

Dorothy Wickenden Klag

from

Memoirs of the Thomas Rogers Wickenden Family

Having been born Dorothy May, August 7, 1898 into a family of seven older brothers and sisters, two parents and a grandmother, my earliest feelings were those of being overwhelmed by a house full of adults. To be very honest, being the youngest has not been the most enviable position in which to find one's self. Through the years there have been many sad and lonely experiences to transcend; however there has also been a bright side with certain gratifications.

In this span of nearly sixty-four years much has been forgotten but I am listing some early childhood impressions which come to mind: getting my daily ration of candy from Grandmother Wickenden's dresser; turkey dinners at Grandmother Consaul's on Thanksgiving Day and the wonderful smell of her cellar; our old barn and the pigeons roosting there; Sunday morning devotions and afternoon walks to the "green hill" and Highway's pond; singing around the piano or the old organ which Homer rigged up for foot pedaling; ice skating in the side yard and a high bank of snow for coasting; jumping rides on the fireman's bob-sled as it drove by; creamed onions for Saturday lunch, baked beans at night and guests for Sunday supper; Father's Research Club picnics; Arthur's threatened arrest by "Nosey" Father Harks; the building of Tom's sail boat in the back yard; marching two by two from the old Baptist Church to the new one for the dedication; the excitement when Ida left for China and my correspondence with a Chinese girl who later visited me in Toledo; a trip to Sarnia with Ruth on the wrong boat; trips to Lakeside in the spring to pick wild flowers and staying overnight with the Waters girls; becoming an aunt when eleven and babysitting one whole summer with Betty when Will and Marion went to Europe; and the thrill of riding in Tom's first car and attending his wedding in Covington.

My grade school days at Franklin seemed uneventful. However, one year because of overcrowding our class met in the back of the old Baptist church across the street. I attended three high schools without moving, which is quite a record: Old East Side Central my freshman year, Old Central my sophomore year, and incidentally its last, and Waite my junior and senior years. I belonged to the Zetaethan Literary Society and the Camp Fire Girls which was sponsored by the YWCA. After graduation in 1916 I entered Denison with much fear and trepidation lest I could not uphold the family reputation for scholarship. To help earn my tuition I delivered mail "rain or shine, snow or sleet" to the dorms and cottages for two years and corrected math papers for Anna B. Peckham the last two. It was all very good experience. I accepted a bid to the Chi Psi Delta Sorority, now Kappa Alpha Theta, to which I will always be grateful for polishing off the rough edges of adolescence. I participated in YW and athletic activities, sang in the Chapel Choir and the Girl's Glee Club. These were war years; our food was rationed and many social activities were curtailed. I contracted the flu and had to be carried by two profs from Stone Hall to the Kappa House which was a temporary hospital. Homer came over from Camp Sherman to visit me and help cheer me up. On

Armistice Day there was great rejoicing, only to be marred by receiving word that Arthur had been wounded in France. My junior year 1 had the privilege of attending an Eaglesmere Conference, thanks to Ruth who sent my expense money. I wept copiously after receiving a B.S. degree at graduation, as those four years seemed as near heaven as I had been on earth.

Mother and Father seemed delighted with the decision that I would return to Toledo to live. After teaching two weeks at Birmingham School in Ironville I was called to Waite High School for an interview. Nelson "Knocky" Rupp who was then football coach at Waite had recommended me for a secretarial job in the principal's office. It was much more to my liking, and I accepted with pleasure. Those were six fascinating years. I worked hard but learned a great deal, met many interesting people and attended most of the school dances and parties. I really made football fans out of Mother and Father. Jimmy Wickenden, who seemed like a brother, having lived with us for several years after his mother's death, was the quarterback of the team and interest was high. Ruth was married to Leslie at home and I was privileged to be her bridesmaid. A year later I served in the same capacity at Ethel's and Arthur's marriage in Chicago and saw my namesake Dorothy Jean Winans who was born a few days previous.

Having the family's education behind them, Mother and Father decided to do a bit of traveling. They went to Canada visiting several nephews and cousins and were especially impressed with Dan Kidney at Ottawa. They also traveled west to California via the Grand Canyon and several National Parks and returned by Lake Louise and Banff, visiting Cousin Fiffle en route. During his last years Father worked for the Defiance Gas & Electric Co. and was superintendent of the old Miami and Erie Canal and the power house in Maumee. I often wonder what he would think if he could see it all now. The canal bed is the Anthony Wayne Highway and the power house is an exclusive social club owned by the Edison Co. His passing in 1924 interrupted his dream of returning to England and visiting his relatives there.

In 1925 Will was traveling in Europe for the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education and, at his suggestion, Mother and I returned to Europe with him after a quick trip home for a conference. We met Marion and Betty in England and were indebted to them for conducting us through England, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland and France. Upon returning to Toledo I was met at the station by a young man with a diamond ring. Thus I became engaged to marry Frederick William Klag who also was the youngest of eight children. He was a graduate of Ohio State University in engineering, belonged to Eta Kappa Nu honorary engineering fraternity and at that time was teaching physics at Waite High School. He was also serving as Faculty Manager of Athletics with championships in all categories. He took these teams from coast to coast and south to the gulf. In the meantime he had developed quite a reputation as a public speaker and gave many after dinner speeches and graduation addresses throughout northern Ohio. We were married July 7, 1926 at home with a simple ceremony and only the immediate families in attendance. We took our honeymoon trip to California via the Grand Canyon, returning by way of Seattle, Vancouver, Lake Louise and Banff. Upon our return we started housekeeping in the upstairs apartment.

That fall Mother left for a trip to Iowa to visit Ethel and Arthur. At Christmas time she went east to visit Will, Tom, Homer and Ida. When she returned home it became evident that she was not well and was failing rapidly. After several months of illness, she passed away in May 1927.

We moved most of the family furniture, dishes etc. to the Lakeside cottage and thereafter had comfortable beds and plenty of dishes. In May 1929 when I was six months pregnant a long-distance telephone call came from Lakeside that our cottage was on fire and to come down immediately. After a family consultation it was decided to buy the cottage on Third Street.

On August 8, 1929 Frederick William Klag, Jr. came to live with us and all was going well until one Saturday in October when Fred rushed to get our pay check into the bank. In fact, he was the last one in. The crash came, and our bank never opened again. Things went from bad to worse, taxes did not come in, our salary went down and down. and what we did get was paid in script which the merchants would not accept. We had previously purchased a lot in Ottawa Hills but had to give it up. We really hit bottom. Somehow we survived, but never recovered.

In the meantime we joined St. Paul's Methodist Church as a compromise between Fred's Reformed and my Baptist background. Fred taught the adult class and we have both served on the official board and in many other capacities.

Frederick, like the rest of the family, attended Franklin School. At Waite High, in spite of the fact that his father was Assistant Principal and Dean of Boys, he made a good scholastic record. He served as student leader of the band which played for all the football games and traveled with the team for out of town games. The band featured Theresa Brewer, the now famous jazz singer and TV star. Frederick attended Miami University for two years and had arranged to transfer to Ohio State for engineering when his father was stricken in August 1949 while addressing the Woman's Club at Lakeside. Plans were suddenly changed, and he entered Toledo University in order to be at home. He was very satisfied, as Toledo has a fine College of Engineering thanks to Will who had revamped and standardized its curriculum, and for which he received an honorary degree.

Upon graduation Frederick went to Akron where he was employed by the government as an engineer at the Goodyear Aircraft Corporation. For eight summers he had worked at the Sohio Service Station at Lakeside and had really instilled Lakeside into his blood. Here he met Mary Louise Miller of Elyria, who also was employed at Lake- side during the summers. They were married July 10, 1954 at the First Methodist Church in Elyria and we were gratified to have Arthur assist in the ceremony. Mary was graduated from Lake Erie College as an art major and taught art in Warren and Akron before John Frederick was born February 7, 1956 (Father's birthday). In June they moved to Berea, Ohio where Frederick worked for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. They bought their home at 8995 Lindberg Boulevard and on November 16, 1958

Geoffrey William arrived. Brian Thomas followed on May 8, 1961. Since 1960 Frederick has been employed as Industrial Sales Engineer for the Alloy Engineering Company of Berea. He thoroughly enjoys his work and does an occasional bit of traveling for the firm, which is located near the Cleveland Airport. From all indications this branch of the family is becoming as Lakeside minded as the rest of us. Having both maternal and paternal grandparents there every summer, this is not surprising.

My extra-curricular activities include several organizations. Having organized and served as president of our Toledo Denison Women's Club, I was asked to become a member of Samagame Club, a service group composed only of presidents of accepted clubs. In 1929 I was invited to join P.E.O., a national organization interested in the education of women the world over. In this group I have made wonderful friendships which I have cherished through the years. While serving as president of our chapter I was sent to the National Convention at Houston, Texas, all expenses paid. Music has always interested me though I have had no formal training in it. From childhood up to the time of Fred's illness I always sang in a choir and occasionally a trio. In the past I have sung in the Toledo Choral Society, Madrigal Club, which gave yearly concerts at the Toledo Museum of Art, and the McCune Chorus which sang at the World's Fair in Chicago. I belong to the American Association of University Women and at present am particularly interested in the Antique Group. I have learned to cane and have caned three chairs at the Lakeside cottage. At one time or another I have served on the Boards of the YWCA, the Goodwill Auxiliary and the Republican Women's Club.

Since Fred's complete retirement in 1957 his life is of necessity more sedentary. However, I have not retired and find my duties and responsibilities increasing daily. Between the six months spent at Lakeside and an occasional trip to Berea we manage to keep from a life of boredom. Our traveling is of the arm-chair variety, but we can always dream. Our latch string is always out, either at 602 Starr Avenue or at the "Jenny Wren" for any of the family who come our way.