

## Mom's Stories

### Introduction

*Who I am.*

I have often been told that I am the family story teller. So I guess that is my job---and I have decided to have fun doing it. Your job is to pass them on.

I ~~seem to~~ want to start with the Vierling family probably because my Grandpa, Arthur, was the love of my childhood. His family came to the United States out of the Socialist Revolutions of 1848 from the Alsace region. His grandfather had some experience with steel making in the old country and this catapulted his family into the business of supplying steel beams to build many of the new tall buildings of the 1880s & 90s in the ~~city of~~ Chicago. They were members of "The 300" who basically shepherded the growth of the city. The Depression changed all of that.

Mary Vierling Schwartz Quinn Follett, my "Auntie Mame" Mom, was a nearly mythical character. Her story of riches to rags and back again is filled with joy, fear, pain, talent, humor, and great love. Because of her strength and perseverance we live comfortable lives filled with the memories of highs and lows and shared experiences.

I didn't know my father, Edward Schwartz, until I was 43. The saga of the Schwartz family is amazing and truly the American story. He gave me a rare gift by sharing his memories. <sup>surprisingly</sup> Amazingly, he never had a chance to tell them to my three half sisters. That has been my job.

We joined the Follett family when your Grandma Mary married Grandpa Garth. Miraculously they greeted us with open arms and I was always treated like a blood relative. Their success story in business is so intertwined with our family story that it is often hard to separate them. There were four brothers led by a truly remarkable father ~~that~~ <sup>who</sup> created the base of all Follett businesses. There were twelve children in my generation, of whom only four were boys. There was never a question about what those

boys would do---give your skills to the company boys---and Follett Corporation grew. Fortunately, the girls married fine men. None of them knew that when they got their education in unrelated fields they would be lured into "The Family Business". Understanding the strengths that all of our husbands contributed is to understand the strength of Follett Corporation.

*Bill*  
Your Dad and I were married December 27, 1957. His background was a struggle that made his successes all the more heroic. Historically, the Goshorn family appeared to have to come to America about 1755. They <sup>may</sup> ~~might~~ have been Swiss German folks looking for a better life, or they might have been Hessian soldiers sent by the English to keep the settlers under control. Their families ended up settling in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, and Michigan. They were strong farming folk with a bit of an entrepreneurial bent. Your Great-Grandfather, Grandpa Goshorn's father, was an artist of some note. The Great Depression of the 1930's took its toll nearly bowing your Goshorn, Henry and Carrie under. It was tiny Grandma Anning, Grandma Goshorn's Mom, whose spunk and vision were a support to all, <sup>Grandparents</sup>

As I look back on my own life I begin to realize that it mirrors much of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and as such I suspect it deserves the telling. Born in the Depression, scared by "The War" and then the "Cold War", I lived the life of a comfortable housewife-teacher with three beautiful children. History stepped in and I was given the privilege of leadership through some momentous times.

Your lives are filled with stories that will help your children and grandchildren understand themselves. Pass them on. Life is history. I am proud of the lives you have lived and the values we share. Keep up the good work.

Love,

Mom

*Comment for  
a wider audience  
Do a family tree*