



Frank W. Steil

Jan. 16, 1893 - Aug. 18, 1981

Frank Steil was born in Detroit, Michigan in 1893. His parents were George P. Steil and Katherine Ackles. They immigrated to the United States from Germany in 1882 and were followed by his grandparents, John P. Steil and Anna Ruhl two years later.

Frank was the fourth child of the eight children born to George and Katherine: George (b. 1887), Anna (b. 1889), William Valentine (b. 1891), Frank (b. 1893), Florence (b. 1895), Alice (b. 1898), Walter (b. 1900), and Marie (b. 1903).

Frank grew up on the eastside of Detroit. The Steil family was Catholic and belonged to St. Anthony's parish.

Frank's father George, his grandfather John, and his older brother Valentine (known as William) were carpenters and cabinetmakers. An 1891 city directory lists the business name as John P. Steil and Sons. The following year, the directory listed the business as Steil Brothers (carpenters) and indicated that John P. Steil had died the previous year at the age of 62.

In 1899, the city directory shows that the George Steil family lived at 1325 Canton. The cross street was listed as Kirby. A 1900 census document also shows the family at this address and indicated that George was a carpenter.

These documents coincide with information learned during a "trip down memory lane" for the 80th birthday of Kay Coleman (only child of Frank Steil and Catherine Lukaschewski). Kay pointed out an old dilapidated store with an apartment above it, stating that her father's family had once lived there.

Frank was industrious. A work permit signed by his father shows that Frank started working in a factory at the age of 15. In 1919, he became a partner in Air Friction Carburetor Sales Company. The following year, a census form listed Frank's occupation, at the age of 26, as a toolmaker.

Frank married Catherine Lukaschewski (then known as Catherine Lukas) on October 28, 1920. The ceremony was performed at St. Anthony's Catholic Church. The invitation indicated they would be living at 362 Fullerton Avenue.

Kathleen Jeanette Coleman was born to Frank and Catherine on December 16, 1921. She was born at home with Dr. George C. Pratt attending. The residence was listed as 2158 Fullerton Street in Detroit.

In 1930, the census showed Frank and Catherine and Kathleen living in a duplex they owned on Fullerton Street

in Detroit. The value was listed as \$11,000. It also showed that Frank was not a military veteran. Although Frank registered for the draft in 1917, he was never called for service.

Sometime during the 1930s, Frank and Catherine bought several lots in the Bunny Run area of Lake Orion, Michigan. They built a cottage on one of the lots. The cottage became a recreational gathering place for Kathleen and her friends as she was growing up. It also became the venue for annual reunions of the Steil family. After Kathleen married Murray Coleman, they and their children enjoyed the cottage. One of the lots later became the site of a new home for the Coleman family when they moved to Lake Orion from Ferndale, Michigan.

Frank worked for several years at Packard Motor Car Company in Detroit. He later worked as a tool and die maker at Genera Motors. He retired at the age of 65. Frank died on August 21, 1981, at the age of 88.

Frank was a loving husband, a caring father, and a terrific grandfather. His memory lives on in our hearts.

Links to documents and photos on the website: