AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JEAN ELIZABETH GRAY WESSEL

My mother, Genevieve Ursula Wright, was born in Cincinnati, Ohio on July 3, 1903 to Margo O'Flaherty and Joseph Wright. Margo had a sister Elizabeth O'Flaherty, who married Thomas O'Flaherty, who was not a relative. Elizabeth was always called Bess. There was also a sister Kate, and a sister Gertrude. Joseph, my grandfather, had two older sisters Mamie was married to Albert Wimmers, and Emma married Will Roesch. They had one son, Raymond, who is still living. His wife Cecelia died in 1993. They never had any children. They married when he was 27 and she was 37.

Mamie Wright Wimmers had two daughters, named Marie and Florence. Ray Roesch, Marie and Florence Wimmers were very close with Mother, Aunt Margaret, Uncle Paul, and Uncle Bob Wright. The Wimmers daughters never married, and when they were in their eighties, they both became ill with cancer, and passed away within a month of each other in 1993.

When Genevieve was young her parents separated, and since her mother, Margo worked as a nurse, the four children, Genevieve, Margaret, Paul and Robert ended up in an orphanage. Joseph, another brother, had died when he was five years old. At one time Aunt Bess went to the orphanage and took the children out on a day pass, and took them to a relative's home in Chicago. Eventually, they had to go back to the orphanage, because she didn't have permission to take them that far or keep them that long. Margo died of an impacted bowel at the young age of 39. She was at that time studying to become a doctor. When Genevieve finished the eighth grade of school, she left the orphanage to live with her father.

Clarence Ward Gray, my father, was born on April 3, 1898 in Atlanta to Anna Marie Molloy, who was born in Marietta, Ohio and Samuel Gray, who was from Atlanta, Georgia. Clarence was the only child born to my paternal grandparents. Our Gray ancestors originally came from New York. Some of them came down the Ohio River to this area and then on to Atlanta. Many of them were in the printing business. Anna Marie Molloy was from Marietta, Ohio. I never heard the story of how she got to Atlanta.

When my Father was in grade school his parents also separated, and I never had the privilege of knowing my Grandfather, or saw a picture of him. I don't know anything about his family, except that there were a couple of Uncles - one's name was Bill. That information coincides with information about Dale Gray Corde's family, who is the mother of Cheryl Corde, a playmate of our Cheri, who lived across the street from our family on Nandale Drive in the fifties.

When Dale Cordie found out we shared the same last name, we

compared notes and found that she also, had an Uncle Bill Gray, who was a printer from New York, and he had come down the Ohio and ended up in Atlanta. She was a Protestant as was my Grandfather. We could be related to Dale Gray Corde. Cheri Wessel and Cheryl Corde looked a lot alike when they were in their twenties. After my Grandmother's death, we found out that she had divorced my Grandfather Gray, when she applied for Social Security, because she did not know whether he was dead or alive at that time, or where he was, and because of that, it would have been difficult to secure her Social Security.

Even though my Father only attended the public school until the sixth grade, he was a smart man with a good sense of humor. Everyone who met Clarence liked him, not only because he was so good looking, but because he was a caring man, a good story teller, and a very good listener.

I don't know when Kate Amann became friends with my Grandmother Gray, but I know they shared a flat before my parents were married. We always called her "Aunt" Kate, and her daughter, Mae, we also called "Aunt." We called my Grandmother Gray, "Ma".

Genevieve was quite a beauty, and while she was living with her father, after she left the orphanage, she met Clarence and they dated s little, but her father did not like her to date. However, they fell in love anyway. Knowing they could never get permission to marry from their parents, because she was only sixteen and Clarence was 21, on August 20, 1919, they eloped. Then they went home and told their parents, so after that they got married at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in the West End.

Since then the church has been torn down for progress of the expressway. They first lived on, or near Eggleston Avenue, where the Cincinnati Riverfront stands today. At that time, my father worked for the Street Railway Company, and was a motorman. They lived only a short time at that address, and then moved to 1210 Nevada Street to a two family house in Lower Price Hill. My Grandmother, Kate Amann and Aunt Mae shared the other flat, which is what we called apartments in those days.

My Grandmother Gray worked in the Sales Room of The Rookwood Pottery at the top of the Incline in Mt. Adams. Among other duties there, she would take people through the Pottery on tours. It took only a short street car trip from Price Hill down Eighth Street to Fifth Street and Vine, where you could transfer to the 49 Zoo Eden Street Car, which would take you the rest of the way on Fifth Street and then up the Mt. Adams Incline, where you could see the whole city of downtown Cincinnati as you reached the top, and also the Pottery in Mt. Adams. I know I went there many times by myself, when I was still quite young, and took the tour of the Pottery along with other people. It was very memorable for me.

On the tour through the Potter', they not only showed you all the beautiful pottery that had already been cast, but you had the privilege of seeing the potter throw the clay onto the potter's wheel and see the vase, or whatever the potter was making, grow and indent. They also showed us the kilns (ovens) in which they baked the pieces of pottery. When the piece was put into the oven, they sealed the oven doors, baked the pieces, and then let them cool for two days. It was really exciting. In the seventies after the Pottery had been closed for years, a restaurant was opened on the property, and naturally they called it the Rockwood Pottery Restaurant.

My Grandmother had been an organist when she was younger, and she also taught piano lessons, but I only remember hearing her play the piano a few times. By that time she had arthritis in her hands. My brother, Bernie, told me recently that our grandmother gave piano and organ concerts, when she was young.

When I was about four, I remember my Father played the violin, and Bernie was taking violin lessons, too. Music must run in our family, but it sure didn't pass on to me.

During the years of my parents marriage, they gave birth to 13 children. The first three children were born at the Nevada Street address, which was only one block long. It ran off of Gest Street, parallel, and between, State Avenue and Glenway, a short distance from Eighth Street. Bernard Arthur Gray, their first child was born on June 20, 1920. Almost two years later another son, Clarence Joseph, later nicknamed Dink, was born on January 25, 1922. They were great pals all through childhood, and even in the first few years of their marriages Bernie and Dink's families lived in a two family house together.

Dink amazed me when we were still in grade school, because he could get up by himself on the cold winter mornings to serve 6:30 a.m. Mass. During Lent I went with him, but it was such a chore for me to get up that early on a cold morning.

On April 1, 1924 as the morning Angelus was ringing I was born, their first daughter. I wish I could say that I was a beautiful baby, but according to my Grandmother Gray, I was a skinny baby with a bumpy head. I weighed only eight pounds, the smallest Mother had, until her very last baby, Denny, who weighed in at seven pounds and thirteen ounces. My Grandmother Gray told me that she molded my head, when I was given a bath the best she could, but... I never did like the shape of my head, so I suppose I didn't think she did a good job. Looking at the small size of my Mother, it surprises a person to realize that she had babies weighing ten and eleven pounds.

A week after I was born, on a Sunday afternoon I was taken to Blessed Sacrament Church by Aunt Bess and Uncle Tom O'Flaherty, who

were chosen to be my godparents. I was given the name of Jean Elizabeth. Incidentally, the priest didn't like my name, Jean. He said that he wouldn't give that name to a pet, and to make matters worse, he spelled my name,"Gene", on the Baptizimal Certificate. Oh well, I always liked my name. Mother had thought of naming me Angela, because of making my entrance as the Angelus was ringing.

Their third son, John James, was born two years later, on April 5, 1926, and lived for only 17 days. The doctor diagnosed the cause of death as an enlarged thymus gland. Mother said he was the most beautiful baby that she had. Maybe she just thought that, because he came after me.

When we lived on Nevada Street We had to go up a flight of steps leading to a porch along side of our flat to reach the front door. A lot of houses in those days did not have bathrooms. However, they had built a little room on the end of the porch which had a toilet, and the seat on it was slanted upward just a bit. When you sat on it, it slid down in place, and when you were finished, you stood up and the toilet flushed all by itself, but it flushed with such force and noise, that I was scared to death and would run into the house. That is the only memory that I have of that flat, except I do have a picture in my mind of a mantle with a Rookwood vase on it. Keep in mind that I was only two or three.

We then moved to a two family house at 1317 Bowman Avenue a couple of blocks away, but still running parallel to State Avenue. My Grandmother Gray (Ma), Aunt Mae and Aunt Kate took the upstairs flat on Bowman Avenue with us. That house was on two streets. It was reached by climbing two flights of stairs up a hillside on Bowman Avenue, but it could also be reached in the rear by going down just a few steps from Denver Avenue. We had two addresses at that house. After we lived there a short time, our landlord built a full bath - tub, sink, and toilet - in both flats. He also replaced the gas lights with electricity. We were real big time then!

Before that on Saturday night our parents would put a big tin tub in the kitchen, stoke up the stove to warm it up, and heat up lots of water to pour into the tub. Of course, it took a lot of time to do that, so we used the water for several children. Bernie reminds me while we younger children were getting bathed on the first floor, Ma would be giving first, Bernie a bath and then Dink one, in the same bath water upstairs in her flat. You might call that an assembly line.

My Father would wash my hair with Tag Soap, a Procter & Gamble product, that was used for many things, (mix it with brown sugar and it was good for poison ivy, among other things.) Then he would rinse my hair in vinegar, and finish by brushing my hair, when it was dry and it would shine beautifully, just as good, as if we had used all the products that we use today. Of Course, we probably

had very soft water in those days, too, because we didn't have all the environmentally bad things running into our river.

One time when I was walking up the two flights of steps leading to our house, a grasshopper jumped on my chest. Now I have always been terrified of grasshoppers, so I started to scream, while I just stood their frozen. My poor Mother came running down to get me thinking that I really had been injured. She was really upset with me when she realized, all the commotion was caused by a little grasshopper. Years later, I remember crossing the street just so a grasshopper would not have a chance to jump on me again.

My brother, Donald Thomas was born on March 21, 1928, at this house, and he was the first of Genevieve's children to be born in the hospital - Good Samaritan, and all succeeding children were born in hospitals. I don't remember much about Don, then because he was the baby of the family while we lived there, and I was only four. Aunt Mae's mother, Kate, passed away during this time, but Mae continued to live with our Ma, and when we moved to 2821 West Eighth Street, they came along and took the second floor flat.

While Mother and Dad were unpacking our boxes after we moved in, Mother looked out the window and saw Don walking up the street with his arm around a little black girl, whom we later found out was named, Edith Rivers. My parents did not know that there was one block of black people living across the street. Remember, my Father was born in Atlanta, and the time was the early Thirties. In those days blacks went to a church for blacks only. Most of the blacks that lived across the street were Catholic, but they went downtown to a church there. Also, until about 1956 they were not allowed in most swimming pools.

I remember one hot summer day, I was swimming at Dempsey swimming pool, when they told Junion Rivers to get out of the pool. I told the guard that he wasn't "co'ored", that he was just tan. Of course, the guard knew that I was lying, and he had to get out. As young as I was, I knew it was wrong, and I suppose others did, too, but no one ever did anything about it until the black people complained in the sixties.

Anyway my parents decided that we would look for another flat right away. We lived there for at least six years. I guess we weren't as bigoted as we thought. Later when Dad bought a Model T--Ford, he rented a space to park his car from Edith's Father, Mr. Rivers. I remember seeing him shoot the breeze with him many a time. It's interesting to note that all the black children who lived there went to college when they grew up, but most of the white ones who lived there did not.

We never had a radio in those days, and I had never even seen one, but I remember going to Aunt Em, Uncle Will and Cousin Ray Roesch's house for a visit. Ray was studying electronics, and he had put

together a Crystal Radio Set, and we all got a chance to put on the ear phones and listen to it. You can't imagine the excitement we felt when we heard what was coming through the ear phones!

We finally did get a radio when we lived in that house, but I don't remember what year it was. I do remember we listened to the P&G Soap Operas, Amos and Andy, Fibber McGee and Molly, and many others on radio. The most popular soap opera was Ma Perkins, played by Virginia Payne, the daughter of our family doctor. Once I walked into my friend, Helen's house, and her Mother was crying. I

thought something terrible had happened, but it was only that Betty and Bob, another popular soap at the time, had a marital fight. Bob, the hero of the soap opera was Don Ameche, the same man who fifty years later won an Oscar for playing in the movie called Cocoon.

My Grandmother and Mae got a telephone about that time. It was one of the upright phones that you heard the Operator say, "Operator", when you picked up the receiver, and then you had to give her the number which you were calling, such as Wabash 1021.

Whenever Mother was going to have a baby in the summer time, we children would go to the farm in Oxford and stay with Aunt Bess and Uncle Tom to give Mother a rest right before, and after, she had the baby. Because they had married so late in life they never had any children, but they sure took care of enough of us, and gave us plenty of love and care.

Although it was a lot of fun on the farm, I was always a little bit jealous, because our neighbors would get to see the new baby before I would. Bernie, Dink and I went to stay with Aunt Bess and Uncle Tom in 1930, when mother was about to give birth to our next brother, Richard Anthony, a beautiful roly poly baby boy who was born on July 26. Since we were living in Holy Family Parish, he was baptized there. Alice and Joe Willahan, friends of Mother and Dad's, were Dick's Godparents. I now had two older brothers and two younger ones.

Connie Morgan, Alice's sister, was graduating from Mother of Mercy Academy in Westwood. There they used flower girls to walk with the graduates, and she asked me to be her flower girl. I really thought I was something, wearing that beautiful yellow dress with ruffles on it. I still have a picture of me wearing that dress.

In 1929 there was a stock market crash, and thousands upon thousands were unable to find work for several years. We were fortunate, because instead of laying off a lot of people at Gibson Art, where Dad was a pressman, they had one group work one week, and the other group work the second week. Of course, that cut his salary in half, meaning he would only receive twenty five dollars to last him two weeks. That was bad, but we never had to go on

welfare.

When I went to the first grade of school, Mother couldn't walk with me the first day, because she had two little ones at home. I suppose my two older brothers, Bernie and Dink, ran on ahead. Anyway, Mother took me to the front door, and Bill Brennan was just passing by on his way to school. He was in the second grade. Mother asked him if he would walk me to school and he said he would. It was only two blocks. Many years later his son, Denny Brennan, became my son-in-law. When I was in the eighth grade Mary Ceclia Lucky, who later became Denny's Mother, came to our school for the eighth grade, so I met them both at Holy Family School.

In 1932, we went to the farm again the last part of July, because Mother was expecting another baby in August. We did have fun on the farm, because of the many different things we did. Every day I would be allowed to gather the eggs by reaching under the hens to get the eggs on which the hens were sitting. Of course, sometimes the chickens would peck me wh n I tried to get them, and I didn't like that at all.

Aunt Bess taught me how to make an Angel Food Cake from scratch. It took thirteen egg whites, and you would use a wire whip with the eggs on a hugh turkey platter with a wide lip. You would whip the whites until they stood in soft peaks. It took quite a bit of doing.

I also learned how to use the honing wheel to sharpen knives or an axe. You sat on the seat, and peddled the wheel, while you held the knife, or whatever to the wheel. It helped if you put water on the wheel as it spun around.

There was a family named Manrod on the next farm. They had a daughter named, Catherine, who was my age, and a son named, Bob, who was Dink's age. One time Aunt Bess gave us permission to walk through the meadows to their house to play for a while. That was a big deal, because she usually wouldn't let us out of her sight for fear that we would hurt ourselves. When we were crossing one of the meadows, I saw a bovine in the same meadow in which we were walking. We couldn't tell whether it was a cow or a bull. When it started to come our way, you should have seen how fast Dink and I ran through the acreage and over the fence. We didn't even try to open the gate. We were too frightened to take the time. On the way back we checked to make sure there were no animals about.

Sometime Aunt Bess and Uncle Tom would allow us to help milk the cows. We would pour the milk into clean crocks from the milk pails, which we had used when milking, and cover them, and put them in a cold cellar. Since the milk was not homogenized, like we buy today, after you let it settle for a day, you would go down and lift the lid and take a cream skimming tool and get the good cream from the top of the milk. When we had gotten enough cream, we

would put it in the butter churning jar, which had a paddle mixer in it, and then we would churn away by hand, until we had butter. It took a lot of muscle power, but we were always proud of the finished product. First we poured the buttermilk off into another jar for drinking, and then put the butter in a dish to go into the ice box, because Aunt Bess didn't have an electric refrigerator. Even we didn't have one at our house in those days.

When we wanted to order a big cake of ice weighing 25, 50, 75 or 100 pounds, we had a square cardboard that had printed on it, 25 pounds, 50 pounds, 75 pounds and 100 pounds, one amount on each of the four edges of the card. We would put the card with the correct number of pounds we wanted to order on the top, insert it in the window, and the iceman would take his ice pick to a 100 pound piece of ice and poke it just right, so that it would break into a 25 pound piece, or whatever it was that we wanted that day, and then just bring it in and put it in the ice box for us. Of course, you

had to remember to empty the ice pan under the box where the melted ice water would drip, or else it would run all over the floor.

Sometimes there was enough milk from the cows to sell to the milk companies, then Uncle Tom would put that milk in large clean cans and load them on the wagon, hitch up the horses, and take the cans to the milk companies to sell. The milk companies would deliver the milk to city homes or stores in their own wagons, which had wagon wheels like they used in the old west. The wheels used to make a lot of noise as they went down the street. They always started delivering about three in the morning, so most of the deliveries would get to the homes before breakfast. In later years the milk companies put rubber tires on their wagons to make them quieter. Then much later they used trucks to deliver milk and other dairy products. They would always deliver every day, so you wouldn't have to keep the milk too long.

We also got to ride the horses on the farm, sometimes we even were permitted to take them to the creek to water them by ourselves, that is until Aunt Bess caught us racing them. There were times we even rode horse and wagon, or buggy. We had our own creek in which to swim. Another plus was there was an ice cream store located across the street from church, that sold double dip ice cream cones for a nickel. On Sunday after Mass on Main Street in Oxford, Aunt Bess and Uncle Tom would always buy us one. I think that was the only time we ever got to eat ice cream before breakfast. It was such a big decision to decide what flavor to buy, because they had so many from which to choose. Can't you just see us there.

Reminiscing about Folkers Ice Cream Store, where we went after Mass in Oxford reminded me of the farm Aunt Bess and Uncle Tom rented just off Highway 27, which was a two family, owned by the Ringling family. They used the other half of the house themselves, and had a lot of children, mostly girls. Since Aunt Bess and Uncle Tom

never had children, we enoyed playing with the Ringling girls. One time we put on a play, in which Bernie took the male lead and married one of the Ringling girls. In August of 1993, Ed and I took a tour to Toronto, and we spent several days with a man named Ed, his wife Agnes and his sister-in-law, Javita, who live in Hamilton, Ohio.

One evening while we were at dinner with the people from Hamilton, they were trying to tell me exactly where in Hamilton they live. I told them that I didn't know Hamilton that well, but I knew Oxford better. I told them about one farm that Aunt Bess and Uncle Tom lived on, and exactly how to get to it. You should have seen the look on their faces, as they told me that that had been their farm, and that they were the girls with whom we played so many years ago. I told Bernie about it when we returned home. He remembered them well, and wanted to know whether I had gotten their phone number.

One time Aunt Bess showed us something that she had in the palm of her hand. She told us it was a small revolver - loaded - and that we were never to touch it. I knew something was going on, because I could hear Aunt Bess and Uncle Tom talking in bed after we had said our nightly Rosary one night. I wasn't exactly sure what it was all about, but I was worried. Anyway nothing happened while we were there.

Many years later I was watching The Elliot Ness Show, and I found out that the bootleggers who were hiding from Ness took over a farm house on Highway 27 near Oxfo d around the time that we had been staying with Aunt Bess and Uncle Tom. I told Bernie about that recently, and he said that he thought that it had been the time that John Dillinger, who was Public Enemy #1 at that time, was holed up on Highway 27. I don't know which it was, but I can imagine how worried Aunt Bess must have been with Uncle Tom working way out in the fields every day, and criminals loose in the area. She was always so solicitous for us anyway.

On August 5, 1932 we finally had another daughter, Dorothy Ann. I thought she was the most beautiful baby God had ever created. She was beautiful, but then so were all the rest of the babies. I suppose I was just tired of waiting for another baby girl.

Although Uncle Tom never drove a car, Aunt Bess did. When we went into the town of Oxford, where the church, grocery store, post office and ice cream store were, Aunt Bess would go through the stop signs at Main and High Streets. We would tell her what she did, and she would say, "They know I don't stop there."

Well, later she told us that she was going to take us to Richman, Indiana, which was a bigger city than Oxford. It had traffic light signals. She said we had to help her see the lights, because she was not use to driving where they had those signals. We were glad

to do that, but the windows were open, and when she went around a corner her hat blew off. She took her hands off the wheel grabbing for her hat. We all yelled at her to grab the wheel. I don't know whether Bernie grabbed it or what, but even though we didn't crash, it was an exciting trip.

I was the only child in our family, who went to all eight grades at Holy Family School. I made my First Holy Communion there, Confirmation and Eighth Grade Graduation. I can still see the tile floor of the center aisle at church. It was white and had two shades of blue tiles clustered together. Whenever there was an event taking place there, and we had to walk down the aisle, the nuns would tell us that each child should be standing on the clusters of blue tiles, which were about two feet apart. That way we would be just far enough away from the child in front of us.

On these occasions, there were always two girls leading the First Communicants, or whatever, dressed in beautiful satin colored angel gowns with long flowing sleeves who led us into Church. When they got to the altar rail, they would turn around and look at us, and then lift their arms straight out with their beautiful sleeves flowing down from their arms, which was the signal for all of us girls to kneel down, genuflect, and stay kneeling until they put their arms back down. Then we would stand up and proceed into our pews. They also had two angels proceeding the group of boys and would repeat the signal for them.

Back then before Vatican II, you had to remember to fast from food and water from Midnight the night before until you received Holy Communion. It was always a big worry for us that we would forget and break our fast . I never knew anyone who did, though.

I have never heard more beautiful organ music than I did at Holy Family at all events, whether it be First Holy Communion, Christmas, or just a Sunday Mass. Every year, I get nostalgic for all the beautiful Christmas music that was played there. I have never figured out whether it was Mr. Thuis' organ playing, the big high organ pipes, which reached to the ceiling, or the acoustics in the church that made it better than anywhere else. In the center of the domed ceiling their was a triangle with an eye in it. It was supposed to represent the eye of God. Since the church was redecorated, it isn't there anymore. I suppose, I got the idea that heaven was round, because I always thought of heaven, when I was little and looked up at the Eye of God in the round dome.

A few months after I made my First Holy Communion, Aunt Margaret married Uncle Jerry Joering. I took my sister, Dottie to our neighbor's house, so she could babysit her while we went to the wedding Mass. I wore my First Holy Communion dress to the wedding, and when I tried to give Dottie to our neighbor she held on to my shawl collar and cried. That made me feel so good that I had a sister, and she wanted me.

In those days only the wedding party went to Communion at wedding Masses. We went to my Grandfather's house before the wedding started. Because I had just made my First Holy Communion, I told my Mother and Grandfather that I was going to go to Communion at the wedding. They told me to go downstairs and get something to eat, because I would not be allowed to go to Communion at the Mass.

I went downstairs, but I neglected to say anything to anyone about eating breakfast, because I still intended to go to Communion. When we went to Mass and Aunt Margaret and Uncle Jerry were safely married, and it came to Communion time, and the wedding party finished receiving Communion, Aunt Bess got up and walked up the aisle, so Mother told me to go ahead and go, because no one was going to tell our Aunt Bess that she couldn't go to Communion. I really felt like I pulled off a good one.

When I was in the second grade, I was a good student, and the nun liked me. One day when I had already finished my assigned lesson, I was just sitting there getting bored, so I thought I'd see if I could whistle. I had never been able to do that before. I put my lips together and blew. Out came the loudest whistle that I ever heard. The teacher, Sister Evelyn Marie, asked who did that, and I raised my hand, and she told me to go out into the hall. After a few minutes she came out, and asked me why I did that. She never expected me to do anything like that. I told her the truth, that I didn't think I could whistle. She told me not to do that anymore and then we both went back into the classroom.

The children in the first six grades st school were always supposed to go to the nine o'clock Mass each Sunday, and the children from the seventh and eighth grades were supposed to attend the ten o'clock Mass. The children always sat together, not with their families like they do today. You really had to be sick, or dying, or something of the sort, if you did not show up at the proper time. One Sunday I decided I wanted to go to Mass with Aunt Mae at ten o'clock. Monday morning Father Goekler came in and asked me why I was at ten o'clock Mass. When I told him I had wanted to go with my aunt, he really scolded me. I didn't do that anymore.

At Eighth and Chateau our next door neighbor who lived on the second floor was a minor bootlegger - not rich, but he certainly had more money than any of the other neighbors. He used to ride around in taxis, and whenever he wanted someone to run an errand for him, he would go outside on his porch and just whistle. Someone would always hear him and come running, because they knew he would give them at least a dime tip, sometimes even a quarter. Boy!

The neighbors on the first floor were Eleanor and Lester Hall, who at that time had three boys, the oldest one was named Ronnie. One day Eleanor asked me to babysit for them, and I did that many times. They were really something. When I told them they couldn't

go outside, they would climb out the window when I wasn't looking. Other times they would tie one of their brothers to a chair. They really kept me hopping. Well to show you what a small world this is, many years later I became a sister-in-law to Eleanor Hall's brother, Bob Perry, who had married Mary Wessel. Also, I found out that Rita Wessel and Jeane Wessel were the other two girls who Eleanor used for baby sitters, when she wasn't using me, but we never met at that time.

A third surprise was when I was grown, my husband and I went to a local theater play to see, "Pajama Game", and we were so impressed with the lead baritone, that we looked at the program to learn his name. You can imagine our surprise, when we learned he was Ronald Hall, the one for whom I had babysat so many years before. Neither of us had seen him since he was a child. About that time my son, Mark, was planning to be married, and they hadn't hired a singer for the wedding yet. After I told him about Ronnie Hall, he checked him out where he was performing at another wedding, and was so impressed that he hired him to sing at his wedding.

I remember when we were still living at the corner of Eighth and Chateau we had so much fun playing games in the street. There really weren't that many cars in those days, so it was not dangerous to play there. Since our house began a series of six row houses, we had a four foot wall at the end of our property, where

we played many games, such as telephone, Buffalo Bill, or just sat and talked.

We also played Red Ball, Green Ball, I Dare Someone to Come Over. We played that in the street, and when the "It" person called three of the same colors in succession everyone would try to run to the opposite side of the street without being tagged by the "It" person. We kept that up until everyone was caught. The Movie Star Game was one where we had two sides and we would line up on the side walk. First one team would walk up to the other team and give two or three initials. The guessing team would have to guess the name of the movie star, and the other team would run back to their home base. Then it would be the turn for the other team to give the initials of the movie star.

We played Go Sheepy Go, where the "It" person had to count up to 100 while he covered his eyes, while we would all hide. It was neat, because we had two woods on opposite corners, and we would hide in them. When the "It" person counted to 100, he would call "Go Sheepy, Go." then we, who had hidden, would try to run home free while the "It" person was looking for us. Whoever was beaten back to home would be "It" the next time. Kick the Can worked pretty much the same. Someone would kick the can as far away from home as possible, and everyone would run and hide from the "It" person. Sometimes it was fun to hang out in the woods and just talk. I remember we used to eat hawberries from the trees and

Indian carrots, which we found in the woods.

The boys used to play marbles, or a game with baseball cards - flipping them, and I suppose heads won. Anyway they would be mighty unhappy, if they lost all of them. Bernie and Dink used to play marbles in the house with each other when the weather was too bad to go outside. We had an area rug that had a design at each end that really served as a ring for the playing field for the marbles. They enjoyed many hours of marbles there. Both boys and girls played jacks, and sometimes even the boys played jump rope with the girls.

Another good thing about living at Eighth and Chateau, was that in the winter time, when it snowed, we could go sled riding in the street. You could go up to Mt. Hope, get on the sled and ride down the hill for three blocks, get off at Grand Avenue and walk up the hill for five blocks near Elberon, get back on the sled, and ride down the other way to Grand Avenue again. Of course, we were only allowed to do that in the daytime.

One night we were looking out the window watching the teenage Bueker boys ride their Bobsled down the street, feeling sorry for ourselves, because we were not permitted to sledride at night, when we saw the heavy Bobsled hit a small sled with Karen and Charles , a brother and sister, whom we all knew. Karen flew in the air and hit the ground hard. The boys put her on their sled, and took her around the corner to the priest house where they called the

ambulance. Unfortunately, Karen died, and we all felt terrible about that.

Sometimes we went to the Movies. When I was really young, the cost was fifteen cents for adults and ten cents for children. Before I went to school and learned how to read, the movies were silent ones, and they would have captions underneath. My Mother and Father really got upset, when I asked them what the caption said, and they were still busy reading it, I would pull their face over to me and ask them again, "What are they saying now?" Just about the time I could finally read, the talkies came into being. Such is life!

There was a movie house at Eighth and Depot Street called the National Theater. There was a movie house on Warsaw near St. Lawrence Corner called the Western Plaza, and then there was one on Glenway called The Glenway Theater. When I was older they opened a new theater at Sunset and Glenway called, what else but the Sunset.

My family did not have money to buy children's books, except for school, so when I was old enough to read, I would read anything I could get my hands on. I always read the newspaper, and when something big in the news would break, the newspaper boy would come

around in the middle of the day yelling, "Extra, Extra." The paper cost only two cents, and we would buy one and when my parents were finished reading it, I would read it almost from cover to cover - not the stock market. I could probably write my own book about the Lindberg kidnapping and murder, for which Bruno Richard Hauptmann was convicted and put to death; I read so much about it.

We had some murders in Cincinnati, where a good looking German born woman by the name of Anna Marie Hahn, would take jobs as a housekeeper/nurse for old men, who had a little bit of money. It seemed they got sicker after she started working for them, but not before they learned to care enough about her to put her in their wills. There were several of these men, before the authorities got wise. The last murder was in Camp Washington, and she was tried, convicted, and electrocuted for the murder.

Also in Cincinnati we had a public enemy number 1. His name was Bob Zwick. I went to school with his namesake and nephew. They finally caught him, after a big shoot out, where they shot off half of his face. He died in prison many years later. There was another public enemy number 1 case - John Dillinger. I can't remember which one came first.

It's a funny thing. I read everything they printed about those cases, but I always thought they were innocent. I never figured out why I felt that way until I grew up. I could never do anything like that, so I believed no one else could, either. I suppose I was much better off when I was big enough to walk to the library to borrow books to read. Then I read more uplifting stories.

One interesting story I read in the papers was about Amelia Earhart, the best known female aviator, who was the first woman to solo across the Atlanta in 1932. She remained in the news over the years with the different feats she accomplished. In 1937, she wanted to be the first to fly around the world around the equator. She took a man named, Fred Noonan as her navigator, but they never made the last island, on which they were to land. To this day, they have never found the plane or their bodies.

Another person who was in the news in those days was Will Rogers, a cowboy, humorist and actor. I believe he even wrote a column in the newspapers for a couple of years. He also died in a plane crash with his friend Wally Post, who was a newspaper reporter, in 1935.

We never had supermarkets in those days, and most housewives didn't have cars, so anything they bought at the grocery store, they would have to carry home by hand. Sometimes Mother would send one of us to the store to pick some th ngs up. A lot of times, she would forget something, and then she would have to send another one to the store. However, we had peddlers who would come around in their trucks with vegetables and fruits. They would sing out what was

their best buy of the day to get the attention of the housewives. Of course, it was something else for us kids to do, so a lot of times we would go out and climb into the truck with our Mother.

There was also a ragman, who came around to buy rags and old iron. He would always call out, "Rags, Old Iron," but it never sounded like those words. I don't know whether they were foreigners, or not, because you could not understand the words, but we did know what they were saying.

There was an organ grinder, who had a monkey, and he came around and repaired umbrellas and sharpened knifes. Even if you didn't have anything to be repaired, he would have the monkey do a bit of a dance, and give you a tune from the organ.

When my Dad was coming home from work with his Model T Ford, he would honk his horn a couple of blocks away from our house, and we would know that it was his car, because it had such a distinctive "Ooga" sound. Another thing about the Model-T was that all eight of us fit in it. That was the count of the family when he owned the Model T.

Did I tell you about the time that Mother and Dad took the motor out of one Model T Ford, put it in the wagon and drug it across the street and brought it into the house, worked on it and then put it back in the wagon, and drug it back across the street to where another Model T, with a better body on it was sitting. They put the rehabbed motor in the newer car and then, they then pushed the old one over the hill into the woods. I believe that's a "No-No" today.

One time a friend of mine gave me some clothes which had been outgrown. Among other things was a very good coat with a fur collar and cuffs. Easter was going to be early that year and we didn't have a warm coat for Dottie. Mother cut the coat down to fit her and even recut the fur for the coat. It was a beautiful job, and she did it without a pattern, and completed it all in one day. Of course, she stayed up most of Good Friday Night getting the job done, but she could do anything.

One of my friends when I lived at Eighth and Chateau was Helen Martin, who lived around the corner behind our house. Upstairs from her lived Mrs. Geoghan, who was a seamstress. It was so neat, because she would give us scraps of material, so that we could make doll dresses for our little glass dolls, which were six or eight inches tall - that was way before Barbie. The material that Mrs. Geoghan gave us was from bridesmaids' and bride's dresses. We were in seventh heaven sewing up our dresses for the dolls. During those years they printed cut out dolls in the comic sheets, so naturally, we would cut them out and play paper dolls, too.

I also played with Betty Crowe who lived in our row of houses, Alma Kramer, who lived in the next block on Eight Street, Dolores Kennedy, who lived on Chateau, and Rosalyn Kneer, who lived on Price Avenue, the next street over. We played dress ups with old dresses and high heeled shoes. I remember Aunt Mae wore a size three shoe, and it was great because I had such a long foot that they just about fit me when I wore them to play dress up. Another thing we did was just as soon as school was out for the summer we would take our books and start to play school. Mother never did understand how we waited so patiently for the last day of school to be out, and then start right back in and play it.

While we were living there the family that lived in the sixth row house attached to ours was named Flannery. They had a beautiful little girl, Shirley, who was a year or two younger than I was. Unfortunately, she contracted some sort of disease, and passed away. I, along with other girls in the neighborhood, was asked to be an honorary pallbear. In those days people would put a beautiful floral wreath on the front door, and hold the layouts at their homes, and they would last for two days, and then on the third day the body would be taken to church for the funeral Mass and to be buried. I had mixed feelings about being a pallbear I remember I had to get a new dress to wear to the event, because I didn't have anything fancy enough, but I was very sad, because I had never known anyone young who had died before.

I never saw or heard from Helen Martin or Dolores Kennedy after I left the eighth grade. When we went on a cruise a few years ago, I ran into Betty Crowe on it, and I recognized her. It was fun seeing her and talking over old times. Although I haven't seen Alma Kramer I did talk with her on the phone once, and I have had updates on what's been happening to her, since we left high school. Rosalyn Kneer is married to a man named Rogers, and she was on the

committee who put together our eighth grade reunion in 1989, so I had the fun of meeting her again.

A while after Dottie was born we moved to 404 Crestline Avenue, which lead to the back entrance of Mt. Echo Park, and ran parallel to Elberon Avenue. Even though this house was a three family, it was larger than the flat where we had been living, because all of the rooms were so large. However, the house was a mile from Holy Family School. They had no cafeteria there, so that meant that we walked four miles altogether on a given day, but it was a fun place to live. It had a large yard with plenty of trees, and a large wrap around front porch, and a small back porch. When we moved there Aunt Mae and Ma moved to a two family house on Price Avenue across from Dempsey Park. It was the first time in my life that they did not live upstairs from us, but we still saw them a lot.

I remember walking to and from school with my bother, Don. One winter morning it was dark while we were walking up Elberon Avenue,

and I heard a rubbing noise, that made me think someone was following us. I turned around, but could see no one there, so we kept going, but I still heard the noise. Finally, I figured out it was the noise of Don's new corduroy pants legs rubbing together. Boy was I glad to figure that one out, because there were so many trees for the bogey man to be hiding behind.

We were poor, but we were never on welfare. I never really felt deprived if I didn't have some of the things other girls had, but I do remember one May when we were going to have May Crowning of being guilty of coveting. I was walking along Elberon Avenue and saw all these beautiful flowers in yards as I was passing, and I would have liked to have a bouquet to bring to May Crowning, but that wasn't to be. I suppose that was why when I grew up, that I liked to grow flowers so much.

When I was in the fifth grade, we had a May Altar to honor the Blessed Virgin Mary during the month of May. We all helped build it. We tried to make it look like the Grotto of Lourdes. Father Goeckler would always give a prize for the best altar. The winning room would be permitted to keep a beautiful relic in a gold case on their altar for the rest of the month. We used kleenex, and crepe paper to make simulated stones. It was really quite beautiful It almost looked like real stones were there. Sister Henrietta, our teacher was a good art teacher, and she instructed us on how to make things. We were sure we were going to win. The principal and Father went from room to room to judge the altars. Later he came back to our room, and the whole room screamed together, "We won, We won!." Sister shushed us. She said, "We don't know that yet." But she was wrong. We had indeed won it.

In August it was time to go back to farm in Oxford, because on August 20, 1934, Robert Emmett was born during one of the hottest weeks we ever lived through. It ranged from 102 to 109 degrees for a week. Many years before Dad had started working as a pressman at Gibson Art Company. They sent Dad home from work, because the presses where he worked were melting from the heat. Wow! We used to take walks to Mt. Echo Park to try to catch some breezes to cool off. We would take little, Bobby in the wagon with us. I don't know whether people had strollers in those days or not. I know we did not. We had buggies for when our babies were real small, but once they could walk, we took them in wagaons.

Two years later Thomas Everard was born on June 29, 1936, he was a beautiful baby. In fact when he was two years old, we kids sometimes would take him for a walk, and because he didn't have a boy's haircut yet, people would tell us what a beautiful baby sister we had. Dad would take Tommy over to the Mt. Echo Park, when he got home from work in the evening. When it was time to take him home he would tell him it was time to go home, that the birdies where sleeping. That was one of the first sentences that Tommy ever said. "Birdie's sleeping, Dad?"

Our landlady, who lived on the third floor, was a nurse who took cases in peoples' homes, so she wasn't at our place much, but when she was, she made it uncomfortable for us with the crazy things she would do. She never wanted us to cut the grass, and left it grow long. One time when Dad knew she was on a case, he was cutting the grass, because it was about ten inches long, and he was afraid that it would catch on fire, because everything was so hot and dry, and she came home and raised cane when she caught him cutting it.

Another time we bought wall paper and Mother and Dad papered the whole flat themselves. When Dad showed it to her, she said it looks so good, I'm going to raise the rent, and meant it. We looked for another flat, and when we found it we moved to 765 Mount Hope Road, one house from the corner of West Eighth Street, which today is a block away from the Sovereign Restaurant overlooking downtown Cincinnati.

The Sovereign Restaurant was built on the site of the old Price Hill Incline, which in those days we rode down the side of the hill in about three minutes to get to Eighth and State, and then could board a street car for downtown. It would save so much time, because if we just wanted to take the trolley, we would have to walk all the way over to Grand and Warsaw. It only cost a nickel for an adult to ride the Incline, and three cents for children.

Today they are remodeling homes on Mt. Hope, because of the great view. In fact they have even built new homes there.

In 1937 one Sunday in January we had a great snow storm, which left many inches of snow on the ground, but the weather warmed up quickly, and it started to rain and it rained for days causing the Ohio River to start rising, and we ended up having the worse flood ever in the Southwestern Ohio, and Northern Kentucky area. It crested at 79.9 feet on Tuesday, January 26. Our major airport at the time, the Lunken, was unusable for seventeen days, before the waters receded. It has never reached that high again in our area, because of the flood walls, which we built after that.

The flood was so bad that for days we had no water to drink, or electricity. We had to find water to drink at the many springs and wells around the area. Where there were no springs or wells near, water trucks brought water around to the people. The hugh gas tanks that were situated on the Ohio River Bank caught on fire, and I saw the biggest fire of my life. What a site - all that water and a fire right on it.

Since most things were closed down during the flood, Dad, Bernie, Dink, and I decided to go sightseeing to see the extent of the flood. We took the Price Hill Incline down to Eighth and State and walked to the end of the Eighth Street viaduct, which was blocked by the flood water. We then climbed the steps to the railroad/pedestrian bridge, which spanned the Ohio River to

Kentucky, and walked across it to Kentucky. We spent the afternoon touring the cities of Northern Kentucky on some street cars. Then we walked back to Cincinnati over the railroad/pedestrian bridge, and then on to home. We saw sites that we have never forgotten, and hoped to never see again, and haven't until we saw the news stories in 1993 of the Missouri, Mississippi flood, which lasted for more than two months.

Next to the Incline was a very large mansion, which was many things during the years, a cafe, restaurant, and once it was called the Hill House, which was a cafe, and a small night club. My Father had a cousin named Al Johnston, well, it really was my grandmother's cousin, and he was a gymnast, who went around to different places and did exhibitions with his partner. We were fortunate enough to be able to go to the Hill House when he was entertaining there. We really thought he was great.

I remember the other fellow in the act was much bigger than Al, and he would stand up on a platform ten feet off the ground, and jump off and land on Al's stomach. Wow! When I told my brother, Bernie that I had put this in my story, he told me that my memory was too big, that it was just a few feet that he jumped. (Just like the fish that people catch. It grows with the telling of the story.)

Aunt Kate Amann had been Bernie's Godmother, and when Bernie was a teenager, since Aunt Kate had passed away many years before, Aunt Mae asked Bernie what he would like to do in life and he said he would like to become a dancer, so she made arrangements for Bernie to be given dancing lessons.

Even though Dink had never taken dancing lessons, he was a good Jitterbug and ballroom dancer, and very popular, just like Bernie was. They didn't know it, but they caused me trouble. A lot of boys would not ask me to dance at the dances, because they thought I was as good as they were, which I wasn't.

Another time The Hill House held auditions for a play to be held at Mt. St. Mary's Seminary complex at Grand and Warsaw. I tried out and was picked to be in the chorus of the play called, "Loose Change." I'll never understand why I was picked, because I certainly was no singer. Anyway it was fun rehearsing and also fun on the nights of the shows.

While living on Mt. Hope I starting going around with Jean Ackret, who lived a block down on Mt. Hope, and Betty Merten. We would take walks together, and talk on the phone, and go to parties together. When I was about fourteen, my girlfriends had a surprise party for me, my first birthday party. I was really flabbergasted that someone would do that especially for me.

We also started a club with about eight girls including Betty, Jean, Alma Kramer and also Rosalyn Kneer. I never saw Jean Ackret

after High School, and I was disappointed when she didn't show up at our class reunion a couple of years ago, because her son was ill then. Betty Merten went to St.Xavier Commercial School instead of Seton, so I rarely ever saw her again until Grandmother Wessel's funeral this year. It was good to see her then, and I hope to get together with her sometime soon.

When I was in the eighth grade of school, I was chosen to say the Act of Consecration to the Blessed Mother during May Crowning. Back in those days, they didn't use microphones in church, so everyday for a week, our eighth grade teacher, Sister Mary Leonard, would take me over to the church about a half hour before lunch time. She would sit in the last row of church and I would have to stand by the Blessed Virgin statue on the altar and read the Consecration. She would keep saying, "I can't hear you!," - just like a marine sergeant - because I didn't have a very loud voice.

Finally, the big day came. I was wearing a very pretty white dress, which Aunt Margaret had made, and Mother and Dad and all of my relatives said I was as white as my dress, I was so scared, but I did read it loud enough for everyone to hear it in the church.

In the eighth grade, I received two medals, one for perfect attendance, and another one for top honors. The only reason I received the second one was that Jimmy Schappelle had transferred to Covington Latin School, because he had always been the smartest in the class. He later went on to become a priest. We had another boy in our class Paul Strassel, who became a priest.

One summer when I was a teenager, I found out Aunt Margaret and Uncle Jerry were going to have their first child, and I went and stayed with her, so I could help her out a little bit. That winter they finally had their first daughter, Margie. In the next few years they had another daughter Betty, two sons, Tony and Jerry. All those years when I was growing up I really wanted cousins, and I had to wait until I was a self-centered teenager to get them. What a shame, my younger brothers and sisters were much closer to them than I was.

When I started high school, I went to Seton High up on Glenway Avenue, and I use to walk to and from school. My Mother and Father gave me a dollar a week for street car fare, but by walking I could save the money and use it for other things. In my freshman year I was vice president of our class. Another Jean, Jean Kissel, beat me out for the post of president. I believe she was related to the Kissel Family, which owns all the ride concessions. (That had nothing to do with her being chosen president. She had a good personality.) We had fun going to dances, pep rallies, and football games, about which I knew nothing. When they changed sides in the second quarter, I asked why they penalized the team, because they hadn't fouled. Brilliant!

After school I helped the Biology teacher clean up the lab and other such things, and was paid by a government program that they were sponsoring for the youth of the day. The summer I was fourteen, I went to the Photo Developing Company located on State Avenue near the Kroger Company factory and got my first job. Of course, I had some pull, because both Dink and Bernie were already working there in the mailing department. My job was collating the photos after they were printed, and putting the right pictures in the mailing envelopes to send out. I made fourteen dollars a week.

On Mondays when we ate lunch in the cafeteria, I thought something was wrong with me, because everyone else was complaining because it was Monday. I felt great. I never figured it out until much later that I was an early morning, early week person. I am always tired late in the evening and on Fridays.

When I was a sophomore in high school we moved to 2346 Glenway in Price Hill. This time we had a whole house to ourselves, even though it was in a row of three houses. It was a neat house, although, it was very old. It was built on a hill, and it had three floors, and we could see downtown Cincinnati from the balcony of my bedroom. Once again we were back in Blessed Sacrament Parish, where we started out. I never went to school there, but I did get married in that Church years later, but a few years ago they tore the church down, so I can never go back again.

I had met Rita Wessel in the summer before I went to high school, when I was at a party, and when I was a freshman, I met Jeane Wessel, because she was in my class at Seton High. One Sunday when I was walking with Rita Wessel and Rita Molleran, we ran into Ed Wessel coming out of Burkhardt's saloon on Warsaw and Ross Avenue, and Rita introduced us. I had heard a lot about him from both Rita and Jeane, because they both thought he was the greatest. We later saw him at St. William's festival, I was with Rita and Rosie Walker, her friend. He asked Rosie to go on a ride with him, so you see, it wasn't love at first sight for either of us.

Our neighbors on Glenway were the Donlin's on one side, and two sisters lived on the other side with their two daughters. Their daughters were Patricia Murphy and Margaret Maloney who went to Seton with me. The Donlin's had three girls, Mary, Margie and Dottie. None were my age. Mary was just a little older than I. A few years later Mary's fiancee was killed in the War, and I got

to know her quite well while I was consoling her, and we started to run around together.

Bernie and Dink were two of the best Jitterbug dancers in Price Hill. They went with a crowd of other good Jitterbug dancers. Several times we put on a variety show for the benefit of our parish, Blessed Sacrament. When I say we, I was involved, too, but not as a dancer. I sold tickets, ushered etc. I secured one of

the singers for the show. She was my girl friend, Betty Haverbush, and I had a tough time talking Bernie into putting her on the show. He was surprised that she was so good.

The first show we put on was held in the auditorium at Blessed Sacrament Church. It was such a success - both afternoon and evening performances were sold out - that the next time we put it on, we held it at Seton High School. The Jitterbug friends and my brothers were known as the Jitterbug Ten. They never performed professionally, but they were good! The show consisted of Paul Singer as Master of Ceremonies, Bernie and Dink doing jokes, ad libbing, others singing, dancing and doing skits. It was very professionally done.

I was dating several different boys when I was fifteen. In those days you did not go steady. You usually went to parties in a crowd. I was asked to a Christmas formal by one of the fellows that I was dating. His name was George Bengert. Since I needed a jacket to wear over my formal, Rita suggested that I borrow her sister, Mary's fur jacket, which I did. I stopped by her house after school one afternoon, and when we got there, her brother, Ed was there, home for lunch. I noticed him then, and I think he noticed me, too. Anyway, I went to the formal with George Bengert before Christmas, and George asked me out for New Year's Eve, and I said yes. The other fellow, Bill, whom I dated on Sunday evenings called and asked me to go out New Year's Eve, too, and I told him I already had a date. He was very upset, because he took it for granted that I was going out with him on New Year's Eve.

A couple of days after the formal dance, I was going to take the jacket back to Mary Wessel, and Dink said that he would ride me up Glenway, because they lived a couple of miles up Glenway from our house. I told him that I was going to go out with Ed that night. He said he didn't know that I was dating him, and I said that I wasn't, but that I was going to that night. When I got to the Wessel house, he was there, and we joked around for awhile, and then he asked me if I wanted to go bowling. I said sure, even though I had never bowled before. (He said that he had to make a phone call and then we would go. I never found out until much later that the phone call was to someone to break a date which he had.) Before we left his house Rita asked him if he knew where I lived and he said, sure that I lived down on Glenway.

Anyway we went bowling, and in those days, you would bowl in your stocking feet, if you didn't have bowling shoes. I bowled a twenty my first game, and he has never let me forget it. Afterwards, we went to the Sunset Theater, which was where the Glenway Chevrolet now has its annex to show its cars. Afterwards, we went to a little cafe on Glenway, and then we started to walk home. Ed kept asking me how much farther down I lived. I told him not much farther, because it never seemed far to me. I always walked it twice a day to school.

That night he asked me to go out New Year's Eve. He was going to the same party that I was going to go. I told him, "No." I was already going to that party. Ed left for home, and I found out later that he took the trolley home, because it was too far for him to walk.

I went to the New Year's Eve party, and ended up spending more time with Ed, than my date. After that I had a date with him every Sunday night. He worked on Saturday nights. We went to the movies, dancing, to the roller rink, horseback riding, bike riding, to Coney Island, to the Zoo, and parties together. At The Cincinnati Zoo they had an ape named Suzie, who was trained by William Dressman to sit at the table and eat with a knife and fork and many other unique things. She was the first ape to be trained in that way.

Sometimes we double dated with Jeane Wessel, and or Rita Wessel and their dates or others. I remember one time we went to the first-built Drive-In Theater on Reading Road, with Jeane Wessel and her date, Ray Wade, and another couple. That was wild - six people in a car trying to see the movie. I don't believe anyone knew what the movie was about, because Ray Wade was such a nut. He always had us in stitches. He was in and out of the car like a six year old. That night we wanted to throw him out.

In January of 1941, my brother Jimmy was born. He had dark brown hair just as all the rest of us had, but when his baby hair came out, it grew back blond. He was very blond even when he went into the Navy when he was seventeen. To this day I picture him that way until, I see him again and see his dark hair which is now going gray.

A few days after Jimmy was born on a Sunday afternoon I went up the street to get a fudgecycle to eat, and when I came home the radio was blaring the news that Japan had just bombed Pearl Harbor. It was January 7, 1941. That meant that the United States was now in World War II.

Early in the year of 1942 Ed received his "Greetings" from the government informing him that he was One-A and would be drafted soon. When Ed received that notice, he broke up with me, because he said he didn't know what condition he would be in when he came home. My brother, Bernie, also was drafted for service about that same time. Bernie was then dating Ann Raffaeli.

When spring came and it was time for my prom, I decided to ask Ed to take me anyway, because I knew he still liked me. He accepted my invitation, and we double dated with his sister Jeane, who had invited my brother, Bernie to the prom, because in those days students in Catholic high schools could not invite anyone to the prom who was not Catholic, and Bob Sayers, whom Jeane was dating was not a Catholic at that time. She knew Bob would understand,

because Bernie was just a friend.

Ed and I continued to date until the day he was supposed to report for induction into the Army. It so happened that Bernie and he had to report to Ft. Thomas, Kentucky on the same day. The first day Dad went over to pick them both up to come home for the evening, which was a Friday. The next day when Bernie called for Dad to pick him up again, I answered. When I asked him if Ed was ready to come home, too, he told me that Ed was going to be shipped out that day, so Dad and I picked up Ed's Mother and went over to Ft. Thomas, and I believe Bernie got someone else to ride him home. Dad stayed with Mrs. Wessel and me while we visited with Ed. Then he had to leave for the train. Dad knew where they would board the train, so we went there and saw him at the last minute before he moved out. We had no idea where they were sending him, but we found out later that they sent him to Craft Croft, South Carolina.

Bernie stayed at Ft. Thomas for a bit and then went to Tennessee for a six weeks, and then they shipped him to England, where they put him in the postal department. They didn't have to train him long because of his experience with the postal service at Photo Development Company. Later they sent Ed to Florida, and he spent a few days around New Year's in New York City. After that he was sent to Africa, Italy, Germany and many other places. He was in the message center most of the time. I don't believe he ever had to shoot at anyone, but there were times that he was shot at, but luckily they missed.

Dink joined the Airforce. Before he got his wings, he washed out, but he still stayed in the Airforce with the ground crew. While Dink was in Texas, Kiki, Jean Morelli, whom he was dating flew down to visit him. They wrote to me and asked me to send them the papers Dink needed to get married. I did, and they were married in Texas, and a while later he, too, was sent to England. When Bernie and he both managed a furlough, they met in some city in England.

The summer before my senior year I got a job at Gibson Art Company where my Dad worked. When September came, I thought it would be good idea if I kept my job, since both Dink and Bernie were no longer breadwinners. I went to West Night High school to finish high school. It was located at Hughes High School, then. I was good in shorthand and typing, and one of my shorthand teachers asked me if I was going to look for an office job. I told her that I probably would when I finished my high school. She told me about a job that was available at the Cincinnati Shaper Company, so I went for an interview. I was not aware that Ms. Daly, my teacher was the Office Manager. Of course, I got the job, and I worked there until I married and started my family.

Since most of the fellows we dated in those days were in service, Rita and I, and sometimes Mary Donlin, would go to the movies, or night clubs with Don as our escort. He was still too young to be