

FRANK PETER BERNARD

Henry's younger brother, **Frank Paul** (the "Paul" is only in the Bible; we always knew him as **Frank Peter**) was born at Grafton 11:30 p.m. on Saturday, July 24, 1915, baptized by Fr. Forbes.

Frank comes across in most all accounts as a devil-may-care kid. He didn't graduate from high school. He had the ability but apparently lacked the motivation. He was big and athletic, but wasn't an athlete. Marvin Campbell, a few years younger than Frank, idolized his older cousin. Frank was perhaps inclined to mischief, but there is no indication that he was a disobedient son. He comes across as irrepressible and fun-loving.

One gets an idea that Frank was more his Dad's kind of man than older brother Henry, who was more serious, religious, bookish and perhaps viewed as a "Momma's boy" and not as "tough". Their father, Henry, perhaps had a first grade education, at most, and was tough and self-made. He likely didn't consider education in school as all that important.

The last six years of Frank's life were on the USS Arizona as a Navy man, a Shipfitter. A job in the Navy during the Great Depression was coveted, and since it was peacetime, enrollment in the military was not guaranteed. But in 1935, at the age of 20, Frank went into the service.

Frank never married. The last letter he sent to Henry Bernard (whose nickname was "Boy"), typewritten and dated November 7, 1941, indicated (typed here exactly as it appeared; original plus additional photos on following pages): *"I think I will get hitch to that little girl up in Washington she is a honey and she will join the church to marry me what do ou think of that is all right to do that, and say a fellow asked a question so I will aske you it, it is is this he wants to know if a woman who was married outside of the church I mean that they are bouth Protetens and now they are dev divorce would it be alright if this woman joined the church in order to marry this boy who is already in the church and you tell me for him?"* (See following page.)

A grieving father, Henry Bernard, speaks out at a California picnic

this item was submitted to the American Legion Magazine in 1991. The newspaper article was found by Loria (Collette) Kelly of East Grand Forks MN

At left is the original of the article in the Grand Forks Herald. It is very hard to read. The entire article is very long, and has the headline "3,500 Attend State Picnic in California". This picnic was somewhere in Los Angeles, and probably about February 12. The following reference is about half way into the article, and is the only personal reference in the article (other than speeches and names of people in attendance).

From Grand Forks Herald
February 17, 1942

"A touching incident occurred during the program. In complimenting Americans of Polish for their patriotism, [Lech T.] Niemo [counsel for the Republic of Poland in Los Angeles and a Los Angeles lawyer who grew up in Minnesota] read a press report telling of the death of a young man of Polish descent at Pearl Harbor, the young man being a native of the Grafton area. When he had finished reading a man and his wife arose in the audience, the man asking if he might interrupt for just a moment. Niemo graciously complied, and the man said the report of that boy's death later was found to be in error, but that the man actually killed at Pearl Harbor was the pal of the boy mentioned in the first press report. "The boy killed," said the man, "was our son!" The couple standing were Mr. and Mrs. Henry Bernard, long time residents of Grafton. The entire audience arose and stood in silence for a moment in honor of the dead hero and the parents who made the sacrifice."

I can see Grandpa doing this, and it is emotional to even type this now.

Uncle Frank's pal was John Grabenske of Warsaw, and he indeed was initially reported killed in action at Pearl. Dad used to keep in touch with him in retirement in Arizona, but the last contact from Arizona to Dad from John's wife was that his health was failing. He probably is no longer alive.

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LATE JUN 1941 -
LONG BEACH CA

from left:
Henry + Josephine Bernard
Jessie Whitaker, Frank Bernard
Richard (Dick) Henry + Esther
Bernard.