

## **Chapter 10. 1944 to 1969: Re-Connecting with Family**

### **Summary**

John and his (now adult) children re-connected in the 1940s in Joliet. He married Nina [*Mrs. Domenica Salbego*] and moved into a house at 1604 Marcella Ave. in Joliet, which would be known as “The Farm.” At various times Mary (and her husband and son), Gino, Livia, Joe, and John A. (and his wife and children) lived with John at The Farm. Nina was loved by her step-children, but problems with her husband led to her joining her mother and daughter in California. An area adjacent to The Farm was platted as the Ullian Subdivision by a real estate developer, with John (and sons) providing labor for building the streets, and maybe more. John left The Farm in 1951 and moved in with Mary’s family for most of the rest of his life. Some additional information on the lives of John’s children is provided.

### **John’s Return to Illinois**

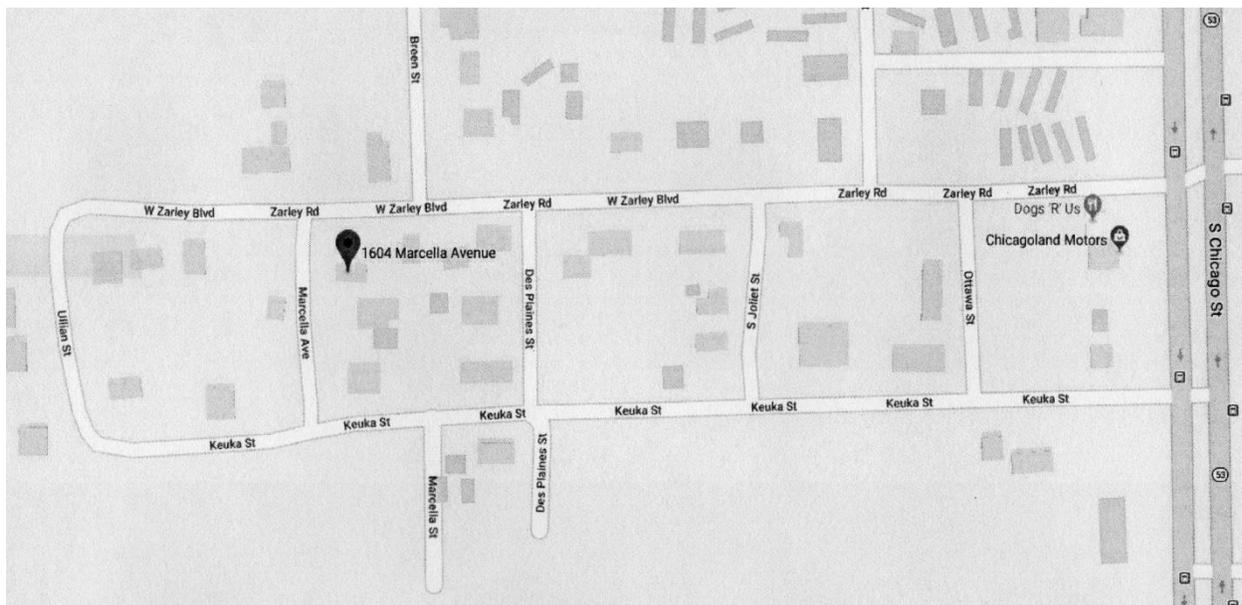
The years covered by this chapter – 1944 to 1969 – are those in which John and his children re-connected as a family in Joliet IL. The previous 2 chapters began with discussions of the lives of John’s children, then moved to a discussion of where he was and what he was doing at the time. We begin this chapter with John – in acknowledgement of the importance of his establishing a gathering place for the family after many years of being away.

The last bit of documentary evidence of John’s being in Texas is his draft registration card from 27 Apr 1942, and the first bit of documentary evidence of his being in Joliet for good is his marriage license of 29 Jan 1944, when he married Nina (Mrs. Domenica Salbego) in Joliet.

Gino has written [*Appendix C*] that John returned to Joliet on or about 18 Mar 1943, although he did not explicitly state whether that was for a visit or to stay. This was a couple weeks after the birth of his first grandchild, David Ullian Larson. David’s understanding is that John and his son Joe (who had left the Illinois Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Children’s School and not yet entered the Army) moved in late 1943 to 1604 Marcella Ave. in Joliet. Knowing exactly when John moved to Joliet permanently is further complicated by an entry in the 1945 Joliet City Directory which shows John and Joseph living at 67 N. Eastern Ave., both employed at Farrell Manufacturing Company, with no mention of Nina. We believe that this information was out-of-date – and that it is likely that John stayed in Joliet after March 1943, living at the Eastern Ave. address with Joe until they moved later in 1943 to 1604 Marcella Ave., the property known to the family as “The Farm.”

Why did John move to Joliet rather than back to the northern Chicago suburbs where he had lived with his wife and young children in the 1920s? By mid-1943 his children had the following connections to Joliet. Mary had left ISSCS for a foster home in Joliet in 1937, graduated from

Joliet Township High School in 1940, was married in May 1941 in Joliet, and had her first child (John’s first grandchild) in early 1943 while living with her husband, Dave Larson, on Lind St. in Joliet. John A. had lived in a foster home in Joliet for about a year before entering the Army in April 1943. Livia had lived with foster parents (when not away at a boarding school) in Joliet since leaving ISSCS in 1937. Gino’s only connections to Joliet before 1943 were through his older siblings, but while he was overseas (1943-1945) he sent his Navy pay to his sister Mary – who used it for the 1604 Marcella Ave. property in Joliet for her brothers to have a home after their military service. Joe was removed from ISSCS in August 1943 by his father and taken to Joliet before entering the Army in 1945. The northern Chicago suburbs had apparently less appeal for John at the time. John’s brother Romano in Highland Park IL had died, and Romano’s sons had moved from Illinois by 1943, leaving Romano’s daughter Pauline and her family as the only individuals from that side of John’s family remaining in Illinois. John’s in-laws, the Ferraro family, did remain, both in Rockford and the north Chicago suburbs. If John were to leave Texas (as he did), Joliet seems to be the logical place for him to go.



Location of 1604 Marcella Ave., Joliet IL.  
*[Notes: S. Chicago St. was U.S. Route 66 at the time.  
 Area to left (west) of Marcella Ave. is the Ullian Subdivision]  
 [From Google Maps]*

### **1604 Marcella Ave., Joliet IL**

Gino has described The Farm: “We had an outhouse and no running water, just a pump, 3 chicken houses, a large barn, cherry trees, and 5 acres in back. What happened to Nina and why she left dad, I don’t know.” Another time, Gino told Linda Wysocki that “The house at 1604 Marcella Ave., Joliet, had 8 rooms, with basement, outhouse, pump house, 3 chicken coops, and 10 acres of land.”

Family lore is that John's son Gino sent his sister Mary an allotment from his Navy pay while in service during the Second World War, and that Mary – unbeknownst to Gino – used that money to purchase 1604 Marcella – so the boys in the service would have a home to come back to after the war. Gino has said that he expected that his pay would be waiting for him and didn't learn until he got out of the Navy [16 Feb 1946] how the money was used.

An examination of the chain of property ownership does not support the story that Gino's money was used to purchase 1604 Marcella (although its use for renting the property is possible). That property had other owners from at least 1937 to 1951, the year that John moved from 1604 Marcella to the home of his daughter Mary.

The property at 1604 Marcella Ave. when John moved there (probably in the last half of 1943) was composed of lots 2, 3, and 6 of block 4 of M. Binzen's Subdivision. Property records in Will County [Appendix H] show that those 3 lots were purchased by the Warnicks on 5 Apr 1937, then sold (warranty deed) by them on 24 May 1943 to the Blasers. The Blasers sold (warranty deed) that property on 17 Mar 1944 to the Barellos; this sale also included 5 acres to the west of Marcella Ave., property that later became the Ullian Subdivision. We do not know how the Barellos came into possession of these five acres. On 18 May 1945 the property (3 lots and the additional 5 acres) were sold (warranty deed) by the Barellos to the Connollys. On 31 Dec 1948, the Connollys submitted a plat for turning the 5 acres west of Marcella into 15 lots with 3 roads and calling it the Ullian Subdivision. The plat was recorded in county records on 4 Apr 1949. On 27 Jan 1951, the Connollys sold (warranty deed) 1 of the 3 lots (lot 6) to Walter Randolph. On 2 May 1951, John and "Lena" Ullian provided the Connollys with a quit-claim deed for lots 2 and 3 and the 15 lots of the Ullian Subdivision. A week later, on 9 May 1951, the Connollys sold (warranty deed) all of the property covered by the quit-claim deed to Sverre Uglund.

**22 Mar 1937:** Anna Hausmann to August and Audrey Warnick – Lots 2, 3, 6 of Block 4 of M. Binzen's Subdivision – Indenture.

**24 May 1943:** August and Audrey Warnick to Otto Walter and Philippina Phoebe Blaser – Lots 2, 3, 6 of Block 4 of M. Binzen's Subdivision – Warranty Deed.

**17 Mar 1944:** (Otto) Walter and Philippina Phoebe Blaser to Savino Band Elena Barelo – Lots 2, 3, 6 of Block 4 of M. Binzen's Subdivision and the North 5 acres ... [*which became the Ullian Subdivision*] – Warranty Deed.

**18 May 1945:** Savino and Elena Barella to Frank A. and Leora M. Connolly – Lots 2, 3, 6 of Block 4 of M. Binzen's Subdivision and the North 5 acres ... [*which became the Ullian Subdivision*] – Warranty Deed.

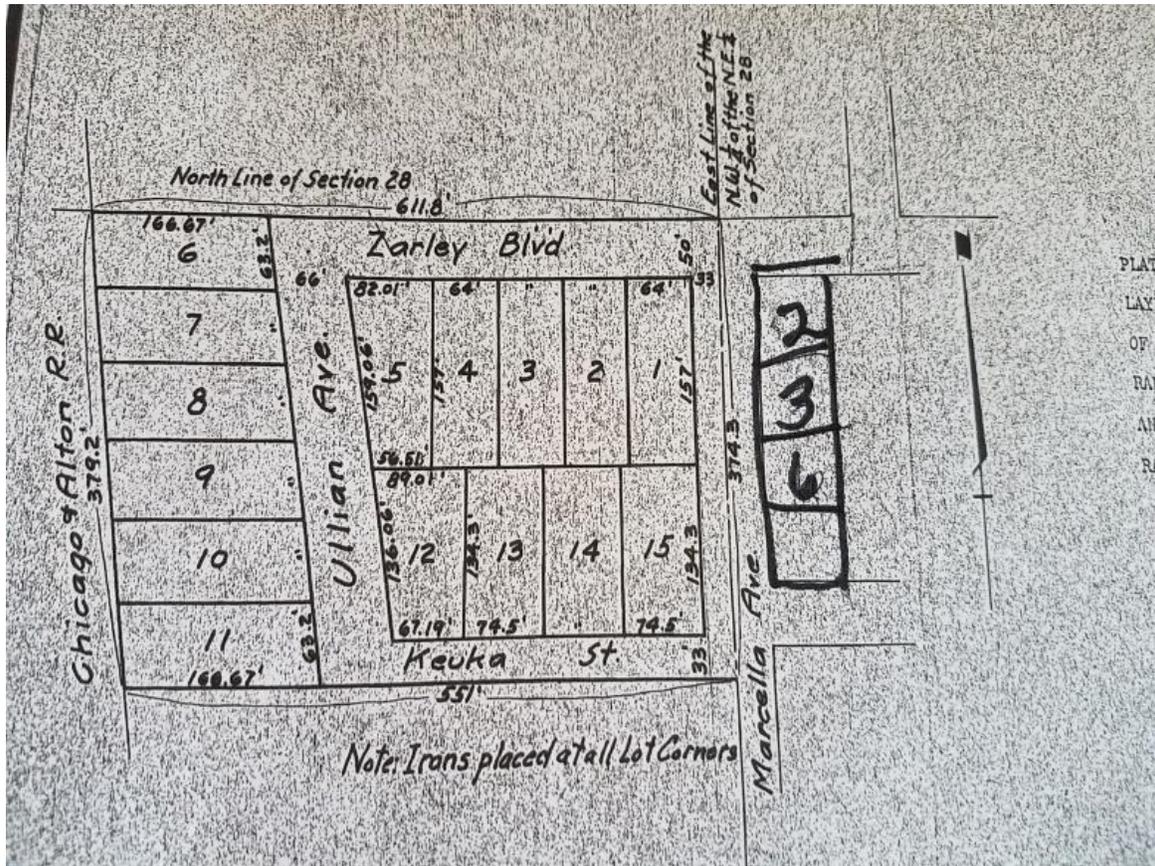
**31 Dec 1948:** Frank A. and Leora M. Connolly subdivided "the North 5 acres..." into 15 lots and 3 streets, designating it as Ullian Subdivision.

**4 Apr 1949:** Ullian Subdivision officially recorded in the Will County Recorder of Deeds office, in Book 27, page 11.

**27 Jan 1951:** Frank A. and Leora M. Connolly to Walter E. Randolph – Lot 6 of Block 4 of M. Binzen's Subdivision – Warranty Deed.

**2 May 1951:** John and Lena Ullian – Lots 2, 3 of Block 4 of M. Binzen's Subdivision and Lots 1-15 of Ullian Subdivision – Quit-Claim Deed.

9 May 1951: Frank A. and Leora M. Connolly to Sverre Ugland – Lots 2 and 3 of M. Binzen Subdivision and Lots 1-15 of Ullian Subdivision – Warranty Deed.



Ullian Subdivision Plat [The Michael Binzen Subdivision is to the right (east) of Marcella Ave., and includes 1604 Marcella as Lot 6.],

That John and Nina, and at various times all of his children, lived at 1604 Marcella Ave. is not contested, but they must have either been renting or had an agreement similar to a contract for deed. They did not own the property. Transfer of property by warranty deed (as held by the other owners of 1604 listed above) provides an assurance that those transferring the property are the lawful owners of that property. The quit-claim deed, rather than assuring ownership, merely transfers whatever rights to the property the grantor owns – if any.

John and “Lena’s” transfer of the property by quit-claim deed to the Connollys in 1951 suggests that they may have had, or been perceived to have, some financial interest in the property. John A. and Gino have said that John created the streets in the new Ullian Subdivision, and as a landscape gardener and contractor in the past, it would not be unusual for John to have helped the Connollys develop the 5-acre plot. John was a hard worker, always gave 100%, and he expected the same from his sons when they worked for him (which was mostly after the war, when they lived with him at 1604 Marcella). He had a large stake-bed truck, which he sold after

leaving Marcella Ave., that he used for moving dirt, plants, etc. He and sons Gino and John A. did a lot of digging on his landscaping and other contracted jobs. It is not difficult to believe that he would have taken on the job of developing streets and lots for houses, either to profit from this on his own or under an agreement (labor in lieu of rental payments?) with Frank Connolly.

Gino has written that when John sold the property, John's son Joe received \$1,000 and John got the rest. We don't know how much John received for the property from the Connollys (other than the pro-forma "One dollar and other good & valuable considerations" listed on the quit-claim deed), or whether Gino's understanding was accurate. We can envision (but not provide documentary support confirming) that John rented the 3 lots from the Blasars and Barellos, then when the Connollys purchased the 3 lots and the 5 acres in 1948, John agreed to provide labor for the development of the Ullian Subdivision in return for a lowered rent or other payment. Then when the Connollys decided to sell all of the property in 1951, they felt the need to obtain a quit-claim deed from John (and "Lena") to protect their property rights against a potential or actual claim by John that he owned some or all of the property, including the subdivision that bore his name. It must be stressed again that this is speculation on our part. The chain of warranty deeds held by other people for the 1604 Marcella property shows that John did not purchase this property through a warranty deed. The presence of John and his family on the property for around 8 years shows that they at least were renting it or had some other financial arrangement with the legal owners.

Although Nina's name [as "Lena"] was listed on the land transfer and she supposedly signed it, we have assumed that she was not physically present at the time – she had left John, and Joliet, perhaps a year earlier and moved to California. We must note that on the 1940 Federal Census, Nina's first husband Bortolo [*as Bert on the Census form*] lived in Lake County – where John's and "Lena's" signatures were notarized on the deed in May 1951. We do not know whether Bortolo/Bert was still in Lake County in 1951, or whether he was involved in the transaction – perhaps signing for his former wife. Similarly, her father, Joseph Velo, was in Lake County in 1940, and if he had also been there in 1951, he may have been involved in the transaction. Or perhaps Nina returned from California and signed while visiting relatives in Lake County. There is no Power of Attorney indication on the document, as there should have been if it had been signed for Nina by someone with her permission. We simply do not know who signed the quit-claim deed – Nina or someone else.

QUIT-CLAIM DEED — STATUTORY FORM

The Grantors, John Ullian and Lena Ullian, his wife, who are

of the Township of Joliet in the County of Will and State of Illinois for the consideration of One and

other good & valuable considerations) Dollars, CONVEY and QUIT-CLAIM to

Frank A. Connolly and Leora M. Connolly, husband and wife, who are of the City of Joliet in the County of Will and State of Illinois all interest in the following described Real Estate, to-wit:

Lots two (2), three (3), in Block four (4), of M. Binzen's Subdivision of the North part of the East half of the Northeast quarter of Section twenty-eight (28), Township thirty-five (35) North, Range ten (10) East of the third Principal Meridian; also: Lots one (1) to fifteen (15), inclusive, in Ullian Subdivision of the North five (5) acres of that part of the Northwest quarter of the Northeast quarter lying East of the Easterly right of way line of the Alton Rail Road Company, in Section twenty-eight (28) in Township thirty-five (35) North, and in Range ten (10) East of the third Principal Meridian according to the Plat recorded April 4, 1949, in Plat Book 27, page 11, Document No. 554085, being further

situated in the County of Will in the State of Illinois, hereby releasing and waiving all rights under and by virtue of the homestead exemption laws of this State.

Dated this 2nd day of May, A. D. 1951.

(SEAL.) John Ullian (SEAL.)
(SEAL.) Lena Ullian (SEAL.)
(SEAL.) (SEAL.)

STATE OF Illinois
COUNTY OF Will Lake

I, Nello Ori, a Notary Public in and for the said County, in the State aforesaid, do hereby certify that John Ullian and Lena Ullian, his wife, who are

personally known to me to be the same person as whose name appears subscribed to the foregoing instrument, appeared before me this day in person, and acknowledged that they signed, sealed and delivered the said instrument as their free and voluntary act, for the uses and purposes therein set forth, including the release and waiver of the right of homestead.



Given under my hand and Notarial Seal this 2nd day of May, A. D. 1951. Nello Ori, Notary Public.

No. 695874
STATE OF ILLINOIS } ss.
County of Will.
I hereby certify that the within instrument was filed for record in the office of the Recorder of Deeds in the County aforesaid, on the 29 day of August, A. D. 1951, at 2:16 o'clock P. M. and recorded in Book 1345 Page 397.
Robert L. Spritzer, Recorder of Deeds.
Fee, 1.05 Paid.

Quit-Claim Deed from John and "Lena" Ullian to Frank and Leora Connolly - 1951

## **Nina at 1604 Marcella Ave.**

As noted earlier, we do not know when Nina moved in with John at 1604 Marcella Ave., but we have assumed it was between John's move to 1604 Marcella (probably in late 1943) and their wedding date of 29 Jan 1944. It was Gino's understanding that "she was a girl friend of Dad's for many years before they were married." The 1940 Houston City Directory listed both in an entry typically used for a married couple, but they were not yet married. She was definitely in the house prior to 1947 – the 1947 Joliet City Directory shows that they both were at 1604 Marcella, as were Gino and Joe. Gino would leave by his 22 Jun 1947 marriage, and Joe by his 7 Nov 1948 marriage. Livia lived at 210 Nicholson St. and Mary lived (with her husband and sons) at 214 Anderson Ave. at that time.

There were Salbego families in Lockport, Will, Illinois [*a smaller city adjacent to Joliet*]. Gino stated in a letter to his niece Linda Wysocki in 2004: "Yes, I do remember Nina. Her last name was Salbego and she had kin in Lockport." John A. remembered gardening and doing odd jobs with his father and brothers after the war for Salbegos in Lockport, but did not know how they were related to Nina. We have thus far been unable to establish how Nina and the Lockport Salbegos were related (assuming that they were). It must be noted here that John's godmother (in Italy) was Cattarina Salbego, daughter of Giacomo Salbego – so John's connection to the Lockport Salbegos could have come from his godmother independent of a connection through Nina's first husband.

The house at The Farm was "Nina's Place." At various times Mary (and her husband Dave and 1 son), John A. (and his wife Mildred and 2 children), Gino, Livia, and Joe lived on Marcella. John A. and Mildred, who did not live on Marcella when either Mary or Livia lived there, have said that Nina loved "her boys" – she was very nice to her step-sons. John A. and Mildred also remembered Nina as an excellent cook. John A. and his brother Joe especially remembered the pies, including the graham cracker crust pies she often baked for them. She would cook whatever "the boys" wanted. Nina always used newspapers on the table – wrapping the scraps up in them after the meal. According to Joe's wife, Lorraine, Nina always bragged about "her boys" when she visited the local grocery store where Lorraine had worked. The store was owned by Lorraine's first husband, Clarence Peet, and was adjacent to their trailer park ("tourist camp") at the corner of S. Chicago St. and W. Zarley Blvd. in Joliet – just about 4 blocks from 1604 Marcella. John A. and Mildred thought of Nina as an angel, very hard-working, very nice, who would do anything for her family. Unfortunately, as all agreed, Grandpa did not treat her well.

John and Mildred and their first 2 children (John A. Jr born in January 1947 and Linda F. born in June 1948) moved in with John and Nina on Marcella Ave. in about 1949 and stayed for about a year. The 1950 Joliet City Directory (with information presumably collected in 1949) shows John A. and Mildred living there with John. Before moving in with his father, John A. and Mildred had been renting a home at 206 Daniels St., Wilmington, Will, Illinois [*just a couple blocks from the old U.S. Route 66*], that was available only to defense workers. John had lost his job at the Joliet Arsenal due to cutbacks as the war-related work was ending, so they could no longer stay in that house. They remembered staying at least one Christmas on Marcella. They moved from Marcella to the ground floor of a rented home at 1528 E. Cass St. in Joliet prior to

the birth of their third child in September 1951. The 1950 directory shows Livia (Ullian) and Don French living at 305 S. Margaret St., Joliet, but provides no information on Gino or Joe.

Nina worked cleaning house, according to John A. and Mildred, for “the old Dr. Stephens” and maybe others in Joliet. They mentioned that Nina once made it known that she didn’t appreciate having to walk home from her workplace while Grandpa spent the evening at the tavern. The nearby “Sasso’s Tavern” [*Airport Tavern, owned by Charles Sasso, on S. Chicago St.*] was his favorite haunt while he lived on Marcella, and at least some in the family thought he spent too much time there. He had friends there, including Caneva Inserano [*spelling of name may be incorrect*] who John had told his son John A. came over on the same ship to New York as he did. [*Whether he meant same ship on same trip, or same ship at another time is not known. We have not found his name on the ship manifest for John’s voyage.*] John’s truck was said to know the way home after he had too much to drink. S. Chicago St. was part of the old U.S. Route 66 in Joliet at the time. It was about a quarter mile east of Marcella Ave., which it paralleled.

Regardless of the financial arrangement that John made to live at 1604 Marcella Ave., it served as a very welcome home for John, Nina, and the children. It was a place where the adult Ullian children could – and did at some point – live with their father, which they had not been able to do for so many years. While our knowledge of when each of the children lived on Marcella with their father sometimes requires a margin of error of a year or two, we can guarantee that in the late 1940s The Farm on Marcella was the magnet that drew the family back together after being apart all too long.

### **Nina’s Departure**

We do not know exactly when Nina left John and The Farm. It was probably in the spring or summer of 1950, or possibly but less likely in 1949, that Nina moved to California. Her mother Maddalena Velo and her daughter Ida Salbego lived in San Bernadino County, California. We know that Nina arrived in time to be registered as a voter in 1950 while living there with her mother. John A. remembered that when Nina left, he was working construction, and he didn’t work construction in the winter, so she probably left in the spring or summer. That also fits with her having largely recuperated from a broken leg resulting from a fall on the ice.

Gino has written “She was a good cook but dad didn’t treat her too good. I was working at the Arsenal and took one of my checks to buy Nina a winter coat because dad wouldn’t buy her one. She was out feeding the chickens when she fell and broke her leg. Earl McDonald lived next door and carried her into the house.” According to Gino, she slipped on the ice. She was still limping but no longer had the cast or crutches when she left. John A. came home from his construction job one day and was waiting for dinner when he found out that Nina had left. He also noticed that the stove and refrigerator were gone. He learned that she had earlier told her husband John that the stove and refrigerator were hers – she had bought them with money she earned scrubbing floors. John A.’s wife, Mildred, believes that the Salbegos in Lockport were related to Nina, and that they came later for “her things.” After Nina’s departure, John and his sons no longer did any work for the Salbegos in Lockport.

What became of Nina after leaving Joliet? Nina wrote to Mildred Ullian not long after moving, saying that she was staying with her daughter near Los Angeles, and working at a Catholic Church rectory [*role unspecified*]. The 1950 voter registration list for Precinct 10, Fontana, San Bernardino, California, shows both Mrs. Nina S. Ullian and Mrs. Maddalena Velo [*Nina's mother*] living at 125 Martin Ave. [*Fontana is about 50 miles east of Los Angeles.*] Later voter lists for Fontana show Maddalena Velo, but not Nina, at 125 Martin Ave. in 1952 and 1958, and at 16957 Martin Ave. in 1962 and 1964. Nina's daughter Ida Salbego (born 5 Sep 1921) married Stannard C. Adams (1923-1979) in 1950, and they were divorced in 1972 in San Bernardino, San Bernardino, California. Nina had written Mildred that she was living with her daughter, but the only address we have found for Nina in California shows her living with her mother in November 1950. Perhaps she did live with her daughter Ida (who was on the November 1948 and 1950 voter lists, living at 560 N. Blanchard Ave. in San Bernardino) before Ida was married in 1950. We have found no record of Nina after 1950 – with the possible exception of the aforementioned quit-claim deed of 2 May 1951 for 1604 Marcella, where the “Lena” signature may or may not have been signed by her.

We have been unable to find any indication that Nina and Grandpa divorced. She had previously been divorced from Bortolo Salbego, and her marriage to Grandpa was in a civil, not Catholic, ceremony. Her claim to be working in a Catholic Church rectory in California is at least a little questionable, given the Catholic Church's stance on divorce, and on divorced persons, at that time in history. Perhaps her employers did not have the whole story. Or perhaps they agreed to hire a woman in need of a job, regardless of the divorce.

### **John after Marcella Ave.**

In 1951, John moved from The Farm at 1604 Marcella into the home of his daughter Mary and her husband Dave and 2 of their sons at 214 Anderson Ave. in Joliet. Mary became his primary caregiver for the rest of her father's life, almost 20 years.

About 1952, while living with the Larsons, John was a janitor at Tony's Tavern (owned by Anthony Lucenta) at 1827 E. Washington St. (at the corner of E. Washington St. and Park Rd.), about a quarter mile from the Larson's home on Anderson. After the Larsons moved to a new home on Maple Rd. in Joliet, John would often meet an Italian friend named Gino to walk together to the Club Rio Tavern at 1600 Maple Rd. (at N. Briggs St.). He liked to drink wine, and it tended to make him very quiet and peaceful. When he lived with the Larsons, John and Dave would drink together. Dave drank beer, and it had the opposite effect on him. The memories of Dave and Mary's son David Ullian Larson in Appendix A provide more detail about his Grandpa's life with the Larson family.

David U. Larson has written that John did not live with his family from 1957 to 1962. His departure from the Larson residence may have occurred because of changes in the Larsons' living situation: Mary gave birth to her third son, Bruce, in November 1957, and Mary and Bruce stayed with her in-laws while the Larsons were building a new home on Maple Rd. that winter. Grand-daughter Linda Wysocki remembers John staying with her family for maybe about a year – and giving up her room for him to use – in about 1958. At some point during this period John

lived with Gino's family, probably for a summer. He did not live with his son John A.'s family. We haven't been able to establish where John was during the other years David mentioned.



Bruce Larson with John Ullian in 1962 at Larson Home on Maple Rd.



John Ullian with Santa Claus in December 1967 at Larson Home

## **Mary Katherine (Ullian) Larson**

Mary's son David Ullian Larson provided most of the following information about his mother.

Mary married David [*Dave*] Robert Larson on 3 May 1941 at Trinity United Methodist Church in Joliet, about 6 months before her twentieth birthday. The 1942 Joliet City Directory shows that they lived at 116 Briggs St., and that Dave was an apprentice at American Can Company. The first 2 grandchildren of John and Linda Ullian were born to Mary and Dave during this period: David Ullian Larson in February 1943 and his brother Terry Wayne Larson in September 1945, both in Joliet.

Not long before David's birth in February 1943 the family moved from Briggs St. to Lind St., just off of Maple Road, on the east side of Joliet, where Mary had friends. They lived on Lind St. until about August 1944, when they moved to 1604 Marcella – The Farm – where they lived with Mary's father, John, and her brother Joe. David's understanding is that John and Joe had moved to The Farm in late 1943. The Larsons had a bedroom on the first floor, and John and Nina's bedroom was on the second floor. David's baby book shows that he spent his first Christmas (1943) on Lind, and the second (1944) on Marcella – with John, Nina, Joe, and his parents. In about August 1945, just before David's brother Terry was born that September, the Larson family left The Farm. They had lived there about a year, then moved to Circle Dr. in the Ingalls Park neighborhood of Joliet. They lived there a short time and then bought and moved into a house at 214 Anderson Ave. in Joliet, where they would live until 1957.

In 1951 Mary and Dave Larson began sharing their Anderson Ave. home with Mary's father. In that year, the 2 Larson sons (Terry and David) were 6 and 8 years old; in 1957 a third son (Bruce) would be born to complete the family. John lived with Mary's family for almost 20 years. Although Mary had always wanted to be a nurse, after marrying she devoted her life to being a wife and mother.

Mary was an excellent cook. In her basement on Anderson Ave. she had a stove where she cooked and canned for many hours, making jelly and canning applesauce, mincemeat, tomatoes, pears, and plums, to name a few. She made fudge from scratch as a treat for the family. She also liked asparagus (although the boys didn't) and the family would pick it at a farm.

Mary found time to be a den mother of Pack 32, Den 4, for the Cub Scouts. She even wrote and supervised much of a minstrel show put on by the Cub Scouts. She was also active in the PTA at the school of her sons.



The Larsons in 1953:  
Dave and Mary  
David and Terry



The Larsons and John Ullian:  
Mary, Dave, John  
Terry, David



214 Anderson Ave.  
First Home Owned by Dave and Mary Larson

As a child at ISSCS Mary was selected to work in the office because she had such an eye for detail. She made posters and created displays at the school. She had beautiful Palmer Method handwriting.

She was very artistic in many areas. She made earrings from a leather lace material, which sons Terry and David would sell door-to-door. She worked with ceramics and had a kiln in her home to fire her pieces. She received training in many locations from many instructors, which allowed her to perfect each skill. In her own kiln, she experimented with various glazes and heats. Porcelain was another medium she used to expand her creative output.

Although she never went to church services, she worked tirelessly to donate beautiful handicrafts to the Ingalls Park Methodist Church in Joliet for their annual holiday craft show. She made candles, wall plaques using dried wildflowers, serving trays, plaster of Paris creations, jewelry, and many other items. She even made beautiful table lamps with used wallpaper rollers as the base.

She also loved sewing doll clothing and even made numerous complete dolls. She had a delicate touch with a single hair brush bristle to make eyelashes so that the eyes looked lifelike. To porcelain doll heads and hands, she added sewn elements. Her stitch work on every item was very uniform.

Mary would take David and Terry to downtown Joliet on the bus. And as they waited for the bus, she would take out her hanky, spit on it, and wipe dirt off their faces. She had a friend who worked at the “Snack Shop” near the bus stop in town where they would get a hamburger. When

the boys would get on her nerves, she would say, “You’re driving me to Kankakee” [*the local “mental health facility”*].

She also taught her sons to be independent. If David asked for something she did not have, like string, she would say “What would you do if you were in the desert?” So from an early age he was expected to figure out another way to do everything. Mary trusted her sons: when David was 10 years old, he and his 8-year-old brother would be gone all day, including walking 4 miles to the golf course, and when they came home Mary would never ask these adventurous boys where they went.

Mary never learned to drive. Her husband was said to have had no patience in helping her. She felt the “H” pattern for stick shifts was not something she could learn when her husband was constantly giving her “H.”

Mary’s connection to ISSCS would always show through. She visited The Home in Normal and organized the first reunion picnic for ISSCS alumni in Joliet. Mary had a large circle of friends. She never forgot her connection with her mother and frequently visited her grave on Decoration Day. And she maintained contact with her Aunt Mary Ferraro in Glencoe IL and visited her a few times.

Her love of nursing would show in many ways. She took 2 showers every day. (Her husband 1 per week and her father 1 every month or 2.) She loved Linco, a local bleach in Joliet, a disinfectant like Clorox is today, and used it often to clean. But most of all, it showed in the loving way she took care of everyone.



Mary Larson – 8 Aug 1971

When Dave retired in 1986 he, Mary, and Bruce moved to Florida. After building a house in Port St. Lucie, St. Lucie, Florida, Mary enjoyed several years there. They celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on 3 May 1991.



David and Mary Larson – 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Newspaper Article – 1991  
*[Probably in Joliet Herald News]*



Dave and Mary Larson – 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary – 1991



Mary and Dave Larson – 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary – 1991



Mary Larson – “See You Later!”



Mary Larson – 4 Nov 1996



Back: Bruce Larson, Don French, Rita and Terry Larson  
Front: Livia French, Mary, David, Dave Larson  
1996

By 1996, never having had a broken bone or having a single stitch her whole life, Mary's health took a downward turn. She had a lumpectomy and radiation in 1996. The following year she had surgery for appendicitis, followed by a stroke from a blood clot. She was moved to Emerald Nursing Home in Port St. Lucie, where she lived for 3 years until her death on 31 Dec 2000. Mary's remains were cremated and scattered. Her husband, Dave, died on 10 Jun 2001 in Port St. Lucie. His remains were also cremated and scattered.



Mary (Ullian) Larson – April 1999

## **John Anthony Ullian**

John A. Ullian Jr. provided the following information based on conversations over the years with his father and mother, John A. and Mildred Maxine (Huffington) Ullian.

After John A.'s separation from the Army in Rockford IL in February 1946, he went to Normal and stayed for 2 or 3 days with the family of his future wife, Mildred Maxine Huffington (called Max or Maxine by many in her family). With \$300 from the Army in his pocket, he went to Shields jewelry store in town and bought a ring for \$100. He briefly returned to Joliet and stayed again with the Ruddy family. He started school, but when his GI Bill money didn't come immediately, he quit. Then on 20 Apr 1946, John and Mildred were married in the rectory of Holy Trinity Church in Bloomington, McLean, Illinois. John's sister Livia and brother Gino were the witnesses.



Mildred and John A. Ullian on their Wedding Day – 20 Apr 1946

The bride and groom borrowed a car for their wedding, complete with tin cans tied to it. After the wedding, they took a train to Chicago. John A. told his son that they honeymooned at the Grand Hotel, on Michigan Ave., with a view of Lake Michigan. Mildred remembers it differently – that they honeymooned at the Palmer House.



John A. and Mildred Ullian's Wedding Transportation

## Ullian Nuptials Revealed

Mr. and Mrs. Bernard C. Huffington, 406 East Poplar street, Normal, have announced the marriage of their daughter, Maxine, to John A. Ullian, son of John Ullian of Joliet.

The marriage took place April 20 in the parsonage of Holy Trinity church with the Rev. Fr. Raney performing the double ring ceremony.

The couple was attended by Olivia and Geno Ullian, sister and brother of the bridegroom.

After a short wedding trip the newlyweds will make their home near Joliet.

The bride is a graduate of Normal Community High school and has been employed at State Farm Insurance companies for the last two and a half years.

Her husband attended University High school and served three and a half years in the army. He is now employed by the Sander-son Porter company.

*Pantagraph* [Bloomington IL] 29 Apr 1946

After their marriage they first lived in Gardner, Grundy, Illinois, in an apartment above Topper's Grocery Store on Main St. near the Post Office. They lived there less than a year. Next they rented a house at 104 Daniels St. (2 blocks from U.S. Route 66) in Wilmington IL, which was available only because John A. worked at the Joliet Arsenal. His first job at the Arsenal was as a switchman and conductor taking the train from the Arsenal across the highway to Sanderson and Porter, but he lost that job when Civil Service came in and he didn't have enough seniority. Then he worked in explosives areas – Group 7, then #A until it blew up, then Group 1, where he worked with TNT. Near the Arsenal's North Gate (on Laraway Road) still stand the remains of what may be buildings he worked in while burning TNT and other explosives.



Former Joliet Arsenal – Sites near Laraway Rd. – 2005

Their first son, John Anthony Ullian Jr., was born in January 1947 at St. Joseph's Hospital in Joliet while they were living at 104 Daniels St. in Wilmington. Having a child entitled them to rent a larger home – and they moved a block away, to 206 Daniels St. Linda Frances Ullian was born in June 1948, also at St. Joseph's in Joliet, while they were living at 206 Daniels.

When John A. lived in Gardner, he could take a bus for employees to the Arsenal. There was no bus from Wilmington to the Arsenal, so they needed a car. They bought a used 1936 Buick Century for \$100 from Don French, his sister Livia's husband.

When John A. was laid off from the Arsenal about 1949 or 1950 as its post-war needs declined, they had to leave the house on Daniels. They had nowhere else to go, so they moved in with Grandpa, Nina, and Joe at 1604 Marcella Ave. The 1950 Joliet City Directory showed John (as an explosive operator – but without an employer listed) and Mildred living with Grandpa on Marcella. They remembered spending a Christmas there before moving away.

John A. and Mildred have shared a number of stories over the years about 1604 Marcella. John and his brother Joe fed Grandpa's chickens in the garage. For a chicken dinner, Nina would grab one outside, twist the neck, and let it flop around on the ground – then clean and cook it.

Clara Belle Beck, whom Gino would later marry, lived across the street, a little ways down, on Breen St. She lived there with her mother, with her brother Delbert, and with her step-father, Andy Tomac.

Grandpa and at least one of his sons had built the first roads around his house on Marcella, with cinders. He took his truck to Bucciarelli's [*spelling uncertain*] to get the loads of cinders. Before that, it was just a dirt track to get back to "The Farm." Grandpa had to go to the courthouse or somewhere to get it certified as a road. There was only one house next to 1604 Marcella – to the south. A black man (or family) lived there; he was a rug cleaner.

While the timing of when he worked where is uncertain, we know that John A. worked around this time in construction with his father, and at Star Peerless, and in construction with Gino. At Star Peerless he varnished wallpaper while it was moving through the rollers. He walked to and from work, about 3 miles each way. When he worked with Gino in construction, John A. has said that they were putting in sewer lines for Walsh Oil Co. (owned by Ed Walsh). Charley Shoop [*spelling uncertain*] was the moneybags, the silent partner; and the Irishman J.V. McCarthy was the boss in the sewer. The city contracted the sewer work to Walsh. This included dynamiting near the Ruby Street Bridge [*part of U.S. Route 66 then*]. After the explosion, John A. and Gino would have to shovel everything out – they shoveled it into wheelbarrows, and a crane lifted the wheelbarrows out. Their work also included caulking the pipe with roping from the inside and connecting the individual sewer lines to the main line. Some of the lines were 50 feet deep. Gino was completely buried twice during this job, and his brother John and others freed him by clawing away with their hands while on their knees. John A. worked there about a year or so, while living on Marcella. He didn't have a car when they lived on Marcella and had to walk everywhere. [*The Ruby St. Bridge is about 3 miles from 1604 Marcella.*]

By September 1951, when their third child, James Alan Ullian, was born, the family had moved from 1604 Marcella to 1528 E. Cass St. in Joliet [*on U.S. Route 30, the Lincoln Highway*] where they rented the ground floor of a house heated by a coal-burning pot-belly stove, and without indoor plumbing other than a hand pump in the kitchen, for \$30/month. John A. Jr. believes that his father drove a 1950 Ford while they lived on Cass St. John Jr. also remembers his favorite baby-sitter, Barbara Trolinger, a Tennessee girl whose mother took care of the cabins at the tourist accommodations across the street: “Barbara let us kids do things that we wouldn’t have been able to do otherwise, like walk over the limestone dam over Hickory Creek in nearby Pilcher Park, or help her eat a lunch of 2 pounds of thick-slab bacon fried in a skillet and accompanied by a very generous amount of freshly-baked cornbread.” The 1953 Joliet City Directory (presumably with 1952 information) showed John A. at that address, working as a machinist at Caterpillar Tractor Co. – a plant just opened in 1951. In March 1956 the family moved into a new Pearson pre-fab home (whose stud-and-wallboard walls came in a semi trailer and were lifted into place by a crane, and for which Gino helped his brother John A. with some of the concrete work) at 1011 Elgin Ave., Joliet. This house was across a large field (which became a wonderful place for the neighborhood kids to play, with an occasional baseball field whose mowing with lawn mowers “borrowed” from home probably destroyed more than 1 lawn mower) from WJOL radio station and its tall antenna. It was also on a hill above the E J & E (Elgin, Joliet, & Eastern) railroad yards. John A. and Mildred raised their family there. During John A.’s later years at Caterpillar (around the mid-1960s), he also worked about half-time in the evenings in the kitchen at Silver Cross Hospital in Joliet. He later left Caterpillar for a full-time position in the kitchen stock room at Silver Cross, from which he retired in about 1988. At Silver Cross, he enjoyed working mostly with women, who enjoyed his friendly and unassuming nature and his sense of humor. He also socialized (golf, fishing, bowling) with men at all position levels at the Hospital. In 2003, their 3 children long gone from the family home, John A. and Mildred moved to 4324 Odonahue Dr., Joliet.

Mildred had worked at State Farm Insurance in Normal IL beginning in high school, and later (after all of the children were in school) as a secretary at Goldblatt’s department store (Joliet), the purchasing agent at Shelby-Craftco (Joliet and Chicago), and briefly at the Joliet Arsenal. John and Mildred devoted their lives to being great parents and grandparents, as well as a favorite aunt and uncle. They enjoyed traveling to visit relatives, especially after retirement. Mildred’s love of sewing, knitting, crocheting, and other needlework has been quite useful to many family members for many years. Their 3 children have appreciated all the sacrifices their parents had made over the years, including enabling the children to go to good schools and being supportive wherever John A. Jr., Linda, and Jim’s lives have taken them.



John and Mildred with their children: James A., John A. Jr., and Linda F. – about 1954



Mildred and John Ullian – 1971



John A. Jr, John, Mildred, Jim, and Linda Ullian – 1991



Mildred and John Anthony Ullian – April 2012

John A. Ullian died on 18 January 2015, 3 months before his ninety-second birthday. He was buried at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery, Elwood, Will, Illinois. In 2018, Mildred still lives at home in Joliet.



John A. Ullian's Tombstone  
Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery, Elwood IL

## Livia Agnes Ullian

Chapter 9 includes information on Livia's life from 1941 through 1946, which includes the time she spent at 1604 Marcella. At the conclusion of Livia's story in that chapter, she was living in about 1946 in one room in the home of Gert Crowley at 210 Nicholson St. in Joliet. After living on Nicholson St., Livia roomed with a "red-headed girl" in an apartment on Third Ave. in Joliet. That roommate introduced her to Don French.



Livia Ullian and Donald L. French Sr. – Wedding Day – 26 Mar 1949

Livia and Don met in February 1949 and were married at Trinity Evangelical United Brethren Church on 26 Mar 1949. Joseph and Lorraine Ullian were their witnesses.

Since Livia's Catholic faith meant so much to her, they were remarried on 13 Mar 1950 at St. Mary's Carmelite Church in Joliet. Since Livia was 8 months pregnant and marrying a Protestant, the wedding was performed in the rectory office. Livia's brothers John and Joseph were the witnesses.

Livia and Don lived on Draper Ave. in Joliet in 1 room of a house before they bought a house at 305 Margaret St. in Joliet in the early 1950s. In the early 1960's, they added on a third bedroom, garage and a larger living room to their home. Don worked at the Texaco Oil Refinery in Lockport, Will, Illinois, as a crane operator throughout their marriage.



Livia Cooking at her Draper Ave. Home



Livia and Don French's Home at 305 Margaret St., Joliet IL

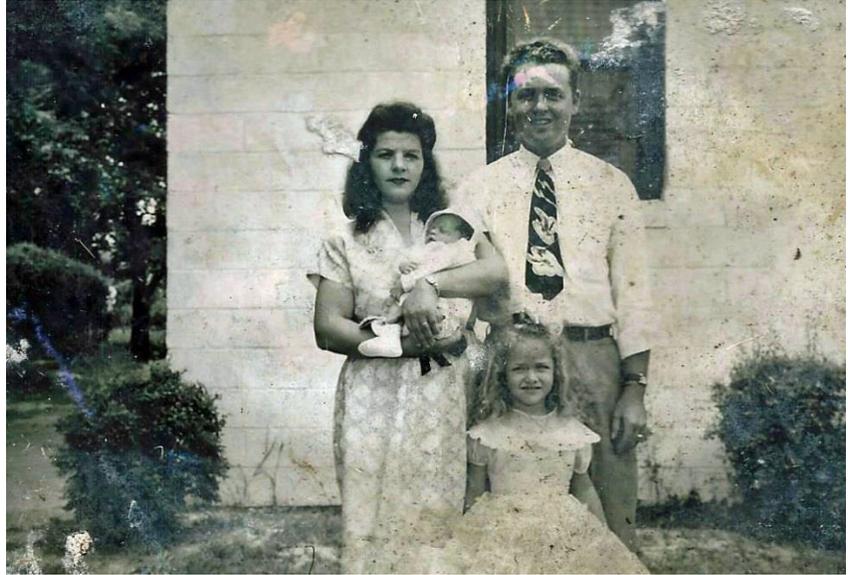
Livia was a wife and homemaker and she and Don were blessed with two children: Linda, born in 1950, and Donald Jr., born in 1954, both born at Silver Cross Hospital in Joliet.

She was a parishioner at St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church in Joliet. Livia loved babysitting her grandchildren. Livia enjoyed embroidering and flower arranging. Don and Livia also loved traveling, including trips to Hawaii, to California to see the Rose Bowl Parade, and to many other states. To this day (in 2018) Livia never misses watching the Macy's Thanksgiving Parade

or the Rose Bowl Parade. Don and Livia enjoyed many weekends camping with their grandchildren, in their camping trailer.



Livia and Don French with Daughter Linda – about 1953



Livia and Don French with Son Don Jr. and Daughter Linda – 1954



Don Jr. and Linda French – about 1956



Don and Livia Celebrating in Florida

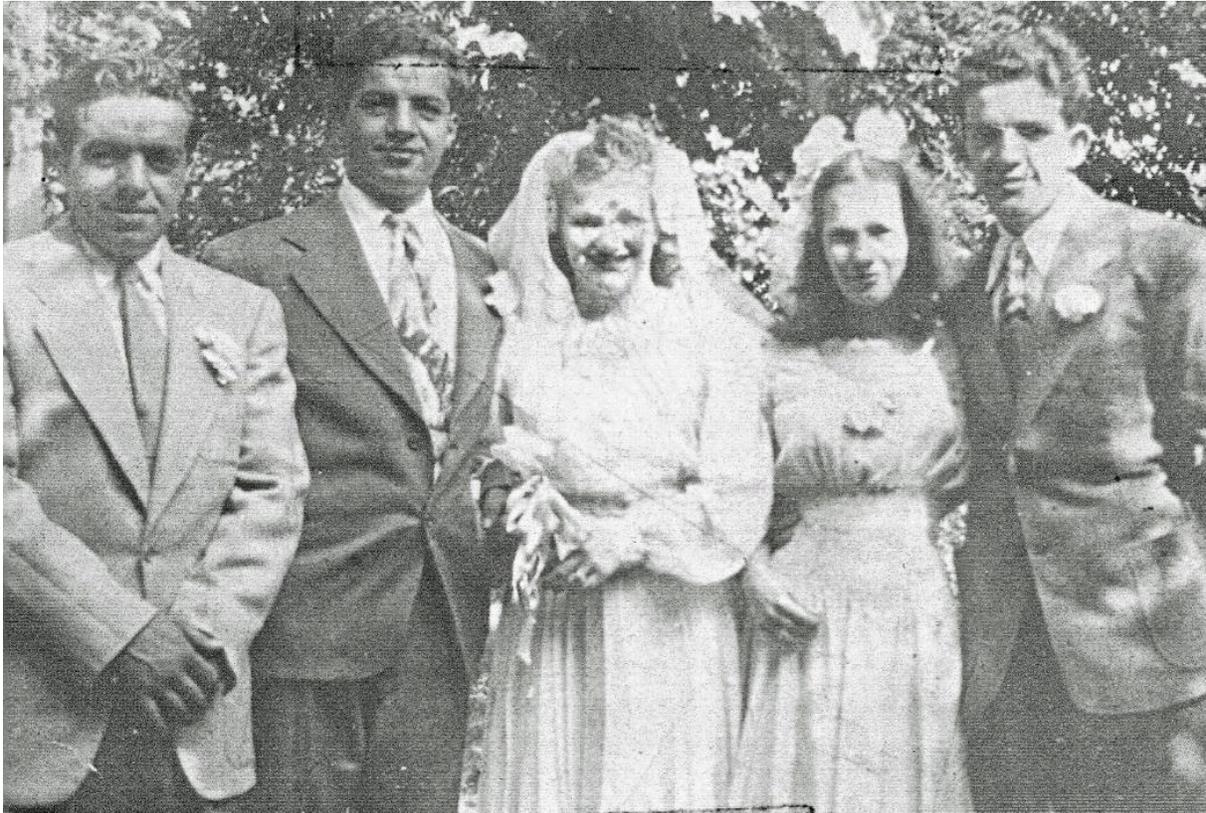
After Don's retirement from Texaco, Don and Livia enjoyed spending several winters in Florida and then moved full time to Port St. Lucie, St. Lucie, Florida, in 1985. They enjoyed their retirement there until Don had a cerebral hemorrhage and died on 27 Jan 2001 at Martin Memorial Hospital in Stuart, Martin, Florida. He is buried at Woodlawn Cemetery in Joliet. In 2018, Livia still resides at home in Port St. Lucie.



Donald L. French Jr.'s Tombstone at Woodlawn Cemetery, Joliet

## **Gino Frank Ullian**

“After I got enough points to get discharged, I boarded the *U.S.S. Henrico* and came home to California. It took five days on a troop train to get to Chicago. I was discharged honorably the 16<sup>th</sup> of February, 1946. After coming home to 1604 Marcella Avenue, I was whistled at by a short blonde, who I later married.” [Written by Gino Ullian – Appendix B.] Gino lived on The Farm from his Navy discharge to his 22 Jun 1947 wedding, when he married that short blonde: Clara Belle Beck [also known as Clarabelle].



John A. Ullian, Gino and Clara Ullian, Clara's sister Betty Beck, and Joseph Ullian

Gino and Clara Belle Beck were married on 22 Jun 1947 at the Gospel Temple on E. Cass St., Joliet, by the Rev. Johnson.



Gino and Clara Ullian – Wedding Day

Gino has told Linda Wysocki that he worked at the Ammunition Plant [*Joliet Arsenal*] after the Navy, unloading boxes of TNT from boxcars, and later worked at the Arsenal's depot. He then worked as a laborer and foreman for D'Andrea Construction for the rest of this working life.

Gino and Clara lovingly raised their 7 children (5 girls and 2 boys) initially on W. Zarley Blvd. in Joliet, and then later moved to 317 Luana Rd. in the Preston Heights area of Joliet.

After his retirement, Gino and Clara headed for Page, Coconino, Arizona, and took their motor home to nearby Lake Powell.



Gino, Clara, and their Children at 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary – June 1997

Gino lost Clara, the love of his life, on 4 Feb 2001 in Yuma, Yuma, Arizona. Gino died on 11 Oct 2013 in Phoenix, Maricopa, Arizona – about 3 years [*or 1,118 days*] before his beloved Chicago Cubs won the World Series. Gino and Clara were both cremated and after Gino's death they were buried together at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery, Elwood, Will, Illinois.



Gino and Clara Ullian's Columbarium Marker  
Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery, Elwood IL

An excerpt from Gino's obituary nicely sums up the life of this man:

“Following retirement from the Laborer's Union in 1987, Gino and Clara retired in Arizona. Gino's greatest joy in life was spending time with his family. He was a die-hard Chicago Cubs fan, and at the end of every season he would say, ‘wait until next year.’”

“All who knew Gino said the same thing, he was one of the greatest men that walked the earth. Gino's legacy to his children included honesty, integrity, kindness, generosity and above all he taught his children the value of hard work. He was a wonderful role model as a Father and his children were extremely blessed to call him 'OUR Father.’”

## **Joseph Francis Ullian**

After his Army service, Joe returned to Joliet to live with John and Nina on Marcella Ave. The 1947 Joliet City Directory shows Joe as working at Farrell Mfg. Joe lived on Marcella until his marriage to Eunice Lorraine (Frost) Peet – Lorraine – on 7 Nov 1948.

Lorraine's first husband was Clarence Peet, who had 1 arm and owned a grocery store, filling station, and tourist camp at 1519 S. Chicago St. at Zarley Blvd. in Joliet. It was on the old U.S. Route 66, and about a quarter mile from 1604 Marcella Ave. Lorraine worked there, and Joe probably met her at the store. The store was very close to the American Institute of Laundering, where Clarence worked after closing the store, and where Livia also worked. It was also near "Sasso's Tavern" [*Airport Tavern, owned by Charles Sasso, at 2019 S. Chicago St.*] which John frequented often.

We don't know exactly when Lorraine and Clarence Peet divorced, but the 1940 Federal Census shows Clarence, age 28, and Lorraine, age 21, as married with two children: Clarence and Donna. Since Joe and Lorraine married in November 1948, and Clarence and Lorraine had two more children (Thomas and Yvonne) before then, they must have divorced about 1945 or 1946.

Joe and Lorraine's marriage on 7 Nov 1948 took place in Pocahontas, Randolph, Arkansas, about a month before Joe's twenty-second birthday. Joe had done his Army basic training in Arkansas, but we do not know whether that was why they were married there.

In 1955, they lived at 517 Osage St., Joliet IL. At some point during the 1950s they had lived on E. Cass St., a block or so west of where his brother John A.'s family lived. Joe had worked at the Joliet Arsenal, and then applied at Caterpillar Tractor Co. in Joliet. He got the job despite not having graduated from grade school after he told them that he was in the engineer group with the Airborne in the Army and was a machinist. He retired from Caterpillar after 30 years in 1981. He and Lorraine moved to Arkansas after his retirement.



Joe Ullian – 1987

A news clipping, believed to be from the Joliet Herald News, announced Joe and Lorraine's 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary. We do not know when the photo was taken.

**Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Ullian**  
**50th Anniversary**

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Ullian of Hardy, Ark. will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary November 7, 1998. Joseph and Lorraine Frost were married November 7, 1948 in Pocahontas, Ark.

The couple will celebrate with an Open House from 2 to 4 p.m. at the home of their daughter, Yvonne. Please come and celebrate their life together.

They are the parents of Clarence L. Peet (deceased), Donna Lewis, Thomas Peet and Yvonne Chudy. They also have 17 grandchildren and 28 great-grandchildren.

Mr. Ullian is retired from Caterpillar Tractor Co.



Joe and Lorraine's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – 7 Nov 1998  
*[Probably from Joliet Herald News]*



Joe and Lorraine on their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – 7 Nov 1998

Lorraine died on 20 Jun 2003 and is buried at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery. They had been married over 54 years at the time of her death.



Lorraine and Joe Ullian

After Lorraine's death, Joe lived in Donna, Hidalgo, Texas for several years after having moved from the retirement home that he and Lorraine built in Arkansas. He had been traveling back and forth between Arkansas and Texas (for the winter) but decided that he was too old to travel by himself between Arkansas and Texas. He sold his property in Arkansas and moved permanently to Texas. He loved it there and enjoyed traveling to Mexico and around the area. Joe enjoyed dining and traveling with a friend, Elaine.

Joseph F. Ullian died on 28 Sep 2017. He was cremated and will be buried in 2018 at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery with Lorraine.



Eunice Lorraine Ullian's Tombstone.  
Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery, Elwood IL



Brothers Gino, John A., and Joe Ullian – about 1990

## Conclusion

The Ullian children went through many trials in their young lives, losing their mother so early, being separated from their father for most of their childhood and adolescence, and growing up with limited contact with each other. But having persevered, they all grew up to lead happy, productive lives, lovingly raised their families and enjoyed life. And through all the years, they kept in contact with each other, either while living in Joliet or in different locations after retirement. They were truly FAMILY!



The Family – about 1929



Ullian Family Reunion – about 1970



Gino, John, Livia, and Joe – August 2005