

**LIFE BROUGHT MANY SMILES FOR EARL & MARTHA
CARMAN
4/22/97**

I first became acquainted with Earl and Martha Carman in 1958, while they managed the Bisby Gate at the Adirondack League Club. I came to know them as two of the most congenial people I ever met.

Married in 1913, the union lasted until Earl's death in 1979. Earl was born in Wilmurt, NY in 1893 and Martha two years later at Northwoods, NY. They shared most of a lifetime together, as well as the experience of losing their birth sites to Hinkley Reservoir.

Never a robust person Earl suffered from asthma and along with many others, came to the area for his health. Caretaking, forest fire observer and gatetending provided the family livelihood.

The couple had four children: Bill, Arluen, Theron and Daryl, as well as several grandchildren. One of the grandchildren affectionately referred to them as Ma and Pa Kettle. Earl's slow-going, easy manner and dry sense of humor coupled with Martha's get-up-and-go enthusiasm for life, led to the analogy.

Earl was forever plaguing Martha with practical jokes. A trip to her sister's on the train provides a good example. When she opened her pocketbook at the station, she had to wade through yards of toilet paper he had crammed it with.

One of his best he reserved for Martha and her sister who was visiting. The ladies returned late from an Eastern Star function and were sleeping in the same room. Earl had hidden a large battery-operated fire bell behind the dresser. He touched it off after they were well asleep. He had removed the cover from the bell so sparks added an extra dimension to the ear-shattering clamor of the bell.

As forest fire observer on Woodhull Tower, Earl's duties were to report all airplanes as well as fires. He had a little dog that picked up on the routine and alerted Earl with his frantic barking long before Earl could hear the planes. The dog would go no higher than the first landing up the tower steps until the day a bear changed his mind. He chased the bear into the woods until the bear reversed the pursuit and the tower was conquered.

Earl had an amusing story he told all the visitors to the tower about a squirrel the dog loved to chase. After Earl cut down the small tree the squirrel took refuge in, it went 30 feet up in the air before it realized the tree was gone.

Martha retained her zest for life to the end. She enjoyed her last years at the Eastern Star home in Oriskany. At Christmas time I always gave her a roll of stamps and two or three boxes of cards. She sent them to everyone she knew with messages written on every inch of available space on the card.

We used to enjoy their company on Friday night fish fries. Typically, Earl had to be coaxed into coming while Martha was rearing to go.

Earl retained his sense of humor until the end. In his last days, terminally ill with cancer, he was asked if he had made peace with his maker. He reflected for a moment and answered, "I didn't know we had ever quarreled."