

**THE MISADVENTURES OF ME
AND MY FAMILY TREE**

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY, GENEALOGY,
WANDERINGS AND TALES**

By

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DEDICATION

I would like to thank my father, Luther Eurvin Sterling (1911-1991), my mother, Emma Louise Ragains (1913-2006), my grandfathers William James Sterling (1882-1964), Frank Ragains (1884-1959), My Grandmothers Matilda Ann Seigrist (1891-1964), Malinda Maud Sims (1883-1956), My Great Grandfathers, Thomas Eurvin Sterling (1858-1916), George Harvey Seigrist (1864-1944), Pleasant Green Ragains (1852-1952), Thomas Jefferson Sims (1840-1915), My Great Grandmothers, Sarah Joanna Oliver (1864-1898), Cynthia Ehrhart (1864-1916), Mary Elizabeth Carlton (1856-1941), Martha Custus McWilliams (1846-1923), my great-great grandfathers, Jesse Sterling (1803-1868), Henry Thurston Oliver (1830-1887), Samuel Seigrist (c.1817-), Daniel Ehrhart (c.1882-?), David Ragains (1812-1887), Ambrose Wake Carlton (1832-1921), William Wilson Sims (1802-1848), Joseph Allison McWilliams (1808-1889), and my great-great grandmothers, Frances (maiden name unknown to me) Sterling (1827-a1880), Nancy Louise Edwards (1828-1925), Matilda Nye (1835-1918), Mary Triplett (1823-1862), Mary Jane Jackson (1831-?), Margaret Bone (1800-?), Jedidah Perkins (1812-1882) and on and on all the way back to Adam and Eve. Most of all, I wish to thank the Lord for making my ancestors fruitful and allowing them to multiply. This is in recognition of the fact that each and every one of us is a miracle of God's Creation. Since the beginning of time, each of these ancestors has been blessed with a following generation. Finally after millions of years, God created an Okie. That Okie was me, and for me it was good.

I also wish to thank my wife, Anita Jean Cooper for without her love and encouragement this undertaking would not have been possible.

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FORWARD

My wife, Anita, is a talented amateur genealogist. When we married on 27 May 2001, she had already done a lot of work on my family tree. Her main motivation for doing all of this research on my family was because she had been married to my younger brother for almost 32 years.

After our marriage, the Genealogy bug bit me. Anita was kind enough to turn all of her Sterling Family research folders over to me. Since I was twice retired (U. S. Navy and Solar Turbines, Inc.) I had a lot of time on my hands for travel and research. I decided to travel the country, seeking out as many members of my generation and my parent's generation as I could and record as many of the old family legends as possible and preserve them for future generations. I can't help but regret the fact that I should have started this project 50 years ago. Most of my mothers generation had already died and those left had either failing memory or practically no memory at all, Most of my cousins were either too young to remember or their memories were so bitter that didn't wish to remember. In addition to visiting nearly all of my cousins, Anita and I visited a large number of Court Houses, Libraries and Cemeteries. Some of the family stories are very clear to me. I can remember some events that took place when I was a toddler as if they happened only yesterday. Other memories are beginning to fade.

Now as I am beginning to show my age there are times I have trouble remembering what I had for breakfast just a few hours ago. Now that I am entering the age where I am beginning to suffer some short term memory loss, I can see myself as I saw my mother as her memory began to fail. My mother once had a wonderful memory and delighted in telling stories of years gone by. These wonderful stories began to fade as dementia set in and her memory began slipping away. As this was happening to my mother I began to feel a strong need to put her stories, other family stories and my stories on paper in the hope that time, dementia and the Angel of Death will not destroy them as well.

I love my children, grand children and great grand children with all my heart. It is my hope that someday they shall take a few hours out of their busy lives and read my book. When they do, they will get to know their heritage a little better.