

A Journey Through  
Dementia/Alzheimer's  
Disease

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**Geraldine McCall**



**A Journey Through  
Dementia/Alzheimer's  
Disease**

by  
Geraldine McCall



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This is a true story. The characters in this story are real. Some of their names have been changed to protect their identities.

# DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to everyone who knows or who have someone in their family suffering with Dementia or Alzheimer's. It is dedicated to the care-givers who come in contact with loved ones and/or strangers. I have a great respect for people who work in facilities taking care of the affected. The road is long and hard, and filled with difficulties, but with the Grace of God, we get through it.



# List of Characters

Eugene McCall (Pop)—father of the family (deceased)

Nora Scruggs McCall (Mom)—matriarch of the family

Carolyn McCall Loper (Red)—oldest child

Geraldine McCall Reese (Gerry)—second child

George Louis McCall—third child (deceased)

Paula Jean Thomas (Jeannie)—fourth child

Jessie McCall (Jessie)—fifth child

John Douglas McCall—sixth and youngest child

Howard David McCall (Kerry)—Carolyn's oldest son

Randolph Wayne McCall (Randy)—Carolyn's youngest son

Cicero Williams Jr.—Jessie's son

Cicero Williams Sr.—Jessie's ex-husband

White Cactus Club—Women's savings group

Miss Evelyn Smith—Nora's close friend (deceased)

F. Gwendolyn Hodge—Nora's niece

Marsha Laws—Nora's niece who worked at Markham Elementary School

Regina Glenn (Sweet)—Nora's niece

Patricia Coleman (Pat or Patty)—Nora's niece

Minnie Campfield—Nora's niece

Margaret Ricks—Nora's next-door neighbor

Lucille Scruggs—Nora's sister-in-law

**A Journey through Dementia/Alzheimer's Disease** is a memoir covering the last few years of my mother's life.

Nora Scruggs McCall was a deeply religious person who never lost her deep-seated faith that God was in control and that everything would work out as He had planned.

As the dementia progressed, Nora continued working as a volunteer grandmother at Markham Elementary School. She also continued attending church services at Mount Calvary Baptist Church on week nights and every Sunday.

I want to thank my brother, John Douglas McCall, who was the main caregiver to our mother. I also want to thank Mrs. Margaret Ricks for helping my mother and brother through the years. Resounding thanks go to my cousin F. Gwendolyn Hodge for her dedication to the family. Thanks also to Mrs. Minnie Laws Campfield, who graciously proofread my work.

Thanks to my children, Wendolyn and Beverly Reese, who allowed me to ignore them while I was writing this work, and who gave me pep talks when I felt weighted down.

Thanks to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for giving me the strength to be there for my mother in her final days.



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# CHAPTER I

In May 2006, I was visiting with Mom, who was writing checks to pay her bills. Out of the blue she said, “I get tired of all these bills. I wish someone would pay them for me.”

“I get tired of paying bills too, but we have to do it,” I said.

“I can’t keep up with them. I think I’ve paid one bill when here it comes again. Then the other bills come too. I don’t know which bill I paid and what bill I need to pay.” She seemed frustrated.

“Mom, would you like me to pay your bills for you?”

“Oh, Darling, could you?”

“I’ll need you to sign a power of attorney giving me the right to handle your finances.”

“Let’s go,” she said.

“Not right now. We’ll have to wait for me to get the papers we need. My credit union will notarize them for us.”

A week later I told her I would pick her up the next day to have the power of attorney papers notarized.

“When we have completed the paperwork, we’ll go to a department store, or we can go when I get home from work,” she said happily.

It bothered me that Mom was finding it difficult to write checks and keep up with her bills. It was a wake up sign that her memory was declining.

\* \* \*

Mom was still at work when I reached her house, but George was at home. I sat under the carport, where it was cool, to wait for her.

Mom saw me waiting when she arrived and quickly exited the car.

“I’ll be right out,” she said rushing into the house.

“Take your time.”

She was ready to leave in ten minutes.

Our first stop was the department store. As we walked around the store she complained that she needed a sprinkler to water her lawn. I led her to the garden department, where I purchased the sprinkler.

