# JULIE 1

### Catherine Marshall



## JULIE

Guideposts

#### Books Used in Researching Julie

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#### The Characters

Julie Paige Wallace, eighteen-year-old high school senior and parttime reporter at *The Sentinel* 

Kenneth Timothy Wallace, father of Julie and editor and publisher of *The Sentinel* 

Louise Wallace, wife of Kenneth and mother of Julie

Timothy "Tim" Wallace, the Wallaces' eleven-year-old son

Anne-Marie Wallace, their nine-year-old daughter

Randolph Munro Wilkinson, assistant manager of the Hunting and Fishing Club

Emily Cruley, typesetter, assistant editor at The Sentinel

Dean Fleming, retired railroad machinist and repairer of equipment at *The Sentinel* 

Hazel Fleming, sister of Dean

John Hammond, pastor friend of Dean Fleming

Margo Palmer, high school classmate of Julie

Sam Palmer, father of Margo and owner of the Stemwinder, a roadhouse

Graham Gillin, high school athlete

Troy Gillin, his younger brother

Spencer Meloy, pastor of Baker Memorial Church

Thomas McKeever, Sr., board chairman of Yoder Steel and head of the Hunting and Fishing Club

Thomas McKeever, Jr., son of above and president of Yoder Steel

Bryan McKeever, son of above and high school classmate of Julie

Munro Farnsworth, Pittsburgh businessman, board member of Yoder Steel and the Hunting and Fishing Club

Cynthia Wilkinson Farnsworth, his wife

Cyrus Stearns, executive of the Pennsylvania Railroad

Neal Brinton, "puddler's helper" at Yoder Steel

Cade Brinton, brother of Neal and union organizer at Yoder Steel

James Sanduski, watchman at the Hunting and Fishing Club

The Vincent Pileys, across-the-street neighbors of the Wallace family

Jean Piley, their daughter

Donald Whipkey, chairman of Baker Memorial Church Council

Florence Whipkey, his wife

Ted Gillin, Sam Gaither, Salvatore Mazzini, Floyd Townsend, Wade and Stover Alcorn, Barry Simms, Sheldon Wissinger, Janet McIntyre, George Cummings, Alderton business people and town personalities

#### Foreword

Julie is Catherine Marshall's nineteenth and final book, and her second novel. It is a companion piece to *Christy*, her first novel, published in 1967.

Both Christy and Julie give readers a fascinating look at unforgettable segments of American life and history. Christy portrays life among the mountain people of eastern Tennessee in 1912. Julie depicts the depression years of 1934–35 in a flood-prone town in western Pennsylvania. Both books took a long time to write: Christy, nine years; Julie, seven. Both works are based on Catherine's family life: Christy Huddleston was nineteen-year-old Leonora Haseltine Whitaker, Catherine's mother. Julie Wallace, the central character in Julie, is in part drawn from Catherine's own memories of her life in Keyser, West Virginia, as an eighteen-year-old.

Research on Julie began in 1977 as Catherine became fascinated by both the Johnstown Flood of 1889 and the inner workings and mechanics of operating a small weekly newspaper. She also took a refresher course in the events of the depression years of the thirties. Soon the research spilled over into dam construction, the early union movement in America, steel making, private railroad cars. Poems written by Catherine as a teenager found their place.

I married Catherine in 1959 after she had been working on Christy less than a year. She was a courageous woman to become, at forty-four, a mother to my three young children, ages three, six and ten. Christy was put aside for a time as we established a new home together.

Soon it also became clear that as an editorial team, Catherine, the writer, and I, the editor, struck a good balance. We began spending countless hours together talking through characters and plotting the action and suspense of Christy. This close relationship continued through Catherine's nonfiction books: Beyond Our Selves, Adventures in Prayer, Something More, The Helper, Meeting God at Every Turn, and a book we bylined together, My Personal Prayer Diary.

When Catherine spent forty-two days critically ill in the hospital during the summer of 1982, working on the manuscript of *Julie* was a form of therapy for me at this very difficult time. Even during visiting hours we sometimes found ourselves talking about the book's characters. So often—perhaps too often—did our absorption in the editorial process spill over into family life, vacation periods, travel, even illness.

By January 1983 Catherine seemingly had recovered from her lung collapse of the summer before. She and I began the new year by spending several days on *Julie* with our longtime editor, associate and close friend, Elizabeth Sherrill. Months of revision work were still needed.

Catherine was in the hospital for tests when she passed away suddenly of heart failure on March 18, 1983.

What a tremendous loss to her family, as well as to a book audience of millions! Her writing career had spanned thirty-four years, including eighteen books that sold somewhere over sixteen million copies.

In many ways *Julie* is Catherine's own story, because the passion for causes, the quest for faith and the courageous spirit in Julie Wallace were also in Catherine.

I know. I lived with these qualities for twenty-three years. Though the void she leaves in my life can never be filled, I am sustained by memories—of our adventures in faith, of our tumultuously creative family life and of our fulfilling editorial partnership.

Leonard LeSourd January, 1984

#### Lookout Point L

As I stood on Lookout Point and viewed Alderton seven miles below, I wondered what changes I would find. Fifty years had altered the town very little. The population was now about forty thousand, with the growth centered in residential areas built on higher ground, but downtown Alderton was much as it had been when the Wallace family first arrived in September 1934. A few more stores, several new shopping centers, two more theaters. Yoder Steel still dominated the town's economy.

Lake Kissawha glistened a short distance away in the bright sunlight. Boats with multicolored sails covered the water, just as they had that fateful summer of 1935. I noted that a few more cottages dotted the surrounding shores than at my last visit. The rebuilt dam was not visible from Lookout Point.

A mile or so below the lake, on the twisting road leading down the mountainside toward Alderton, I spotted the Fleming cabin. What would I discover there? Would the ax still be above the fireplace—a sign that The Preparers were continuing their work? For so many years I had yearned to write about this group. Permission had finally been granted three years ago when it was agreed that I should tell the whole tragic story of Alderton 1935. I had done that, and sent copies of the manuscript ahead to my family. Only one small piece was missing. This visit now would complete the story and end the book.

Each of my trips to that cabin had been a turning point for me. What would it be this time? With growing anticipation, I walked back to my car. I started the engine but still did not pull out onto the road. So many years, so many memories. I recalled the night a group of us had celebrated our high school graduation on this very spot, dancing on the asphalt to the music of a Chicago station on Bryan McKeever's car radio.

And before that, the very first time I stood here on Lookout Point. That was in September 1934, when my family and I stopped for a glimpse of the town that was to be our new home. The sky was fresh-washed that afternoon, the storm clouds lifting. How soon those clouds were to return, and with what devastation, none of us in the fall of 1934 could have dreamed . . .

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Our 1928 Willys-Knight had been climbing for at least ten miles, one hairpin turn after another, under a threatening sky. Though it was early September, the temperature was close to ninety degrees. There was a stillness in the air and a steady buildup of dark, lowering cloud banks to the east.

"Kenneth, the car's overheated!" Mother's voice was anxious.

"I'm aware of it," Father replied. Rivulets of perspiration were streaming down the back of his neck.

"Shouldn't we stop and let the radiator cool off?"

"I will, Louise, as soon as I can find a place to pull over."

There had been increasing irritation between my parents ever since Mother, custodian of the map, had suggested some sixty miles back that the most direct road to Alderton was west on Route 30. Dad did not agree and had chosen Route 143, which approached Alderton from the northeast. A mistake. Route 143 was poorly paved and endlessly curving.

We were all on edge this late summer day of 1934. Four consecutive days on the road, seven-hundred-odd miles, four blowouts, five people jostled all the way from Timmeton, Alabama, to western Pennsylvania. Mother had driven most of those miles because I had yet to obtain my driver's license and my father was still having those attacks of malaria.

For most of the trip I had been shut up in the back seat with the animal energy of Tim, eleven, and Anne-Marie, nine. Every waking moment my younger brother and sister had wriggled and fidgeted, poked one another, and me, and chattered incessantly. I felt bruised and battered, my clothes a mess. In an effort to ease the tension, Mother began giving us a running commentary on what we would see on Dad's alternative route into Alderton. "We'll be going down Seven Mile Mountain now. The map shows a little village not too far ahead. Yancyville, it's called. Oh, and here's something interesting," she added. "A lake." She held the map to get a closer look. "It's called Lake Kissawha. Indian name, I suppose."

As she spoke, dark clouds suddenly blanketed the landscape. Then the sky emptied. There were no separate raindrops; rather it seemed as if giant hands had overturned cloud-buckets. Lightning and thunderclaps followed—eerie, terrifying. And at that moment white steam began to rise from the car radiator.

Anne-Marie started to cry softly. Hunched over the wheel, Dad searched through the downpour for a place to pull off. There was a bump; we skidded off the road and began sliding to the right. Frantically Dad twisted the wheel, fighting the slide. No use. We ended up with the two rear wheels in a water-filled ditch.

As Dad turned off the ignition, his hands were shaking.

"Now let's all stay calm," Mother said crisply. "Nobody's hurt. We'll be all right."

After about five minutes the deluge stopped and the sky lightened. Gratefully we rolled down the windows; the closed car had been like a steam-oven. Dad started the engine but the back wheels only spun crazily, churning mud. Gunning the motor merely sank the heavy old Willys deeper into the ditch.

Then we heard a heart-stopping sound—a roaring, crashing noise from the steep slope just above us. Startled, we looked up to our right and saw a river of water pouring down the side of the mountain. It crashed onto and over the car, water gushing through the open windows, soaking us. Then it surged across the road, tore off a route marker, and churned down the asphalt surface for fifty feet before plunging over the side of the mountain to our left, sweeping along rocks and small trees in its path.

We sat silently in the car, paralyzed by our narrow escape. Then dazedly, almost like a film in slow motion, my parents began mopping up the water in the front seat. Suddenly Dad's body slumped forward against the steering wheel. I could see a vein throbbing in his neck.

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In a panic I clambered over Tim and opened the car door. "I'll go for help," I said, catching Mother's distressed eyes.

High school tennis had strengthened my legs. I ran back along the road we had traveled, avoiding the debris and the worst puddles. My eyes were searching the downhill side of the road, now to my right, for the building I thought I had glimpsed through the trees.

Yes, there it was, some kind of rustic lodge or inn near the shore of the lake. The side road I turned into was steep, slippery underfoot. As I ran, I spied in the distance the figure of a man in a green sports shirt emerging from the building.

At that instant my foot caught in a fallen branch. Down I went, sprawled on all fours—mud all over the front of my skirt, spattered on my blouse and face.

"I say, what a nasty tumble—"

The man was now standing over me, hand outstretched. He was younger than I had thought.

"My family needs help," I stammered, spurning his hand and scrambling to my feet. I pointed toward the road. "Up there."

"Was there an accident?"

"Yes, our car slid into the ditch. I think my father's hurt."

"Should I call an ambulance?"

"I don't know."

"Let's have a look." He set off at a rapid pace, with me trotting to keep up, trying to get my tangled hair out of my eyes and wiping furiously at the mud.

"Beastly day for motoring. Tell me what happened," he tossed

over his shoulder at me.

A clipped English accent, reddish-blond hair. He seems nice, I thought. "We were driving up from Alabama. My father's Kenneth Wallace, the new publisher of *The Alderton Sentinel*."

At the main road I pointed the way toward our disabled car. After rounding several curves we saw it. My father was still in the driver's seat, but I rejoiced to see that he was sitting upright.

The young man bounded forward. "I'm Randolph Wilkinson. Are you injured, sir? How can I help?"

Insisting that he was all right, my father climbed slowly out of the Willys. By now Mother too was out on the road to greet us, with Tim and Anne-Marie tumbling after. "Julie!" Mother cried. "What happened to you?"

To my relief the two men became absorbed in examining the car as I explained my fall to Mother while wringing out my sopping skirt. What a way to meet a stranger . . . fall on my face in the mud practically at his feet.

Brushing aside Mother's protests, my father climbed back in behind the steering wheel, turned on the ignition, and began a gentle rocking motion—forward, back, forward. As the rocking pattern stepped up, the Englishman didn't hesitate to step into the water behind the car, flex his muscular arms, and at the right moment give a mighty shove. The heavy old Willys lurched forward from the ditch onto the road.

"By Jove, we *did* it!" Our rescuer shot one hand into the air while Tim and Anne-Marie whooped in triumph.

Dad set the hand brake and climbed from the car. "How can we thank you!"

"No need to." Mr. Wilkinson was looking at me again. "But I insist that you come back to the Inn for a cleanup. Can't go on as you are."

"Thanks so much," Dad replied. "But I think we're all right now."

"Kenneth, please," Mother urged. "Let's accept the young man's offer."

"And Dad, don't forget the radiator," Tim put in.

My father grimaced. "I'd forgotten. Our water boiled over, Mr. Wilkinson."

This time the Englishman climbed behind the wheel. He drove several hundred yards down the mountain to what he called the back entrance to the Inn. We wound through a woodland, then crossed over the top of a tall dam. To our right was an immense lake; below, on our left, water from the spillway formed a gurgling stream.

After we pulled up in front of a large building, the Englishman showed Mother, Anne-Marie and me to a powder room off the front entrance hall. One glance at myself in the mirror made me shudder: my wavy light brown hair was hanging in stringy ropes; mud spots on my face gave the effect of chicken pox. I stared down at my filthy saddle shoes, my rumpled skirt and blouse, and groaned. I looked more like a lumpy twelve-year-old than

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almost eighteen. After cleaning up as best I could, I fled outside.

Lake Kissawha was larger than I had first thought. When we drove in, the far banks had been lost in mist. Now they were just visible, perhaps half a mile away. As I strolled down to the shore, I noticed that the steep face of the dam was a wild aggregation of loose rocks and boulders, with saplings and scrub pines growing out of the crevices.

Odd way to construct a dam, I mused. Then I turned and walked back to our car.

When our family reassembled by the Willys, the handsome Englishman was there to see us off. As I started to climb into the back seat he took my hand and held it for a moment. "I'm glad we met, Julie," he said.

Startled, I looked up into his hazel eyes. They were warm, sparked by a mischievous twinkle. Then, very slowly, he winked!

My eyes must have shown my confusion. I reddened, murmured something unintelligible and stepped into the back seat, aware that my legs were strangely weak.

Mr. Wilkinson then strongly urged us to go back a mile or so, where he said we would find a scenic spot called Lookout Point, which had a breathtaking view of Alderton and the whole valley. Though road-weary and eager to end our long journey, we decided that a good first look at our new home town would be well worth retracing our route.

A few minutes later, with Mother now at the wheel, we pulled into an asphalt parking area and climbed out of the car again. The dark angry clouds were now vanishing to the east. Through breaks in the overcast we could see the narrow Schuylkill Valley spread out below, surrounded by the towering Alleghenies, with Alderton on the valley floor.

I stood there fighting disappointment. Before leaving the flatness of Timmeton I had tried to visualize what it would be like living in the mountains. All afternoon we had been driving through glorious scenery, misty-blue peaks soaring over undulating ridges, each horseshoe bend opening a new and breathtaking vista. I could scarcely wait to see Alderton.

But spread below us now was something very different. Alderton looked pinched, hemmed in by the mountains. In many places the hills were denuded, the slopes pocked with slag heaps.

The peace I had sensed in these mountain heights was gone. A dissident note had entered in—as if men and nature were antagonists.

We stood there in a tightly huddled family group, our eyes sweeping the landscape below us. For a moment no one said anything. I was feeling let down, betrayed, but dared not voice it.

Still, there was beauty mixed in with the ugliness. Just below us in the twilight Lake Kissawha was like a multicolored mirror. A sparkling stream, like a glistening strand of pearls, wound down Seven Mile Mountain to Alderton. Consulting the map, Mother reported that this was the Sequanoto River, that it was joined by Brady Creek just north of Alderton, and that the combined streams flowed through the center of town.

Father, pale and drawn, pointed out the two bridges spanning the river, including the railroad bridge built at the turn of the century. On his previous visit here, local citizens had described it as an architectural monstrosity because of its ponderous concrete arches. As our eyes searched the town, tongues of flame would leap from tall brick smokestacks, then die again. A thick sooty haze hovered above the scene.

"That's the Yoder Iron and Steel Works," Dad said, indicating the smokestacks. "Employs over twelve hundred men. Headed by Tom McKeever, a tough old man who runs this town, I'm told."

"Including The Sentinel?" Mother asked.

My father shrugged. "I don't think he'll pay much attention to us." He pointed again. "There's the Trantler Wireworks, a Yoder subsidiary. Makes barbed wire and such. Those and the Pennsylvania Railroad yards are the town's chief industries. See the yards on the east side of Railroad Bridge—apparently a major east-west transfer point." From where we stood we could see two roundhouses surrounded by glittering skeins of tracks.

"Just like a model train set!" Tim breathed excitedly.

"Sure looks that way from here, son."

Dad then indicated the residential areas, mostly tucked into the hills, and a section of drab gray houses east of town. "Workers' houses," Dad explained. "They're called the Lowlands." The name fit; they were certainly the ugliest part of this industrial center of