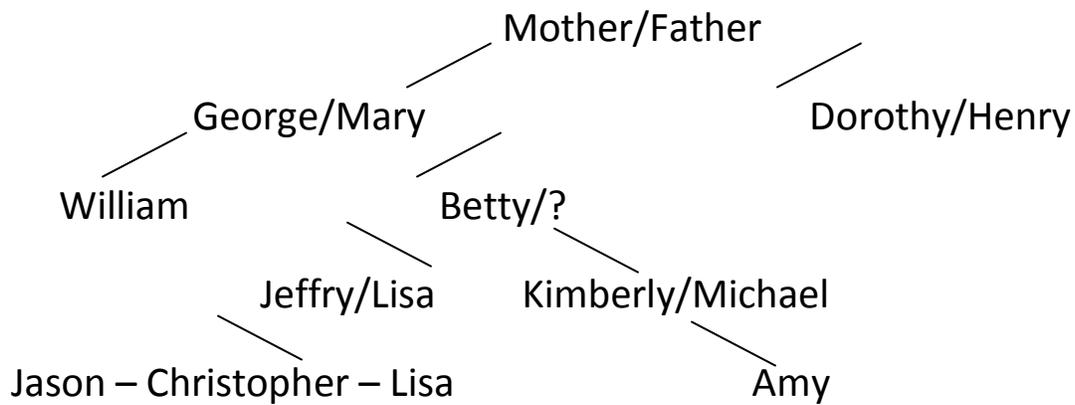


A Lifetime of Memories

By Lee Giles

George's Family Tree



Part of the Easy Peasy All in One Homeschool

All Rights Reserved

Chapter 8

Kimberly's husband came around the back of the house in an apron and holding cooking tongs. "The hamburgers are about to go on the grill. We'll be ready in a bit. Kim, where are the rolls?"

"I'll get them," Kimberly said.

"No, that's all right. Stay with everyone here. Looks like everyone's having a good time."

Kim whispered some directions and talked even more with her hands and Michael headed into the house.

George watched Michael go and said, "I'm so glad you found Michael. We were worried about you for awhile there, but he kept you from straying far from home. You were married in 72?" Kim nodded. "Lots of things changed that year, didn't they?"

George smiled a sad smile and closed his eyes.

March 18, 1973

"Mom, I'm going out to try and get gas," Jeffry called out to Betty. "Would you please record MASH?"

"Get it set up for me," Betty said. "You know I'm not good at working that VCR."

"I don't know how long I'll be gone," Jeffry said. "I tried earlier but they were out of gas where I was. It'll be a long wait I'm sure. When I get back, I'll help Dad with the taxes."

Jeffry heard his dad from the other room. "What did Dad just mumble?" Jeffry asked his mother.

"He says he doesn't need any help. He has his handy dandy pocket calculator this year." Betty smiled knowing her husband's frustration with numbers.

"Well, I might be out all night waiting for gas anyway."

George watched Jeffry push buttons on the box attached the TV in their living room. He had been living with them for the past year since Mary's heart gave out on her. Jeffry passed him on the way out, held up his hand and said, "Give me a high five Grandpa." George had learned the routine and held up his hand for a slap.

George rubbed his hand, and shaking his head, walked over to ask Betty, "What does that thing do?"

"What thing, Dad?"

"The box on the TV?"

"It's a video recorder. You put these big rectangle tapes in and it can record the TV shows onto it so you can watch them later. It's like a music cassette tape but bigger and for videos."

"Speaking of those cassette tapes, what did you do with my record player when I moved in here?"

"It's in the basement with all your records."

"You could have left me and my records in my home," George grumbled.

"And let you eat instant rice, instant soup and instant mashed potatoes? How could I? You've always needed a woman around to take care of you." Betty laughed. George did too.

August 9, 1974

Betty poured coffee for everyone despite Alabama's summer heat. "Kim, I'm so glad you and Michael were able to come over for dinner. Your anniversary is next week and there's already a little one on the way. What a wonderful year it's been. Oh, I guess you don't want coffee."

Kim replied, "No I'll skip it. They say it's bad for the baby."

"That's fine, but I bet later they'll change their mind. Everything in moderation. Isn't that what mom used to say? George?"

George put down the paper. "What? Did you know it's official now? Or is about to be?"

"What, Father?" Betty asked. "Nixon is resigning the presidency tonight on live television. What a disgrace for America."

"He didn't resign soon enough," Michael exclaimed. "Sent us boys off to Vietnam. Only pulled out last year." He put his hand on Kimberly's belly. "Under his watch abortion was made legal too. I hate the man. He's a killer."

"Now Michael," Betty said. "I hate it all as much as you do, but Jesus says that to hate a person is akin to murdering them. So let's hate all the killing and not the president."

Kimberly spoke up. "I find it remarkable how so many of my friends who protest all the killing during the war are now protesting for the right to kill a baby. They call it pro-choice. Now that I'm pregnant I know there is a life in me. You can't deny it. You shouldn't be able to kill it."

"It's horribly sad," Betty said. "What an awful place our country is in right now. So much has changed. Even you, Kimberly. You're working now and plan to work after you have the baby. Life is so different now. Isn't it George?"

"It certainly is. Things keep on changing, but are we making progress? I'm not too sure about that."

March 29, 1979

"Hi there, Dorothy," George said and shuffled softly into her hospital room. He hung his hat on the back of the door and lowered himself gingerly into the seat near her bed. "Told you I'd be back for another visit."

"Promises, promises." Dorothy tried to tease; she couldn't help but smile.

"How are you feeling?"

Dorothy didn't answer but picked up the remote, guessed the answer to the *Wheel of Fortune* puzzle and turned off the TV.

George continued undeterred. "You know I flew here. Wish I could tell mom. Good to be in New York again. Kimberly's kids are growing like weeds. Still little, but they're bigger each time you see them. The world is still falling apart. Big disaster at the nuclear plant on Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania. The Iranians are still holding the American hostages they took." George looked at Dorothy and smiled. "I guess you already know that Elvis is dead." Dorothy started laughing. "So, how are you feeling?"

"You know, Murphy's Law, what can go wrong, will go wrong. Since when did we have to worry about the Iranians taking hostages. And me, well, you know, this is wrong and that too and every day another test and another problem to report. Don't look sad, George. I'm on my way to heaven. Wish I was going today, but I guess it will come soon enough."

"I love you, Dorothy. Thanks for being such a great big sister."

“You’re the great one, George. Don’t worry about me. You go spend time with those great grandkids or they’ll be all grown before you know it.”

“Well, before I go I brought you something.” George held up an oversized white t-shirt with a big yellow smiley face on it.”

“Have a nice day,” Dorothy read from the shirt. “Thank you, George,” she said with a smile. “I’ll try.”

Chapter 8

What I know...

- Long gas lines began in the summer of 1972 and worsened before they got better in the spring of 1974. They were caused by shortages prompted by those controlling the oil deciding not to sell oil to America (an “embargo”).
- The pocket calculator was introduced in 1972.
- M*A*S*H* began on Sunday 17, 1972. That was a Sunday, so I picked a date on a Sunday in March.
- VCRs were introduced in 1971.
- Instant mashed potatoes, instant rice and other quick just add water meals were introduced in the 80s along with mixes such as Bisquick and cake mixes.
- Expressions: give a high five, pro-choice, promises promises, have a nice day
- Nixon resigned on television at 9PM on August 9, 1974. It was announced that day in the papers.
- The US pulled out of Vietnam in 1973.
- Roe vs. Wade legalized abortion on January 22, 1973.
- *Wheel of Fortune* began in 1975.
- Three Mile Island was the worse US nuclear disaster and began on March 28, 1979 near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.
- American hostages were held in Tehran, Iran from November 4, 1979 until Reagan came into office in 1981. I fudged here and put the start of this earlier in the year.

Other news in the world...

- | | |
|------|--|
| 1970 | Computer floppy disks introduced |
| 1975 | Microsoft founded |
| 1979 | Margaret Thatcher is the first woman prime minister in Great Britain |
| | The Walkman is introduced |

