

## BIOGRAPHY OF CHARLES FAHS MARCH

Born to Charles L. and Clara Elizabeth Kauffman March, Fahs, as he's been known all his life, was the eldest of three sons. He was born May 28, 1918 in an 18<sup>th</sup> century log cabin at Locust Point, Dover Township. The house was part of a 128 acre farm located on Canal Road, near Davidsburg, York Co., PA.

His family later moved into the large farmhouse located on the property, built in 1756 by the Revolutionary War captain named Sharp, and owned by his maternal grandparents, Milton Ruby Kauffman and Anna Mariah Fahs Kauffman. Fahs' father later died as a result of injuries suffered in an accident on this farm.

Fahs and his brothers Richard and Donald were in the 4-H baby beef club and raised champion steer, showing them at the annual Farm Show in Harrisburg. In 1935 their steer won the PA Grand Champion. They all shared farm chores and Fahs' chores were to feed the horses and cattle and to bed down the horses. All three sons also assisted their mother with milking and milling corn.

Fahs attended Lenhart's School and then Strayer's School. His first grade teacher was Edna Gerber Baughman. Other teachers were Grace Stambaugh, Andrew Gerber and Monroe Bentz. At Dover High School he was taught by George Leib, Charles C. Young, Scott Knaub, Miriam Fissel and Kate, whose last name might have been Gross or Myers.

His farm chores kept Fahs from participating in most school activities although he did participate in some school plays. He played the clarinet, taught by Abraham Nace, who made his brother Richard's violin out of wood from a maple tree on the farm. He and his brother played with the Dover Band and a church band, and played in Dillsburg, Wellsville and other areas, and in Halloween parades.

After his graduation from Dover High School in 1936, Fahs went to work for the S. Morgan Smith Company in York. He attended school there for more than four years to learn precision

tool-making and stayed with that employer for twenty-six years. He also worked at York Safe and Lock Co. during WWII making machine parts for tanks.

Other employment was with York Ice Company, Shipley Oil Company and for an uncle putting up hay for fifty cents a day at a greenhouse in Manchester.

Fahs' military service during WWII included service on board the repair ship DEC699/USS Marsh, which carried a machine shop, a woodworking shop and a welding shop to repair ships damaged in battle. He also served aboard a sub-chaser and a mine sweeper. He served in the African Campaign, The Pacific Theater, and The Battle of the Atlantic. His last tour of duty was in China via the Panama Canal, Honolulu, and the Marshall Islands. The war in the Pacific ended before his ship arrived in China. He was discharged from the U. S. Navy on December 9, 1945, at Sampson Naval Base in New York.

Fahs and his wife, Verna Marie Sowers, were married June 11, 1943, before he went into the Navy. She passed away in August 1986 and is buried in Salem Church Cemetery. His daughter, Marciaann March Longenecker, was born in 1946 and lives in Lower Windsor. His only other child, son David Burnell March, was born in 1949. He's a carpenter and lives along the Susquehanna Trail.

Fahs' brother Donald, born in 1921, was a sargent in the U. S. Air Force and was killed in 1944 while flying a B17 Flying Fortress over Cologne, Germany. His brother Richard, born in 1919, and a colonel, also served in the U. S. Air Force. He died in 1975. Both are interred in Salem Church Cemetery.

Fahs entered the Powder Mill Rd. (York, PA) nursing home in August 2004. He will be buried alongside his wife Verna after his death. His complete life history, as told by him, can be found in the GDHS' archives.