



Louise Goldsborough Thomas Cooley died at home on October 21, 2016. She was 92. Louise was born on July 17, 1924 in Frederick Maryland, the only daughter of Louise Goldsborough and Edward P. Thomas, MD. She was preceded in death by her parents, her two brothers, Edward P. Thomas and Robert J. Thomas, MD, and her beloved daughter Florence Talbot Cooley.

Louise was proud of her “roots” in Frederick, Maryland; a historic town famous for its church spires and the burial site of Francis Scott Key. She would regale her family with tales of the swinging bridge, visits to Braddock Heights, the oyster barrel in the cellar where her chore was to keep the live oysters fed. All her life, oysters, served any style, were her first choice on a menu. Louise attended Frederick Public Schools followed by Northfield Seminary for Young Ladies in Massachusetts. She earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology from the College of William and Mary, and completed her nursing training in 1949 at The Johns Hopkins School of Nursing. While working as head nurse on Halstead 9, the Hopkins surgical ward, Nurse Thomas met a young resident surgeon, Denton Cooley, from Houston. They wed in 1949, had their first baby, Mary, in Baltimore, and later moved to London for a year of training for Denton.

In 1951, the couple moved to Houston to begin her husband’s medical career. Louise was not only a helpmate to Denton, but the coordinator and commandant of their growing family that included five daughters - Mary, Susan, Louise, Florence and Helen. While her husband spent untold hours, seven days a week, at the hospital, Louise created a comfortable home and participated in her daughter’s activities. Her training as a nurse proved invaluable when she was among the first responders at the Poe School bomb in 1959 where three of her children were students, just as it did in raising five daughters. She always said, “Nurse’s training is training for life!”

Louise and her family spent leisure and vacation time close to home, waterskiing at the “ski shack” on the San Jacinto River and horseback riding at Cool Acres on the Brazos, both within an hour of the Texas Medical Center.

As her husband’s surgical career took off, Louise traveled the globe with Denton on behalf of the Texas Heart Institute. They were often guests of important world figures and returned home with wonderful stories. Louise and Denton participated in Houston social life in spite of long work hours that included very early mornings. In spite of the limelight surrounding heart surgery innovations, Louise insisted on a normal family life for her daughters. Denton often said, “I always wanted to be captain of my ship, but I married an admiral. She is my life line. Without her, I would have been lost.”

Louise was a collector of people – she enjoyed a wide range of friends. Until the end of her life, Louise kept in close contact with her friends and family. Everywhere she went, people remembered her sparkling blue eyes, her smile and mostly her generosity. She was quick to send food, a special book or a thoughtful gift – always accompanied by a personal message on a Post-It note. She had many lifelong friends, to whom she remained loyal to the end. Louise learned to play bridge after rheumatoid arthritis sidelined her from tennis and aerobics activities. She developed close friendships around the bridge table, often bragging to Denton that she had won some money that day, usually no more than 50 cents. She was also a voracious reader and an avid book buyer. Her greatest joys

included spending time with Jeanne Jard at the River Oaks Bookstore and weekly visits with John Wilmore at the beauty parlor, which were the destinations of her final outing.

Louise was a uniquely generous mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She rarely bought one of anything, but rather, at least five so she could be ready with a gift. From the time they could toddle, her grandchildren walked right in the kitchen door and made themselves at home – sitting on her bed talking, playing in her closet or just snatching a treat from the pantry. The GrandDarl's home was a safe haven for grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Each family member knew he or she would find a warm welcome from Grandmommy and GrandDarl when they walked in the “library.”

Louise was a member of Pi Beta Phi Fraternity, the Garden Club of Houston, Town and Country Garden Club and the Junior League of Houston where the garden room bears her name. Also named in her honor is the Louise Goldsborough Thomas Cooley Endowed Chair in English at The College of William and Mary. In addition, a group of friends created a scholarship fund in her name at her alma mater, The Johns Hopkins School of Nursing.

Louise is survived by her husband of 67 years, Denton Arthur Cooley, MD, and daughters Mary Craddock, Susan Cooley, Louise Davis and Helen Fraser, and their husbands. John W. Craddock, Jr., M.D., Richard C. Davis, and Charles D. Fraser, M.D. Also surviving are sixteen grandchildren and spouses - Sarah Walker and David Spitz; Blair Walker, MD and Marc Schmid; Denton Walker and Laena; William Walker and Emily; Jack Craddock; Caroline Craddock; Louise Paez and Gabriel ; John Plumb and Katherine; Robert Plumb and Sheridan; Mary Senkel and Nick; Susie Lowe and Jimmy; Peter Kaldis, MD and Leslie; Laura Nachtigall and David, Charlie Fraser, MD and Kathleen; Gracie Fraser; Will Fraser - and sixteen great-grandchildren, with more on the way. She is also survived by beloved cousins, nieces and nephews in Maryland and Texas.

We are grateful for the many people who support the Cooley family, including Dena Houchin, Joan Miller, James Berardo, Kathy Gerrie, Barbara and Jack Sebring. The family is especially thankful to Robert “RB” Williams and Neftali Bucio for their decades of devotion. Each is a cherished member of our family.

Our deepest gratitude goes to her caregivers during her final years and hours -Cynthia Bruns, Glenda Sparrow, Eddie Guice, Imogene Randall, Barbara Crawford, Ann Belisle, Marina Reyes, Venita Walker, Wilma Byrd and Adriana Loya - and for their kind and excellent care of our wife and mother. The family is grateful for Dr. Shirley Riggs and the staffs of the CHI/St. Luke's Hospital 23rd Floor Terrace and the Texas Heart Institute Clinic, Dr. Francis Williams and staff of Kelsey Seybold Rheumatology and Dr. Sarah Selleck and staff of Baylor Geriatric House Call program.

The family will receive visitors on Sunday, October 23, 2016 4-6pm at George H. Lewis and Sons 1010 Bering Drive. A memorial service will be held on Monday, October 24th at 11am at St. John The Divine Church. A private burial will take place beforehand at Glenwood Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be sent to the “Louise G. Thomas Cooley Scholarship Fund” at the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing, 525 N. Wolfe Street, Room 524, Baltimore, MD 21205 (online at <https://secure.jhu.edu/form/nursing>) or the Texas Heart Institute P.O. Box 20345 Mail Code 3-117 Houston 77225-9969.