice made a brave decision. She determined to cause her own death by refusing food and water, allowing herself only occasional ice. She accomplished her goal in 18 days.

Alice did her very best to educate her children. She missed her Washington family and tried to maintain contact. Alice was admired for her beauty, musical gifts, artistry, and great determination.

DIANTHA McKAY

Diantha was born February 15, 1911. She was 14 years younger than Eloise and 8 years younger than her next sibling, Alice. Trained in swimming by her father, she was on the diving team at North Central High School, from where she graduated in 1928. She studied piano and voice in Spokane and at the University of Washington. Her operatic soprano voice had an unusual non-vibrato quality. Impressed, her college voice teachers encouraged Diantha to become a professional singer, to which her father objected. He considered "being on the stage" an improper profession. Her repertoire included bravura songs, like "The Maids of Cadiz" by Hector Berlioz, and "Musetta's Waltz" from Georges Bizet's opera "Carmen". She could play piano excellently. She also studied tap dancing.

At the University of Washington and King County Hospital, Diantha studied nursing. Her father again objected, thinking nursing inappropriate for his daughter. She switched to chemistry and English, graduating from the U.W. in 1933 with a dual degree, and with teaching credentials. Diantha's first teaching job was at Cashmere, where her mother lived with her for part of the year.

John Fowler, a pharmacist, and Diantha met at the U.W. They married in 1935, then moved to southeastern Washington, where Diantha taught at Dixie, while John operated pharmacies in several towns. Son Douglas Pangborn Fowler (1937) was born in Walla Walla; son Perry Michael Fowler (1939) was born in Spokane. Divorced in 1940, Diantha, with her young boys, moved into her parent's home in Spokane.

During World War II, Diantha worked as a secretary at Geiger Field, near Spokane. After her mother died on December 26, 1942, Diantha kept house for her father. A broken hip confined him to a wheel chair, then to a bed. Diantha nursed him until his death on October 17, 1948. To upgrade her teaching credentials, she took extension courses from Eastern Washington College of Education at Cheney. After the McKay home in Spokane was sold in 1949, Diantha taught at Almira, until 1953. During the summers she took graduate classes at the University of Washington, receiving her Master of Library Science degree in 1954. Moving to Whitefish, Montana in 1953, she taught high school English, business, and was the school librarian. Both Doug and Mike graduated from Whitefish High School. In 1958, Diantha became librarian at Lake Sammamish High School, near Bellevue, Washington. She designed and oversaw construction of a new learning center there. To honor Diantha, it was named "The Diantha M. Fowler Learning Center". She retired from Lake Sammamish in 1977.

Diantha encouraged her sons academically. Doug received a Preventive Medicine degree from the University of Washington in 1967, and his M.S. from the UCLA School of Public Health in 1970. At UC Berkeley, he studied biostatistics, mechanical engineering, and environmental health, receiving his Ph.D. in 1981.

Since 1982, Doug has operated Fowler Associates, a consulting firm. His career has included teaching at San Jose State University, UC Berkeley, and the UCSF School of Medicine. Doug also is a visiting professor in Romania, at the Babes-Bolyai University and the Iulie Hatieganu University of Medicine and Pharmacy. Michael was designated a National Merit Scholar. His perfect score on the college SAT chemistry exam helped earn him a full scholarship at the California Institute of Technology, where he studied one year. At the University of Washington, Mike studied math and physics, and developed interests in painting and poetry. Doug served in the Air Force, Mike in the Navy. They live in Washington State: Doug on Orcas Island, Mike in Kent.

Diantha was beautiful, musical, and intellectual, like her sisters and her mother. She had a special flair for languages and conversation, as well as for music. She was a gifted teacher and librarian. Her sophisticated knowledge of literature was outstanding. Diantha died from cancer in 1984, in Seattle, Washington.