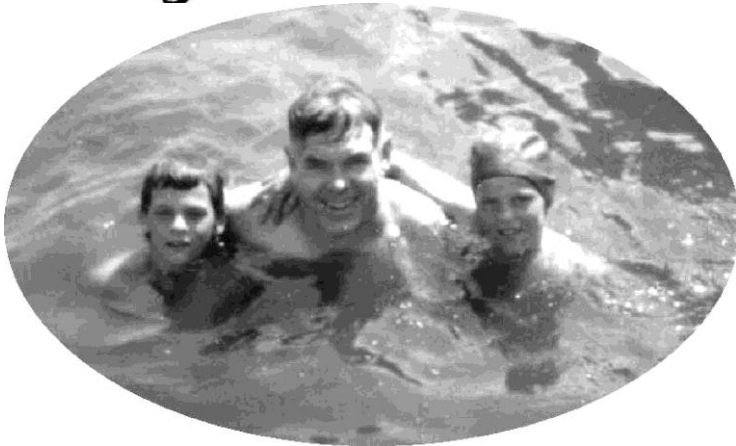


George



George Raymond Casey
August 22, 1906—March 8, 1973
St. Philip Neri School, Class of 1920
Bowen High School
1924 or so: Ore boat job with John Woulfe
University of Wisconsin, BA 1931
Semi-Pro Football, Fort Atkinson Blackhawks
U.S. Army 1941-1945
Married Alice Kilty June 13, 1945
Eva Winifred Casey born June 13, 1946
MaryDaniel Casey born July 3, 1947
Circa 1950: Fire Dept. → Engineer Custodian,
Chicago Board of Education

Cause of Death: Metastatic Adenocarcinoma
Buried at St. Mary's Cemetery,
Evergreen Park, Illinois.

In season we walked over to the beach every evening for a swim.

Dad said *his* father would walk to the lake with several children in tow, the youngest, Dan, on his shoulders. Once there, Grandpa would do the breast stroke while the youngsters stayed between him and the shore.

Here's a zoom on George at college gleaned from a letter Uncle Bob wrote seminarian Dan 10/20/30. The day of a big game, Bob and two friends arrived at the house where George lived in Madison. "George, Swider, Neups and his brother Paul, and some other lad were in the room....Neups had played with the Bees in Ripon in a night game on Friday...He scored three touchdowns. One of Ripon's coaches said that Wisconsin's 'B' team could take Chicago, and I wouldn't doubt it. Ed and Geo were rarin' to go so left for the Stadium at 1:20....It was plain that they were on edge. I don't mean scared but they had heard so much about Penn's running game, their lateral and forward passes that they knew not what to expect....Penn was mighty cocky....As the game progressed we were kept warm with the cheering." There follows a play by play, complete with diagrams. Wisconsin scored immediately. In the third quarter George intercepted the ball and ran 48 yards for a touchdown. "Ed Swider(ski) as you know won his position because of his fighting SPIRIT, he certainly fights tooth and nail while in there. George says he was talking all the time, sometimes using strong language. The referee warned him on several different occasions to quiet down and he would only get worse....Can't you just imagine him [doing] something like that?...Summing the whole game up, the Wisconsin team played inspired football and were unbeatable last Saturday....After the game I met Mona and we all went over to the dressing room door"

When George was drafted in March 1941, Fr. Dan gave him a 5-year diary. That is the basis for the following account of George's army life. In November 1941, he was released as an "over 28," but he was called up again in January 1942. For awhile he was Fire Chief at the Presidio, of which he says, "Presidio of San Francisco is great place." But in July 1942, "Bad news. Maj. Hoxie warned us about civilians taking over this fire dept. for the duration." His first month's pay was "\$21 (Can they spare it?)" By 1945 he was getting \$172.50/month. He got to Stanford and Cal football games. He got into duplicate bridge. "Like it a lot." Throughout his service George recorded the names of movies the army screened for them, including *Citizen Kane* and *Casablanca*. No comment on the former, "Good!" on the latter. When he got orders to take a train to Indiantown Gap PA, he requested a stop in Chicago. He was told not to communicate with anyone about this troop movement! That gag order must've been rescinded, because next thing I know I'm reading, for Tues, Aug. 18, 1942, "8:45am Roy at depot. Home & visited Pop; Rickleman, Woulfe, McShane, Upham, Luke!...Met Alice at Lyd's party. McShane's Cottage. Big time—Kay Nangle was there." Wed.: "Home from McShane's Party early in am. Slept to 11am. Breakfast with Pop. To Lyd's, to beach—stopped to see Ed Fleming. Alice came to supper. Lyd, Pat & kids. Mil & Rod over. Pop, Roy, Kay & Annie & Alice to train. Left 8:20" How's that for 36 hours? This guy socializes until 3am throughout this diary. Interesting that when later settled into married life he was home at 4:30pm every day, and only partied a few times a year, always with relatives or Wisconsin friends. And I'm *sure* he liked it that way. About Indiantown Gap he writes "Don't like this post. Too military." "Our passport pictures arrived. Mine's a 'honey'." "This Indiantown Gap is the bunk. We don't like it. All want to get across seas." In December 1942 he's transferred to Ft. Dix, NJ. "Barracks exactly like Gap." He spent Christmas 1942 at the Gillcrists. He *loved* it. He slept in the front room. Francie "was looking at 'chairs' at 4am with flashlight." At 2719 the Christmas "chair" system was simple, since we had two easy chairs. But how does this play out with *nine* kids? All were home but

Evamarie. Her Uncle George, and her oldest and youngest siblings, Annapolis cadet John and 3-year-old Danny, visited her Christmas Day at the motherhouse. On Jan. 5, 1943 George Casey and 4399 other GIs embarked on *The Empress of Japan* (!) without convoy. He was seasick most of the way. "Boat filthy; Meals terrible;... Very much disappointed in whole setup." There was a pool on their arrival date and harbor. Jan.14, Firth of Clyde, won. Once settled at the Disciplinary Training Center in Langport, Somerset, they arranged the office so that all got a weekly 24-hour leave. Right away George became involved in the local scene, but not until Palm Sunday does "the French lady, Mrs. Lodwidge" rate a diary mention. Soon he's playing bridge with her set. By July I am picking up a definite *frisson* from the diary (e.g. "First contact!"). July 1943 highlights: "Sicily invaded by Allies...Lodwidge house invaded by—." Until he departed for France in October 1944 it seems like he spent most of those 24-hour leaves at Ker Huel (Lisette's house). When Mrs. L's daughter, Jacqueline, who was in the Free French, came home on leave before shipping to Syria, he didn't get "his" room, but he got another. It comforted my mother, who was in love with George, but not engaged, to know Lisette was old enough to have a grown-up daughter. But then she started wondering if she should be worried about *Jackie!* (No she should not.) Mme. Lodwidge helped Sgt. Casey buy a diamond ring which he put in the post safe "for Kilty." But then in July 1944 (The ring has been in the safe for months) he's writing in his diary "Still have come to no decision about Kilty." Dec 19, 1944: "Very busy in office. I don't like France. Am lonesome for '7247,' POP, rest of family, & Alice." On Friday Feb. 9, 1945, George took his first plane ride. "Left Chartres 10:45 AM. Arrived Yeovilton airport 1:10. Truck to Sherpton Mallet. Receipt for 52 GPs" (That would be German Prisoners). Then cab to Langport. Drinks by the fire at Ker Huel. Breakfast in bed (a tradition by now). Bridge. Quiet evenings in a real home. And for variation he goes out visiting—11 stops are named, plus the *Rose & Crown*. He *hated* to head back to the Loire DTC on Wednesday morning. I have a letter to "POP & All" on the same adventure. It covers how he wrangled to be chosen for this duty, the two days of mechanical and weather delays before liftoff, how the White Cliffs of Dover really are white, and on the French side too...for a whole page. And not *one* word about the accommodations. He got home 5/5/1945 due to his father's stroke. He got a 45-day furlough. He was discharged 9/13/1945.

*** Several Years Later ***

When I was about five Dad would not let me help him paint up on the scaffold. In a pique, I said, "*You* get to have all the *fun*." In a few more years he let both of us, and Sandy, the boy downstairs, scrape and steam off layers of old wallpaper. There was a high incidence of projects involving dropcloths at 2719.

I used to field phone calls from The Michael Reese Hospital blood bank. Would he please come? Dad passed on his O-negative blood and the willingness to give it. MaryDan once said giving blood was her favorite charity.

Dad was no singer. He passed that along too. But he did teach us "*Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree With Anyone Else But Me*" and "*If You Want To Be a Badger*."

Mid-1950s family dynamic: Eva: "I'm *never* changing my name." Alice: "Don't worry, George. She'll change her mind when she grows up." George: "Who's worried?"

After our young neighbor, Johnny O'Keefe, left our porch, having bragged how much money he was making selling encyclopedias, Dad said, "Yeah, but he didn't say for how many weeks."

Dad called a boy on 75th Place "Transfers," MaryDan's friend Kathy Wheelihan "Houlihan," and his godchild Marion Guinan "Snooks." Guess what Transfers collected at the bus stop?

Dad knew everything was not on the square. He kept several glaziers working full time at the Oakenwald. He told me in the 1960's that he'd never seen a colored glazier. I wrote "black" but then I recovered this memory from about 1966: Eva: "...colored..." "MaryDan: "Don't say that! That's what Mom and Dad say and it's so *embarrassing*."

Advice from Dad:

Never leave the house without money. No sense in being **SHORT**.

Don't pay a BIT of attention to him. (Learning to drive, I was going the speed limit. A car passed honking.)

Dad on his deathbed: "I think the happiest people are those who help others." I mentioned this to Mom maybe a couple of years later. She had not known of this opinion of his. She said in a heartfelt way, "*Thank you* for telling me that."

When Mom and Dr. Guzauskas were working on tubing in his side and Dad was beyond talking forever, I was observing from the other bed. Dad waved at me with his fingers.