

## Ruth Wickenden Winans

*from*

### *Memoirs of the Thomas Rogers Wickenden Family*

The only really exciting thing about my arrival as the seventh child of the family on September 14, 1895 must have been that I turned up as a girl after three boys in a row.

The first memories that come to mind are a flash of pictures about 602 Starr Avenue, the Norway maples on Starr Avenue, the crooked boxelders on 6th Street, the big mulberry bush near the front sidewalk, the lovely white birch near the front entrance, the apricot tree that drew so much attention when in bloom, the quince bush, so much fun to climb in, the white grapes (I can smell and taste them yet) the purple grapes, and apple, cherry and plum trees too. The yard seemed adequate for our play but got rough treatment. I recall distinctly that we did not leave it without permission, so as a rule most of the neighborhood children came to us to play.

Some vivid memories are shared by all of us as to the inside of the house. Uncle Rob's many paintings hung on the neutral catered tan walls, Mother's little Steinway piano, the golden oak bookcase desk and center table, Father's straight back office type chair with smooth turned wooden arms, Father's organ and the duck picture hanging over it. I can see the rather crowded dining room, where eleven sat down for three meals a day, with long white tablecloths and napkins with individual rings, the silver sugar bowl and spoon holder and the pass-through cupboard for dishes. The kitchen and pantry were adequate but poorly arranged and somehow in them Father and Mother managed enough food to keep the big brood growing and well nourished. There were the screened cellar shelves where extras and leftover foods were stored, the vegetable cellar with dirt floor. the bins for potatoes and vegetables, stone crocks with pickles and rows of canned food. This eventually was made into a room to use as a laundry, and I recall a washing machine run by water pressure which was a great innovation over the hand cranked ones.

Then there was the shed back of the kitchen also used as a laundry room in summer. I remember so well the first ice refrigerator we bought and put out there and what a wonderful help it was to Mother.

Going to the front hall there was the walnut bannister on which all of us had many a slide and some tumbles. There was the guest room over the parlor with the whatnot filled with curios.

The little sewing room at the head of the stairs which contained Lottie's square walnut child's bed which we all occupied, sometimes two at a time, as we came along. I have this bed and while I have not used it for some years, different friends of mine have used it continuously since Mother let me have it for Dorothy Jean when she was two. I also have the old walnut chest that was in Grandmother Wickenden's room. This chest was purchased by Father and Grandmother when they first set up housekeeping in Toledo. On the back of this chest is one single rough sawed board which is twenty-nine inches

wide. This chest has printed in it: From Grove Rigby, 71 Summit Street. Toledo, Ohio. In the small top drawers Grandmother kept a sack of hard candy. Dorothy and I, and possibly Arthur, received a piece of this every morning after breakfast when we would go up to see her for a few minutes. My memories of her are rather stern but never unkind. Her long illness following her stroke and the difficult care she required is one of the crosses Mother bore somehow on top of her enormous housekeeping job.

Of course, upstairs recollections must not leave out the bathroom. The pull chain toilet, the wood encased zinc tub (that made a fine slicky-slide) and so elegant in its day, the attic stairway leading to that fun spot for rainy days, the old wooden tank up there which was part of the soft water plumbing, the dormer windows, the corner where Dorothy and I had our playhouse and dolls, the old cast-iron book press that we used to crack nuts, the winter pears spread out on the floor to ripen, and the clotheslines for mother's washings in rainy weather, all are most vivid.

One of my earliest memories of pre-school days was the daily nap after lunch in Mother's and Father's downstairs bedroom. When sleep just wouldn't come my chief amusement was riding the footboard of that old walnut bed like a hobby horse, with always a careful ear for Mother's checking on me. If that didn't seem fun my other amusement was to get in that back stairway that opened into the shed from Mother's bedroom and pretend it was my little house. That back stairway was an amazing \*'outlet" for all of us at times, I am sure.

The most outstanding memory of this period centers around Aunt Jenny Consaul's wedding to Arthur Taylor. I was allowed even at four years of age to walk over to Grandma Consaul's home on Main Street. If I went across the back lot where the "magnificent" Taylor home (not Arthur's) was built. One Saturday morning while at Grandmother's, I was told about this wedding and my part in it. I was shown all the clothes I was going to wear. The white lawn dress with 'short puffed sleeves I had tried on at Aunt Corals, having been told that she was making it for another little girl just my size. But there on Aunt Jenny's bed was this lovely little dress with gold pins to fasten it, embroidered flannel and white petticoats, long white stockings, white kid shoes with jeweled buckles and white hair ribbons. I still have the dress and shoes and in a recent centennial celebration in Ashland I displayed them as garments worn over fifty years ago.

On this particular Saturday I remember running home at noon and finding the family at the dining room table. I went from person to person telling each of them of some item of my new and marvelous collection of clothes. I had had my fourth birthday in September and this was early November. The wedding was in the old Second Baptist Church, then located across from Franklin School, on Thanksgiving Day. I was the only attendant. I wore a wreath around my neck made of tiny rosebuds and leaves and carried a basket of rose petals which I scattered before the bride.

In the rehearsal the day before the wedding I had been instructed how to hold Aunt Jenny's bouquet during the ring ceremony. We practiced with a bunch of dry twigs, but

at the service she carried a long spray of calla lilies with long stiff stems and too heavy to hold as I had been rehearsed. I did not know what to do with them, so I propped them over my right shoulder like a gun, and the picture of the wedding taken from the balcony shows them perched up there.

After the ceremony I was to lead them out. but as I got to the third pew where our family sat I spied Dorothy on Father's knee. I halted the procession while I kissed her, and Father had to hurry me on down the aisle. Those were the days when all of us sat in church in the third row front every Sunday.

My next distinct memory was when I was five, weeping copiously the day Will left for college at Granville. On being asked why I cried I remember saying, "You'd cry too if you had a big brother going away to college." That was in 1900.

Grade school days were not very spectacular. I think I can recall all of my teachers. They were Mr. Van Cleve, the principal, Mrs. White, Miss Rennelsbecker, Miss Wall, and her mother Mrs. Kemp, the Misses Marie and Evelyn Metzgar, Miss Maria Farst and my greatly beloved Mrs. Walters. I was a conscientious student but shy and very self-conscious and left no great mark behind me.

Family recollections of this period which stand out were Lottie's chronic illnesses, the frequent times when she had headaches and we had to play on the other side of the house, and finally her going to Oklahoma to seek better health. Her letters from that experience were as good as any story book for me.

The annual trips to the Lakeside cottage were the subject of our plans and dreams from New Years until school was out in June. I believe there was no influence in our childhood experiences quite as great as that vacation experience. We were always eager and ready to go as soon as someone could take us. Mother would get her vacation by staying home with the baby. Grandmother Consaul, Lottie and Ida seemed to take command at the lake. Father came once in a while but never seemed content to stay. His building of the interurban railroad that took us directly to the lake must have been a great satisfaction to him as it was a matter of pride and convenience to all of us.

There was more or less routine to our home responsibilities during this period. The three children in grade school had the chore of doing the breakfast dishes before we could leave for school. The oldest one washed, the next one wiped and the youngest cleared the table and put dishes away. How Mother stood us I don't know, because we drew hair lines on who was to do what, and the rules were many. Eighth grade graduation meant graduating from breakfast dishes too.

At this time I helped with the enormous amount of Saturday morning baking and house cleaning. Speaking of baking, do you all remember that Father used to put on a huge white apron and help Mother mix a batch of bread in a huge dishpan before he left for his office? I recall Mother baked eleven loaves at a time twice a week, and the heels were always gone from all the loaves before she could get them cooled and wrapped to

pack in the big stone bread crocks. As much as we loved her bread, we always thought that the sour bakers' bread we got one day a week was a wonderful treat.

It was when I was in the sixth grade, I believe. that Ida graduated from Denison and planned her departure for China. It was early spring of that year that Esther Lamb and I made our first and famous trip to visit our sisters at Granville. I recall that we went to a big reception where, I am afraid, "Pleased to meet you" was the full extent of my conversation. At any rate, while eating Sunday dinner at Thornton's who lived in Granville, I came out with "Pleased to meet you" when they passed me a plate of cake. One of Ida's beaux gave us a box of fruit to eat on the old T. & O.C. on our way back to Toledo.

For weekend amusements there were Saturday and Sunday afternoon walks and an occasional trip with Father out in the country where he helped run a Sunday School. Mother's frequent suggestion to us was a walk over to the "Green Hills", the area where Waite High School now stands. There was a pond where we skated and some little hills where we could coast in winter. In the spring a variety of wild flowers could be found in the woods. Esther Lamb (now Mrs. Ralph Lucke) and I took many Sunday walks together. I recall being just a little jealous of her for she had Sunday shoes and kid gloves.

When I was about ten years old Rollin Wickenden's wife, Choice. died when Martha Jane was born. To help Rollin solve his immediate problem James, about five then, came to live with us for a year. He was taking music from Alicia Quaife and would come home to ask me to play his new pieces. I was proud of my "superior ability", and readily obliged. In a few weeks, however, Alicia asked if any of us played James' music for him and I spoke up proudly that I did every week. She then requested that none of us do this as James was playing entirely by ear and not learning to read music at all.

Homer, of course, was taking his music seriously those days and he tried to keep me encouraged with mine. Later. when he learned to sing, he tried with great patience to have me play the accompaniments, but. alas, I was pretty poor at it.

Tom used to like to sing too and brought home some of the first popular music we ever had around the house. I believe Tom was also responsible sometime for buying and setting up our first radio (played off of batteries in those days), but what a source of enjoyment as well as a matter of pride it was! Somewhere about this time someone bought a cheap Victrola, and Homer brought home a few classical records. I remember especially that Andante Cantabile was my favorite.

Our next-door neighbors of those days were Moons with their parrot, and speaking of animals I'm sure you all recall the hunch-backed cripple who rode around in a little wooden wagon pulled by a goat. We passed his house on our way to Franklin School and were always intrigued. The following names I also recall: Litchfields, Baumgardners, Klaibers, Halls (I remember Gertie), Van Cleves, Tuckers, Florys, Lockharts, Hoyts, Jones (grocery store), Urschels, Howes, Mittenthals and Sokolskys,

whom Mother innocently advised to use "sulphur and lard" when their children got the itch. None of us will forget the bulbous nose of another neighbor, Father Harks. Never will I forget one day when we were skating in the side yard that one of the neighbor boys shouted at him as he walked back and forth and called him a name. He came right to our front door. The children all scattered, and he told Mother that Arthur had called him "Nosey." Mother knew it probably was one of the other children and she did her best to be polite, hide her amusement and make amends. Arthur, I believe, had to apologize and tell him he did not do it.

Speaking of Father Harks reminds me of how entertained we were at all the Catholic funerals when the black hacks with liveried drivers lined up in front of our house during the service. We could see our distorted reflections in the shiny black curved sides, much to our amusement.

The old barn still stood in those days filled with Father's engineering camp equipment, block and tackle, ropes, heavy wooden blocks, etc. There was no end to the uses the boys found for this stuff, summer and winter. I particularly remember making a high step arrangement back near the alley, packing the steps with snow, pouring water over it to freeze into a glaze of ice and sliding from it onto a sheet of ice Father would let us make by flooding the side yard.

It was during this period that Tom built his famous boat. He will tell that tale, no doubt. Also, I hope he tells about the "flying dutchman" he made first---with rubber-tired wheels on a plank frame with a cloth sail. Euclid Avenue had just been asphalted and this vehicle would ride the length of the Avenue at quite a speed. It was short lived, however, as the police said he was scaring horses and he would have to refrain from using it. Tom had to defend himself against the combined Homer and Arthur team, and I recall on one occasion when they were upset by something Tom had done to them they asked Mother if she didn't think we could sell him to someone.

I will always wonder at Tom's patience with me, a girl and seven years younger, but he would take me sailing sometimes. I guess I was as frightened as I was flattered. One time he, with Lawrence Severance and me, sailed up to Walbridge Park. I was to be home by three o'clock, so they planned to put me off on the east side of the river, near Lawrence's sister, to get a street car back home. I was up straddling the prow, and as we came near to shore we had a good breeze and came in at quite a clip. In shallow water, however, we ran up onto a waterlogged raft which we couldn't see. Of course we tipped over, but I was high and dry on the prow and hung on. The boys put me on land and got me up the bank to the car line and I left them to bail out and get out of their difficulty. I never told anyone, and the boys came in at dusk, all dried out with no one the wiser. That time there really was no danger. One time though I was out in Maumee Bay with Tom, and a sudden gust of wind caught us. He told me to grab a certain rope and I got the wrong one and we almost capsized.

Homer always encouraged my piano efforts and we had fun working on the old organ by putting foot pedals on it made out of our old blocks. Arthur was always kind and would

read to me from The Youth's Companion. I was more aware of his school achievements than any of the others and was terribly impressed with his good grades. I'm sure that was the source of my inferiority complex in school.

My chief memories of Dorothy start back when she was about eighteen months to two years of age and we all wanted to play with her like a doll. I can remember going without dessert, so I could play with her before her bedtime. Later, however, I remember special privileges which she seemed to have, and I did not. They bobbed her hair but would not cut mine. She was allowed to wear ankle socks, an innovation of that day, but they kept me in stockings, which, of course, made me jealous of her. As I recall, we each went our own way, more or less, and had our respective friends and activities, but we got along very well when our interests did run parallel.

In high school I was still shy and ill at ease but much in love with some aspects of it. I was at East Side Central for three years, where Miss Goodall became my great inspiration for biological subjects. I loved gymnasium work and basketball. The year at Central High was somewhat disconcerting as it was difficult to transfer into a new and more sophisticated group in the senior year.

Ida's experiences in China were the keen and novel interests of those days and Will's achievements were always points of great pride to me. The first trip which he and Marion made to Europe, when Betty, a two-year-old, came to stay with us, is a vivid memory. I recall especially Mother's sweet way with Betty and how proud Father and Mother were of their first grandchild.

When I graduated from high school Ida was returning from China. I decided to stay in Toledo and take a few hours at Toledo University, so I could spend some time with her. The next summer she decided to marry Justin Nixon and I was her attendant, wearing a beautiful white batiste dress she had had embroidered for me in China. Harmon Nixon was best man and I was greatly impressed with him.

I went to Denison that fall of 1914, and Arthur, a senior, was a great help to me. In my own senior year I was president of Shephardson Student Government, a position which weighed heavily upon my shoulders, and I was greatly honored to be elected May Queen that spring. We were about to enter World War I, and in an attempt to be patriotic in our celebration I was dressed as Columbia, and Justice, Liberty, and Truth were my attendants.

One college experience I have cherished goes back to the summer between my junior and senior years. I went as a delegate to a national college YWCA meeting at Eaglesmere, Pa. The speakers were of broader vision than any I had ever heard before. The mingling with students from all over the world and the great inspiration of Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick who was the leader of the day-to-day discussions were a great experience. I had to leave the conference a day before it closed to get to Cold Spring Harbor, N.Y. for a summer school session. Imagine my embarrassment but great delight to find Dr. Fosdick as my sole companion on that train coming down the mountain. That

was forty years ago, and he was a young man in his early forties, but as we all know, even then a powerhouse of inspiration. Such a thrill!

My studies at Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island, N. Y. furnished more new experiences and broadened my source of long-lasting friends. My biological studies at this Marine Laboratory were wonderful. I rode on parts of Long Island Sound on tugs and launches and had many trips in a canoe. One time we paddled about six miles to an anchored Navy training ship. They allowed us to come aboard via a rope ladder over the side. Our inspection tour was so interesting we didn't notice a hard blow had arisen, and believe me, when we climbed down to that pitching canoe about ten p.m. and started our six miles back to shore I thought my end had come. We made it though. My escort was as relieved as I when we landed.

Other features of that summer at Cold Spring were the fact that a sudden embargo on all freight except war supplies separated me from my trunk for about five weeks and all I had was my suitcase. Then a serious polio epidemic was a terrifying experience with one death in our group. I wound up the summer with a two weeks' visit with Will and Marion. This was in a cottage on the New Jersey shore where we could see the freighters out a few miles being loaded with T.N.T. to be sent abroad.

I went back to Denison for my senior year where I assisted in the biology department. Also I swam in the pool every day and was able to win the swimming championship at the annual girls' athletic meet. It was during this same year that so many of us gathered for Tom and Dee's wedding. I was greatly awed by all the lovely preparations. I am sure others in the family will refer to this occasion.

I had dated Leslie Winans quite steadily my senior year and when he entered the University of Chicago Medical School in the fall of 1917 I went to Boston for a year of extra work at Simmons College, wearing his Kappa Sigma pin. I lived that first year with Will and Marion in West Roxbury. Will, then at M.I.T., drove me to school every day in his model T Ford. They were most kind to me and made it a very pleasant year. That summer I went to Rochester to take care of John Nixon while Ida went to the hospital to have Charles. Later I went back to Cape Cod for several weeks with Will and Marion at Brewster and loved it.

In the fall Will and Marion left for Europe and I stayed on at Simmons as an Assistant in the biology department, at which time I had my introduction to the ins and outs of renting rooms and apartments in large cities. I was certainly ignorant and had some rather rude awakenings.

During this time Homer's and Arthur's army experiences were of great interest to all. Our great joy when the Armistice was signed was changed to dismay when we heard some time after the Armistice that Arthur had been wounded some days before the fighting ceased. He will tell his own story. I went to see him in New York City a few days after he landed, just after he had been fitted with an adequate leg brace. He walked with crutches. I remember his laughing about Fifth Avenue traffic stopping so he could walk

across the street. Homer, of course, was disgusted that all his battles were fought with a typewriter.

Leslie was sworn into the Army as soon as he entered medical school. By some error his class were never issued uniforms and were always being picked up as slackers when they would forget to have their papers on them. When the war was over he was given an honorable discharge with \$60.00 discharge pay, the sum total of his pay for his two years in the army. The army provided no board, room, tuition or books, a far cry from our army medical training program today.

During Leslie's senior year in medical school we decided to get married, having been engaged for three years, and were joined in a simple ceremony in Toledo on September 7, 1920. Those who were there may remember the dither we were in when my bouquet didn't come. Homer improvised for half an hour on the piano. Finally the flowers arrived, the truck having been involved in a wreck.

Poor as we were, we had a ten-day wedding trip to Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. The weather was gorgeous, and we had a fine time.

While there Arthur, who had been released earlier in the summer from a New Jersey hospital, came to spend a few days with us. I believe he told us more of his war experiences those quiet evenings on the lake than he has ever told before or since. Also, on that wedding trip we were hiking through a trail in a dense wood one day and heard someone coming toward us. Much to our surprise it was Gordon Seagrave, now the famous Burma surgeon, and his wife. We had been at Denison with him and his sister Grace and they were then preparing to leave for Burma and a spectacular career.

Dorothy Jean was born June 28, 1921, two days before Ethel's beautiful church wedding in Hyde Park which I had hoped to attend in a much made over evening dress and cape. But one reward for my disappointment was that Father and Mother got an early glimpse of D.J.

Leslie was called home because of illness in his family and I came home with D.J. all alone and to an empty apartment. As he was interning for the next eighteen months I finally decided I wasn't equal to being alone so much and went home to Toledo where Father, Mother and Aunt Dorothy eased my worries and loneliness so much.

The next spring I was visiting Lottie and Stephen in Ashland, Kentucky when Leslie joined us for a few days. We decided we liked a small town, the milder climate and other features and ended up coming here to live and practice. Lottie and Stephen always were a marvelous help in many, many ways. Those early years were hard for we were living on borrowed money. First Father and then Tom came to our aid. When those notes were paid off you can imagine our great joy. But those years had their sad side also, as first Father and then Mother passed away. Dorothy's faithful attention to them during those years made us all feel very grateful to her.



I think at times Leslie has wished he had stayed nearer a large medical center, but he has done an excellent job professionally and grown with the community. We have had a good life here and the children have now left to find their fortunes elsewhere. Leslie and I are grateful to each of our families (he was one of nine children) for the love and affection and the solidarity one feels through close family ties. We hope that same feeling continues on through the next generations.

Ruth and Leslie Haines Winans are parents of three children, Dorothy Jean, born in Chicago on June 28, 1921, Charlotte Ruth, born in Ashland, Kentucky, on March 31, 1926, and Thomas Roger, born in Ashland on February 12, 1933.

Charlotte Ruth Winans married John W. Hook II of Cabin Ridge, West Virginia at Ashland, Kentucky on August 27, 1949. They are the parents of four sons. John William III was born at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on June 8, 1951, Thomas Leslie at Ironton, Missouri, on February 26, 1953, Richard Charles on October 19, 1954 at Marion, Kentucky, and James Garvin on July 30, 1959 at Salem, Kentucky.

Thomas Roger Winans married Janet Jenkins of South Bend, Ohio in Cincinnati on August 18, 1956. They have a son, Robert Anthony, born at Salem, Kentucky on January 7, 1959.

Dorothy Jean Winans married Frederick Dismuke Knapp, Jr. at Richmond, Virginia on February 2, 1959. They are the parents of Frederick Gary, born on September 23, 1959 at Charlottesville, Va.