

Harvey Charles Dolphy AKA Charles Dolphy Harvey (1896 – 1960)

At noon on July 7, 1934 on the main street of Jal, New Mexico, Roy B Conover dropped dead of a heart attack. He was the third husband of my grandmother Hazel Pearl Tompkins, but my mother remembered Hazel as saying that Roy was the love of her life. Between them they owned a drug store and a service station (or as it was called then a filling station). They appeared to have been making a good life, but this account isn't about those two. Instead, it's about Charles D. Harvey.

By the time that Roy Conover's will was probated (he had children from a previous marriage) in January 1935, Hazel was signing documents as Mrs. Charles D. Harvey. Long ago, my father gave me a list of his mother's husbands, which included the name Charles D. Harvey. Without that list and the probate documents, I would never have known this man existed. For years, I thought he must be a figment of someone's imagination because there was NO record to be found of this man. Even after I found the marriage record that gave his approximate age and place of birth, he was not to be found.

With two war registrations during his span of life, he should at least show up there, but he doesn't.

What I have finally found about his life is fascinating but still filled with gaps. However, this is what I know about him as I write this account, he touched more families than most of us would have ever imagined.

He began life as Harvey Charles Dolphy 24 Jun 1896 in Jamaica, West Indies born to Agnes Charlotte Eden and Osmond Charles Dolphy who were also born in the West Indies. O.C. Dolphy was a Presbyterian minister who brought his family to Alabama in 1899.

He is clearly a problem teenager. In 1910, he is arrested for stealing from his brother's home. He is also arrested for criticizing a military parade. In 1912 he is arrested for forgery. Finally, he is court-martialed in 1914 for unspecified offenses.

By 20 April 1917 he has married Callie E. McPherson who lists her occupation as nurse in the 1920 census. In that same census Harvey now lists his birthplace as Alabama and his occupation as piano collector. They are living in Mobile, Alabama. Harvey has joined the Alabama National Guard (for the last time). I'm sure his father, who will die the next year in January 1921, believes his son has sown his wild oats and is settling down.

But perhaps relieved of the demands of his father, Harvey travels to Mexico and returns by ship to arrive in New Orleans 10 March 1921. Callie won't divorce him until 12 March 1925, but the marriage appears over. Sometime during his time in New Orleans he marries Ida V. Keegan perhaps while he is attending Tulane University School of Journalism. She carries his name for the rest of her life filing for divorce in 1944 and again in 1969.

He moves on to Atlanta, Georgia marrying Pansy Dorothy Lynch 31 August 1926 with whom he has the only child I have recorded. His daughter Grace Gwendolyn Dolphy is born 17 September 1927. He is still in Atlanta in 1928 living next door to his brother Vivian. He is listed as a salesman. He abandons his family not long after according to the divorce record filed in 1931 by Pansy.

By 22 February 1930 he marries Grace Lee Goodrich in Carter, Oklahoma, but by the April 1930 census they are not living together.

According to undocumented information he marries for the fourth time 2 August 1930 in St. Louis, Missouri (home at that time of his brother Gerald and his mother) Nancy Caroline "Nan" Chrisman. She keeps his name until her death.

The next time I find him, he is marrying Mary Elizabeth Goldsberry in Columbia, Missouri in September 1933. He is listed as a newspaperman and they are to move to California. However, by 1940 she is listed under her maiden name and single so once again he has left

her behind. However, by 1952 she gives her name as Mary G Harvey.

And here's where it gets interesting. At each point along the way up until 1933, he gives his name as Harvey C. Dolphy. But at this point he disappears and Charles D. Harvey appears. Then it cannot be the correct person, you say. I'd agree until one sees the military burial record. His wife clearly indicates that this is a man with two names but the same birth date. And the California death records record his mother's name as Eden.

LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL <i>(2) (3) (1)</i> DOLPHY, Harvey CHARLES		GRADE Cpl.	SERVICE NUMBER 1349745	NAME OF CEMETERY GOLDEN GATE	
DAYS OF SERVICE ENLISTMENT May 2 1917		SEPARATION May 19 1919		RETIRED <input type="checkbox"/> DIED ON AD	
SERVICE DATA (Company, Regiment, Division, or other organization and basic arm of service) Co. M, 1st Inf. Ala. NG Fed. Serv.		CHECK IF REMAINS CREMATED <input type="checkbox"/>			
EMBLEM (Check one) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CHRISTIAN <input type="checkbox"/> NONE		STATE Calif. YAK		OTHER (Specify)	
DATE OF BIRTH MO DAY YEAR June 24 1896	DATE OF DEATH MO DAY YEAR Oct 12 1960	DATE OF INTERMENT MO DAY YEAR Oct 19 1960	GRAVE LOCATION SECTION GRAVE NO. 2A 773	DEPTH OF GRAVE 5'	CASKET IN BOX <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VAULT <input type="checkbox"/> NONE
NAME AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN OR OTHER RESPONSIBLE PERSON (Include postal zone and relationship) Widow - Rowena Harvey P.O. Box 63863 Los Gatos, Calif. unknown		HEADSTONE OR MARKER ORDERED Cpl Com/1 Deputy Ala Ng/ww MAY 18 1961		DB, RE, SR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VERIFIED NOK <input type="checkbox"/> NOT VERIFIED	
REMARKS (Authority for interment, disinterment) Authority: Telg. OQMG #475 Oct 18 1960 Grave #772 Sec. 2A, res. for widow. NOK wishes name inscribed CHARLES DOLPHY HARVEY (True name).		SHIPPING POINT FOR HEADSTONE (Nearest freight station) San Bruno, Calif B 1129401 1129401		GREEN MOUNTAIN MARBLE CO WEST RUTLAND, VT.	
PERTINENT BURIAL DATA PLACE OF DEATH Los Gatos, Calif. NAME OF FUNERAL DIRECTOR The Place Funeral Home		RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION OF DECEDENT Prot.		NAME OF CHAPLAIN OFFICIATING AT BURIAL SERVICE None	
TYPED NAME OF SUPERINTENDENT J. F. MONAGHAN		SIGNATURE OF SUPERINTENDENT <i>J. F. Monaghan</i>			
DA FORM 2122 1 MAY 58		RECORD OF INTERMENT (TM 10-287)		1	

And that brings us to 16 December 1934 in Las Cruces, NM where he marries my grandmother. I have found no divorce record, but my father said this marriage did not last long which will come as no surprise to those reading this account. By 1935 he is in San Francisco and by 19 June 1936 he marries Edith Rowena Westcott. This marriage lasts until his death in 1960, and she's the one who fills out the request for his military burial stone. His obituary lists him as a newspaper entrepreneur, but I cannot yet find any record of this occupation.

I'd love to find a family member who remembers this man. It's interesting that so many of his wives keep his name. It's as if his touch on their lives was not as painful as this account would seem. Perhaps he was a man who "loved not wisely but too well."

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