

LUELLA RUTH MORWOOD

11 November 1965

by BURTON WESTLAKE MORWOOD, brother

Luella Ruth Morwood was born in Chicago, Illinois, on Sept. 28, 1892 and removed with her parents, Barton Henry and Mary Louise Westlake Morwood, to Swickley, PA. in 1895. She was educated in the public schools and early indicated a musical aptitude, becoming proficient in young ladyhood, as a pianist. Among her early recollections were song fests with her many friends around the upright piano and she was probably instrumental in transmitting musical instincts to her younger brother, who, both eventually obtained valuable musical training in one of the finest Boy Choirs of the time. She early associated with the Baptist Church and eventually was called upon, occasionally, to play the church pipe organ for the choir and church services.

Her business career began early with the old Buffalo Steam Roller Company, with offices in Pittsburgh as a secretary-stenographer. Her fidelity and business acumen were soon recognized and she became office manager. With the advent of modern paving techniques, steam rollers declined in popularity, and, because of the sooty climate of Pittsburgh had affected her physical stamina, she decided to seek a better climate. Before World War I she went to Oregon to live and found secretarial work in the state offices of the Capitol at Salem. After World War I, she removed to Portland and eventually married Alonzo L. Seamster on September 13, 1919 at Vancouver, Washington. To this union was born two daughters, Anna Ruth on Jan. 8, 1921, and Mary Jane on Aug. 22, 1923.

Like many other patriotic citizens, World War II found her again in the business world as a secretary for the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railroad. She continued this association for over 22 years attaining the position of Secretary to the Superintendent. During this period she was a member of the National Secretaries (International) Ass'n., and National Association of Railway Business Women. For two years she edited and compiled by herself a quarterly 30-page publication for the latter called the "Portland Puffs," which would put many learned literary scholars to shame. She belonged to the Hinson Memorial Baptist Church, and in the '30s and '40s was superintendent of the Primary Dept. for 12 years, using her art and musical talents to the utmost, writing and composing small

pieces of music to fascinate the children in her department. When she returned to work, her devotion to her church turned to their missions and to supporting a child in South America to which she gave generously. Her art talents turned to China painting, for which her daughters will be ever grateful. She was a Portland resident for 41 years and died after a very short illness on Feb. 1, 1965. A short summation of her whole life was her devotion to her church and constant service and thoughtfulness to all who knew her.

This sketch is furnished in collaboration with daughters Mary Jane and Anna Ruth.

RUTH MORWOOD SEAMSTER
BORN: 9/28/1892 — DEATH 2/1/1965

Worked at the SP&S Railroad Portland office as a secretary to James L. Monahan, and Frank F. Barlow, Jr., H. M Bates, H. L. and S. G. Buntin.

She would travel to train wreck sites, take down all information regarding cause, required repairs and have pages on Monahan's desk by the morning. She worked up to the day she passed away at the age of 73, and was held in high regard for her loyalty and expertise.

In her spare time she traveled by train all over the U.S. meeting up with other railway women, which led to the creation of the PORTLAND PUFFS (Railway Business Women's Association of Portland, Oregon). As editor for Chapter 40 of the RBWA she duly compiled these pages quarterly.

(This information provied by her daughter, Mary Jane Biethan, Beaverton, Oregon.)