

Dennis Lawrence Healy and Margaret Anna O'Toole
1874-1947 **1881-1960**

Chapter 17

Dennis was fifteen years old when he went to work as a Postal Clerk at the Commercial Postal Station in St. Paul, from 1892 through 1914. He lived at home with his parents at 638 Linden Street, St. Paul, taking care of them while his older brothers were busy learning the plumbing and steamfitting business.

WITH the agreement that Dennis would care for his aging parents, James and John promised to help him become established in a business once they had the Healy Plumbing firm on its way.¹ Dennis later became the Secretary for the Healy Plumbing Company but kept his postal job for some time.

DENNIS married an Irish girl, Margaret Anna O'Toole in St. Mark's Catholic Church, St. Paul, on July 8, 1908.² James and John loaned Dennis money to build a home at 1931 Selby Avenue in 1909, which at that time was a new district and near St. Mark's Catholic Church.

DENNIS was listed in the 1917 *St. Paul City Directory* as a Manufacturer's Agent. From 1917 through 1919 he was President of the St. Paul Boiler and Manufacturing Company. About 1920 Dennis set up the Healy-Ruff Company with Clinton DeWitt Ruff.



THE Healy-Ruff Company was located at 765 Hampton Avenue in St. Paul (now 2255 University Avenue.) They manufactured the radiator hangers invented by the Healy Plumbing and Heating Corporation. Healy-Ruff paid a royalty to Healy Plumbing on each hanger they sold. The Healy-Ruff Company also manufactured concrete inserts and

¹ See Chapter 20 for the history of the Healy Plumbing and Heating Corporation.

² Marriage Certificate of Dennis Lawrence Healy and Margaret O'Toole.

water level controls for municipal water systems. They were manufacturers' agents for heaters and pumps for industrial and municipal systems. The firm also sold plumbing materials and supplies.³ Dennis flew East in 1931 for the company. It was his first plane ride.⁴

MOST of their married lives, Dennis and Margaret lived at 1931 Selby Avenue except for the two years they lived at 1970 Selby Avenue. The 1970 Selby home was Margaret's parents' home. After Margaret's father died, the family moved in with Margaret's mother until her death in 1939. They then moved back to their home at 1931 Selby Avenue.

MARGARET'S first cousin, Marion Towey, came to live with them when she was five years of age. Marion's father died when Marion was three. Marion had five brothers and her mother could not care for all the children. Marion graduated from St. Catherine's College in St. Paul and later married Edward Murnane.

SUMMERS for the young Dennis Healy family were spent at Lake Johanna located about twelve miles west of St. Cloud, Minnesota. Margaret cooked all the meals on a kerosene stove. Dennis installed a water tank at the top of a hill that supplied lake water to the kitchen sink and toilet. He also supplied a few neighbors with water. They boiled water for dishes and cooking and a neighbor's pump furnished their drinking water. There was no telephone in their summer home but a friendly neighbor took the calls for them.

DENNIS had to travel to consult with his agents representing the Healy-Ruff Company. Margaret went with him on many of the trips after the children were grown. As the years passed they wintered in Daytona Beach, Florida, with Andrew Waldorf and his wife. Mr. Waldorf was President of the Waldorf Paper Company in St. Paul.

EDWARD and Patrick, Dennis' brothers, would visit every other year. They would all go to the Minnesota-Wisconsin football game with their first cousin, Dr. Jay Healy (James S. Healy), and his wife, Carrie. Jay was the Wisconsin State Veterinarian. The other years, Jay and Carrie traveled to visit them and to see the game.

DENNIS took his sons, Roger and Bill (William Edward Healy Sr.) to Pettibone, North Dakota, to visit Dennis' sister, Nellie, and her husband, John Koehler.

AFTER Dennis' brother, John Sr., had his accident and was bed-ridden, Dennis often drove to John's home, Hope Glen, to visit him. Dennis' son, Bill, remembers those visits. Dennis' family often visited at the home of his brother, Jim, at Mahtomedi, Minnesota. Soft spoken, with kind manners and gracious hospitality, Margaret and Dennis and family were welcome visitors.

³ Information for some of this chapter was supplied by William Edward Healy Sr., son of Dennis and Margaret.

⁴ Letters of the Healy brothers and sisters to each other and to their nephew, Gerald Cummings.

MARGARET and Dennis were active in their parish church and school of St. Mark near their home. They had a child in the school from the day it opened until 1936. Dennis was a long-time member of the St. Paul Rotary Club and the Midway Club. Both Dennis and Margaret were avid bridge players and belonged to many local bridge clubs.

DENNIS died of pneumonia and diabetes on February 13, 1947.⁵

Children of Dennis Lawrence Healy and Margaret Anna O'Toole

MARGARET MARY HEALY, 1910-1956, graduated from St. Catherine's College in St. Paul and became a teacher. She was also President of the St. Catherine's Alumni for a few years. She and her mother both suffered from heart trouble. Margaret Mary never married and died of diabetes in 1956.⁶

DENNIS LAWRENCE HEALY JR., 1913-1966, graduated from St. Thomas Military Academy, St. Paul, and studied engineering at the University of Minnesota for three years. He then worked in the engineering and sales department of the Healy-Ruff Company. Dennis was with the Military Police, 3rd Army, stationed at Fort Snelling in St. Paul. During World War II he served in the Army Field Artillery, 25th Division, for three and one-half years in the South Pacific.

Dennis married Mary Deborah Fogle and took over his father's position as a partner in the Healy-Ruff Company after the death of his father in 1947. At the death of Mr. Ruff and at Dennis' mother's death in 1960, he had acquired all the stock of the company. They raised five children.

PHILIP JOHN HEALY, 1916-1918, died at the age of two of erysipelas, now known as cellulitis.

ROGER MARTIN HEALY, 1918-1976, graduated from St. Thomas Military Academy and St. Thomas College with a degree in accounting. He went directly into World War II as an Intelligence Officer in the Army Air Force in Texas, Florida and California. After the war he was in the Air Force Reserve as a Colonel.

Roger married Lois Irene Honebrink. He became the accountant for the Healy-Ruff Company and at the death of his brother, Dennis, he took over the company. He later sold the firm but remained as their accountant.

⁵ Letters of the Healy brothers and sisters to each other and to their nephew, Gerald Cummings.

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History of the Hope and Healy Families

WILLIAM EDWARD “BILL” HEALY SR., 1921- 2016, was a graduate of St. Thomas Military Academy and St. Thomas College in St. Paul with a degree in accounting. He married Doris Marguerite Bartel. Doris was a librarian and taught at the St. Cloud, Minnesota, State University. Later she set up the technical library at Eden Prairie, Minnesota, and the South Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, library. They raised seven children.

After two years in the life insurance business, Bill worked for seventeen years as a cost accountant in his wife’s family business, the Bartel Ace Hardware Company in South St. Paul. Later he worked for Target Stores in Roseville, Minnesota, as Manager of toys and sporting goods. A few years after that he purchased the Powell Ace Hardware in St. Cloud, Minnesota.

Bill closed the hardware store after two years and worked for the local Community Action Council. Governor LeVander of Minnesota appointed him Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity for the State of Minnesota. In 1971 he was appointed Administrator of the County Courts in Dakota County, Minnesota.

Bill and his wife, Doris, moved to Burnsville, Minnesota, in 1973. Bill retired in 1986. He and his wife, Doris, have spent many winters in Destin, Florida.



Healy Brothers. Ed, left, and Dennis in back standing. Sitting L-R: Patrick F., John, and Jim. Taken in Chicago, where Patrick F. lived, at the funeral of his wife Margaret Gallagher in November 1934.