

Chapter 4 - Virginia Waugh

Virginia Waugh was born prematurely on March 6, 1940, weighing just 3lbs 1 oz, her brother Ralph named her 'Peanut' a name she uses still, because she grew to 4' 11" inches tall. She was three when she was abandoned at Avondale and rescued by Gertrude Ramey. It was Miss Ramey who sent it to live at the Fields farm in Worthington in 1944, a fate no child could endure.

"I used to have fainting spells as a small child, and I still do, especially when I feel overheated. When I was little, I'd fall over just sitting in a chair. Mrs. Fields grabbed me by my ankles and ducked me up and down into the rain barrel or pumped cold water on my face until I came to. Ralph came in one day when she nearly drowned me pumping water on my face. He stopped her. I barely remember Ralph, but I know he was there with me."

"On their farm, I picked up potatoes; from their old hand pump, I filled a water bucket, lugged it to the garden and poured it on the plants. I was little just about age five or six, when Mother sent me back. I worked hard.

After Ralph and I ran away from the Fields farm in 1946, we lived with mother and Forest in three different places in Ashland: Central Avenue, Donta Road and Pollard Crossing. We moved to Maryland in mid summer of 1948, because I remember I was eight years old. So, I guess the incident with the BB gun happened when I was age six, and well before we left for Maryland."

"I don't remember the reason I went back to the Fields place. I went there the first time when I was three years old. I guess Mother didn't know how mean they had been to me, and to Ralph," Virginia said.

"I was six years old, when mother made me go back to stay at the Fields farm."

I didn't want to, but she forced me to go. Once mother left me there, I was playing on their front porch, when a neighbor boy standing out by the road, called my name. I turned as he fired his BB pellet into my left eye, blinding it forever. I don't remember his name. I ought to. After that, our family moved to Baltimore in 1948 when I was eight, to live on Baltimore Avenue not far from Johns Hopkins Hospital. There, Doctors removed a cataract, but could do nothing to restore my sight in that eye. They explained while the pellet had not ruptured my eye ball, it was blinded for good. At age forty, I had two surgeries to correct uneven pull of the eye muscles so my eye is straight again."

"Mother was all right I guess, I never had any trouble with her, and so was Forrest as well as I can remember. He was gone on duty a great deal. He'd come back on leave for short visits. Mother drank quite a bit as she grew older. She seemed to work all the time though, as a bartender or a waitress. She was always gone it seemed," Virginia said.

"At one time, Marjorie, Phyllis, Ronnie and I went to Germany to live with mother and Forest while he was stationed there for about three years, I think. Then he was sent to Alabama for two years. Marjorie had married by then, so it was just Ronnie and Phyllis and me still at home. We moved back to Maryland, after Alabama. Soon, Forrest was stationed in Italy and mother divorced him about that time. They say it was because he was gone so much," Virginia paused, "But, I'm not certain about her reason for divorcing him. They divorced in 1965, just five years after I'd married, and I am certain of that date," Virginia emphasized.

"My formal education was sketchy. I attended Summit school in Boyd County for a short time. Then in Maryland, at grade four, I was sent to a vocational school. Poor grades I guess. I couldn't remember things easily. Perhaps it was related to my fainting spells.

I saw my birth father, Albert Waugh, for the last time when I was nineteen.

We were on our way back from visiting brother, Ralph when he was stationed with the Army in Florida. Our mother thought it was important that we stop to see our father in Georgia. I don't understand her reasons. He was a stranger to me. So, mother, Ronnie and Phyllis and I called on him in his small apartment. He seemed pleasant enough and glad to see us. He had remarried.

I was married on February 12, 1960 in Delaware, just one month short of my 21st birthday. I live in Los Angeles with my husband of forty-five years, with our children and grandchildren.

My sisters and brothers and I talk often over the phone. We are close and we stay together, as we always tried to do."

- Virginia Peanut Waugh -